

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
DARTMOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

March 12, 2018

The warrants for bills payable were reviewed and signed by the School Committee.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dr. Shannon Jenkins, at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the James M. Quinn Elementary School. She noted that the meeting was being videotaped for future broadcast over DCTV, which is aired on Wednesday and Friday evenings, and the DHS YouTube channel.

Present were the following members: Dr. Jenkins, Mr. Nunes, Mrs. Amaral and Dr. Karafotis, Dr. Jenkins and Mr. Oliver.

Also present: Dr. Gifford, Ms. Roy, Mr. Kiely, and Mrs. Genthner.

Visitors present: Mrs. Oliveira, Mr. Thibault, Ms. Chavier, Mr. Martin, Mr. Boyle, Mrs. Brooks, Mr. Porter, Mr. Grandfield, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Pavao, Mrs. Correia, Mrs. McHenry, and members of the community.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Jenkins invited anyone in attendance to the podium to offer comments regarding any matter on the evening's agenda with the exception of the FY19 Budget as that matter would be addressed at the Public Hearing scheduled to commence at 6:45 p.m.

No comments were offered on any of the agenda items.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

FY19 BUDGET

Dr. Jenkins opened the Public Hearing on the FY19 Budget at 6:45 p.m. Dr. Jenkins invited those wishing to speak on the matter to come to the podium and to state his/her name for the record.

No public comment was offered on the FY19 Budget.

Dr. Jenkins closed the public hearing on the FY19 Budget at 6:50 p.m. and reopened the regularly scheduled school committee meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Regular Session Minutes of February 12, 2018. The motion carried with Mr. Oliver abstaining from voting citing he was not present at the February 12th regular meeting.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to approve the Executive Session Minutes of February 12, 2018, as written, with the stipulation that they be held until such time as the matter or matters for which the session was held have been resolved. The motion carried with Mr. Oliver abstaining from voting citing he was not present at the February 12th executive session meeting.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Student Representative Charlotte Correiro, a junior at Dartmouth High School, reported on activities taking place at Dartmouth High School.

- Last week 9th, 10th and 11th grade students submitted their course requests for 2018-2019 and the guidance department will be scheduling follow up appointments.
- Congratulations to Samuel D'Atri, Ben Ackerman and Elijah Wilson for participating in the All State Music Festival in Boston MA.
- The Dartmouth High School Music Department, featuring the orchestra, band and chorus, held its Annual Pops Concert on March 8th and this year's honoree was John Nunes for his service to the music department and to the students of Dartmouth.
- Ms. True and Ms. Sousa organized the DHS TedX Talks this past week at the high school which included 16 presentations with topics such as the cultural importance of theater and the importance of political engagement; these performances can be found on the DHS TV media channel on YouTube.
- The Class of 2019 along with its advisors, Ms. Fifield and Ms. Rivard, hosted the Mr. Dartmouth competition where senior Dane Ashton was crowned Mr. Dartmouth.
- Congratulations to those DHS students and their advisor, Ms. Kane, who recently competed in the DECA competition in Boston; three Dartmouth students are moving on to the international competition to be held in Atlanta, Georgia in April.

PRESENTATIONS

SPOTLIGHT ON KIDS – Andrew B. Cushman School:

Dr. Jenkins invited Mrs. McHenry, the Early Childhood Director, to present the Andrew B. Cushman's "Spotlight on Kids" segment.

Mrs. McHenry thanked the Committee for the opportunity to showcase some of the important programs currently being implemented at the Cushman School including the Kindergarten Writer's Workshop. Mrs. McHenry explained the progressive nature of the workshop wherein students learn to read and write utilizing discussion, illustration and acting; adding, the workshop promotes the building of skills simultaneously throughout the school year. Mrs. McHenry invited

the following kindergarten students to the podium to read their “how to/informational” writing: Addison Labelle, Maddie Pavao, Michael Simas and Chloe Korolnek.

Mrs. McHenry informed the Committee of the many connections Cushman students made throughout the Community as they relate to the Kindness Matters theme started by the Central Administration: canned good drive to support the food pantry at the Council on Aging, pajama drive to assist families at a local women’s shelter, holiday cards were made for troops in Afghanistan and preschoolers travelled to the Council on Aging to put on a holiday show.

Mrs. McHenry added that the school is currently in the midst of a “Random Acts of Kindness” Challenge where students can earn “hearts” by acts of kindness. Mrs. McHenry invited kindergartner Austin Russo to share how he received his “heart.”

In conclusion Mrs. McHenry explained the Cushman “Calming Moments” and invited kindergartner Kalliana Whitfield and preschooler Julia Thomas to come up and demonstrate a Cushman “calming moment.”

The Committee congratulated Mrs. McHenry and the students on their wonderful presentation.

SPOTLIGHT ON KIDS – Joseph DeMello Elementary School:

Dr. Jenkins invited Mrs. Pavao, the Principal of the Joseph DeMello Elementary School, to present the school’s “Spotlight on Kids” segment.

Mrs. Pavao thanked the Committee for allowing the DeMello School to make its presentation highlighting Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Mrs. Pavao introduced Elizabeth Correia, Assistant Principal of the DeMello School and the following fifth grade students who were in attendance and contributed to the segment: Rafaela Hathaway, Audrey Kertscher, Sophia Litos and Jade Winters.

Mrs. Pavao noted that PBIS was implemented in 2012 and she presented a brief review of what PBIS entails and what changes have been made to “reboot” the program.

Mrs. Pavao invited some “fifth grade friends” to explain the three core values: Sophia Litos explained what being respectful means, Rafaela Hathaway explained what being responsible means, and Jade Winters explained what it means to be safe.

Mrs. Pavao explained DeMello’s “mindful moments” during morning announcements when students are reminded of how they can demonstrate the core value being highlighted that month and how the school recognizes students when they follow the core values: fifth grade student Audrey Kertscher explained how students are recognized for “doing the right thing.”

The Committee thanked Mrs. Pavao and Mrs. Correia for their presentation and for all they are doing to maintain the wonderful learning environment at the DeMello school.

COURSE CHANGES at the HIGH SCHOOL:

Mr. Thibault, Principal of Dartmouth High School, thanked the Committee for the opportunity to explain the changes in the program of courses which will be implemented at the high school starting in the 2018-2019 school year.

Mr. Thibault credited Assistant Principal Ms. Chavier and Bridgit Martin, Director of School Counseling and Support Services, and the lead teachers for their hard work in defining the course changes.

Mr. Thibault explained the reasoning behind the changes and how they relate to the District's vision for the high school as well as noting the changes will provide students with a better understanding of course options and more control over course choices.

Mr. Thibault clarified the purpose for the course changes: clarification of course content, better access for a greater number of students to more rigorous course offerings, building "pathways of study," rebranding health and physical education courses, and defining course levels.

Mr. Thibault added that the new schedule format and course changes have necessitated a proposal for a revision to the committee's graduation requirement policy which is on the evening's agenda as a separate item.

Dr. Jenkins asked for clarification regarding the difference in requirements for physical education and health credits for the current classes weighed against those requirements for the incoming freshman class.

Mr. Thibault responded that the main reason was not to change too many graduation requirements as the current classes were already told what the requirements would be when they entered as freshman; "we" felt that changing the number of additional electives needed to graduate would be a better decision than changing other requirements.

Mr. Thibault added that the credit requirements are the minimums and students will have the opportunity to take additional electives.

Dr. Jenkins offered that it might be helpful for parents and students if pre-requisites for AP courses were outlined.

Dr. Karafotis commented she appreciated the high school administration's efforts to encourage all students to look at more rigorous courses.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Gifford recommended the following field trip request to the Committee for its approval:

- DHS requests permission to participate at the Robotics East Super-Regional Championships from March 16th through March 18, 2018 in Scranton PA.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver, to approve the above-named request as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

- **School Choice – Continued Discussion and Vote to Participate in the 2018-2019 School Year**

Dr. Jenkins asked the Committee if there were any questions or comments concerning school choice.

Mr. Oliver asked Dr. Gifford for reassurance that approving school choice for the 2018-2019 school year, particularly when a new scheduling format will be implemented, will not greatly increase class size.

Dr. Gifford responded that the number of students enrolling through school choice does not adversely affect class size especially when you factor in those students who do not continue on to the high school from Dartmouth middle school.

Dr. Gifford continued by stating the district and high school administrations will be watching closely at class sizes as course scheduling continues based on student course selections which were only recently made.

Dr. Gifford reminded the Committee how school choice funds supports important programs currently being implemented and those which the District is hoping to implement.

Mr. Oliver stated that, although school choice is controversial, the revenue that comes with it is important to the District.

Dr. Karafotis commented that including school choice students enriches the District not only with funding but with the students themselves.

Ms. Amaral commented it would be unwise not to support the extra funding from school choice which will support important District initiatives and added a thank you to the administration for the data provided.

Dr. Jenkins added that student enrollment is down but staff levels have remained the same so there is capacity for more students.

Mr. Nunes asked if there will be a certain number of students to be accepted.

Dr. Gifford stated the District is recommending 30 additional students for 2018-2019.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis, to make Dartmouth Public Schools a school choice district for the 2018-2019 school year. The motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Nunes opposing.

- **FY19 Budget**

Mr. Kiely informed the Committee he has been working with the Town Treasurer and will be meeting with him on Wednesday to continue going over the budget numbers; adding, the finance committee has a meeting on Thursday I will be available to answer any questions the Committee may have concerning the District's budget.

Mr. Kiely added he is hoping to get some assurances from the Treasurer that the District will be able to rely on the numbers in its current proposed budget.

Dr. Jenkins asked if the Town has a projection for new growth.

Mr. Kiely directed the Committee to the budget binder and noted that for FY19 there is not much new growth projected.

Mr. Kiely stated he believed the Town will make every possible effort to support the district's proposed budget.

Dr. Jenkins asked for clarification on voting on the budget.

Mr. Kiely stated that the earliest opportunity for the Committee to vote would be at the next school committee meeting noting he would provide the motion language for the Committee should it be prepared to vote at that time.

Mr. Kiely added that district administration is scheduling a joint meeting with the Select Board and the Finance Committee in April and he hopes to have "firm numbers" by that point.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Revision of School Committee Policy IKF - Graduation Requirements**

Assistant Superintendent Michelle Roy presented the revised School Committee Policy IKF – Graduation Requirement – for a first reading.

Ms. Roy asked the Committee to review the revised policy and if there are no questions or modifications it will be returned to the Committee for a second reading and a vote.

- **Superintendent's Update**

Dr. Gifford encouraged people to go on the high school YouTube channel to view the TedX Talks that were recently held at the high school.

Dr. Gifford stated that the MCAS infrastructure tests, which are geared to educate students and teachers on the new electronic format of the MCAS tests, have started and Mr. Gallishaw reports they went very well.

Dr. Gifford informed the Committee that the District has been running a safe and kind initiative.

Dr. Gifford announced that the District has been accepted in to the second phase of the Massachusetts Capital Skills Grant Program.

District Elementary Schools partnered with the Lions Club recently collecting pennies.

The District is participating in a “thank you card” drive organized by a local animal rescue shelter, Odie’s Place, to recognize first responders.

Dr. Gifford informed the Committee that she applied for a grant through the Superintendents’ Group and was chosen to travel to Portugal on an educational trip along with 7 other superintendents this spring.

- **Report of the Chair:**

Dr. Jenkins stated the District recently held an information session on school safety which was well attended and well received noting that those people who were unable to attend can watch the session which is being aired on DCTV. Dr. Jenkins congratulated Mr. Nunes on his well-deserved honor by the high school band at its recent Pops Concert.

- **Additional Comments:**

Ms. Amaral mentioned that Destination Imagination teams competed at the regional tournament this past weekend and three teams won first place – two from the elementary level and one from the middle school – and will be advancing to the State tournament in Worcester.

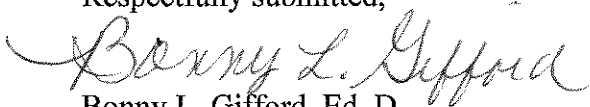
Ms. Amaral announced that there is a SEPAC meeting this Thursday on managing challenging behavior at home.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The next regular session of the School Committee will take place on Monday, March 26, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in the James M. Quinn Elementary School Community Room.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Ms. Amaral to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:00 p.m. in order to discuss personnel matters and not to return in to Open Session. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent