

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

**September 3, 2019 – Working Session**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kathleen Amaral, at 4:05 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room of the School Administration Building.

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

Also present: Dr. Gifford and Mr. Kiely.

Visitors present: Members of the community.

**OPENING COMMENT**

Ms. Amaral opened the meeting by explaining the purpose: to discuss potential topics for future meeting agendas. She also stated the intent of the meeting was not to discuss the merits of the topics but to offer suggestions for topics.

Dr. Jenkins added “we are not debating the merits of items but whether or not to add them to an agenda.”

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dartmouth Resident David Ehrens: Mr. Ehrens spoke to the usefulness of putting an item on an agenda...speaking specifically about the use of an Indian logo in Dartmouth. He added various districts & other institutions have already eliminated names and mascots such as the Indians. He also mentioned that a July newspaper article stated the Superintendent and Committee Members had discussed the issue and he could find no minutes of this discussion. He then added there has been talk of a discussion that has been had with tribe members but he can't find any documentation of such conversation. He added that if documentation existed it should be shared with the public.

Dartmouth Resident Jim Hijiya: Mr. Hijiya stated the use of a particular logo like the Indian is an important and complicated issue. He requested the topic be added to a future agenda noting it should be on a meeting agenda that did not include other important topics as he felt this issue should be given ample time and attention. Noting the issue would bring people to the table who had differing opinions he felt the topic should be given more time.

President of New Bedford NAACP LaSelle Hall: Mr. Hall spoke about the establishment of the various chapters of the NAACP including one on the UMASS Dartmouth campus. He stated he would like to get on a future agenda to speak about the Dartmouth mascot. He wanted to find out

where the school committee body stood on the issue. He added this was not a local concern but a larger issue as the NAACP is getting back on track relative to standing up for such issues. Mr. Hall brought a guest who stated she was in support of his comments.

Public Comment closed at 4:15pm

Ms. Amaral then asked Committee Members to discuss their ideas for topics.

Dr. Jenkins suggested discussing the mascot topic first so the public who had come to speak on it could hear the conversation and leave when other topics were discussed. She then added that the Committee might think of creating a task force to explore the issue.

Mr. Oliver agreed stating this was a worthwhile discussion. He supported the idea of forming a sub-committee to explore and solicit public feedback and added the sub-committee could be a fact finding committee.

Mr. Nunes stated as a lifelong resident of Dartmouth and graduate of DHS he remembers the Indian logo being chosen in the 60's. Without meaning any disrespect, he feels the issue could be very complex, stretching to include other names and logos such as the Blue Devils, whereby folks could say it's anti-Christian as an example. Mr. Nunes feels there are other very important issues that need to be discussed before spending time on the mascot discussion.

Dr. Karafotis stated she can understand Mr. Nunes' perspective but feels it is appropriate to form a sub-committee and would be happy to be on the committee.

Ms. Amaral stated the September 9<sup>th</sup> agenda is full, noting new hires and mentors will be present and recognized.

Dr. Jenkins stated one of the tasks of the sub-committee would be to discuss the scope and the charge of the committee.

Mr. Oliver agreed this was an important issue and felt the committee could decide the scope and task of the sub-committee. He noted he understood Mr. Nunes' passion for the existing mascot.

Ms. Amaral noted the discussion could serve as a chance to educate people about the history of the logo and how people's perspectives on the topic differ.

Mr. Hall stated the NAACP was not looking to be antagonistic but would like to partner with the committee and be part of the discussion.

Ms. Amaral moved the meeting asking members to offer suggestions for additional items.

Dr. Karafotis commented; so much has been going on in education and things are happening so fast she would like to find a way to "showcase" classrooms so the public gains a sense of everything educators are doing and how students are learning. She cited personalized and blended learning as an example. She suggested creating promotional videos and putting them on our website.

Mr. Nunes offered the following:

1. Would like to see the new AD introduced along with the new teachers at the next meeting. He added that after the AD (Mr. Crisafulli) is on board for a while he would like to hear from him regarding the health and wellness curriculum, particularly concerning vaping and juling.
2. School lunch updates: Noting we have added a nutrition director Mr. Nunes wanted to hear how the lunch program was going and have a discussion about eligibility for free and reduced lunches.
3. School Improvement Plans (SIPs): Mr. Nunes mentioned he would love to hear more about curriculum items particularly the math program, noting his perspective on "common core" math.
4. Technology updates: Would like to hear about how technology is being integrated and what our long range technology plan looks like.
5. Transportation and parent pick-up. Mr. Nunes noted he continues to see numerous parents in line to pick up students and was curious about how many students busses were transporting. This is especially important noting the large cost for transportation.

Mr. Oliver offered the following:

1. Agreed relative to hearing more about technology, stating he would like to hear a comprehensive technology report that includes staffing, salaries and tasks. He stated he feels with technology being involved in almost everything we do it's important that Dartmouth keeps up with the need for more staff that are appropriately compensated.
2. Asked about late bussing and whether it is beneficial to offer late bus transportation for the elementary level. It was noted the conversation should start with the elementary principals.
3. Long range master plan: noting we completed the plan and have not taken action on the recommendations.
4. Innovation Lab updates: How are the equipment and the lab being used? Has there been enough professional development so people feel confident using the lab and other equipment?

Dr. Jenkins offered the following:

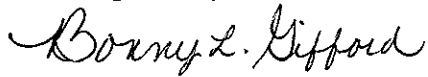
1. Agreed with Mr. Oliver relative to hearing about the technology plan, especially the long range vision. Will we have chrome carts in every classroom? Etc.
2. Facilities discussion: Dr. Jenkins suggested discussing the master plan and building of new schools in a joint meeting with the finance committee and select board.
3. School start times, noting research is clear.
4. NB Voke representatives. Perhaps ask them to provide a report 2 or 3 times a year.
5. State legislatures to discuss the state of education funding.

Ms. Amaral offered the following:

1. Overview of continuum of services offered by DPS. She suggested this topic might be discussed on the same night the SEPAC acknowledges staff who have been recognized by parents.
2. Update on brain based program and other work being done in the district.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins to adjourn at 5:14 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bonny L. Gifford".

Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.  
Superintendent