

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

February 11, 2019

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

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mr. John Nunes, at 6:30 p.m. in the Quinn School Community Room. He noted 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: Mr. Nunes, Mrs. Amaral, Dr. Karafotis and Mr. Oliver. Dr. Jenkins was not present. The Chair advised the Committee that Dr. Jenkins is teaching in Japan and will return in August 2019.

Also present: Dr. Gifford, Mr. Kiely and Mrs. Genthner. Ms. Roy was not present.

Visitors present: Mr. Gallishaw, Mr. Thibault, Mr. Martin, Mrs. Pavao, Mrs. Brooks, Mr. Grandfield, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. McHenry, Mr. Kingsland, Mrs. Vieira, and members of the community.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Nunes invited those in attendance to the podium to offer comments regarding any matter on the evening's agenda.

No comments were offered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 28, 2019. The motion carried unanimously.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Miss Alves reported on the following Dartmouth High School activities.

- Congratulations to Harmonix, the high school acapella group, who was asked to perform on "Sing That Thing" a television program on WGBH which is scheduled to air in April.
- With the assistance of Ms. True and Ms. Sousa, student-presented "TED Talks" were recently held at the high school: the talks were streamed live by the high school media class.
- The National Honor Society will be hosting a "Senior Sweetheart Dance" this Thursday at the Council on Aging.
- Congratulations to the boys' track team who won the OCL championship as well as to the 24 track athletes who are "States" bound.
- Varsity Hockey recently qualified for the State tournament.
- The DHS Cheer Team recently won third place at a competition held in Franklin.
- *DHS Gives Back* is supporting poverty awareness by sharing statistics with students.
- MCAS Biology exams have concluded.
- AP Photography Students recently went on a field trip to an "ice castle" in New Hampshire.

- The After Prom Committee recently held a successful “Comedy Night” fundraiser to help support the After Prom party.

Dr. Gifford asked for more information about *DHS Gives Back*.

Miss Alves gave a brief explanation of the community support group including how students raise funds and awareness for less fortunate Dartmouth families.

PRESENTATION

- **Spotlight on Kids – DeMello Elementary School**

Principal Catie Pavao thanked the Committee and the Superintendent for the opportunity to present the DeMello School’s *Spotlight on Kids* and acknowledged faculty participants: Marianne Aguiar, David Finn-Clarke, Robin Kolbeck, Leslie Gamache and Erin Shurtleff.

Mrs. Pavao highlighted the STEM program at the DeMello School and explained the benefits to teaching and learning: a video was shown illustrating student participation in STEM activities.

Mrs. Shurtleff provided a brief explanation of what students in her classroom are doing in relation to STEM challenges.

Mrs. Pavao explained “buddy classrooms” where students from different grade levels collaborate on STEM challenges.

The following students participated in the presentation by describing their STEM challenge and showing their finished project: Fifth graders – Ava Constantino, Keiley Cordeiro, Emily Pereira, Lauren Kippe and Henry Caron; Fourth graders – Zoe Beckman and Kyleigh Fredette; Third graders – Caleb Desrosiers.

Mrs. Amaral thanked the students for speaking about the process of their individual STEM challenges.

Dr. Karafotis commented on the number of female students who are interested in science and who participated in tonight’s presentation.

Mr. Oliver noted the level of engagement within STEM activities.

Mr. Nunes congratulated the students on their work and their ability to speak well publicly.

- **FY20 Budget:**

Dr. Gifford and Mr. Kiely presented the proposed FY20 school department budget to the committee. Dr. Gifford prefaced the presentation reiterating the District’s core beliefs which have essentially remained the same and the strategic goals which have evolved to meet the District’s objectives; Teaching and Learning, Access and Equity, and Community Engagement.

Dr. Gifford continued by explaining the collaborative process of building the budget naming the participants; central administration, directors, school principals and the budget sub-committee; as well as noting the difficulties of prioritizing the allocation of limited funding.

Mr. Kiely stated that the process to get to the draft budget is extensive: schools and departments work hard to reflect on their school improvement plans to create budget proposals that will make a difference for students. At that point, central administrators get to work assessing and compiling the proposals in a “big picture” sense for the district. Mr. Kiely added tonight’s presentation is a prioritization of the budget requests.

Mr. Kiely reported that the FY20 proposed budget is \$44,245,179 ; noting the categories and percentage breakdown: *Instruction* (including teachers’ salaries, principals, teacher assistants, professional development, special education services, supplies and books) which represents 75%; *Other Services* (including transportation, attendance, health and other co-curricular activities) represents approximately 11%; *Maintenance and Utilities* (including maintenance and custodial personnel and related costs) represents 8%; *Administration* (including district administration, technology district systems and legal costs) represents 3% and *Tuitions* (includes student out-of-district placement) represents 3%.

Mr. Kiely noted this year’s budget proposal is consistent with last year’s. He noted some changes as follows: Increases in *Instruction* and *Administration* are mainly due to all collective bargaining agreements expiring at the end of this school year as well as contractual obligations. In other areas such as *Maintenance and Utilities* there was a slight decrease due to on-going energy efficiency efforts. The increase in the minimum wage as well as increases in transportation contributed to more funding being “built in” to *Other Services*.

Dr. Gifford listed and explained the budget recommendations which included instructional additions; Applied Behavioral Analyst; .5 Reading Specialist (DeMello); .5 Wellness Teacher (DHS); Technology Integration Specialist (DHS); Grade One Teacher and a Special Education Teacher (Quinn); together with software upgrades for the high school guidance department and professional development.

Dr. Gifford noted as a result of some of these budget proposals some positions were reallocated including reducing a teaching position at DeMello; not fill a vacancy caused by a retirement in the ELA coaching staff, each of the elementary schools will retain an ELA coach (reallocate for a special education teacher at Quinn); not fill a vacancy caused by a retirement in the high school art department (reallocate funding for the technology integration specialist position at the high school.)

Mr. Kiely informed the Committee that the Public Hearing on the FY20 Budget will be held on Monday, March 18th and that, hopefully, the Committee would be able to vote on the budget at the April 8th school committee meeting.

Mr. Kiely stated that Town Hall indicated the Finance Committee is looking to have the School Department present the FY20 Budget at its meeting either on March 7th or March 14th.

Mr. Kiely added that April 8th would mostly likely be the date of the joint meeting with the Select Board and Finance Committee: spring town meeting is scheduled for June 4th.

Mr. Oliver commented on the frustration of not being able to fund all of the requests made by the school administrators: one of the “themes” that comes across is the “great need” for social emotional, well-being and behavior resources including staff.

Mr. Oliver asked Dr. Gifford for an explanation for this “great need.”

Dr. Gifford responded students are entering the district with these needs.

Mr. Kiely added that the “steps” taken in the FY20 budget will address those needs although they are not necessarily what the schools requested.

Mr. Kiely noted that through re-allocation the “net” of the “pluses and minuses” is not a big number, \$121,000.

Mr. Oliver concurred and complimented the administration for its creativity in reallocating funds to best meet the District’s needs.

Mr. Oliver asked if the reduction in the art teacher position will reduce course offerings.

Dr. Gifford explained that it would not particularly due to the change in scheduling at the high school.

Mr. Oliver stated he has heard about the difficulty finding substitute teachers and if it is possible to increase the daily rate to attract more teachers.

Mr. Kiely responded it is a concern and the District recently increased the substitute teacher rate which was due, in part, to the minimum wage increase which created a “trickle up” effect.

Dr. Karafotis noted how little money there is “to play with” but is very “pleased” how the District is addressing the social emotional needs not only of the students but reaching out to their families.

Mrs. Amaral asked if Medicaid reimbursement for ABA services would be an avenue to negotiate for more money from the Town.

Mr. Kiely responded yes: reimbursement submissions from Medicaid are processed through the School Department and, although the funds go to the Town’s general account, the “good” relationship the School Department has with the Town side of government and its appreciation for the District’s efforts obtaining these reimbursements each year - which is a substantial amount of money - benefits the District when monies are being allocated to Town Departments particularly with capital improvement projects.

Mrs. Amaral asked if teacher assistant professional development, particularly in RBT, is district wide and if teacher assistants with the training receive additional compensation.

Dr. Gifford confirmed that the training would be district wide and on a volunteer basis, at first, adding the District is looking at adding a stipend for assistants with this particular skill/training.

Mrs. Amaral asked about unfunded professional development.

Dr. Gifford stated the District felt better about waiting on funding specific professional development until the State makes a final decision about the new regulation.

Mr. Nunes asked if the Town still pays the salary for the school department employee who processes the Medicaid reimbursements.

Mr. Kiely stated it does.

Mr. Nunes thanked Dr. Gifford and Mr. Kiely for their efforts on the FY20 budget which the Committee will review and asked that the matter be placed on the next meeting’s agenda for further discussion.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Gifford recommended the following field trip requests to the Committee for their approval:

- DHS Request to Participate in the All State Music Festival in Boston MA from February 28th through March 2, 2019.

Dr. Karafotis moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral, to approve the above-named request as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

- DHS Request to Participate in the YMCA's Annual Youth and Government Model Government Conference held in Boston MA from March 20th through March 22, 2019.

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

OLD BUSINESS

- **Update on Stadium Project:**

Mr. Kiely reported that the Turf Committee recently met with turf manufacturers - for over 8 hours - and explained the selection process for the turf and the vendor.

Mr. Kiely stated he should receive finalized plans tomorrow which will have the field layout including drainage and utilities and that the project will go out to bid on March 6th.

Dr. Karafotis asked what is going out to bid.

Mr. Kiely stated the bid, at this time, will be predominantly for the field and the lights including some drainage that is not directly related to the field.

Mr. Oliver clarified that some work is being done in advance of Phases II and III.

Mr. Oliver stated the Turf Field Committee met approximately three weeks ago which went well with many District Department Head members and Town officials present and we are hopeful the project will continue to move forward beyond Phase I.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Superintendent's Update:** Dr. Gifford reported on the following:

-DeMello School held a PBIS rally last week where the staff and students said goodbye to departing faculty member, Joshua Rodrigues the school's IT specialist.

-Professional Development was held last week: sessions offered included assistive technology and growth mind-set which is founded on brain based research. Some sessions were conducted by our staff.

-Highlander Institute was at the high school last week including assisting teachers with implementing personalized and blended learning in to their lesson plans.

-The Core Team for the Innovative Leadership Network met with the "Ambassadors" from all of the schools last week.

-Some members of the Core Team will be traveling to the AASA National conference in California next week.

Mr. Oliver asked for a status of the District's partnership with Educatius.

Dr. Gifford responded that the District is working with an Educatius representative who is recruiting students for "us" in a number of countries.

- **Report of the Chair:**

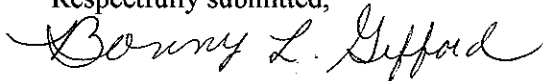
-DSMA Home Show is scheduled for Saturday, February 23rd at 1:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular session of the School Committee will take place on Monday, March 4, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in the James M. Quinn Elementary School Community Room.

Mrs. Amaral moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to close the Regular Session at 7:55 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent