

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

January 28, 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. Jenkins, Dr. Karafotis and Mr. Oliver.

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

Visitors present: Mr. Gallishaw, Mr. Thibault, Ms. Chavier, Mr. Boyle, Mr. Martin, Mr. Doane, Mrs. DaSilva, Daniel McGrath, Mr. Robidoux, Mrs. Pavao, Mrs. Brooks, Mr. Grandfield, Mrs. McHenry, Renee Vieira, and members of the community.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of Mr. Carlin Lynch, former Dartmouth Public Schools Athletic Director and Coach.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Renee Vieira, Dartmouth High School Teacher and Dartmouth Educators Association President expressed her concerns regarding several agenda items including an amendment to the student handbook as it concerns a change in cumulative final exams; *MA insight: Education and Research* as it does not benefit all staff; and the Dartmouth High School Flexible Learning and Individualized Pathway Program (FLIP) as it concerns the Union's right to bargain.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 14, 2019. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

School Choice – 2019-2020

Mr. Nunes opened the Public Hearing on School Choice for the 2019-2020 School Year at 6:46 p.m. Mr. Nunes invited those wishing to speak on the matter to come to the podium and to state their name for the record.

Renee Vieira, Dartmouth Educators Association President, Dartmouth high school teacher and parent, asked for the amount of funds the District has received from the State since it began participating in school choice.

Mr. Nunes responded that the District will have received at the end of this school year \$925,961.00.

Ms. Vieira asked if some of the funds received have been used at the high school as was mentioned last year.

Mr. Nunes stated that that question will be answered when the Committee discusses the matter later in the meeting.

Ms. Vieira asked if any students who have been accepted in to the program have left.

Dr. Gifford confirmed a few students have left the program.

Mr. Nunes asked if anyone had any further comments to make on school choice; hearing none.

Mr. Nunes closed the public hearing on school choice at 6:49 p.m. and reopened the regularly scheduled school committee meeting.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Senior Taylor Alves, the recently appointed student representative, reported on the following Dartmouth High School activities.

- DHS Robotics Club finished first and fourth in their competition this past weekend allowing them to advance to the state tournament on March 2nd.
- Advisors, Ms. Brittingham and Ms. Taylor, and the Class of 2021 Officers recently concluded a very successful shoe recycling drive.
- DHS TV and Media Production class just finished filming and editing its program called "The Big Green Product Pitch" scheduled to air on January 30th at 6:30 p.m. at Dartmouth High School.
- The After Prom Committee lead by Ms. Veloso, Ms. Abreu, and Ms. Garcia will be hosting a comedy show at Rachel's Lakeside on February 9th; proceeds will go to the 2019 After Prom event.
- DECA is headed to the state competition and has started its roses and chocolate fundraiser to help with costs.

Miss Alves gave a brief introduction of herself including her student government, extracurricular and sport activities.

PRESENTATION

- **Spotlight on Kids – Dartmouth Middle School**

Principal Darren Doane thanked the Committee and the Superintendent for the opportunity to present the middle school's *Spotlight on Kids* and introduced Laurie Hellstrom and Temple Mitchell, Dartmouth Middle School Eighth Grade Science Teacher and Instructional Technology Specialist respectively and advisors to the Dartmouth Middle School Garden Club.

The following students participated in the presentation: Kelcey Almeida, Avary Amaral, Serena Carnes, Cooper Hair and Sophia Gioiosa. Club members who were unable to attend are Sydney Downs and Samarra Bruce.

Ms. Hellstrom and Ms. Mitchell showed a video, narrated by students, wherein hydroponic gardening was described and the garden planted, tended to and harvested by students at the middle school was shown.

The garden club was initiated by three students: Kelcey Almeida, Avary Amaral and Sophia Gioiosa, who addressed the Committee explaining how the club grew.

Students brought a portion of the hydroponic system as well as seedlings to illustrate the work of the club. The garden produces lettuce, kale, spinach and basil; some of which has been provided to the Middle School cafeteria to be used in the students' lunches. Students handed out homemade pesto, made by Mrs. Mitchell from basil grown by the students, to members of the Committee and Central Administration.

Mrs. Mitchell explained fundraising plans in order to keep the club going.

Mrs. Mitchell thanked Jeanne Sheridan, the District's Director of Nutrition, and Mr. Kiely for their support.

Mrs. Amaral asked about "Donors Choose" which was shown in the video.

Mrs. Mitchell stated it is a fundraiser to help raise funds to purchase a composter and heaters.

Dr. Jenkins encouraged the Advisors to apply in the next round of the Dartmouth Education Foundation grant competition.

Dr. Karafotis asked how the students became interested.

Miss Almeida and Miss Gioiosa stated as they were walking by the greenhouse that is housed in the Middle School last year they thought it would be a great place to start something and went to Mrs. Mitchell for help in getting started.

Miss Amaral stated she and her father have a hydroponic garden.

Mr. Oliver asked how much is being consumed by students in the cafeteria.

Students responded; seven containers of lettuce and three of basil.

Mr. Doane concluded that more students are becoming interested in this club.

- **Mass insight: Education and Research:**

Dr. Gifford introduced Sally Guadagno of *Mass Insight: Education and Research* and invited her to the podium to present the services offered by her program.

Ms. Guadagno directed the Committee to informational packets provided.

Ms. Guadagno gave an overview of the program and services *Mass Insight: Education and Research* provides and what, she hopes, a relationship with Dartmouth High School would look like: the Dartmouth

High School is looking to retain *Mass Insight: Education and Research* in order to expand the appeal of its AP STEM and English course offerings.

Ms. Guadagno reported that *Mass Insight: Education and Research* is in its eleventh year of existence, as a separate entity from the original *Mass Insight Program*, and that it is a public/private partnership: Massachusetts was one of six states, at that time, to replicate a grant that existed out of Dallas through the National Math and Science Foundation.

Ms. Guadagno stated the goal of *Mass Insight: Education and Research* remains the same which is to increase participation in AP STEM and English classes, particularly from the student population that does not typically consider taking AP courses: Ms. Guadagno stated the program focuses on STEM and English courses as that was the original grant requirement and, as a replication grant, we were obliged to continue that focus.

Ms. Guadagno reported that *Mass Insight: Education and Research* currently partners with 82 public schools in Massachusetts.

Ms. Guadagno notified the Committee about the grading of AP examinations and how private and public higher education institutions may differ on the credit given for AP scores: *Mass Insight: Education and Research*, along with college-board partners, currently is lobbying the state legislature to have all state colleges uniformly accept a score of “3” for college credit.

Ms. Guadagno provided statistics which illustrated the advantages to students who take AP courses including at the college admission level as well as with remediation and reducing the numbers of students leaving before earning a college degree.

Ms. Guadagno explained that *Mass Insight: Education and Research* generally partners with a school, initially, for three years: this gives the school the opportunity to grow the program.

Ms. Guadagno pointed out the support services provided to math, science and English AP instructors in particular the week long Summer Institute at Bridgewater State University which is college-board endorsed.

Ms. Guadagno described the support *Mass Insight: Education and Research* offers to students at no charge including a mock exam.

Ms. Guadagno stated that she has met with the Superintendent and the High School Administration as well as relevant High School faculty. On the next visit I would bring “my team” including consultants in all of the sciences, math and English who would be available throughout the year to AP instructors: “we come to your school when invited, we do not evaluate we support.”

Ms. Guadagno stated they have provided some support with vertical alignment for English teachers.

Mr. Oliver asked how the program is funded.

Ms. Guadagno responded the program is privately and publically funded: they must match public funds.

Mr. Oliver asked if there is a program fee.

Ms. Guadagno responded that there is a fee for the program however, in year one, five thousand dollars is returned to the District to be used by math, science and English AP teachers for resources with the only

criteria being the resources are sustainable: an incrementally decreasing portion of the fee would be returned to the District each year of the three year contract.

Ms. Guadagno added by accepting state funding the program is mandated to cover the cost of exams for economically disadvantaged students.

Mr. Oliver asked if AP teachers would be required to participate in the program or would it be optional.

Ms. Guadagno responded that that would be a District decision but it is rare that teachers would not participate.

Dr. Karafotis asked if professional development is the main focus; is *Mass Insight: Education and Research* trying to get more teachers prepared to teach AP courses.

Ms. Guadagno stated the goal is to get more students to enroll in AP courses.

Dr. Karafotis asked how “we” are identifying students to enroll in AP courses.

Ms. Guadagno explained the “recruiting” practices.

Dr. Jenkins asked what the program fee is.

Ms. Guadagno stated the fee is \$15,000.00.

Dr. Jenkins asked what the stipend is for STEM and English AP teachers and stated her concern about limiting the benefit of professional development to only a specific group of teachers.

Ms. Guadagno stated stipends are given for work outside of the classroom such as attending a Saturday session and the stipend is \$90.00 and added that there professional development at the Summer Institute for social sciences and world languages but this would be a separate cost which would be at a discounted rate for partners.

Mr. Thibault offered that the greatest benefit from partnering with *Mass Insight: Education and Research* would be changing mindsets.

Mrs. Amaral asked for clarification about the “mock exam.”

Ms. Guadagno explained the process of administering and taking the mock exam as well as what is done with the results.

Mr. Nunes asked what the starting time would be.

Ms. Guadagno stated professional development would begin in July 2019 and the “recruitment effort” would begin in September 2019 or when invited by the District.

Mr. Oliver stated that if the program is adopted this evening he would like an update from the Administration in six months as to how the program is being received in the District.

Dr. Karafotis asked Mr. Thibault about his past experience with *Mass Insight: Education and Research*.

Mr. Thibault explained the positive experiences he had partnering with *Mass Insight: Education and Research* while at Durfee High School and Oxford High School.

Mr. Oliver asked if it would be a 3 year contract.

Ms. Guadagno stated yes and that it is renewable each year.

Dr. Jenkins asked the Administration how this would be funded.

Dr. Gifford responded from school choice funds.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis, to approve Dartmouth Public Schools partnering with *Mass Insight: Education and Research* for the next year. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- DHS Indoor Color Guard requests permission to attend the WGI Regional Competition in Bethlehem, PA from March 16th through March 17, 2019.

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

- DHS Indoor Color Guard requests permission to attend the WGI World Championships with the Varsity Color Guard in Dayton, OH from April 3rd through April 6, 2019.

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

- DHS Indoor Percussion/Dance Team requests permission to attend and compete in the WGI World Championship in Dayton, OH from April 10th until April 13, 2019.

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

NEW BUSINESS

- **Greater New Bedford Regional Technical High School:** The Chair invited Mr. James O'Brien, Superintendent of the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School (GNBRVTHS), to the podium to respond to questions provided to him by the Committee.

Mr. O'Brien thanked the Dartmouth School Committee for reaching out to GNBRVTHS and introduced himself and the following individuals present at the meeting: Mr. Michael Shea, past Superintendent of GNBRVTHS and chair of its School Committee and representing the Town of Dartmouth on said Committee, Dr. Cynthia Marland, newly appointed school committee member representing the Town of Dartmouth; Mr. Helder Angelo, GNBRVTHS Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability, and Mr. Michael Watson, GNBRVTHS Academic Principal.

Mr. O'Brien gave a brief explanation of his personal experience with the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School as a student, instructor, administrator and now superintendent and noted the changes in vocational education.

Mr. O'Brien provided the Committee with a copy of GNBRVTHS's admissions policy which has been approved by the State's Dartmouth of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Mr. O'Brien read and responded to each of the questions previously provided by the Dartmouth School Committee.

Mr. Watson, in response to a question posed concerning students who receive special education services, added the school does not ask if a student is on an IEP or has a 504 plan on admission applications; we open the admissions process to all students from the sending communities.

Mr. O'Brien answered the question regarding Dartmouth enrollment at GNBRVTHS over a five year span as follows; in 2014 there were 250 students to just under 340 students in 2018. The number of special education students; in 2014 the enrollment was 42 and in 2018 it is 57 and it has "peaked" at 61.

Mr. O'Brien noted its "PR" team is doing very well promoting GNBRVTHS and what it has to offer: at the annual open house for 7th and 8th grade students approximately 2000 people attended: after attending an open house and gathering other information about the school, the decision on whether to attend GNBRVTHS is left to the parents and the students.

Dr. Karafotis asked if all applicants are accepted at GNBRVTHS.

Mr. O'Brien responded that is not the case and explained the criteria that are reviewed to gain acceptance: he added that last year there were 1200 applicants for 550 seats.

Mr. Watson provided statistics pertaining to Dartmouth residents: 145 students applied; 81 were accepted; 28 declined acceptance; 16 withdrew their application; and 20 were not accepted.

Dr. Jenkins voiced her concern for students who are not academically successful in middle school and who are not able to "get in to" GNBRVTHS.

Mr. Watson responded stating the choice of where a student will attend school is a parental decision.

Dr. Jenkins agreed and reiterated her concern that the weight given to attendance and to grades in GNBRVTHS's admissions process is shutting students out of the process before it begins; Dr. Jenkins added that "there is no rule stating it has to be 30 percent grades and 30 percent attendance;" greater weight can be given to other factors allowing more students the opportunity to attend GNBRVTHS.

Mr. O'Brien offered to collaborate with Dartmouth Public Schools to assist students who attend Dartmouth High School and are not meeting success there by offering to train them in a career technical education.

Dr. Jenkins stated she is interested in better lines of communication.

Mr. O'Brien explained the reason for GNBRVTHS's funding and restated that its admissions policy is approved by DESE.

Mr. Oliver stated it is Dartmouth Public Schools' responsibility to showcase what the high school has to offer and under the stewardship of Dr. Gifford and her administration this is now being done and we should see a change in the trend.

Mr. Angelo addressed the Committee and stated that GNBRVTHS has become "a victim of our success;" we got the "word out" about our school but now parents are getting "the word out."

Mr. Angelo noted that students may begin their career at GNBRVTHS on one path but should they elect to change paths it is the school's responsibility to prepare them for that opportunity too.

Mr. O'Brien stated that GNBRVTHS's philosophy has not changed.

Mr. O'Brien asked for clarity on the Committee's question concerning "recruiting."

Mr. Watson stated GNBRVTHS does not recruit students.

Mr. Oliver asked if either of the GNBRVTHS School Committee members would like to speak.

Mr. Shea stated it is a goal of the Committee to improve communications.

Mr. Shea reported GNBRVTHS is looking to bring back Dartmouth Day, Fairhaven Day and New Bedford Day either this spring or in the fall. This is a day when elected officials are invited to GNBRVTHS during the school day to see all that is happening at the school.

Dr. Jenkins asked for more detailed minutes from GNBRVTHS's school committee.

Dr. Jenkins asked that GNBRVTHS consider changing its admission policy to allow more students access to the school.

Dr. Karafotis stated she is interested in the idea of problem-solving for students who attend Dartmouth High School and who may "after the fact" look at the programs being offered at GNBRVTHS.

Mr. Watson informed that Committee that GNBRVTHS plans to send letters to students who applied but were not admitted to GNBRVTHS and who are graduating from Dartmouth High School advising them of post-secondary program opportunities.

- **DHS FLIP Program:**

Ross Thibault, Dartmouth High School Principal, explained the collaborative process leading to the proposal to adopt and implement the Flexible Learning and Individualized Pathway Program (FLIP) at Dartmouth High School in an effort to retain Dartmouth students who are not succeeding in the traditional high school setting.

Mr. Thibault described the program as a "credit recovery and acceleration program that is designed to meet the individualized needs" of students.

Mr. Thibault provided a brief overview of the program's structure including the frequency students will meet with teachers, what materials and on-line curriculum programs will be utilized as well as the need for three stipend positions (program coordinator and two DHS teachers to provide individualized academic support.)

Mr. Thibault reported 21 students were identified as overage and under-credited and who would benefit from FLIP.

Mrs. Amaral asked for clarification of the coordinator position.

Mr. Thibault stated all the positions would be stipend positions at the workshop rate and not new positions.

Dr. Jenkins asked how the program will be funded.

Dr. Gifford stated some of the materials are already accounted for in the general budget; school choice funds would supplement the rest of the cost.

Dr. Karafotis asked if the program is modeled after another program.

Mr. Thibault responded the program idea was influenced by programs implemented at other schools particularly those schools where current DHS administrators have worked which allowed them perspective on what works and how to tailor a program to Dartmouth's specific needs.

Mr. Oliver asked when the program would start.

Mr. Thibault responded as soon as possible.

Mr. Nunes asked for an explanation of the teachers' role.

Mr. Thibault responded the curriculum and instruction primarily will come from *Edgenuity*, an on-line program, the teachers' role would resemble a tutor rather than an instructor.

Ms. Roy added *Edgenuity* also provides on-line support.

Dr. Karafotis moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral, to approve the implementation of the Flexible Learning & Individualized Pathway Program (FLIP) at Dartmouth High School as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

- **DHS – Project Based Assessment:** Mr. Thibault reported that the high school administration and lead teachers, after a year and a half of discussion, recently reached unanimous consensus to change the traditional cumulative final exam format at the high school.

Mr. Thibault stated each department, for this year of transition, would identify and design a form of assessment(s) to be administered over fifty minutes; Mr. Thibault offered some examples of final assessment.

The Committee conducted a brief discussion on the matter.

- **Amendment to Student Handbook:** Mr. Thibault proposed an amendment to the high school handbook appendix which based on the change in the final examination format; including the elimination of references to "Final Exams" to be replaced with "Summative Learning Experiences."

Dr. Jenkins asked if the change would preclude teachers, in a department, from collectively deciding on what the final exam will look like.

Mr. Thibault responded it would not.

Dr. Jenkins asked that the high school be mindful of final assessment scheduling so as not to over burden students.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis, to approve the amendment to the high school handbook appendix as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

- **School Choice – Vote to Participate in the 2019-2020 School Year:** Dr. Gifford directed the Committee to information provided to them regarding school choice enrollment and funding for the two and ½ years the District has been participating in the program. Dr. Gifford stated the District is looking to add 30 seats at the high school level in 2019-2020.

Mr. Oliver asked if “our class sizes” will be able to handle an additional 30 students.

Dr. Gifford responded yes and explained her response by directing the Committee to the class enrollment spreadsheet provided to the Committee.

Mr. Oliver asked, if approved, when the District’s participation would be posted.

Dr. Gifford stated early February.

Dr. Karafotis agreed with Mr. Oliver but commented she wanted to be sure the District is taking in to account new programs at the high school which, hopefully, will increase the number of students coming from Dartmouth middle school to the high school.

Dr. Gifford stated the District is tracking the trend of Dartmouth middle school 8th graders attending DHS.

Dr. Jenkins commented that participating in school choice was a difficult decision but it has proved successful and the District has been able to implement programs like one-to-one computing because of the funds received.

Mrs. Amaral stated she is concerned with class size and asked if the schedule change this year affected the classes with higher numbers.

Mr. Thibault explained that schedules based on student choice have resulted in some larger class sizes; he added that he is conferring with lead teachers and the director of counselling and student services to see where courses can be offered to alleviate some higher numbers but we do not have enough “FTEs.”

Dr. Jenkins clarified that it is not that we do not have enough teachers but that we are offering more courses to students.

Mr. Nunes agreed that the extra funding is helpful but does not support school choice on a philosophical level.

Dr. Karafotis moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins, to make Dartmouth Public Schools a school choice district for 2019-2020. The motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Nunes opposing.

- **2018 Annual Report:** Dr. Gifford submitted the 2018 Annual Report for the Committee's approval.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis, to approve the 2018 Annual Report as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

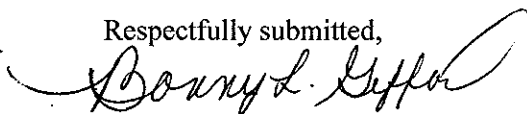
- **Superintendent's Update:** Dr. Gifford reported on the following:
 - Innovation Lab Media Event took place on Tuesday, January 22nd and thanked the following faculty for their participation: Arlyn Bottecher, Dr. Peter Bangs, Dorann Cohen, Jeff Martin, and Sam Brodsky.
 - Professional Development Strands, provided to the Committee for its information, and the associated workshops that the Elementary Teachers and Teacher Assistants will be working on during the next early release day.
- **Report of the Chair:**
 - Mr. Nunes asked the Committee for volunteers to help out on February 23rd at the Indoor Color Guard/Percussion Show to help with handing out trophies.
 - Dr. Jenkins advised the Committee that she will be teaching in Japan for the next six months and this is her last meeting until August; she stated she will try, with the help of Mr. Gallishaw, to set up teleconferencing.
 - Mrs. Amaral informed the Committee that SEPAC is holding an event on February 7th from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Potter School – Sarah Rodrigues from the Balanced Learning Center will be speaking on Youth/Adolescent Anxiety.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular session of the School Committee will take place on Monday, February 11, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in the James M. Quinn Elementary School Community Room.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to close the Regular Session at 9:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent