

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

December 21, 2020

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

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Chris Oliver at 6:30 p.m. and was held in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center; the public was not allowed to physically access the meeting. The Chair stated the meeting is streaming live on the DHS Media YouTube channel and noted the meeting is being videotaped for future broadcast over DCTV. The Chair informed viewers that comments can be emailed to the recording secretary at kathleengenthner@dartmouthschools.org to be read during Public Comment.

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Oliver stated public comments can be emailed to the recording secretary at kathleengenthner@dartmouthschools.org.

Mrs. Genthner reported two public comments were received which were forwarded to the members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Regular Session Minutes of December 7, 2020. The motion carried: 5-0.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Emergency Open Session Minutes of December 15, 2020 as written. The motion carried: 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Equality and Diversity Committee Update: Mr. Oliver opened the discussion of the appointment of two staff/faculty and two community members to the Equality and Diversity Committee.

Dr. Jenkins recommended Shelly Scott and Elizabeth Murphy be appointed the community member representatives to serve on the Equality and Diversity Committee and provided an explanation for her recommendations.

Mr. Nunes recommended Chris Pereira as a community member representative to serve on the Equality and Diversity Committee and provided an explanation for his recommendation.

Mrs. Waite agreed with Dr. Jenkins' recommendations.

Mrs. Amaral agreed with Dr. Jenkins' recommendations but agreed Mr. Nunes' recommendation would also bring value to the committee.

Mr. Oliver stated he has a lot of respect for Chris Pereira noting some of his community involvement.

Mr. Oliver stated he would like to see Chris Pereira as part of this group.

Dr. Jenkins disagreed and explained her reasons for opposing Mr. Pereira sitting on the Equality and Diversity Committee.

Mrs. Waite agreed with Dr. Jenkins.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to appoint Shelly Scott and Elizabeth Murphy as the community member appointments to the Equality and Diversity Committee. On a roll call vote the motion passed: 4-1. Mr. Oliver – Yea; Dr. Jenkins – Yea, Kathleen Amaral – Yea, Mary Waite – Yea, and John Nunes – Nay.

Mrs. Waite started the discussion on the faculty/staff appointments to the Equality and Diversity Committee.

Mrs. Waite expressed her desire for an individual from the elementary school level and recommended Kelly Bloom, who is an outreach social worker at Quinn Elementary School.

Mr. Oliver asked the Committee to consider the appointment of Diane Massari, Dartmouth Middle School guidance counselor.

Dr. Jenkins suggested that at least one staff/faculty representative should be a classroom teacher.

Mr. Nunes recommended appointing three staff/teacher representatives to the committee having elementary, middle and high school represented.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mr. Nunes to revise the make-up of the Equality and Diversity Committee by expanding the number of staff/teacher representatives from two to three. The motion carried unanimously: 5-0.

Mrs. Amaral moved, seconded by Mr. Nunes to appoint Kelly Bloom, Diane Massari and Lili Chamberlain as the staff/teacher representatives to the Equality and Diversity Committee. The motion carried unanimously: 5-0.

Discussion of Return to School Model After the Holiday Break: Dr. Gifford recommended starting the new year in a remote model for the week of January 4, 2021 and to return to the schools in the hybrid model on January 11, 2021.

Dr. Gifford clarified and iterated information provided previously that there is no evidence of COVID transmission within the schools however there are positive cases and close contact identifications that have created staffing issues.

Dr. Gifford continued stating the recommended plan will resemble how school started in the fall: special education students who are in programs will return to school in person on January 4, 2021.

Dr. Gifford stated all teachers will report to the buildings on January 4, 2021.

Dr. Gifford stated the plan is to return to the schools on January 11, 2021 in the hybrid model as per the school calendar which is posted on the district website; however, it is possible that the remote model will be extended and families should be prepared.

Dr. Gifford reported a COVID hotline will be set up and posted for parents to call and report a positive case or close contact; the District will monitor the calls and follow all necessary protocols regarding contact tracing.

Mr. Oliver asked how the hotline will work.

Dr. Gifford explained how the process will work.

Mr. Oliver stated he supports the one week of remote learning as proposed by Dr. Gifford with a maximum of two weeks if needed.

Dr. Jenkins stated she supports Dr. Gifford's plan.

Mrs. Waite asked if the Committee could meet and hear from Chris Michaud, the Town's Health Director, prior to January 11, 2021 to see where "we" are with positive cases and trends.

Mr. Oliver asked Dr. Gifford to brief the Committee - via email – on positive cases and the effect on the schools around the middle of the week of January 4th.

Mr. Nunes stated the decision is ultimately the Superintendent's but an emergency meeting could be convened if necessary.

Mrs. Amaral asked for confirmation that complex or high needs students would return in person on the 4th as they had done in September.

Dr. Gifford confirmed that that is correct.

Mrs. Amaral asked for details about contact tracing.

Dr. Gifford explained the process.

Mr. Kiely further explained the process including transportation issues.

Dr. Jenkins asked if there is any ability to hire a temporary employee to conduct contact tracing.

Mr. Kiely stated he appreciated Dr. Jenkins' comments adding the Town has hired additional staff to assist with this matter.

Mr. Oliver confirmed that Dr. Gifford would update the Committee mid-week of the week of January 4th to confirm the return to the hybrid model or the extension of the remote model.

NEW BUSINESS

Quinn PTO Financial Report: Dr. Gifford welcomed Kyle Grandfield, Quinn Principal, and Linda Hamilton, Quinn PTO President who were present via zoom technology and invited them to address the matter of the Quinn PTO Financial Report.

Mr. Grandfield directed Committee Members to the financial report from 2019-2020 and cover sheet which was provided in the meeting packet.

Mr. Grandfield explained that the PTO is not planning any fundraisers this year as the funds raised last year were not spent due to cancellations of field trips and other events brought on by the pandemic.

Ms. Hamilton reported there is \$35,000 in the PTO account mainly due to the success of last year's color run making fundraising unnecessary this year while allowing the PTO to continue to support the school.

The Committee expressed its appreciation of the PTO's good works.

Mr. Grandfield extolled the efforts and work of the PTO.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Financial Report for the Quinn PTO and the Budget for the School Year 2020-2021, as presented. The motion carried: 5-0.

Superintendent's Update: Dr. Gifford provided the following:

- Tomorrow is a professional development (PD) day; the district has engaged with an on-line PD program called *Master Teacher*.
- STAT Southcoast EMS donated 30 Christmas Stockings for needy families; Ali Cato-Galligan, DMS guidance counselor, assisted with facilitating the distribution of the donation of ten stockings to each of the three elementary schools.
- The Dartmouth Grange continued its annual donation of dictionaries to all third grade students which took place in November.
- Andrew Crisafulli was named the Massachusetts Athletic Director of the Year reflecting his dedication and commitment to interscholastic athletics.
- Ice Hockey and Basketball will run this winter; Dr. Gifford stated fans will not be allowed at these events. Dr. Gifford reported that Mr. Crisafulli is working with DCTV to have some games filmed including some JV basketball games as well as ice hockey games.
- Mr. Kiely reported that Food Service will offer food distribution the week of January 4th similar to what was done at the beginning of the school year; details are being worked out.
- Mr. Kiely reported 3500 meals were served today from the middle school; he thanked Jeanne Sheridan, Director of School Nutrition, and her staff for their hard work and commitment.
- Mr. Kiely reported the State responded this past week to the District's request for assistance (the request was made in response to the State's offer a couple of months back) with 200 air purifiers which were recently delivered noting the purifiers are free to the district and are being paid for

through CARES Act funds. Mr. Kiely thanked Rick Ferreira, Facilities Director, maintenance personnel and DMS Principal Darren Doane for their assistance with the disbursement of the machines.

-Mr. Kiely reported there are approximately 500 HEPA air purifiers in the District.

Mr. Oliver asked if every classroom has an air purifier.

Mr. Kiely responded that every classroom has an air purifier as well as most non-instructional spaces adding some purifiers are being redistributed to be placed in more appropriate areas.

Mr. Kiely stated the last air purifiers the District purchased will be paid in part by an \$18,000 grant received from Eversource.

Mr. Kiely stated the District has spent approximately \$700,000 of the Town's \$3 million in CARES Act funds for HVAC, air purifiers, and technology thanking Greg Barnes, Town Treasurer, and the Town government for its continued support.

Report of the Chair: The Chair had nothing further to report.

Mrs. Amaral reported the Town hired Deloris Joseph as its new Youth Advocate and asked that she be invited to a future meeting.

Mr. Nunes congratulated the Dartmouth High School Theater Company for its successful radio show *It's A Wonderful Life*."

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The next regular session of the School Committee will take place at the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center on Monday, January 11, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.; the public will not be granted physical access to this meeting but will continue to have access to meetings via live stream at the DHS Media YouTube channel <https://youtube.com/dhstvmedia>.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to adjourn from Open Session at 7:52 p.m. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent