

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

July 6, 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 4:00 p.m. and was held remotely via Zoom Technology. The Chair stated the meeting is streaming live on the DHS Media YouTube channel and noted the meeting was being videotaped for future broadcast over DCTV. The Chair advised 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, and Mr. Nunes. Mrs. Waite and Mrs. Amaral were not present.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins to approve the Regular Session Minutes of June 22, 2020, as written. On a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0: Mr. Oliver – Yea; Dr. Jenkins – Yea; John Nunes – Yea.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins to approve the Executive Session Minutes of June 22, 2020, 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 completed. On a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0: Mr. Oliver – Yea; Dr. Jenkins – Yea; John Nunes – Yea.

OLD BUSINESS

Superintendent's Update on Matters Affected by COVID-19: Dr. Gifford provided updates relating to matters affected by COVID-19.

- Central Administration has been meeting often to go through the Commissioner's Guidelines as they are released.
- Districts must submit 3 back to school plans by August 31st: full return, hybrid, full remote.
- District must submit a plan for Special Education teaching/learning.

- Guidance includes spacing logistics and how to repurpose rooms used for specific functions (i.e. cafeteria, etc.)
- Guidance is recommending 6 foot distancing but the minimum is 3 feet of distancing between desks.
- District Leadership Team (DLT) has been provided the Commissioner's Guidelines.
- Staff/Parent Survey was released today with a response deadline of Friday, July 3rd.

Mr. Oliver asked Committee members if they had any questions.

Mr. Nunes asked for clarification of distancing.

Dr. Gifford responded her understanding is edge of desk to edge of desk: at this time, we are looking at 12 to 14 students per classroom based on the current guidance.

Mr. Oliver added that he is not comfortable with desks being 3 feet apart.

Dr. Jenkins commented that she shares Mr. Oliver's concerns but not returning to school is going to be "devastating" for some many kids.

Mr. Kiely described what he has been doing as it concerns assessing classroom capacity indicating that he completed his initial observation last Thursday in preparation for the DLT meeting; Thursday evening the Commissioner issued new guidelines encouraging a physical distance of 3 feet when feasible while 3 feet is the minimum distance allowed.

Mr. Kiely continued explaining the possible use of non-traditional spaces to be used for educational purposes.

Mr. Kiely reported a less than 15 student capacity in most classrooms; at a 6 foot range the maximum would be approximately 10 students in a classroom on average.

Mr. Kiely reported that some classrooms have tables and not desks; this creates a problem since the guideline is that all students should face in the same direction.

Mr. Oliver asked about what the current guidance is on transportation.

Mr. Kiely responded we are waiting for more guidance; what is currently understood students would sit one to a seat on the bus diagonally across from each other for a capacity of approximately 12 students per bus.

Mr. Oliver asked if the transportation vendor is paid "by the bus by the day" or by the "run."

Mr. Kiely responded "by the bus by the day" however in the bid it illustrates what "we" are asking the vendor to do and a variation on what we asked could require some negotiations or possibly a new bid.

Mrs. Waite joined the meeting at 4:21 p.m.

Mr. Oliver interjected to welcome newly elected school committee member Mary Waite to the meeting and the Committee.

Dr. Jenkins asked Mr. Kiely if he has been in touch with the Town side about the increased costs that the district will likely realize.

Mr. Kiely replied that the Town recognizes that what the District has to do will come at a cost.

Mr. Kiely added that we are not looking at costs so much as what would be best for students.

Dr. Gifford stated we are waiting on guidance regarding transportation, special education and cleaning facilities.

Dr. Gifford asked Andrew Crisafulli, Athletic Director, to join the meeting to provide an update on the athletic program.

Mr. Crisafulli reported that he has met twice with the fall sports staff to discuss scenarios for opening the 2020-2021 fall sports season: a normal start - August 21st for football and August 24th for the rest of fall sports; a delayed start for some sports; staggered starts or the cancellation of the season.

Mr. Crisafulli stated the Governor's sports guidance for Phase III classified sports into different risk categories. Contact sports were placed in a high risk category including football and soccer as well as ice hockey and basketball.

Mr. Crisafulli stated once the State issues its guidelines we will make our decisions based on what is best for us locally.

Mr. Crisafulli did note transportation will be a major challenge.

Mr. Crisafulli reported that we are putting together a strength and conditioning program under the direction of Andrew Medeiros, the high school's strength and conditioning coach along with three coaching staff.

Mr. Crisafulli stressed all current health restrictions will be followed and there would be a maximum as to the number of participants for the each of the 3 one hour sessions which will be offered and held outside at the high school.

Mr. Nunes asked if all student athletes would be "dressing" for away games.

Mr. Crisafulli responded that that is one way to address the transportation issue but each district will have to make the best decision for its district.

Dr. Jenkins asked if "flipping" seasons is a possibility.

Mr. Crisafulli explained why Massachusetts will not be flipping seasons.

The Committee thanked Mr. Crisafulli for his report.

Mr. Oliver asked Dr. Gifford if it would be beneficial to have a Committee member sit in, as an observer, on the bi-weekly meetings with the DLT as a way for the Committee to become better

informed on the decision making process as members will likely receive questions/comments from parents when the decision on how school will resume in September is made.

Dr. Gifford stated a meeting will be held next week with the DLT and that she will keep the Committee apprised of meeting dates and times.

Dr. Jenkins asked Ms. Roy if there has been an increase in homeschooling.

Ms. Roy stated there have been a few requests.

School Committee Assignments: Mr. Oliver explained to Mrs. Waite the sub-committees which members were assigned to in May.

Dr. Jenkins stated she would resign from the Dartmouth Education Foundation sub-committee for Mrs. Waite as she is familiar with that group.

Mrs. Genthner reminded the Committee that Dr. Jenkins would step down from the SC Policy sub-committee for the new member.

Mrs. Waite accepted her appointment to the Dartmouth Education Foundation and SC Policy sub-committees.

NEW BUSINESS

Recommended M.A.S.C. Resolutions: Mr. Oliver read the Massachusetts School Committee Association's (M.A.S.C.) resolution regarding expenses related to COVID-19 which was provided to members in their meeting packets.

RESOLUTION: COVID-19 STATE FUNDING

WHEREAS, if schools are to re-open this fall in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the responsibility of each school district to do so safely and responsibly; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that each school district is able to pay for the enormous additional staffing, transportation and material expenses required to do this; and

WHEREAS, the state cannot expect mandatory COVID-19 safety guidelines to be followed without also ensuring that each school district has the funds required to implement these guidelines; therefore, let it be

RESOLVED: that the state must guarantee every school district full reimbursement for whatever COVID-19 expenses are required to follow state mandates.

We must ensure a statewide school re-opening that is safe, responsible and equitable.

THERE CAN BE NO UNFUNDED MANDATES FOR COVID-19.

Mr. Oliver explained that the M.A.S.C. sent the resolution to all member districts for consideration and to forward their support to State Legislators.

Mr. Oliver stated his support to endorse this resolution and put the matter to the Committee for a vote.

Mr. Oliver confirmed that Mrs. Waite is not able to vote as she has yet to be officially sworn in.

Mr. Nunes asked if “we” or the Town has applied for any COVID funding.

Mr. Kiely responded that both have some funding.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins to approve the resolution. On a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0-1: Mr. Oliver – Yea; Dr. Jenkins – Yea; Mr. Nunes – Yea; Mrs. Waite – abstained.

Dr. Jenkins asked if the second resolution regarding anti-racism could be postponed until the next meeting so all members would be able to vote.

Dr. Jenkins suggested the administration provide a presentation highlighting some of the ways the District is teaching about race and diversity.

Dr. Gifford stated the administration will prepare something.

Town Charter Review Appointments: Mr. Oliver referred to a memorandum issued by Shawn MacInnes, Town Administrator, to the Chairs of Town Boards and/or Committees which have appointing authority to the Town Charter Review Committee; noting the School Committee can appoint 2 members to the Review Committee.

Mr. Oliver solicited volunteers from the Committee to sit on the Review Committee.

Mrs. Waite volunteered to sit on the Review Committee.

Mrs. Amaral joined the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Dr. Jenkins asked for clarification: do school committee appointees have to be school committee members.

Mr. Oliver noted that the School Committee appointees do not need to be School Committee members.

Dr. Jenkins suggested soliciting teachers and/or administrators to see if they would be interested in being on the Review Committee.

Mr. Oliver asked if Review Committee members must be Dartmouth residents.

Mr. Nunes stated he believed so but asked the Chair to confirm.

Mr. Oliver asked that the matter be put on the agenda for the Committee’s next meeting.

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

- Extended School Year program began today and will run through July 31st; 64 students are participating virtually.
- Marc Hayes was appointed to the Assistant Principal position at the middle school (DMS) to replace Sarah Decas who was appointed to the Associate Principal position.

Report of the Chair: Mr. Oliver thanked the Committee, Central Administration and the District Leadership Team for their work planning the safest school opening for students.

Mr. Nunes asked if there will be a warrant between now and July 15th.

Mr. Kiely stated there may be one more before July 13th; an email will be sent.

Other Matters that May Not have been anticipated at the time of the Agenda posting.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The next regular session of the School Committee will be Monday, July 20, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom Technology.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mr. Nunes to adjourn from Open Session at 5:23 p.m. On a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0-2: Mr. Oliver – Yea; Dr. Jenkins – Yea; Mr. Nunes – Yea; Mrs. Waite – abstained, and Mrs. Amaral – abstained.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent