

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

November 9, 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 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, Mrs. Amaral, Mrs. Waite and Mr. Nunes. Dr. Jenkins was not present.

Also present: Dr. Gifford, Ms. Roy, 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 no public comment emails were received concerning tonight's agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Regular Session Minutes of October 19, 2020. The motion carried unanimously: 4-0.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Executive Session Minutes of October 19, 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. The motion carried unanimously: 4-0.

PRESENTATION

- **DMS School Improvement Plan for 2020-2021**

Dr. Gifford introduced the Dartmouth Middle School (DMS) Administrative Team who presented (via Zoom technology) the DMS 2020-2021 School Improvement Plan (SIP): Darren Doane, Principal; Sarah Decas, Associate Principal, Peter Rossi, Assistant Principal and Marc Hayes, Assistant Principal.

Mr. Doane shared the presentation slide wherein the three 3 components of the DMS SIP were listed: Teaching and Learning, Access and Equity and Community Engagement.

The Committee requested that the DMS administration provide an update as to how the school is functioning under the hybrid model.

Mr. Doane invited Mr. Rossi to address the Committee on the matter.

Mr. Rossi provided the Committee with an update with respect to the successes and challenges under the hybrid model of teaching and learning as well as efforts made to create a clean and safe environment in the school.

Mr. Rossi explained some of the logistical changes put in place to support the school's adherence to health guidelines and requirements.

Mr. Rossi added students, staff and parents have adapted very well noting students have been outstanding in adhering to the mask and other requirements that have been put in place.

Mr. Nunes asked how students who are out of school under a quarantine order are being educated.

Mr. Doane responded it is one of the challenges the school faces but through a variety of technology and with the assistance of teachers, guidance and other instructional staff students are contacted daily.

Mrs. Waite asked if teachers feel like they are "staying on track" as it concerns content coverage.

Mrs. Decas responded that "we" are less than a week off where "we" would normally be adding teachers have commented on their appreciation for the ten days of professional development.

Mr. Oliver made comments on how important it is for families to make every effort to follow health and safety guidelines.

Mr. Doane responded that DMS informs parents frequently about safety precautions adding parents have been very supportive.

Mrs. Decas provided an overview of the *Teaching and Learning* components of the DMS SIP noting the key points on the presentation slide which were taken from the SIP provided in the meeting packet.

Teaching and Learning

- Monitoring and updating scope and sequence for all content areas.
- The use of data to identify students' academic and social-emotional needs and match with targeted interventions and enrichments.

Mrs. Decas added the DMS SIP supports the District's initiative relating to coherence and effectiveness of curriculum.

Mrs. Decas stated scope and sequence, as it pertains to content, is used as a guide during curriculum planning time noting the school continues to monitor and update it.

Mrs. Decas commented DMS is on target and feels confident that “we” can “hit” all of the standards by the end of the school year.

Mrs. Decas reported on some specific curriculum advancements/inclusions including the new geography standard that has been adopted by grade six.

Mrs. Decas reported on how the use of data ensures the academic and social-emotional needs of students are met with targeted interventions and enrichments which support the District initiative of using student growth data and assessment.

Mrs. Decas described changes made this year to the Check-in/Check-out Mentoring program to make sure students at home who may be struggling connect with their mentors.

Mrs. Decas addressed the *Access and Equity* component of the DMS SIP.

Access and Equity

- Partial inclusion classes for each grade in ELA and math.
- Provide more technology to increase opportunities for blended learning (and remote learning.)

Mrs. Decas commented that, as it concerns blended and remote learning, Google Classroom and Go Guardian have been essential in the current learning environment

Mrs. Decas reported that eighth graders are now in their third year of one-to-one technology adding seventh graders now have one-to-one technology and the “carts” are being utilized by sixth graders.

Mrs. Decas stated “our” message this year is to be fluid and flexible; things are changing on a daily basis.

Mr. Hayes provided an overview of the *Community Engagement* component of the DMS SIP.

Community Engagement

- Connect instruction with the community.
- Continue to seek ways to proactively communicate and define appropriate communication.

Mr. Hayes explained how students and teachers have become more comfortable with technology which has provided for better communication and instruction.

Mr. Hayes described how staff created a virtual open house held this year for incoming sixth grade students in place of the usual Step Up Day for fifth graders.

Mr. Hayes explained how DMS held a virtual 8th grade graduation ceremony.

Mr. Hayes reported DMS has established community connections which the staff and students hope to continue to maintain with adjustments during this time: i.e. Council on Aging, Gifts to Give, etcetera.

Mr. Doane reported that DMS will implement a homework support platform; the platform will be available two days a week from 2:30 pm until 4:00 pm starting December 1st through December 18th; students will be able to connect with teachers and support staff through Google Meet. The program will continue from January 2021 through the end of the school year.

Mr. Doane concluded the presentation by praising staff, students and families for their collaboration and support during this time.

Mr. Oliver asked if students are engaged in learning.

Mrs. Decas responded affirmatively.

Mr. Oliver stated he is happy to hear about the homework support platform the middle school is implementing.

Mr. Oliver asked for an update on TECCA, the middle school's remote learning platform; and, in January, will parents who opted for the remote learning platform be given the opportunity to return to hybrid learning

Mrs. Decas stated it was a "rough start" with TECCA but its "rigor and content" have improved significantly including on-line tutoring which is available throughout the day as well as live lessons; 504 and IEP meetings have taken place and TECCA has been very supportive.

Mrs. Decas has stated enrollment has been more "fluid" than anticipated but we consider students learning through remote platforms to be Dartmouth Public School students and we will likely see some return to hybrid in January.

Mrs. Decas explained that guidance counselors reach out to remote learners daily and a DPS special education teacher and teacher assistant work with all students who have IEPs through Google Meet.

Mr. Oliver asked how assessments are being made for students with IEPs.

Mrs. Decas responded DPS special education teachers will modify assessments for those students and we will utilize DPS assessments for final grading.

Mrs. Amaral asked that "we" make sure we continue as a district to socially engage with students while "physically distancing."

Mrs. Waite agreed with Mrs. Amaral's comments.

Dr. Gifford expressed her appreciation for the reflective and collaborative nature of the middle school administration.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Dartmouth Middle School's School Improvement Plan for 2020-2021, as presented. The motion carried unanimously: 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

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

- The Cushman PTO donated a new school sign which has been installed.
- Cushman's Fire and Safety Virtual Presentations are ongoing.
- Quinn held a mock election: chocolate won over chewy candy.
- Potter held a socially distanced Halloween Dance Party.
- DeMello holding student of the month assemblies.
- Literacy Committee has launched a book mark contest.
- Athletics and Music are wrapping up its fall seasons.
- Over 400 students participated in fall sports and we will enter playoffs next week; volleyball finished another season undefeated.
- Three Music ensembles placed first in their divisions in recent competitions.
- DHS shifted to synchronous learning today where at students on an "at home" day must "google meet" with their teachers for instruction.
- Staffing is going pretty well and principals are doing a fantastic job finding coverage.
- The District will utilize remote learning on days there is inclement (snow) weather unless there is a significant power outage.
- DHS and the Edgenuity platform.
- Update to DPS website that provides COVID statistics within the district which will be updated every Friday.
- Michelle Roy will be retiring on December 11 2020.
- Monday meetings with the Town's Board of Health Director continue and Mr. Gallishaw is creating a shared drive to share information.

Report of the Chair: The Chair asked if the google meets at the high school are mandatory.

Dr. Gifford responded that they are mandatory not optional; attendance is taken.

Dr. Gifford clarified that students who are on an "in school day" they must physically attend school; Dr. Gifford added that if a student does not feel well they should not come to school.

Mr. Oliver expressed his concerns as we approach the Thanksgiving Holiday season asking for parents, staff, and students to continue to follow the guidelines so that we can keep schools open.

Mr. Nunes thanked Town Meeting for passing the School District's request for HVAC funding.

Mr. Nunes reported on the recent music events stating three first places were picked up over the past weekend and thanked DCTV for videotaping the groups.

Dr. Gifford commented that the MIAA has not determined what sports will be running this winter.

Mrs. Amaral asked if the student representative report could return to the agenda including a report of students learning virtually through Edgenuity.

Mr. Oliver asked for a status on transportation.

Mr. Kiely stated it is going well for the most part; there is no capacity issue at the moment as many parents are transporting their children to school.

Mr. Kiely reported buses are cleaned in between runs and disinfected twice daily; students should dress in layers as we will keep windows open for as long as possible.

Mr. Nunes asked if the training session will take place Monday, November 16th.

Dr. Gifford responded yes.

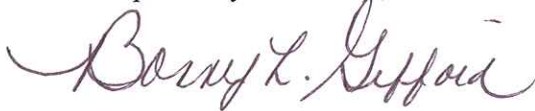
Other Matters that May Not have been anticipated at the time of the Agenda posting.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The next regular session of the School Committee will take place at the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center on Monday, November 23, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.; the public will not be granted physical access to this meeting but will have continued access to meetings via live stream at the DHS Media YouTube channel <https://youtube.com/dhstvmedia>.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:26 p.m. in order to provide an update with respect to collective bargaining with union personnel and not to return in to Open Session. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent