

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

April 27, 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 Kathleen Amaral at 6:30 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 or during the Public Hearing on the proposed FY21 Budget.

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

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

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Gifford introduced Ian Flint the recently hired Director of Music. Mr. Flint will be replacing William Kingsland who will be retiring at the end of this school year. Dr. Gifford directed the Committee to Mr. Flint's resume which was provided to them prior to the meeting.

Mr. Flint spoke briefly about his professional experience including time spent working at the Dartmouth Public Schools.

The Committee welcomed Mr. Flint and wished him well in his new position.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Oliver asked if Public Comment could be closed and reopened at a later time during the meeting.

The Committee agreed.

An email from Kathleen Simmons was received and read: "It was my understanding that Sarah Decas was replacing Carl Robidoux?"

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to approve the Executive Session Minutes of March 23, 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.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Mr. Nunes to approve the Regular Session Minutes of April 6, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to approve the Executive Session Minutes of April 6, 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.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to approve the Emergency Executive Session Minutes of April 13, 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 (4-0-1) with Mr. Oliver abstaining.

OLD BUSINESS

FY21 Budget - Vote: Mr. Kiely reiterated his recommendation not to change anything in the proposed FY21 Budget and asked the Committee to consider taking its vote at this meeting adding motions to vote on the Budget were provided to the Committee.

Mr. Kiely added the Town is planning on holding the June 2020 Town Meeting.

Mr. Oliver asked if the proposed budget included new positions.

Mr. Kiely responded it is "level service;" no new positions are included.

Mr. Nunes asked if "positions" coming in are "replacing positions."

Mr. Kiely stated the Town has enacted a non-essential budget freeze adding he notified Mr. MacInnes (Town Administrator) of essential positions that "we" will need to fill: i.e. Director of Music, Early Childhood Director, and others.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins to approve the FY21 budget appropriation for Potter School Classroom Teachers in the amount of \$1,717,739.00. The motion carried (4-0-1) with Mr. Oliver abstaining.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins to approve the FY21 budget appropriation for the total budget, excluding those items voted individually in the one previous motion, in the amount of \$43,868,996.00. The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Revisions to Student Handbook: Ms. Roy asked for a vote on revisions to the Student Handbook which include the following: the previously approved 2020-2021 school year

calendar, the new Principal at Potter and updating previously approved changes in policy language: educational stability and restraint.

Mr. Nunes asked for status on the following positions: Early Childhood Director and DMS Assistant Principal.

Dr. Gifford responded interviews for the Early Childhood Director have been conducted and that “we” are “holding off” on filling the Assistant Principal position at the middle school right now.

Mr. Oliver commented that the assistant principal position is necessary and that he “would hate to see that go.”

Dr. Gifford agreed; we are being cautious right now due to budget uncertainty.

Dr. Jenkins agreed with Mr. Oliver and Dr. Gifford particularly in how the current situation will affect next year.

Mr. Oliver agreed with Dr. Jenkins and that this Committee will most likely be looking at the reallocation of resources.

Dr. Karafotis stated it would be unfortunate not to fill Mr. Robidoux’s position.

Mr. Nunes stated once a position is cut from the budget it is difficult to get it back.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karatofis to approve the revisions to the 2020-2021 Student Handbook as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Dr. Gifford reported that the *US News and World Report* listed Dartmouth High School as one of the best high schools in the country: DHS was listed 1300 out of 24,000.

Dr. Gifford reported a consensus was reached with the DEA on educator evaluations and that process should move along.

Dr. Gifford briefed the Committee on updates to the District’s Remote Learning Plan

- With the extended school closure DESE recently released prerequisite (Grade Level) Standards: i.e. what should be known to move to the next grade level.
- The District has created a template for all grade levels - which includes teaching new content and not just enrichment – to identify what Standards have been taught and what Standards will be addressed going forward.
- Collaborating with all schools to come to an agreement how to roll out the format of new “live” Instruction: DESE recommendations are being looked at.

Dr. Gifford provided an Update on DHS:

- Working on increasing student participation in remote learning
- Students have been made aware of as far as grades (only terms 1 and 2 grades will be counted towards a student’s GPA); notification to submit make-up work must be made by May 1st.
- Parameters are being set for students on the new learning/content; they must complete 2/3rd

or 65% of this work which would provide them with a “Pass” on their transcript however not affecting their grade or GPA.

-If students do not participate they will see a “Fail” mark on the transcript for the 4th term.

-Meetings are being held with lead teachers, school administrators and the union to come to an agreement on learning and assessment.

-Dr. Gifford referred to documents provided to the Committee on “end of year” activities and reported that the DHS administration is working hard with teachers and students to come to a final decision on these activities particularly graduation.

Dr. Karafotis asked about the issue of “equity.”

Dr. Gifford acknowledged that this is a concern but reported that the Special Education Department is addressing this matter: including implementing virtual team meetings once parameters are set and explained to the instructors and service providers.

Dr. Jenkins stated her concerns pursuant to the data provided by the administration which indicated about a third of students are not regularly accessing on-line learning adding that a May 1st deadline may be premature.

Dr. Jenkins asked what is being done to reach out to this student population.

Dr. Gifford stated the schools are contacting students who are not accessing on-line learning.

Dr. Jenkins suggested a quick survey be sent to parents for their feedback on senior graduation.

Mr. Oliver asked if students who have not “logged in” have had any contact with their school or teachers.

Dr. Gifford responded that the data is from the devices; there are very few cases in the elementary level and Principals have reached out to the parents.

Mr. Oliver asked if preschool tuition is being charged.

Dr. Gifford stated that the decision was made today to not charge preschool tuition at this time.

Jonathan Gallishaw, Chief Technology Officer for the Department Public Schools, joined the meeting to provide an explanation of how the data which was provided to the Committee was captured and what it represents as far as student on-line accessing.

Mr. Oliver asked if the District is providing “paper packets” to parents.

Dr. Gifford responded there have been a few cases where packets have been provided but not as a rule.

Dr. Gifford reported there has been 3000 “log-ins” to the on-line enrichment page.

Dr. Gifford made a clarification regarding Dr. Jenkins concern about the May 1st deadline for high school students stating it is a deadline to request extra time to submit work; it is not the deadline to submit the work.

Mr. Nunes asked how “we” are handling students who have left materials in their lockers with school closure.

Dr. Gifford responded that students don’t need “other” things from their lockers to access or participate in remote learning.

Mr. Oliver asked what the “harm” would there be to have building principals host a “webinar” for parents to explain the expectations being placed on students and families in light of new guidelines from DESE as it concerns remote learning as well as acting as a resource to parents.

Dr. Gifford invited Mr. Gallishaw to introduce the individual building Instructional Technology Specialists (Specialists.)

Mr. Gallishaw introduced the following instructional technologists specialists who explained the google classroom which is being used by teachers during this time: Elementary Level - Trisha Leary (Quinn School); Sandra Chicca (Potter School); Liz Voci (DeMello and Cushman Schools); Middle and High School Levels – Temple Mitchell (DMS) and Jennifer Thomas (DHS).

The Specialists provided information about the use of google classroom by teachers, students and families; a google classroom page was opened and shared with the Committee as well as live streamed.

Report of the Chair:

-The Chair asked the Committee its thoughts about putting the Re-Organizing of the Committee on the next meeting’s agenda.

The Committee agreed to put the matter on the next meeting’s agenda.

-Mr. Nunes reported that members of Dartmouth School Music Association (DSMA) have volunteered their time to sew over 3000 masks with donated materials that are going to First Responders.

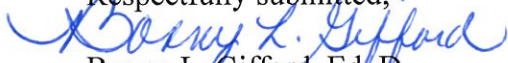
Other Matters that May Not have been anticipated at the time of the Agenda posting.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The next regular session of the School Committee will take place on Monday, May 18, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:14 p.m. in order to provide an update with respect to collective bargaining with union personnel and not to return to Open Session. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,


Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent