

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

February 10, 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. in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center. It was noted that the meeting was being videotaped for future broadcast over DCTV, which is aired on the DHS YouTube channel. Additionally, Mrs. Amaral announced that the meeting was live streaming on the DHS Media YouTube channel and will continue in this format for future meetings.

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

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

Visitors present: Mrs. Oliveira, Mr. Gallishaw, Mr. Thibault, Ms. Chavier, Mr. Martin, Mr. Grandfield, Mrs. Thomas, Ms. Correia, Mrs. McHenry, Mrs. Brooks, Mr. Porter and members of the community.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment was offered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Mr. Nunes to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 27, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 27, 2020, as written, with the stipulation that they be held until such time as the matter or matters for which the sessions were held have been completed. The motion carried unanimously.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Student Representative Brendan Rego provided an update of recent activities and events happening at the high school.

-DHS Scholastic Art Winners: Silver Key Award winners included Claudia Castro (Photography), Piper

Harrison (Photography) and Kenzie Waskiewicz (Ceramics). Honorable Mention recognition went to

Jonathan Daermann (Photography), Nate Jacquart (Photography), Kathryn Reno (Painting) and Kenzie

Waskiewicz (Portfolio and Drawing/Illustration).

-Last week during the P.A.S.E. period the Business and Computer Science Department as well as the

Unified Arts Department met with each grade at DHS to preview course offerings for next year; after

vacation all students in grades 9 through 11 will be making their course requests for the next school year.

-Last Friday members of the Principal's Advisory Council met to discuss the seven plus P.A.S.E. schedule; all students and faculty will be surveyed in the coming weeks.

-Friday February 14th at 2:00 p.m. members of DHS National Honor Society will host its annual Valentine's Day Dance at the Dartmouth Council on Aging.

-Congratulations to the boys and girls basketball teams as well as to the hockey team for qualifying for post-season play.

-Yesterday, the DHS hockey team defeated Bourne HS at the Dunkin Donuts Center in Providence.

-February 22nd the DSMA will be holding its Indoor Percussion Home Show.

-March 1st from 8:30 am until 12:45 pm the DHS Dance club lead by Ms. Kelly will host a dance convention fundraiser which is open to dancers ages seven and older. The entry fee is \$50.00 per dancer and all those interested should contact Ms. Kelly.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- DHS Music Department requests permission for students to participate the All State Music Festival and a performance at Symphony Hall in Boston, MA from March 5th through March 7, 2020.
- DHS Youth and Government Club Advisor requests permission for students to attend the annual Model Government Conference held in Boston MA from March 18th through March 20, 2020.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver, to approve the above-named requests as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

Spotlight on Kids – Joseph DeMello Elementary School

Principal Catherine Pavao and Assistant Principal Elizabeth Correia presented the DeMello School *Spotlight on Kids* highlighting the school's writers.

Mrs. Pavao invited the following students up to the podium: Juniper Pogash (Gr 1), Bennett Kertscher (Gr 2), Nora Kelly (Gr 3), Lucas Sousa (Gr 4) and Ella Moe (Gr 5).

Mrs. Pavao thanked Elizabeth Voci, DeMello School Instructional Technology Specialist, who put together the video; *We are Writers*, that was shown as part of the presentation.

Mrs. Pavao explained the writing process that is taught at DeMello School and directed the Committee to the information provided to them in their packets which contains samples of students' work.

Mrs. Correia introduced the segment in the video where tonight's participating students were pre-recorded reading a sample of their personal narrative writing.

Dr. Karafotis commented that she is pleased to see the school continues to utilize the work of Lucy Calkins and to see it in the progression of students' writing from grade 1 through grade 5.

FY21 Budget

Dr. Gifford and Mr. Kiely provided a PowerPoint presentation of the proposed FY21 Budget highlighting the continued efforts to maintain Dartmouth's academic excellence through its course offerings to students, its professional development offerings to staff and by obtaining grants to advance these efforts.

Dr. Gifford announced that the process to review and revise, as necessary, the District's Strategic Plan with Principals/Directors is scheduled for March 10th: principals will be inviting building staff to join the process.

Dr. Gifford noted that a survey will be sent to parents in the next week or so to provide feedback on how "we" are working in the schools and where they might like to see changes or enhancements to what we are doing.

Mr. Kiely stated the School Department is proposing a budget of \$45,586,736 for FY21.

Mr. Kiely explained how the proposed budget breaks down: 75% to Instruction (including instructional salaries, special education services, etc.); 11% to Other Services (including transportation, athletics, etc.); 8% to Maintenance & Utilities (including custodial personnel); 2% to Administration (including administrator salaries, legal services, etc.); 4% to Tuition (including outside placement tuition).

Mr. Kiely continued by explaining the reasons for the budget breakdown and reported the total budget increase comes to 3.2% or \$1,416,557 over FY20.

Mr. Kiely commented this budget represents a "level service" budget; we are trying to maintain "all the good things" the district currently provides as best we can.

Mr. Kiely presented the budget recommendations; add one full time technology technician and reduce 2 teacher assistant positions, and noted the budget requests that could not be funded.

Mr. Kiely summarized by stating the administration is working with the Town and that “we” are above where the Town thinks “we” should be but this is a bit of a “moving target.”

Mr. Kiely directed the Committee members to the budget binders provided to them for more detailed information: the Public Hearing on the budget will be held on March 23rd.

Mr. Oliver asked when we could expect to receive a final number from the Town.

Mr. Kiely stated he does not know when a final number will be provided by the Town but did state that the Town expects to have the health insurance percentage increase finalized tomorrow.

Mr. Oliver asked Mr. Kiely to confirm the District and the Town are currently “hundreds of thousands of dollars apart.”

Mr. Kiely responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Oliver stated his concern that only so much can be “made up” by reducing supplies, etcetera and that it may come to positions.

Mr. Oliver commented he does not believe the current financial situation is “sustainable” for the school district.

Dr. Jenkins asked what the new growth is for the Town.

Mr. Kiely stated it is minimal.

Dr. Jenkins asked for information clarifying some of the budget line items.

Mr. Nunes offered comments about Dartmouth’s per pupil spending and about the way the Town prioritizes its budget.

Dr. Karafotis stated she is discouraged at the continued resistance to providing more funding to the school department.

Mr. Oliver commented that we need to “go for” an override.

Dr. Jenkins asked if the Full Year Kindergarten Stabilization Fund exists and should any funds be moved in to capital.

Mr. Nunes stated that it would take a request from this Committee to move the funds.

Mr. Kiely stated it would require a Town Meeting vote.

Mr. Kiely stated he could provide language regarding the formation of the Stabilization Fund at the next committee meeting for clarification.

Mrs. Amaral stated the Public Hearing on the proposed FY21 Budget will be held on March 23, 2020.

Mr. Kiely stated he assumes he will have a revised estimate for the Committee's review particularly with the health insurance numbers "coming out."

OLD BUSINESS

Superintendent's Evaluation: Mrs. Amaral stated that she and Mr. Nunes met with Dr. Gifford to go over the indicators to be included in the Superintendent Evaluation.

Dr. Gifford explained the specifics of the discussion citing which indicators were selected that would best support the accomplishment or progress toward achieving the four goals which were approved by the Committee previously.

Dr. Gifford reminded the Committee that DESE recommended choosing 6 to 8 indicators: Dr. Gifford directed the Committee to the evaluation information provided to them in the meeting packet and continued by highlighting the indicators that were chosen by Mrs. Amaral, Mr. Nunes and herself describing what standard each indicator supported.

Dr. Gifford stated that a vote was not necessary but a consensus agreeing to the addition of the indicators to the evaluation rubric.

Mrs. Amaral commented that the process is collaborative and invited Committee members to add indicators they feel would further support the evaluation process.

The Committee agreed with adding the indicators to the superintendent evaluation rubric as presented by Dr. Gifford and did not recommend additional indicators.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed Revisions of School Committee Policies (First Reading): Ms. Roy presented the following proposed policy revisions for the Committee's consideration.

- **School Committee Policy – JB – Equal Educational Opportunities (First Reading)**

Ms. Roy reported it was recommended to include the language *foster care* after homeless as noted in the proposed revised policy provided in the Committee packets.

- **School Committee Policy – JFABD – Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services (First Reading)**

Ms. Roy reported it was recommended to include the language *extracurricular activities* in the first paragraph and language in the second to the last paragraph as noted in the proposed revised policy provided in the Committee packets.

- **School Committee Policy – JFABF – Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care (PreK-12) (First Reading)**

Ms. Roy reported it was recommended to include the language *pre-school* to the title of the policy and in the first paragraph as noted in the proposed revised policy provided in the Committee packets.

Ms. Roy concluded that these policies are presented this evening for a first reading and that she would be seeking a second reading and vote of the Committee at its next meeting.

Mr. Nunes asked if homeless students receiving transportation are “McKinney-Vento.”

Ms. Roy responded yes and added that the State made a change to the McKinney-Vento Act by no longer considering children awaiting foster care as homeless and they have been “separated out.”

Mr. Nunes asked Mr. Kiely if the State was fully funding McKinney-Vento.

Mr. Kiely responded it is not.

Mr. Oliver asked for the district’s McKinney-Vento enrollment.

Ms. Roy responded there are 2 students who live in district and who attend Dartmouth Public Schools and 16 that we “cost share.”

Stabilization Fund Discussion and Vote: Mr. Kiely asked the Committee to consider voting to request that an article to create a stabilization fund that would fund future collective bargaining settlements be placed on the warrant for Town Meeting.

Mr. Kiely stated that if we do not settle the contracts prior to June 30th the funds would be returned to the Town which would require going to Town meeting and request funding once the contracts are settled and “that seems risky to me.”

Mr. Kiely continued stating funds would be deposited in a stabilization account to reserve the funds the school department already has in its budget for collective bargaining.

Mr. Kiely added that if a settlement is reached prior to the June Town Meeting the article can be withdrawn or if it is voted at Town meeting but we settle before June 30th no funds would be deposited in to this account.

Mr. Kiely added that a decision on this must be made tonight because the next school committee meeting on March 9th will be too late for this matter to go on the warrant in order to be considered at Town Meeting.

Mr. Kiely noted that the Town has its own stabilization fund for a similar purpose but it is specific to the Town side of government; the school department could deposit its funds in to this account.

Mr. Oliver asked if the Committee would be voting tonight to send this to the Select Board to be placed on the warrant.

Mr. Kiely replied yes and added that if the Committee voted to request an article be placed on the warrant “my” next step would be to speak with the Town Administration tomorrow to let them know and to work with them to craft language to be brought before the Select Board and then hopefully to be placed on the warrant for Town Meeting.

Dr. Jenkins asked what the mechanism is to withdraw funds from the stabilization fund account.

Mr. Kiely stated it would require a vote at Town Meeting.

Dr. Jenkins asked if “we” could set up a reserve fund like the Finance Committee has done.

Mr. Kiely stated there is no legal mechanism by which “we” could do that.

Mr. Kiely stated that a stabilization fund is the only means he can think of to maintain control of these funds beyond June 30th and why he believes it is worthy of consideration.

Mr. Nunes agreed with Mr. Kiely but would like the funds deposited in to a separate account and not the Town’s.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis that the School Committee requests that the Board of Selectman set up and place on the June Special Town Meeting warrant an article to set up a stabilization fund for the School Committee in an amount up to \$620,000.00 for the purpose of unsettled collective bargaining agreements. The motion carried with Mr. Oliver abstaining.

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

- Thanked the bus drivers and maintenance department for their efforts Friday during the windy weather and getting students home safely and without much delay.
- DPS FaceBook page continues to recognize students for their accomplishments.
- Mrs. Oliveira and I have started doing a podcast with the help of Mr. Perrotti and posted our first one on the DHS YouTube channel; we have invited folks to provide ideas and a name for the podcast. We hope to do a couple each month.
- Pre-K applications are available and kindergarten registrations are open.
- The District was recently awarded the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) grant which will support our computer science pathway at DHS which will involve some professional development.
- Camp Invention registration is open.
- The process to hire a new Director of Music has gotten underway and Ms. Roy is leading the search committee and we will be doing the same for the Early Education Director which will be posted shortly.
- Students have signed up for the “Superintendent Chat” which will take place during the P.A.S.E. period.

Report of the Chair: Mrs. Amaral reported the following:

- The Chair asked the Committee for discussion around forwarding a letter to the Select Board in requesting that Committee’s support for an override as it concerns health insurance.

Mr. Nunes was in support of forwarding a letter.

Dr. Jenkins stated her support for the letter but that we need to consider the long term.

Mr. Oliver stated his support of forwarding a letter and agreed with Dr. Jenkins’ comments.

Dr. Karafotis stated her support for the letter and asked if there were any other options.

Mr. Kiely stated the only thing would be a shifting of the Town's priorities in terms of expenditure.

Mrs. Amaral commented that she does support

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to pass a resolution to request that the Select Board at its next meeting take up the issue of and support a request for an override so the Town can increase its contribution to health care for school and Town employees. The motion passed unanimously.

The letter should be provided to the Select Board as soon as possible.

-Good Luck to DECA competition participants who will be participating at States at the end of the month.

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

Dr. Gifford informed the Committee that Richard Porter, Assistant Principal for the George H. Potter Elementary School, has been appointed to replace Heidi Silva-Brooks who is retiring from her position as Principal of the Potter School on June 30, 2020. Mr. Porter's position change will be effective July 1, 2020.

Dr. Gifford informed the Committee that Melissa McHenry, Early Education Director for Dartmouth Schools, has been appointed to replace Mr. Porter as Assistant Principal of the George H. Potter Elementary School effective July 1, 2020.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The next regular session of the School Committee will take place on Monday, March 9, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:25 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