

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

August 23, 2021

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

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Shannon Jenkins at 5:00 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 Dartmouth Community Media YouTube channel and noted the meeting is being videotaped for future broadcast over DCTV. The Chair informed viewers that public comments can be emailed to the recording secretary at kathleengenthner@dartmouthschools.org to be read during Public Comment.

On a roll call the following members were present: Dr. Jenkins, Mrs. Waite, Mrs. Amaral and Mr. Nunes. Mr. Oliver was not in attendance.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Dr. Jenkins confirmed and acknowledged the public comments that were received and provided to the Committee for its consideration.

No further comments were received.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Regular Session Minutes of July 26, 2021. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

Mrs. Amaral moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Regular Session Minutes of August 10, 2021. The motion passed: 3-0. Mr. Nunes abstained.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on the Return to School: Including Masks and the Test and Stay Program: Dr. Gifford reminded the Committee that the district is maintaining its mask protocol for staff and students in the school buildings.

Dr. Gifford shared information regarding masks from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); specifically, the Commissioner is looking for authorization from the Board to mandate masks for K-12 schools: masks are required until October 1st at this time.

Dr. Gifford stated sanitizing protocols will remain in place and that there will be no social distancing required but the schools will try to maintain 3ft of distance at lunch.

Dr. Gifford stated masks are required on school buses.

Dr. Gifford reported that the district submitted its letter of interest for the testing programs being offered through DESE in partnership with the CIC Health organization and it has been accepted.

Dr. Gifford stated she has spoken with Chris Michaud, the town's Director of Public Health, and school district nurses regarding the testing program.

Dr. Gifford explained, generally, the kinds of testing the district is looking to conduct in the schools; Dr. Gifford noted the district is not "set on" pool testing at this point.

Dr. Gifford commented the point of testing is to eliminate unnecessary quarantining allowing students and staff to remain in the schools.

Dr. Gifford stated parents will have to give permission for their child to be tested.

Mr. Kiely reminded people that air purifiers are in all classrooms and most "adult" spaces; there are 521 deployed throughout the district.

Mr. Kiely reported the schools will continue to be supported with PPE other materials as needed.

Mrs. Waite asked when parents who have "signed off" be notified that their child has been tested.

Dr. Gifford responded parents will know when the district is in a "test and stay" mode.

Mrs. Waite asked what the plan is for children who have to remain at home.

Dr. Gifford responded the schools were asked to develop strategies for students who need to remain out of school (i.e. tutoring) adding the schools will provide more information in the School Improvement Plan presentations; there will be no "remoting" into classrooms.

Dr. Gifford stated she is working with Lori Jodoin, Assistant Pupil Support Services Administrator, and the nurses to clarify the close contact response protocol.

Authorization to Release Executive Session Minutes- 2019: Dr. Gifford provided the following approved executive session minutes to the Committee in the meeting packets for their review and authorization to release: **2019** – 4/29/2019; 5/13/2019; 6/10/2019; 7/8/2019; 9/9/2019; 9/25/2019; 10/7/2019; 10/28/2019; 11/18/2019; 12/9/2019; 12/16/2019.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral, to authorize the release of the following **2019** executive session minutes: 5/13/2019; 6/10/2019; 7/8/2019; 9/9/2019; 9/25/2019; 10/7/2019; 11/18/2019; 12/16/2019. The motion carried unanimously: 4-0.

Dr. Jenkins stated those minutes not approved for release this evening will be added to the agenda of a future executive session.

Report on ESSER Grant Funds: Mr. Kiely reported that the District was recently approved for its ESSER II grant in the amount of \$1,271,000 adding that the District is preparing to apply for the ESSER III grant in the amount of \$2,945,000

Mr. Kiely stated the spreadsheet provided to the members in their meeting packet depicts how “we” are going to focus our efforts.

Mr. Kiely explained the requirements attached with the ESSER II (social and emotional) and III (learning loss) grants.

Mr. Kiely stated the “we” want to be flexible to be able to respond to the needs of students and the District so not all of ESSER III is allocated at this point.

Mr. Kiely listed some of the new staff as well as programs that are being hired and implemented as part of the District plan in spending some of the grant funds noting this was done in collaboration with the schools.

Mr. Kiely stated there are concerns because the grant funds will go away and the district will not be able to maintain all of the changes noting “we” will need to be strategic as we move through the process in order to minimize that “cliff” at the end which is not unique to our school district.

Mr. Kiely stated the ESSER III application needs to be filed in October.

Dr. Jenkins suggested we work with the Town to explore multi-year planning in order to mitigate the effects of the “cliff.”

Mrs. Amaral asked for clarification on the Special Education Teacher/Team Facilitator position.

Dr. Gifford responded.

Mrs. Waite asked about the hiring.

Dr. Gifford responded most are hired but some positions are more challenging to fill.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed School Committee Meeting Dates (October 2021 thru December 2021): Dr.

Gifford proposed the following meeting dates: October 18, 2021; November 1, 2021; November 15, 2021 and December 13, 2021.

All meeting dates were agreed upon by the members.

Mr. Nunes reminded the members that there is a workshop with MASC scheduled for September 29, 2021.

Authorization to Release Executive Session Minutes: Dr. Gifford provided the following approved executive session minutes to the Committee in the meeting packets for their review and authorization to release: **2020** – 1/13/2020; 1/27/2020; 2/10/2020; 3/9/2020; 3/23/2020; 4/6/2020; 4/13/2020; 4/27/2020; 5/11/2020; 5/18/2020; 6/8/2020; 6/22/2020; 8/3/2020; 8/10/2020; 8/18/2020; 8/24/2020; 9/1/2020; 9/14/2020; 9/21/2020; 10/19/2020; 11/9/2020; 11/23/2020.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral, to authorize the release of Executive Session Minutes for **2020** as noted in the agenda. The motion carried unanimously: 4-0.

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

- Accelerated Learning Academy has been going on: 108 students are enrolled
- Project TIME introductory meeting for new teachers happened this week
- Policy Sub-committee is meeting on September 8th to address the following 3 policies: Harassment, Naming of Facilities, and Use of Facilities (specifically the turf field)
- On September 11th at 11:00 a.m. at Memorial Field, the Dartmouth Veterans Advisory Board will be holding a memorial service for the 20th anniversary of September 11th.

Report of the Chair: The Chair opened the discussion regarding physical access to committee meetings.

Dr. Jenkins updated the Committee on the Equality and Diversity Sub-committee noting it is hoped that a meeting can be scheduled for the end of September.

Dr. Jenkins asked members for comments on opening meetings to the public.

Mr. Nunes stated he does not think meetings should be opened at this time due to current trends.

Mrs. Amaral stated she does not think it is the time to open the meeting but wished there was a better way to allow people virtual access.

Dr. Jenkins explained why she does not agree with opening the meetings to the public virtually without having more filters.

Mrs. Waite asked how the public can access emails sent to Committee members.

Dr. Jenkins asked that the use of school space by outside groups be put on the next agenda.

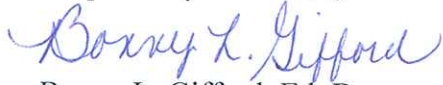
Other Matters that may not have been anticipated at the time of Agenda posting.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The next regular session of the School Committee will take place at the Dartmouth High School Media Center on Monday, September 13, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.; at this time the public will not be granted physical access to this meeting and will continue to have access to meetings via live stream at the DHS Media YouTube channel <https://youtube.com/dhstvmedia> and comments can be emailed to kathleengenthner@dartmouthschools.org.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to adjourn from Open Session at 6:04 p.m. On a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent