

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

February 14, 2022

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 6:30 p.m. in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center. 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 Channels 9 and 18.

On a roll call the following members were present: Dr. Jenkins, Mrs. Waite, Mrs. Amaral, Mr. Nunes and Mr. Oliver.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair invited anyone wishing to make a comment on an item on the meeting agenda to come forward.

Lynne Turner made comments in support of removing the mask mandate.
Pedro Castenheira made comments in support of removing the mask mandate.
Jeanne Tripp made comments in support of removing the mask mandate.
Dan Turner made comments in support of removing the mask mandate.
Adam Moreira made comments in support of removing the mask mandate.
Ken Rapoza made comments in support of removing the mask mandate.
Nicholas Pike made comments in support of removing the mask mandate.
Elizabeth Neto, a Dartmouth school teacher, made comments stating she believes masks are keeping us safe.
Stacy Martin made comments in support of removing the mask mandate.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 24, 2022 as presented. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 24, 2022, as written, with the stipulation that they be held until such time as the matter or matters are completed. The motion passed: 5-0.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Student Representative Evan Garcia, a senior at Dartmouth High School, provided an update of recent activities and events happening at the high school.

- Winter Track competed in the SEC Conference Championship last Wednesday: Boys and Girls teams took second place; senior athlete James Marden broke the school record for the 55 meters event with a time of 6.78 seconds.
- DHS is celebrating Black History month; an interactive bulletin board has been erected featuring prominent African-Americans with QR codes that can be scanned to reveal biographical information.
- DHS Multi-cultural Club will be holding P.A.S.E. event showcasing the work of African-American poets, writers and orators as well as working on weekly morning announcements focusing on the importance of Black history month.
- Students in the new AP Research course are currently collecting data for their research; classmates are encouraged to help take surveys and to participate in experiments.
- DHS will be administering course selections for the 2022-2023 school year over the next few weeks.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Gifford recommended the following requests to the Committee for its approval.

- DHS – DECA State Career Development Conference and Competition
- DHS – Indoor Percussion/Dance Team WGI East Power Regional
- DHS – Varsity Color Guard WGI East Power Regional
- DHS – Indoor Winds WGI East Power Regional
- DHS – Indoor Color Guard WGI World Championships
- DHS – Indoor Percussion/Dance Team WGI World Finals
- DHS – Indoor Winds WGI World Finals

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve all activity requests as presented. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

PRESENTATION

Spotlight on the George H. Potter Elementary School: Dr. Gifford introduced Richard Porter and Melissa McHenry, Principal and Assistant Principal, respectively, of the George H. Potter Elementary School.

Mr. Porter stated the focus of the Potter School *Spotlight on Kids* is “Paws to be a Learner” with an integrated focus on how “we” learn to be safe.

Mr. Porter added the presentation will demonstrate how today’s learning involves technology, differentiation, teaching beyond the school day, teaching kids to be safe and incorporating the arts.

Mr. Porter noted the following Potter educators were present to explain the learning taking place in the video that was produced by the school for this presentation: Dana Doucette, math

coach; Michelle Dias, special education teacher; Kristen Martinho, first grade teacher and Potter After School Program coordinator; Paul Chouinard and Carrie Gregoire, social workers; Beth Neto, visual arts instructor and a special thank you to Sandra Chicca, instructional technology specialist who produced the video.

Ms. Doucette explained the *ST Math* program used at Potter school; video clips of students using the program were shown.

Ms. Dias explained the *Sonday System* which she uses with 4th and 5th grade students: the video showed the system being implemented.

Mr. Chouinard and Ms. Gregoire explained how safety lessons are taught to students; an illustration of an A.L.I.C.E. lesson was provided in the video.

Ms. Martinho explained the S.A.I.L. program which is a free after school program to accelerate learning after school hours; the program is funded by a DESE grant.

Ms. Neto explained the visual arts program at Potter through illustrations on the presentation video.

Mrs. McHenry introduced a video tribute to the Potter school teacher assistants wherein the students thanked the assistants for all their hard work.

Mr. Porter recognized three Potter school teacher assistants who were present: Mrs. Botelho, Mrs. Morin and Mrs. Braga.

The Committee thanked Mr. Porter and Mrs. McHenry for their presentation.

FY23 Budget: Dr. Jenkins invited Mr. Kiely to present the proposed FY23 budget.

Mr. Kiely shared a PowerPoint presentation - which was provided to the Committee members in their meeting packets – and directed the Committee to the budget proposal while providing explanations of the proposed budget including strategic objectives and guiding priorities.

Mr. Kiely stated the district is proposing a budget of \$49,383,460 for FY23 and provided a brief explanation of how the monies will be appropriated to the following budget categories: instruction (which includes most salaries, instructional supplies, special education services, materials); other services (which includes transportation, attendance, health, athletics, student activities); maintenance and utilities (which includes custodial services, snow plowing; administration (which includes administrative technology – district wide, legal services); and tuitions (which includes students who cannot be served in district and are sent “out of district.”)

Mr. Kiely reported a \$2,202,857 increase or 4.7% over last year’s budget.

Mr. Kiely highlighted and explained the reasons supporting the budget recommendations regarding staffing including a full-time teaching position at Quinn; restructuring the Director of Teaching and Learning position and a full-time district wide registered behavior technician (RBT).

Mr. Kiely noted the budget requests that are not being funded.

Mr. Kiely stated that in preparing the proposal, Dr. Gifford and he thought “we” would commit some funding to support some non-funded requests outside of the operating budget; the proposal would use school choice funds for approximately \$62,000 of costs mostly to “combat” the inflationary costs of supplies.

Mr. Kiely stated “we” would look at ESSER funding to support \$75,000 of requests relating to after school programming.

Mr. Kiely concluded his presentation noting the matter of the proposed FY23 budget will be on subsequent meeting agenda for further discussion and stated the public hearing date is scheduled for March 21st.

Mr. Kiely noted there is a slight increase in funding from the State and grant funding will remain fairly stable adding more information is provided in your budget packet which was electronically sent to Committee members last week.

Dr. Jenkins asked if we received health insurance information.

Mr. Kiely stated we have not.

Mr. Oliver asked about “our” enrollment numbers.

Mr. Kiely responded our enrollment is down adding, at this point, there is no decrease in state funding.

Mr. Kiely added we have seen a gradual decrease in enrollment over the last 15 years; Mr. Kiely offered to provide more information regarding enrollment.

Mr. Oliver asked where “we” are regarding ESSER II and ESSER III funding.

Mr. Kiely responded we will not exhaust ESSER II this year adding we will be using ESSER II and III during the FY23 budget cycle and the following budget cycle; Mr. Kiely stated he can provide more information regarding ESSER II and ESSER III funding.

Mr. Oliver asked where do we stand as far as gaining or losing staff.

Mr. Kiely responded based on this proposal we would have an increase over the FY22 budget of 3.5 staff members adding there is more information in your budget packet.

Mr. Oliver stated he agrees with the restructuring of the “curriculum” position but would like to see a job description and salary range before voting on the final budget.

Dr. Gifford commented she expects internal staff members to apply for these positions which would lead to a “domino” effect making it imperative that we post the positions soon.

Mr. Oliver asked what she was thinking for a timeline as far as getting the positions posted.

Dr. Gifford responded.

Mr. Nunes commented he agrees with getting the positions posted.

Mrs. Amaral commended the addition of an RBT position and asked specific questions as to the position location.

Dr. Gifford responded.

Mrs. Amaral asked about the Student Opportunity Act (SOA).

Mr. Kiely stated we have received no funding from SOA but are obligated to report.

Mrs. Waite commented on the reduction of administrative costs as well as the continued dependency on parent organizations to fund certain school needs.

Dr. Jenkins asked if this budget eliminates the transcript fee.

Mr. Kiely stated we are prepared to eliminate the transcript fee.

Dr. Jenkins asked for a report on how we are spending the ESSER funds.

Dr. Jenkins stated her concern about the use of school choice funds; if we are going to use school choice funding for recurring expenses we should discuss developing a policy.

Dr. Gifford reminded the Committee it put in place a requirement that the district would have to come before the Committee before using more than \$10,000 of school choice funds.

OLD BUSINESS

Student Representation to the School Committee: Dr. Jenkins invited Mrs. Waite to open discussion on the matter noting that information provided by Mrs. Waite was sent to Committee members for their consideration.

Mrs. Waite reported she met with Ross Thibault, principal of Dartmouth high school, to go over setting up the Dartmouth high school Student Advisory Committee in compliance with law and explained their discussion and decisions noting the purpose is to move the ideas to policy.

Dr. Jenkins asked Dr. Gifford if the matter needs to be taken up by the policy sub-committee.

Dr. Gifford responded that would be determined by “how” the committee would want to handle the matter; procedures do not need to be made part of the policy.

Mr. Oliver asked if “we” have a policy currently.

Dr. Gifford affirmed there is a policy: SC Policy JIB - *Student Involvement in Decision-Making*.

The Committee agreed to have the current SC Policy JIB looked at by the policy sub-committee and bring any recommendations to amend the policy back to the full Committee.

SC Policy EBCFA – Face Coverings - Vote: Dr. Jenkins invited discussion on the matter of school committee policy EBFA – Face Coverings.

Dr. Jenkins noted SC Policy EBCFA reads “the policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee” adding this is the reason why it was placed on the meeting agenda.

Mr. Oliver agreed with removing the mask mandate while noting the M.A.S.C. guidance forwarded today.

Mr. Oliver asked if “podding” will continue and will cafeteria procedures remain in place or are “we” going back to normal.

Dr. Gifford responded, after meeting with elementary administrators, “podding” no longer makes sense but, for now, we are going to keep the set up of the cafeterias with desks but allow students to talk during lunch.

Mr. Kiely confirmed March 18th is the date set by the CDC and TSA to look at mask policy on transportation.

Mr. Oliver stated his concern about lifting the mandate on the day the district returns from February vacation.

Mr. Nunes asked how the lifting of the mask affects visitors to the schools and spectators at school events.

Dr. Gifford responded with the mandate being dropped we won’t require masks; but we will “hold off” on visitors to our elementary schools for the time being.

Mr. Nunes stated he agrees with rescinding the policy adding he recommends a caveat to authorize the Superintendent to implement the policy quickly should it become necessary.

Mrs. Amaral indicated her agreement with removing the mask mandate.

Mrs. Waite indicated her agreement with removing the mask mandate.

Dr. Jenkins asked if KN95 masks would be available to students.

Mr. Kiely stated we do not have any youth size KN95 masks.

Dr. Jenkins asked that, as we prioritize personnel to move cafeterias back to “normal,” we start with the high school.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to rescind SC Policy EBCFA that was accepted on August 2020 with the caveat that if the virus should “start-up” again and between federal, state

and local authorities they put a mask mandate back in place that the Superintendent is authorized to implement said mask mandate under this policy.

Dr. Jenkins stated she is in favor of rescinding SC Policy EBCFA and asked Dr. Gifford if she wanted the power to implement a mask mandate without the authorization of the School Committee; this is not a matter of rescinding the policy but about giving up our authority.

Dr. Gifford responded.

Mr. Nunes kept his motion to rescind the policy and rescinded his “amendment.”

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to rescind SC Policy EBCFA Face Coverings. The motion carried unanimously: 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

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

- Update on vacation Math Academy; 76 students from grade 3 through 10 have enrolled
- Update on the naming of the DHS basketball court
- Beginning work reviewing the Emergency Management Plan
- Planning another phase of team chair training for staff who facilitate teams
- DHS administration teams attended the *ED Camp* this past weekend which focused on social emotional learning; engaging new teachers and project-based learning.
- I will be attending the AASA conference which starts Wednesday

Report of the Chair: The Chair did not have any additional information to report.

Mr. Nunes reported that the music department will hold its Annual Pops concert at the high school on Friday, March 4th; this year’s honoree is William Kingsland.

Mrs. Waite asked if DHS senior, Joshua Moniz could be invited to a meeting to speak about his role as Dartmouth’s representative to the regional student council.

Mr. Oliver asked Dr. Jenkins whether groups invited to attend the March 8th meeting of the Equality and Diversity Sub-committee have confirmed noting that Dr. Gifford reached out to the Aquinnah Wampanoag and she is waiting to hear back.

Dr. Jenkins stated the Pocasset Wampanoag and Mashpee Wampanoag have confirmed they will be attending adding the National Congress of American Indians has not confirmed yet.

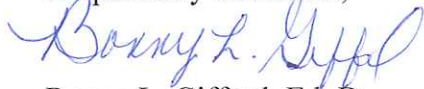
Other Matters that may not have been anticipated at the time of Agenda posting.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The next regular session of the School Committee will take place at the Dartmouth High School Media Center on Monday, March 7, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.; the public will 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>.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. On a roll call the motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools