

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

August 22, 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 John Nunes at 5:00 p.m. in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center. The Chair stated the meeting is streaming live on the Dartmouth High School 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: Mr. Nunes, Mrs. Waite, Mrs. Amaral, Dr. Jenkins and Mr. Oliver.

Also present: Dr. Gifford and Mrs. Genthner. Mr. Kiely joined the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Regular Session Minutes of July 25, 2022 as written. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sonia Coe commented on allergy awareness.

Lynne Turner commented on the high school cell phone policy and the Dartmouth “history” committee.

Michael Hludzik commented on school security.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on School Security and Allergy Awareness: Dr. Gifford stated policies and practices are in place to address allergy awareness but it is the district leadership’s intent to revisit these policies and practices to reemphasize the importance of remaining vigilant.

Dr. Gifford did state that signage will be posted in addition to increased awareness/training through professional development which is currently being discussed with Catherine Pavao, the Director of Teaching and Learning/Elementary Level.

Mrs. Waite asked about team meetings based on the idea of IEP team meetings including non-instructional staff as well as providing Epi-pen training.

Dr. Jenkins asked that playground staff be included in the training.

Mr. Oliver asked that we revisit the policies and procedures regarding allergy awareness as a way to prevent future incidents; are we looking to train not just classroom staff.

Mrs. Amaral added that substitutes should be “kept in the loop” regarding student allergy awareness.

Dr. Jenkins added “we” should be devoting as many resources to allergy awareness as to school security.

Dr. Gifford stated the district’s partnership continues with the police department as it concerns school security cameras and PA access.

Dr. Gifford reported the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan was recently updated and a copy will be provided to teachers adding the principals will go over the plan with teachers.

Dr. Gifford stated the Principals have been asked to document all drills, trainings and professional development taking place in their respective buildings; this year elementary schools will be running “actual” drills.

Dr. Gifford stated Officer Pimental, who has done A.L.I.C.E. training with the district, will be training new staff tomorrow and will meet with the leadership team on Friday.

Dr. Gifford stated that the police department will be adding a School Resource Officer (SRO) for the elementary schools.

Mr. Oliver asked that the 3 SROs have the opportunity to introduce themselves at some point so the parents and the public can “see” them.

Update on Maintenance/Custodial Summer Projects: Mr. Kiely noted there are eight days left before students return to school and the hard work of John Bernat, Facilities Manager, along with the maintenance and custodial staff will continue until then and beyond to address the buildings needs adding “we” will be ready.

Mr. Nunes asked about school lunch forms which are on the district website and whether or not families should still submit these forms given the State legislature has voted to continue the free lunch program.

Mr. Kiely responded that it is important families still submit these forms; we don’t know how long the free lunch program will last and federal funding is often contingent upon free and reduced lunch statistics.

Discussion of the Formation of a Working Group regarding Dartmouth History: Mr. Nunes reported last week that he, Dr. Gifford, Dave Tatelbaum, Chairman of the Select Board, and Mrs. Waite met to “put” together a working group pertaining to town history and culture.

Mr. Nunes stated Mr. Tatelbaum met with Shawn MacInnes, Town Administrator, and it appears the group will have to be a “regular” committee subject to Open Meeting Law.

Mr. Nunes stated, right now, the committee will be comprised of seven members: one each from the Select Board, School Committee, Historical Commission, School Department, and Town

Administrator's office as well as two community-at-large members to be appointed for one year terms noting, per the Town Charter, at-large members must be citizens of the community.

Mr. Nunes stated the Select Board will "do the heavy lifting" and will meet after Labor Day to come up with a mission statement for the committee.

Mrs. Waite provided comments and offered to represent the school committee on the new committee.

Dr. Gifford reported Mr. Tatelbaum is presenting the matter to the Select Board this evening.

Dr. Jenkins reminded the Committee that we have policies in the schools regarding the logo but we need to make sure that appropriate use of the logo is included in the new committee's charge.

Mrs. Amaral moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to appoint Mrs. Waite to the new committee. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Request for Vote to Approve Revisions to the Student Handbook - Athletics: Dr. Gifford invited Andrew Crisafulli, Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics, to speak about the changes to the student handbook as it concerns athletics.

Mr. Crisafulli provided a PowerPoint presentation and briefly explained the process of revising the Student Handbook - Athletics.

Mr. Crisafulli noted the process of revising the handbook was a collaborative effort: school administrators, coaches, parents and student athletes.

Mr. Crisafulli stated one of his goals this year is to create an Athletic Advisory Council to include all stakeholders which will be "revisited" annually to begin in April.

Mr. Crisafulli reported the fall season started on Friday noting the number of football participants is in the low 90s this year which the highest it has been in the past five years adding there are almost 400 student athletes competing for spots across the ten sports offered by the district.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the revisions to the Student Handbook for Athletics. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

Request for Vote to Approve Revisions to the Student Handbook – Cell Phone: Mr. Nunes invited Ryan Shea, Principal of Dartmouth High School, to speak about the changes to the student handbook as it concerns cell phone practices.

Mr. Shea stated that the cell policy was talked about at the last meeting and that this information is not a surprise.

Mr. Shea stated there is a cell phone policy in place; what we are looking at here is the implementation of the policy and provided a PowerPoint presentation to highlight the changes in implementation: Old Expectations vs. New Expectations.

Mr. Shea noted these changes were created through collaboration with teachers and students.

Mr. Shea stated cell phones impact students' mental health which helped to drive this effort.

Committee members asked that the school remain cognizant of students who need to use cell phones as an accommodation or for medical purposes that they are not "outed" by this change.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the revisions to the Student Handbook cell phone practices. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

Mr. Oliver asked about the cell phone policy at Dartmouth middle school.

Mr. Shea stated middle school students must leave cell phones in their lockers.

Discussion to Consider sending Committee Members to the National School Boards

Association's (NSBA) annual conference: Mr. Oliver provided his reasons for asking that this item be placed on the agenda adding it could be something the committee voted on annually whether or not to send a member to the conference.

Mr. Nunes stated the committee would need a policy for out of state travel adding that the policy should include a requirement that participants report back to the committee.

Dr. Jenkins suggested having the Chair and Vice Chair be the annual attendees as those positions change annually.

The Committee agreed to have the policy sub committee take a look at establishing a new policy to send members to the NSBA annual conference.

Dr. Gifford stated the MASS/MASC annual conference is being held in November 2022 and to let her office know if you are interested in attending; we can take care of the registration.

Proposed School Committee Meeting Dates (October 2022 thru December 2022): Dr. Gifford proposed the following meeting dates for October through December 2022: October 17th, November 7th, November 21st and December 12, 2022 all meetings to begin at 6:30 p.m.

The Committee agreed to the proposed dates for October through December 2022.

Meeting dates for September approved previously: September 12th and September 26th with a 6:30 p.m. start time.

Superintendent's Update: Dr. Gifford provided information and updates of events and activities happening throughout the district.

-Cook Center Zoom webinar on August 23rd; information is posted on the district website.

-Project T.I.M.E. started today and will conclude tomorrow for new instructional hires.

-Acceleration Academy was held last week with over 120 students participating.

Mr. Oliver asked for confirmation of his understanding that DESE has no more COVID guidance.

Dr. Gifford stated that that is correct; the only COVID guidance that remains in place is masking in the nurse's office; we encourage parents to send their children to school with a mask just in case; the district will have masks if necessary.

Report of the Chair: The Chair asked Committee members if "we" want to put the Superintendent's Evaluation discussion on the next meeting agenda; the members agreed.

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 in the Library Media Center at Dartmouth High School on Monday, September 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to adjourn from Open Session at 6:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



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