MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
DARTMOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

January 24, 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

No public comment was offered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 10, 2022 as presented. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

School Choice – 2022-2023

Dr. Jenkins opened the Public Hearing on School Choice for the 2022-2023 School Year at 6:35 p.m. inviting those who wish to speak on the matter to come to forward.

No public comment was offered.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to close the Public Hearing on School Choice for School Year 2022-2023 at 6:36 p.m. The motion carried unanimously: 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Naming Facility: DHS Basketball Court – Vote on Naming Committee's Decision: Dr. Gifford reported that the Naming Committee met and unanimously approved naming the DHS Basketball Court in the Carlin Lynch Activity Center after former coach Steven Gaspar.

Mr. Oliver relayed some of the comments made by committee members in overwhelming support of Mr. Gaspar and his nomination.

Dr. Gifford asked the School Committee for a vote on the Naming Committee's unanimous decision to recommend the basketball court in the Carlin Lynch Activity Center be named after Mr. Gaspar.

Dr. Gifford stated she asked to move the matter "up" because Mr. Gaspar, who is unaware of this honor, is assisting with the boys' basketball team practice this evening and asked if she could have Mr. Gaspar come to the meeting to hear this news.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to name the DHS basketball court after former DHS coach Steven Gaspar. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

(The Chair took up the *Student Representative Report* at this time)

The chair took up the matter of the *Naming Facility: DHS Basketball Court – Vote on Naming Committee's Decision* Mr. Gaspar was asked to come to the podium.

Dr. Gifford announced to Mr. Gaspar that the School Committee approved a request to have the DHS basketball court in the Carlin Lynch Activity Center named after him.

The DHS boys' basketball team were present and applauded Mr. Gaspar.

Dr. Gifford stated a more formal ceremony will take place during a home game.

Mr. Gaspar spoke briefly and thanked the Committee for the honor.

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.
-DHS Theater company is preparing for its spring production of *Shrek The Musical.*
-DHS Theater company recently held auditions for its upcoming competition piece.
-Unified Bowling Club has taken several trips this winter exemplifying teamwork, fun and the power of inclusion.
-Last week DHS welcomed Landan Callahan from the Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative who met with administrators and members of the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) as well as spoke with the faculty on ways to support LGBTQ+ students at DHS.
-DHS was awarded *College Boards* Computer Science Female Diversity award in recognition of our high female representation in AP computer science classes.
-Congratulations to DHS music students who have been selected to participate Southeastern Jr District Music Festival: Jonas Chen, Ryan Church, William Jordan, and Mohamad Hijazi.

PRESENTATION

Spotlight on the Joseph DeMello Elementary School: Dr. Gifford introduced Catherine Pavao and Elizabeth Correia, Principal and Assistant Principal, respectively, of the Joseph DeMello Elementary School.

Mrs. Pavao stated their *Spotlight* topic is the new math program - *Bridges*: a powerpoint presentation was shown as well as provided in the members' meeting packets.

Mrs. Pavao highlighted the "rich" and "rigorous" work that students are doing as well as explained the instruction goals: critical thinking, communication skills, creativity, problem solving, perseverance, and collaboration.

Mrs. Pavao noted the differences between content and practice standards and how the DeMello school is addressing both through its new math program.

Mrs. Correia explained how DeMello school develops its best practices for teaching: conceptual understanding, problem solving, reasoning, engage students in productive struggle and facilitate discourse among students to build shared understanding of mathematical ideas.

Mrs. Pavao explained that the *Bridges* math curriculum is "inquiry-based" and "focuses on using visual models to develop mathematical thinking.

Mrs. Correia described the math classroom: number corner, problems and investigations and work places.

Mrs. Pavao and Mrs. Correia shared a video that illustrated how students and staff are implementing the new math program.

Mrs. Pavao commended the work of the school's new math coach; Jennifer Fitton.

The Committee thanked Mrs. Pavao and Mrs. Correia for their presentation.

OLD BUSINESS

Proposed 2022-2023 School Calendar: Dr. Gifford asked the Committee to approve the 2022-2023 calendar that was brought forth at the January 10th meeting.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Kathleen Amaral to approve the proposed 2022-2023 school year calendar as presented. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

MASC Resolution – Regarding Department of Elementary and Secondary Education School District Audits: Dr. Jenkins invited Mr. Oliver to address the MASC Resolution that he drew up and which was provided to the Committee Members:

Mr. Oliver explained the purpose of the resolution and read the proposed language and added the resolution can be sent to our state representatives, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Governor's office.

"WHEREAS the Dartmouth School Committee understands the need for state oversight and audits through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the benefits of Program Review audits. WHEREAS these audits are a significant time and human capital commitment to the Dartmouth Public Schools and other public school districts across the state and WHEREAS school districts are already being pushed to their limits to insure students are educated and there are faculty not quarantined and in place to support our students and schools during the Global COVID-19 Pandemic. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Dartmouth School Committee is asking for a moratorium of these program review audits until such time that faculty and staffing are at normal levels and time won't be taken away from the education of our students in the Dartmouth Public Schools."

Mr. Nunes, seconded by Mrs. Waite to approve the MASC Resolution – Regarding Department of Elementary and Secondary Education School District Audits as presented.

Dr. Jenkins expressed a concern for the second to the last line adding "I do not want to imply that we have non-normal numbers of faculty in our buildings…" and "I do not want to cause concern among the community that we are not appropriately covering our classes."

Mr. Nunes commented that the resolution is relating to all school districts in the state.

Mrs. Waite suggested after replacing "until such time that faculty and staffing are at normal levels and time won't be taken away from the education of our students;" with "until the current health crisis has passed and state adjustments to protect public health are no longer in place in the public schools."

Dr. Jenkins recommended the Committee approve the resolution and empower Mr. Oliver to make minor edits.

Mr. Oliver stated he would take the Committee's recommendations.

Mr. Nunes withdrew his first motion.

Mrs. Waite moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to empower Mr. Oliver to make minor revisions per our discussion and send it off to our state representatives, the Governor and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The motion carried unanimously: 5-0.

Discussion of Dartmouth Logo: Dr. Jenkins opened the discussion noting Mr. Nunes and Mr. Oliver asked for the matter to be included on the agenda.

Dr. Jenkins explained how the Equality and Diversity Sub-committee had planned to invite representatives from local tribes to speak to the sub-committee and stating it is still the intention of the sub-committee to invite representatives from local Native American tribes to a sub-committee meeting to speak and then to have a second meeting that will include public comment.

Dr. Jenkins asked the members if they want to have separate meetings or joint meetings with the Equality and Diversity Sub-committee.

Mr. Nunes responded that he would like to see the matter be "put to bed" tonight; the matter has been going on for almost three years and would like to see this Committee reaffirm the Dartmouth "Indian" as its logo: if we need to have discussions with the Wampanoag tribe, I am "good" with that.

Mr. Oliver asked Dr. Gifford when she last spoke with Chairwoman Cheryl Andrews.

Dr. Gifford responded it was one time may be at the beginning of this year, when the committee had been meeting regularly.

Mr. Oliver commented that the School Department is in "limbo" with the sports teams adding the tribe has asked the town; the select board, the school committee, the town as a whole, to engage in conversation with it and stated he would like to see "us" reaffirm the Dartmouth "Indian" along with continuing to engage the tribe in meaningful discussions.

Dr. Jenkins commented that Dartmouth is not part of the territory of the Gay Head/Aquinnah Wampanoag and another federally recognized tribe in Massachusetts - the Mashpee Wampanoag - has stated its opposition to the use of native mascots adding the Pocasset Wampanoag which claims Dartmouth as part of its ancestral and territorial lands have told her they are opposed to the use of the Indian mascot.

Dr. Jenkins stated she cannot as a member of this "committee" vote to "have this decision" without hearing from "the community."

Mrs. Waite stated we appointed a "committee" to study the matter; I would like to honor this process and agree that we need to expedite it adding the committee was appointed to address more matters than the logo.

Mrs. Amaral offered comments and stated she was not prepared to vote on the logo matter at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Oliver asked for a timeline noting that the Equality and Diversity Committee needs to move on to other matters.

Dr. Jenkins stated she needs help scheduling: the Gay Head Wampanoag, Mashpee Wampanoag, Pocasset Wampanoag and the American Congress of the American Indian who represent tribes in Massachusetts.

The Committee scheduled a meeting of the Equality and Diversity Sub-committee on March 8, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. for presentations to be made to the committee.

The Committee scheduled a second meeting of the Equality and Diversity Sub-committee on March 22nd at 6:30 p.m. for public comment on the logo matter.

NEW BUSINESS

School Choice – Vote to Participate in the 2022-2023 School Year: Dr. Gifford stated the district supports continuing with school choice as well as Ross Thibault, the high school principal.

Mr. Kiely provided financial information and referenced a memorandum included in the meeting packet.

Mrs. Waite moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver, to participate in school choice program for the 2022-2023 school year. The motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Nunes opposing.

2021 Annual Report - Vote: Dr. Gifford submitted the 2021 Annual Report for the Committee's approval and thanked the leadership team for its work on the report.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Waite, to approve the 2021 Annual Report as submitted. The motion carried unanimously: 5-0.

Mrs. Amaral had a question about Special Education funding.

Mr. Kiely responded.

Superintendent's Update: Dr. Gifford reported on the following:
-Cushman and Potter Schools were awarded $5,000 each from the Feinstein group.
-FY22 Math Acceleration Academies grant was awarded from DESE and the district will run math camps for elementary, middle and high school levels during the February and April vacations.
-COVID At-Home testing program was approved and test should be shipped to the district this week; approximately 1000 people opted to participate and the schools are working on the logistics.
-Mr. Kiely provided an update on the stadium storage building project stating the district is facing long lead times which will prolong the project adding there is a meeting on the matter tomorrow.
-Mr. Kiely noted the FY23 budget presentation will be given at the next school committee meeting; a budget sub-committee meeting will be scheduled prior to that date.

Report of the Chair: Dr. Jenkins stated she emailed the Committee three links on school committee policy JIB – *Student Involvement in Decision-Making* to the committee members for their reference adding we can have a discussion on the matter once the members have had a chance to read the email.

Mrs. Waite asked that the matter be placed on the next meeting 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, February 14, 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. Waite to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. into Executive Session to discuss strategy relative to collective bargaining and not to return to Open Meeting. On a roll call the motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

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