

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

February 13, 2023

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 6:30 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. Amaral, Dr. Jenkins and Mr. Oliver. Mrs. Waite was not present.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Bangs, Lead Science Teacher at Dartmouth High School, made comments pertaining to collective bargaining.

Taryn DeFrias, Special Education Teacher at Quinn Elementary School, made comments pertaining to collective bargaining.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 23, 2023 as written. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 23, 2023 as written, with the stipulation that they be held until the matters under consideration are finalized. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Regular Session Minutes of February 2, 2023 as written. The motion passed: 3-0. Dr. Jenkins abstained.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Student Representative Phoenix Dalla Costa, a senior at Dartmouth High School, provided comments on matters pertaining to the high school:

- A presentation on New Bedford's contributions to the Underground Railroad was recently held.
- Winter Sports Update
- Robotics Team Update
- Provided comments on student body opinion regarding the Cell Phone Policy as well as adding his own comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Gifford recommended the following requests for approval; all requests were provided to Committee members in the meeting packet:

- DHS – Cultural Excursion to Spain and Portugal (April 2024)

Nathan Carvalho, Melissa Lomba and Jason Borges, DHS World Language Faculty, briefly explained the department's April 2024 Cultural Excursion to Spain and Portugal and asked for the Committee's for approval.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to approve the April 2024 DHS Cultural Excursion to Spain and Portugal, as presented. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

- DHS – WGI World Championships - Indoor Color Guard
- DHS – WGI East Power Regional – Varsity Color Guard
- DHS – WGI World Finals - Indoor Percussion & Dance Team
- DHS – WGI World Finals - Indoor Winds

Ian Flint, Music Director, provided brief details of the competition participation requests.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins to approve all DHS Music Department requests as presented. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

PRESENTATIONS

Spotlight on Kids – Andrew B. Cushman School: Dr. Justine Dale provided a PowerPoint Presentation and video showcasing the school's student activities: 100th day of school, Special Olympics Young Athletes Day, Caring, Sharing, Bravery lessons.

Dr. Dale reported the Cushman school has received \$31,000 from the Feinstein Institute and indicated what was purchased to assist in teaching and learning.

Dr. Dale described the making of the video shown wherein students acted out examples of bravery, sharing, caring and kindness.

FY24 Budget: Mr. Kiely provided a PowerPoint presentation which was included in member's meeting packets highlighting the different components of the FY24 budget noting the priorities which guided the budget process.

Mr. Kiely reported, for FY24, the District is proposing a budget of \$51,913,526 explaining how the monies would be allocated: Instruction – 75%; Other Services – 12%; Maintenance & Utilities – 7%; Tuitions – 4%; and Administration – 2%.

Mr. Kiely stated “we” are pretty consistent with these categories and where “we” were last year (FY23 budget) and explained the decisions behind the budget proposals for FY24 which amounts to a 5.1% increase over last year.

Mr. Kiely explained budget recommendations: one English Language Learner Instructor; *18-22 Year-Old Transition Program* which includes hiring one Teacher and two Teacher Assistants to operate the program; an additional Pre-K classroom and to hire one Pre-K Teacher & two Teacher Assistants; hire a (.2 - FTE) Physical Therapist.

Mr. Kiely reviewed requests that were not funded including teaching positions, supplies and technology.

Mr. Kiely reported there are 16 positions currently funded or partially funded by ESSER monies noting this funding is available through September 30, 2024.

Mr. Kiely stated there have been preliminary conversations with the Town side of government regarding our funding.

Mr. Kiely reported we do not currently have any state “numbers” noting he is expecting a very modest increase in Chapter 70 funds; not enough to make a “major” difference.

Mr. Oliver stated his concerns about the proposed *18-22 Year Old Transition Program*; he would like to hear more about the program from the Special Education Department.

Dr. Jenkins made comments regarding looking at the use of non-recurring revenues for recurring expenses to help “ease us off the cliff.”

Mrs. Amaral stated her reservations about the proposed *Transition Program* and agreed with Mr. Oliver’s request to hear more about the program.

OLD BUSINESS

Superintendent Search: Mr. Nunes invited Jim Hardy from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (M.A.S.C.) to speak on the matter.

Mr. Hardy reported the Superintendent Search Committee met February 8th at which time Committee members were trained on Conflict of Interest and Open Meeting law as well as Committee members submission of confidentiality statements. The Committee met again on February 10th to review completed applications and have begun the process of scheduling preliminary interviews to be held on February 28th, March 1st and March 2nd.

Mr. Hardy stated it is hoped the Search Committee will have finalists chosen upon conclusion of the preliminary interviews and deliver those names to the full School Committee so that it may start its portion of the search process the following week.

Mr. Oliver, co-chair of the Superintendent Search Committee, reported 2 members of the screening committee withdrew due to time constraints; a parent representative and a teacher representative.

Mr. Oliver asked the School Committee if it wants to fill these positions noting any individual added to the search committee at this time would not have input as to who would be interviewed but that they would be able to participate in the interview.

Mr. Oliver stated his opinion is not to fill the positions at this time.

Catherine Pavao, co-chair of the Superintendent Search Committee, agreed with Mr. Oliver.

Mr. Nunes agreed.

Dr. Jenkins agreed.

Mrs. Amaral agreed.

Mr. Hardy pointed out the two groups are still represented on the Search Committee.

Mr. Hardy provided a review of the Superintendent Search survey results.

Mr. Hardy stated the results of the survey “drove” what was included in the brochure which “drove” what the applicants highlighted in their application packets.

Mr. Hardy reported 400 individuals took the survey.

Pupil Support Services Administrator: Mrs. Amaral, as co-chair of the Pupil Support Services Administrator (PSSA) Search Committee, provided an update as to the Committee’s progress noting the Committee will meet on Thursday, February 16th.

NEW BUSINESS

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

- Carolyn McKearney from the South Coast Educational Collaborative will be working with the Potter School staff on de-escalation techniques and behavior therapy.

- Souper Bowl* can good collection is on-going.

- PBIS rallies are happening

- Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management gave a presentation on recycling at DMS today.

- DeMello is preparing for *Read Across America*.

- Dartmouth Leadership Team met at Town Hall last week to continue its work on a *Portrait of a Learner*: all of the schools have been working on *Portrait of a Learner* in preparation to “roll out” the program in the new year.

Report of the Chair: The Chair reported:

- The Chair thanked Jeanne Sheridan and the Food Service Staff for preparing the reception held for Dr. Gifford in the high school cafeteria before tonight’s meeting.

- Music Update: Annual Pop’s Concert will be held March 9, 2023; Dr. Gifford is this year’s honoree.

- The Chair read and presented to Dr. Gifford a Citation issued by the Select Board.

The Committee thanked Dr. Gifford for her service and dedication particularly through the pandemic and wished her well in her retirement.

Other Matters that may not have been anticipated at the time of Agenda posting: Mr. Kiely reported “we” received an Open Meeting Law complaint on Thursday; “it complains” that our minutes do not contain a list of all the documents and other exhibits used by the public body during the meeting.

Mr. Kiely stated documents/exhibits are noted in the minutes but they do not include a separate list: Mr. Kiely noted he provided a copy of the “law” to the Committee members stating it may be a matter of interpretation however it is easy enough to include a separate list of documents and exhibits used during meetings which the recording secretary will do going forward.

Mr. Kiely noted that “we” are prepared to respond to the complaint but the complaint does require that the School Committee review the complaint and, if the Committee agrees with the suggested resolution, to authorize “myself” to respond to the complaint.

Dr. Jenkins asked if it easier to include the documents with the minutes.

Mr. Kiely stated we are not legally obligated to include documents and it may not be practical adding they are available should anyone make a request.

Dr. Jenkins asked if we can discuss the inclusion of documents with minutes as a general practice at a later meeting and not as a response to this complaint; Dr. Jenkins asked if the Student Representative could be included in the circulation of meeting documents.

Mr. Oliver agreed to Mr. Kiely's recommendation as well as to Dr. Jenkins request to for discussion at a future meeting.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to delegate the responsibility to Mr. Kiely to respond to the Open Meeting Law Complaint that future minutes of the Dartmouth School Committee will include a list of all the documents and other exhibits used during meetings at the end of the minutes. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

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, March 6, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. into Executive Session for an update pertaining to Collective Bargaining with union personnel and to hear two Level III Grievances and not return to open session. On a roll call the motion passed unanimously; 4-0: Mr. Nunes – Yes; Mrs. Amaral – Yes; Dr. Jenkins - Yes and Mr. Oliver – Yes.

Respectfully submitted,



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

Open Session - Documents/Exhibits

Regular Session Minutes for January 23, 2023

Executive Session Minutes for January 23, 2023

Regular Session Minutes for February 2, 2023

Consent Agenda – Cultural Excursion

Consent Agenda – DHS WGI World Championships – Indoor Color Guard

Consent Agenda – DHS WGI East Power Regional – Varsity Color Guard

Consent Agenda – DHS WGI World Finals – Indoor Percussion and Dance Team

Consent Agenda – DHS WGI World Finals – Indoor Winds

Spotlight on Kids -Cushman School PPP and video

FY24 Proposed Budget Presentation

Superintendent Search Survey Summary Document

Open Meeting Law Complaint

Executive Session – Documents/Exhibits

Level III Grievance – Failure to Follow: Academic Freedom language

Level III Grievance – Failure to Follow: Staff Code of Conduct