

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

October 16, 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 Kathleen Amaral at 6:00 p.m. in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center.

On a roll call the following members were present: Kathleen Amaral, Elizabeth Coughlin, John Nunes and Shannon Jenkins. Mr. Oliver was not in attendance.

Also present: Dr. Saba-Maguire, Mr. Kiely and Ms. Genthner.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Ms. Coughlin to approve the Regular Session Minutes of September 25, 2023 as written. The motion passed: 3-0. Dr. Jenkins abstained.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Ms. Coughlin to approve the Executive Session Minutes of September 25, 2023 as written with the stipulation that the minutes be held until such time the matters for which the meeting was held are complete. The motion passed: 3-0. Dr. Jenkins abstained.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Dr. Saba-Maguire invited Anabelle Jonsson, DHS Senior and Student Advisory Council Representative, to give her report.

Ms. Jonsson reported the Student Advisory Committee does not have any issues to report adding the committee which meets every month is currently working on creating a survey to send out to students.

Dr. Jenkins offered her assistance in designing surveys and stated she will contact Principal Shea.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Saba-Maguire recommended the following requests to the Committee for its consideration.

Elizabeth Correia, DeMello School Principal, was in attendance to answer any questions.

- **DeMello/Cushman School PTO – 2023-2024 Fundraising Requests**

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Jenkins to approve the DeMello/Cushman PTO fundraising requests for 2023-2024, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

Dr. Jenkins noted the DeMello/Cushman PTO plans to raise nearly \$45,000.

Peter Rossi, DMS Principal, was in attendance to answer any questions.

- **DMS School PTO – 2023-2024 Fundraising Requests**

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Ms. Coughlin to approve the DMS PTO fundraising requests for 2023-2024, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

Dr. Jenkins asked that, in future, the DMS PTO provide a financial report as other school PTOs have provided noting the Committee's fiduciary responsibilities.

- **DHS Orchestra – Permission for Cultural Excursion and Performance in Spain (Feb 2025)**

Heather Church, music teacher for the district, was in attendance to answer any questions.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Ms. Coughlin to approve the DHS cultural excursion and performance for February 2025, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Amaral proposed hearing the Superintendent's Update now.

Superintendent's Update: Dr. Saba-Maguire invited Mr. Rossi to speak about a recent activity at the middle school she had the opportunity to observe.

Mr. Rossi reported on October 4th the middle school held its 9th annual *Career Day* which is put on by the guidance department for the 7th grade class noting 30 members of the community were invited this year to speak to the students about career opportunities.

Mr. Rossi noted the assistance middle school staff, Paula Pacheco, Recovery/Acceleration Teacher as well as Temple Mitchell, Instructional Technology Teacher, who produced the video that was aired.

Mr. Rossi "plugged" for the middle school's production of "Cinderella" scheduled for November 17th and 18th.

Dr. Saba-Maguire invited Ryan Shea and Rachel Chavier, Principal and Associate Principal of Dartmouth High School respectively, to speak about a recognition the high school received as well as a recent activity at the high school she had the opportunity to observe.

Ms. Chavier stated the College Board launched a new program this year called the AP Honor Roll adding Dartmouth High School received two recognitions: Silver Distinction and AP Access.

Ms. Chavier provided a “breakdown” of the honor roll report as well as an explanation of the significance of the recognitions.

Ms. Chavier responded to Mr. Nunes’ inquiry about number of students enrolled in AP courses that, per last year’s numbers, approximately 300 students are enrolled in at least one AP course.

Ms. Chavier stated the high school’s partnership with Mass Insight has helped to “democratize” AP access.

Mr. Shea reported on September 26th the high school hosted a college fair for juniors and seniors noting over 75 colleges, universities and technical schools attended as well as representatives from all military “branches.”

Mr. Shea singled out Kimberly Peach, administrative assistant for the high school guidance department, for her hard work this year and others for making the fair the success that it is.

Mr. Shea reported that 90% of “our” students are “post-secondary.”

Dr. Saba-Maguire concluded the Superintendent’s Update with information and updates of events and activities happening throughout the district.

- Update on Meetings with School Principals and Administrative teams last week
- Update on DESE Revised Health and Sexual Education Standards noting the District will not be making sudden changes to its curriculum
- Update on HR: new Assistant Director of Student Services, “plea” for Education Support Professionals and substitute Teachers
- Update on “Fun” things happening in the District and read from correspondence forwarded by an opposing coach commending the character of Dartmouth’s football team and coaches.
- Update on Dartmouth Cheerleaders recognizing cheer coach Rebecca Braga, who recently joined the Dartmouth Senior Center dance class last week adding the “Seniors” came to a recent football game.

PRESENTATION

Presentation – Preliminary FY25 Budget: Dr. Saba-Maguire invited Mr. Kiely to address the matter.

Mr. Kiely stated the budget process will be a little different this year and provided information through a PowerPoint presentation which was included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Kiely stated this presentation is based on trying to provide “level service-ish” budget and provided an explanation noting he is starting the projection process much earlier than usual and so has less data to rely on adding tonight’s presentation is a “starting point” to begin to express “our” needs.

Mr. Kiely briefly highlighted “key factors” including staffing, transportation, enrollment, Special and Education tuition adding comments around utilities.

Mr. Kiely addressed “Town, State and Federal factors” reporting the Town Administrator expressed interest in meeting.

Mr. Kiely explained the concerns around ESSER funding expiring and what that will impact.

Dr. Saba-Maguire provided comments regarding the necessity for the District’s past decisions on the expenditure of ESSER funds to address and support student needs.

Mr. Kiely stated he does not foresee any significant change in state aid and projected level funding on “other” grants.

Mr. Kiely reported that the District is at a 5.3% increase for its preliminary FY25 budget or \$54,274,176 (not including the Medicaid budget line.)

Mr. Kiely provided information regarding ESSER funded positions that will no longer exist per this preliminary draft.

Mr. Kiely stated tonight’s presentation is a broad overview and provided information regarding “Next Steps.”

Mr. Kiely stated he would like to schedule a Budget Sub-committee and will reach out to members on that committee.

Dr. Jenkins asked about the transportation projection and federal funds.

Mr. Kiely responded expressing his concerns regarding transportation costs and explained the District’s reliance on federal funds.

Dr. Jenkins stated she hopes using one-time revenue sources to help ease the District over the “ESSER cliff” over the next few years is part of the discussion.

Mr. Nunes asked if McKinney-Vento (homeless and foster care) transportation is fully funded by the government.

Mr. Kiely responded he is “worried” about those costs adding, by law, the State has to fully fund these costs but it doesn’t; the need for this particular funding has increased in the State which will have an effect on how funds are disbursed.

Mr. Nunes asked how the state and federal governments will be assisting with the costs of education and transportation for families being placed in Dartmouth.

Dr. Saba-Maguire reported that 4 students are enrolled (3 elementary and 1 high school student) with a potential for 2 more enrolling tomorrow; currently the State provides \$1,000 per student through a grant that the District will be submitting tomorrow additionally the State provides \$104 per student per day to the District.

Mr. Nunes asked if local government officials should be invited to a meeting to speak about the funding the District receives from the State.

Mr. Kiely stated “we” could extend an invitation to them noting he does know, through discussions he has had with them about this, that Dartmouth is “being held harmless” for not getting less because the State “formula” says “we” should be getting less.

Ms. Coughlin made comments regarding Dartmouth’s ability to increase its State aid.

Mr. Kiely responded noting there is no way for Dartmouth to increase its State aid unless the State changes its “formula” which it just did but it did not help us or 100 other districts.

Ms. Amaral asked for more information about Medicaid reimbursement which concerns the work of related services adding the funding goes directly to the municipality and not the school district.

Mr. Kiely reported there was a sharp decline during the pandemic adding reimbursement is back up to approximate pre-pandemic levels noting many staff work very hard to “raise” this funding for the Town and there is \$300,000 worth of potential funding “out there.”

Mr. Kiely stated what the District “gets out of it” from the Town goes to partially fund one staff member’s salary; a clerical staff member whose job is to compile Medicaid information and submit reports to the State.

Ms. Amaral commented on the impact of not being able to support students appropriately and the possibility of an increase in out of district placements.

Mr. Kiely provided a list of “ESSER” positions: a Special Education Teacher, 2 Adjustment Counselors, 3 Education Support Professionals, 2 Speech Language Pathologists, an Occupational Therapist, a Reading Specialist, an Adaptive Physical Education Teacher and an Outreach Social Worker.

Dr. Saba-Maguire commented on the risk of eliminating these positions.

OLD BUSINESS

Capital Improvement Planning – Further Discussion: Dr. Saba-Maguire invited Mr. Kiely to address the matter.

Mr. Kiely reported there has been “some movement” at what was talked about at our last meeting specifically a proposal to use Kindergarten reserve funds that came up at a meeting of the Capital Improvement Planning committee adding Town Counsel has said that that would not be an allowed amendment at Town Meeting which is tomorrow.

Mr. Kiely stated there will be no school committee requests heard at Town Meeting tomorrow noting he will attend.

Mr. Kiely reported the Finance Committee did vote to transfer \$125,000 from the Finance Committee Reserve fund for the high school roof repairs.

Mr. Kiely stated the Town Administrator and Fire District 3 Chief Rick Arruda spoke about the School District's need to update its fire systems; Mr. Kiely stated it is his understanding the Town stated the matter could wait until Spring Town meeting for further consideration.

Dr. Jenkins asked for clarification regarding the kindergarten reserve funds.

Mr. Kiely clarified.

Mr. Nunes asked Mr. Kiely to reach out to the Town Administrator to let him know that he will be posing a question to Town Counsel, Anthony Savastano, at Town Meeting tomorrow.

Ms. Coughlin asked what needs to be done this year to get "it" on the budget next year.

Mr. Kiely responded.

Mr. Kiely asked to schedule another meeting of the fields and facilities sub-committee.

NEW BUSINESS

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

-Update on Superintendent's Advisory Council

Report of the Chair:

-Update on Music Events (new uniforms)

-Update on Fall Sports

-Update on SEPAC; next meeting is November 9th at Cushman at 6:30 p.m.

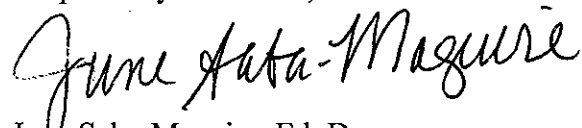
Other Matters that may not have been anticipated at the time of Agenda posting:

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, November 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Ms. Jenkins to adjourn at 7:39 p.m. into Executive Session for a discussion of non-instructional contracted services and not return to open session. On a roll call the motion passed unanimously; 4-0: Mrs. Amaral – Yes; Ms. Coughlin – Yes; Mr. Nunes – Yes and Dr. Jenkins – Yes.

Respectfully submitted,



June Saba-Maguire, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

Open Session - Documents/Exhibits

Agenda

Brief

Regular and Executive Session Minutes for September 25, 2023

Consent Agenda – DeMello/Cushman PTO 2023-2024 Fundraising Request

Consent Agenda – DMS PTO 2023-2024 Fundraising Request

Consent Agenda – DHS Orchestra Cultural Excursion and Performance (Spain 2025)

Presentation – Preliminary FY25 Budget

DHS – Career Day and AP Awards PPP