

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

**January 6, 2025**

The warrants for bills payable were reviewed and signed by the School Committee.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Chris Oliver at 5:30 p.m. in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center.

On a roll call the following members were present: Chris Oliver, Elizabeth Coughlin, Mary Beckwith and Kathleen Amaral. John Nunes was not present.

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

The Chair announced the Committee will now adjourn into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L., c. 30A, Section 21(a)(2), to conduct grievance hearings with the Dartmouth Educators Association pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement between the Dartmouth School Committee and the Dartmouth Educators Association.

Also, The Committee will adjourn into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L., c. 30A, Section 21(a)(3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining where an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the School Committee's bargaining position (Dartmouth Educators Association).

The Chair announced the Committee will adjourn at this time and will reconvene in Open Session at 6:30 p.m.

The Chair reconvened Open Session at 6:55 p.m. in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center.

The Chair announced the meeting is being recorded for future broadcast over DCTV.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was offered.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mrs. Amaral moved, seconded by Ms. Coughlin to approve the Regular Session Minutes of November 4, 2024 as written. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

DHS Senior Jordan Rosenberg provided updates on activities and events happening at Dartmouth High School (DHS).

- Potter Elementary School visited DHS for a Holiday Performance in December.
- Update on Helping Hands Committee Community Support during the Holiday Season.
- Update on Winter Sports noting Jackson Hart set the boys school record for the 55 meter dash; the girls' varsity basketball team has won all of their scheduled games and is ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in MA.
- Dartmouth High School Theater Company will be presenting "High School Musical" for its spring performance; tickets are on sale now for the show which will run from May 1<sup>st</sup> through

May 3, 2025.

-The After-Prom Committee is currently planning this year's prom and is looking for donations such as concession items, items for gift cards and prizes, monetary donations as well as paint and construction materials.

### **PRESENTATION**

**Overview of Dartmouth Public School Service Program:** Mr. Kiely provided brief comments on improvements to the Dartmouth Schools Food Service Program spearheaded by Jeanne Sheridan, Director of School Nutrition and invited Ms. Sheridan to make her presentation.

Ms. Sheridan began her presentation with a recognition of the food service staff which has increased from 26 employees to 38.

Ms. Sheridan provided an overview of the year in review including staffing, menus, sustainability, infrastructure and student participation.

Ms. Sheridan provided a financial report including grant funds as well as information pertaining to present and future plans to include more "scratch" cooking, sourcing of locally grown food and to get the "dish machines" operational at DeMello and Quinn schools.

Ms. Sheridan showed videos of renovations to the elementary and middle school dining areas adding "we" are investing back into our program.

Ms. Beckwith asked about grants.

Ms. Sheridan explained the process.

Ms. Coughlin asked about composting.

Ms. Sheridan stated she has had conversations about composting noting the challenges that go along with it; Mr. Kiely added he has had conversations with Potter School noting there is an individual who would "champion" composting and contact has been made with the Town about the possibility of the schools composting.

Mr. Oliver asked how menus are planned out.

Ms. Sheridan responded how menus are planned for the different school levels.

**Resolution 25-01 – Awarding A Contract Design Services for the DeMello and Potter School Fire Alarm and Detection System Replacement Project:** Mr. Oliver invited Mr. Kiely, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, to present the matter.

Mr. Kiely read resolution 25-01.

WHEREAS: Request for Proposals for Design Services for the DeMello and Potter Fire Alarm and Detection System Replacement Project were duly advertised and proposals received were opened at 3:00 p.m. Friday, November 8, 2024; and

WHEREAS: GGD Consulting Engineers, Inc., 375 Faunce Corner Road, Suite D, Dartmouth Massachusetts, as presented, was selected by the Design Selection Committee as the most responsive, responsible and advantageous proposal; Therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That a contract for the Design Services for the DeMello and Potter Fire Alarm and Detection System Project for the Dartmouth Public School District be awarded to GGD Consulting Engineers, Inc., at a negotiated fee of \$48,000.00.

Mr. Kiely asked the Committee to consider this resolution noting there were four proposals submitted.

Mr. Kiely noted the District has funding for the design portion of this project which was voted at a prior Town meeting and the construction portion of the project is on our current capital improvement plan.

Ms. Coughlin moved, seconded by Ms. Beckwith to award the contract as presented. The motion carried unanimously: 4-0.

### OLD BUSINESS

**Preliminary FY26 Budget – Update on Budget Discussions:** Dr. Saba-Maguire commented how important having the District Strategic Plan in place has been while developing the FY26 budget and how it shapes our thinking and how we will present the budget to the Committee and to the community when requesting funding for this budget.

Mr. Kiely stated we are continuing our budget process noting meetings with administrators during the month of January and plan to reach out to the budget sub-committee to schedule a meeting adding he hopes to present a budget to the full Committee in February for its consideration.

Mr. Oliver asked if we have heard from the Town regarding numbers.

Mr. Kiely responded there is no set number at this time and reported he has had productive meetings with the Town and plans to meet again adding the Town is open to dialogue.

Mrs. Amaral asked about any guidance or changes on the federal level pertaining to the department of education.

Mr. Kiely responded the primary impact for the District pertains to federal grants which make up a fairly significant amount of money; the District receives almost \$2 million in federal grants adding these grants are “tied” to laws that exist primarily to support low income families and students with special needs.

### NEW BUSINESS

**FY26-FY35 Capital Improvement Plan (Draft):** Mr. Kiely opened the matter of the FY26-FY35 Capital Improvement Plan (draft) (hereinafter referred to as CIP) noting he is hoping for the Committee’s feedback and that it is not required the plan be approved this evening.

Mr. Kiely stated it is the first time the District has developed a 10-year plan.

Mr. Kiely explained the CIP information provided in the meeting packet; the memorandum summarizing the year 1 requests which were briefly highlighted: technology hardware replacement; fire alarm and detection system replacement for the Potter and DeMello schools; security upgrades; Dartmouth High School outdoor track (not funded last year); DHS roof replacement noting next step would be to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) noting Dr. Saba-Maguire has alerted the MSBA that we are interested in submitting an SOI which, if we are awarded the “project,” MSBA will pay approximately 50% of the cost; continue flooring replacement of asbestos containing materials at the schools; ongoing HVAC equipment repairs and replacement; modernize school playgrounds; school bus replacement; stadium renovation.

Mr. Kiely reported a new or renovated school was built into FY27 (year 2 of the CIP) adding that he, Dr. Saba-Maguire and John Bernat, the District's Facilities Manager, have a meeting tomorrow with the MSBA in anticipation of them coming to the District at some point to take a look at our facilities.

Mr. Kiely explained how FY26 CIP requests would be up for consideration through the capital improvement planning process we are currently involved in and hopefully moving forward to the June town meeting as well as the fall town meeting.

Mr. Kiely stated the new school request ties very closely into our long-term capital planning process that we are working on with the Town adding he has a meeting with "them" on Wednesday reporting that "group" is interested in addressing the long term needs of the Town's infrastructure.

Mr. Oliver asked if the projects are directed by MSBA.

Mr. Kiely responded MSBA will assess all six buildings and then they will have more conversation with the District.

Mr. Oliver asked that the security upgrades request be brought to a future Executive session in order to be discussed with more detail.

Mr. Kiely responded he was vague on the matter for obvious reasons and that he would provide details during an Executive Session.

Mr. Oliver asked if the DHS roof replacement would be MSBA eligible given its age.

Mr. Kiely stated we believe it would be in terms of installation by the time it is considered.

**SC Policies Section B – School Committee and Government Operations and SC Policies**

**Section A - ADF Wellness Policy – First Reading:** Mr. Kiely thanked all participants in the policy review process including the policy sub-committee members and provided a summary of the proposed changes as they pertain to Section B and Section A Policy ADF of the school committee policies.

Mr. Kiely referred to a summary sheet of the recommended actions that was provided in the meeting packet noting 12 policies have recommended language revisions including deletions and additions as well as a recommended new policy for consideration and revocation of certain policies with explanations.

Mr. Kiely stated revisions to SC policy ADF *Wellness Policy* were developed by the District Health Advisory Committee.

Mr. Kiely reiterated that tonight was a first reading and that the matter will be brought back for a second reading and a vote at the next school committee meeting.

Mr. Oliver asked if SC policy BBBA/BBBB *School Committee Member Qualifications/Oath of Office* could include a CORI requirement adding he is not sure if this is legal.

Ms. Coughlin stated she agrees with Mr. Oliver but is it necessary since committee members do not have one to one contact with students.

Ms. Beckwith commented it is worth checking with legal counsel.

**Proposed Meeting Dates (January 2025 through June 2025):** Dr. Saba-Maguire referred to proposed meeting dates provided in tonight's meeting packet for the Committee's approval: January 27<sup>th</sup>; February 10<sup>th</sup>; March 3<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>; April 14<sup>th</sup>; May 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>; June 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The Committee agreed on the proposed meeting dates for January 2025 through June 2025.

**Proposed 2025-2026 School Calendar:** Dr. Saba-Maguire presented proposed calendar options for the 2025-2026 school year which were provided in the meeting packet for the Committee's consideration.

Both options provided for the same return to work date and first day of school date as well as no school the Friday before Labor Day and a half day on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Option 1 – Dismiss School for Holiday Break on Tuesday, December 23, 2025 making the last day of school earlier (Thursday, June 11, 2026 (not including school cancellation days.)

Option 2 – Dismiss School for Holiday Break on Friday, December 19, 2025 making the last day of school later (Monday, June 15, 2026 (not including school cancellation days.)

Dr. Saba-Maguire stated Mr. Nunes let her know that he prefers Option 1 and recommended that December 23<sup>rd</sup> be a half day.

Mrs. Amaral and Ms. Beckwith each indicated community members have indicated their preference for a two week break at the holidays (Option 2) noting this is a "small sampling."

Mr. Oliver reported some parents have noted they are not in favor of having parent/teacher conferences in December.

Dr. Saba-Maguire stated that that is something we can look at indicating there have been internal conversations about those dates.

Ms. Coughlin agreed with Mr. Nunes' suggestion if the Committee should adopt Option 1.

The Committee agreed to "take up" the matter again at the next meeting.

**Superintendent's Update:** Dr. Saba-Maguire provided information of work being done in the district that is aligned to the District Strategic Plan as well as current activities and events that are happening.

**-Teacher and Learning Update:** Dr. Saba-Maguire provided a brief update regarding MCAS noting Ross Thibault, Director of Teaching and Learning/Secondary Level, will address the topic in more detail at a future school committee meeting. Dr. Saba-Maguire stated passing MCAS is no longer a state requirement for graduation however the District still administers the test noting school districts are legally required to administer the state-wide test. Dr. Saba-Maguire added the District has graduation requirements that are aligned to state and federal requirements.

*At approximately 8:25 p.m. Mr. Oliver left the meeting*

Dr. Saba-Maguire provided information about the *Playbook Initiative*; noting more is to come in the springtime.

Dr. Saba-Maguire provided an update on the DHS math department and the Carnegie Institute.

*At approximately 8:28 p.m. Mr. Oliver returned to the meeting.*

Catherine Pavao, Director of Teaching and Learning/Elementary Level announced the District has chosen CKLA (Core Knowledge Language Arts) as the new ELA literacy curriculum for the District while reiterating the journey taken to get to this decision.

**-Budget and Capital Improvement Update:** HR update – The Early Childhood Director Screening Committee put forward its candidate who Mr. Kiely and I met with and I am pleased to announce that Stephanie Riccardi will start in February as the District’s Early Childhood Director; update on the District’s 2 Principal postings; Mr. Kiely had nothing further to report on CIP matters.

**-Safe and Supportive Schools Update:** Dr. Saba-Maguire thanked all those who participated in the event where DHS seniors spoke with Dartmouth Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> graders about the benefits of a Dartmouth High School education.

**-Family and Community Engagement Update:** Dr. Saba-Maguire provided an update on student, family and community events including the Unified Basketball Jamboree; the DHS TV media students recent field trip to New York City; we continue to present the District Strategic plan at PTO meetings; update on monthly professional development meetings with Bridgewater State University.

**Report of the Chair:** Mr. Oliver thanked the Principals for hosting him on his visits to their schools. -Mr. Oliver asked for the District Administrations thoughts around opening school choice “slots” at the middle school level.

**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 and via live stream at [www.youtube.com/dhstvmedia](http://www.youtube.com/dhstvmedia) on Monday, January 27, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Elizabeth Coughlin moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to adjourn from Open Session at 8:52 p.m. The motion passed unanimously: 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,



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

### **Open Session - Documents/Exhibits**

Agenda  
Brief  
Regular Session Minutes for November 4, 2024  
PPP - Food Service Overview  
M.A.S.C. Resolutions  
Resolution 25-1 Awarding a Contract for Design Services  
FY26-35 Capital Improvement Plan (Draft)  
SC Policies Section B and Policy ADF  
Proposed Meeting Dates (January 2025-June 2025)  
SY2025-2026 Calendar Proposals