

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

March 31, 2026

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

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Mary Beckwith Coughlin at 11:35 a.m. which was held remotely via zoom. The Vice- Chair announced the meeting is being recorded for future broadcast over DCTV.

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

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

Further Discussion of the FY27 Budget: Ms. Beckwith opened the discussion on the revisions to the proposed school budget for FY27.

Dr. Saba-Maguire referenced the revised/updated proposals which Mr. Kiely forwarded to the Committee in its meeting packet adding this is an opportunity to have a discussion on these proposed revisions.

Mr. Oliver asked that the revisions be shared so the viewing public can see the proposals.

Ms. Beckwith asked Dr. Saba-Maguire or Mr. Kiely if they wanted to make any comments before the discussion starts.

Mr. Kiely commented he thought the last School Committee meeting and Joint Session with the Select Board was very productive and we prepared a draft revision for your consideration based on the additional funding from the Town that was noted at the last school committee meeting/joint session adding we are not asking for a vote today that will take place on April 13th; Mr. Kiely stated the revised proposal is at 5% and the details on the screen show how we got to 5%.

Mr. Oliver stated he was very pleased when he received “this” from Mr. Kiely particularly as it speaks to what “I” had mentioned about forward facing positions and being cognizant of the Town’s bottom line; it is clear they looked at enrollment numbers around kindergarten noting he appreciated the projected kindergarten enrollment data that was provided knowing we are going to be cutting a kindergarten position at Quinn and asked if it is fair to assume the district will take a look at keeping this position or bring this position back should there be an uptick in kindergarten enrollment.

Dr. Saba-Maguire responded it is fair to say we will be monitoring our kindergarten enrollment very closely; we are confident the numbers you have in front of you now will rise a bit but not dramatically.

Mr. Oliver asked Mr. Kiely if he feels optimistic that we can reach the 5% proposal.

Mr. Kiely responded he feels more optimistic than he was prior to the meeting on the 23rd adding there is a level of support and recognition for our needs amongst the community and the other boards and we appreciate that noting he has a meeting in the morning with the Town Administrator and will update him based on what may happen in this meeting today.

Mr. Oliver stated he was happy to hear that adding he is confident with this budget plan; it shows we are willing to work with the Town.

Mr. Nunes provided his thoughts on what to do with the \$300,000 (from the kindergarten stabilization funds) to help with positions that are not being funded and agreed with Mr. Oliver's comments about not spending school choice funds in one year.

Ms. Beckwith asked about the maintenance reduction specifically what would we be sacrificing.

Mr. Kiely responded he included an increase in the maintenance budget to address preventative and predictive maintenance efforts in the seven buildings.

Mr. Kiely was pleased to report the Select Board approved the Statement of Interest for the Dartmouth Middle School building at its meeting last night.

Ms. Coughlin entered the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Ms. Coughlin stated she appreciates the Town finding more money for us and the schools need this and they need more than the 4.5 noting the school committee can't ignore the revenue problems of the town adding she would like to meet that 4.5% increase.

Ms. Coughlin stated she would like to use the kindergarten stabilization funds adding it could help with unfunded things within the budget.

Mr. Nunes reviewed his comments around the kindergarten stabilization fund that he made earlier in the meeting adding if the matter can be placed on the warrant for town meeting.

Mr. Kiely stated the Select Board, at its meeting last night, voted to close the warrant but stated he was not sure if that was to all new articles or citizen petition articles reiterating he has meeting with the Town Administrator tomorrow morning and can inquire.

Mr. Kiely stated he hesitates to use one-time funds for recurring items but agreed the funds do need to be used at some point adding we are still "short"; Mr. Kiely stated the kindergarten stabilization account has \$367,000.

Mr. Oliver stated his feelings are that we should spend these funds.

Mr. Nunes asked Dr. Saba-Maguire and Mr. Kiely if they are looking for a motion from us for the \$58.2 for your meeting tomorrow.

Mr. Kiely stated he would like a consensus so that he can relay that to the Town Administrator.

Mr. Nunes stated he is "good" with the presentation.

Mr. Oliver stated he is "good."

Ms. Beckwith agreed.

Ms. Coughlin agreed.

Mr. Kiely stated he will keep the Committee "posted" and will get ready for the next meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Ms. Beckwith to adjourn at 12:08 p.m. into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(2), to conduct grievance hearing pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement between the Dartmouth School Committee and the Dartmouth Educators Association and pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 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. (DAA, DEA, AFSCME) and not to return to open session. On a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously: 4-0. Mr. Oliver – Yes; Ms. Beckwith – Yes; Mr. Nunes – Yes and Ms. Coughlin – Yes.

Respectfully submitted,



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

Open Session - Documents/Exhibits

-Agenda

-FY27 Budget – Revised Proposal

-FY27 Projected Kindergarten Enrollment