

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

May 18, 2026

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

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mary Beckwith at 6:00 p.m. in the Dartmouth High School Library Media Center. The Chair announced the meeting is being recorded for future broadcast over DCTV.

On a roll call the following members were present: Elizabeth Coughlin, Chris Oliver, Kathleen Amaral, John Nunes and Mary Beckwith.

Also present: Dr. June Saba-Maguire, James Kiely, Student Representative Charlotte Alphonse and Ms. Genthner.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered.

RECOGNITION

Superintendent's Certificate of Excellence Award: Ms. Beckwith invited the Superintendent to present the matter.

Dr. Saba-Maguire provided background information about the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Certificate of Academic Excellence and invited Ryan Shea, Principal of Dartmouth High School (DHS), to make the presentations.

Mr. Shea announced that DHS seniors Breanna Waite, who will attend Tulane University in the fall to study biology, and Sophia Rutkowski, who will attend the University of New Hampshire in the fall to study nursing, are the 2025-2026 recipients of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Certificate of Academic Excellence.

Mr. Shea highlighted Ms. Waite's and Ms. Rutkowski's many accomplishments while students at DHS.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral to approve the Regular Session Minutes of May 4, 2026, as written. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Ms. Coughlin to approve the Executive Session Minutes of May 4, 2026 as written, with the stipulation that they be held until the matters under consideration are resolved. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

DHS Freshman Charlotte Alphonse provided updates on activities and events happening at Dartmouth High School (DHS).

- Special Olympics held last Friday
- Junior Banquet was a Success
- AP Exams have concluded
- Seniors are currently presenting their Senior Capstone Projects
- Senior Awards Night will be held this Thursday

SPOTLIGHT ON KIDS – Potter Elementary School: Melissa McHenry, Principal of Potter Elementary School respectively, gave brief comments about the focus of tonight's *Spotlight* and invited Caitlin Sullivan, Literacy Coach for Potter School, to speak about literacy at Potter School.

Mrs. McHenry began the evening's presentation by stating "we" are going to show CKLA (the District's new literacy curriculum program) in action and invited Caitlin Sullivan, Potter School Literacy Coach, to share the accomplishments at Potter relating to literacy.

Ms. Sullivan spoke about Potter School's partnership with the North Dartmouth Library noting that the library has a CKLA trade book list to complement the information the children are learning through the CKLA unit at school.

Ms. Sullivan described the *Minute Madness* program students participated in this past year noting the number of reading minutes from Dartmouth adding Potter contributed 1/3rd of those minutes; Dartmouth was recognized as the most read town in the state due to its participation in this program.

Potter School Second Graders shared what they are learning in CKLA and presented items they made to the School Committee.

Benjamin Grande, Assistant Principal of Potter Elementary School, described the slides in the PowerPoint presentation that was shared during the presentation which expanded on the information concerning CKLA units which are being taught at all grade levels at Potter.

Mrs. McHenry continued the presentation by addressing other work being done by students that adhere to other focus areas of the District Strategic Plan including matters that align with Safe and Supportive Schools and Family Engagement.

Potter School Fifth Grader Leaders spoke about the School's Black Earth Composting Program.

Mrs. McHenry recognized staff who assisted with tonight's presentation: Mrs. Goodman, Ms. Sullivan, Mrs. DaSilva and Ms. Chicca.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Beckwith stated Dr. Saba-Maguire is recommending the following request.

- Permission for the DHS Sailing Team to Participate in National Competition in Maryland

Dr. Saba-Maguire provided further details noting Andrew Crisafulli, District Athletic Director, was present to answer any questions.

Mr. Nunes asked if students would be able to do any site seeing.

Mr. Crisafulli responded we are hoping to put together a "nice" itinerary for the students.

Mr. Oliver moved, seconded by Mrs. Amaral, to approve the request. The motion passed: 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion on Town Budget Advisory Group's Suggestion Regarding School District Audit: Ms. Beckwith opened discussion on the matter inviting Mr. Oliver to start noting it was his suggestion to include the matter on tonight's agenda.

Mr. Oliver thanked the Chair and the Committee for agreeing to include the matter on the agenda for discussion and reiterated his concerns about the future of School District funding indicating that a future option is, potentially, an override which is not popular adding if citizens still have questions about the school district and feel the information is only coming from the School Department this suggestion by members of the Town Budget Advisory Group to have a third party review the school department might help to change some minds in the community; Mr. Oliver noted there is a Budget Advisory Group meeting tomorrow which he, Ms. Coughlin and Mr. Kiely will attend.

Mr. Oliver commented he thinks this is a worthwhile endeavor to show a "good faith" effort.

Ms. Coughlin stated she concurs with Mr. Oliver noting "we" have given reports of how we use our monies and how we have "tightened our belts", I "am fine" with having an outside party ask questions and put together a report but "before we get much further I'd want to know exactly what needs to be in the report" and I think all Town departments should be answering the same questions to have an "even" view of all the departments.

Ms. Coughlin stated she would hope the cost of the study would be paid by the Town.

Ms. Beckwith asked about next steps and how would we know what "they are seeking."

Ms. Coughlin responded that would be discussed at tomorrow's meeting.

Mr. Oliver stated he would not want to take a vote tonight; he is looking to get a feel from the Committee and report back to the Budget Advisory Group tomorrow.

Ms. Beckwith asked if it would be helpful to share the audits and reports the School Department has already done with the Budget Advisory Group.

Dr. Saba-Maguire stated we can work on this.

Mrs. Amaral stated she finds this request for an audit "disrespectful" adding "we" are an open book and Mr. Kiely provides financial information in a way that is understandable adding the school department does not return money to the Town at the end of a fiscal year because it only asks for what it needs and to spend money on what has already been provided "feels foolish"; if we must proceed I agree it needs to be equitable across all departments.

Mr. Nunes stated he is not in favor of "this"; it will create more work for the school department for information that has already been provided and if this goes forward the school department should not pay for it and it will be a waste of money for the Town; there has to be trust adding he trusts the central office staff implicitly.

Mr. Oliver clarified he is looking at this operationally and comparing ourselves to similar districts he has complete trust in the District.

Dr. Saba-Maguire referred to Ms. Beckwith's request to compile a list of audits and reports stating different entities that come to the School District are independent of the Department of Education; when

the Department of Education comes to do a review, they don't come themselves they hire an outside group to review District departments including finances; adding we do not audit ourselves.

Dr. Saba-Maguire continued stating she feels what needs to happen is less about compiling a list of the different ways the District is reviewed, which is often, but more about helping the public understand what the independent audits and reviews actually produce, there may be a misunderstanding of what information is available presently noting the annual report submitted to the Town has much detail about the budget and how it supports the work happening in the schools.

Mr. Oliver reiterated this Committee does not need to be convinced what the District does for students; he is thinking about what "we" can do to educate registered voters about a possible override and eventually a debt exclusion for a new school building.

Dr. Saba-Maguire stated she is not opposed to another group that has the capacity to put together all the information that is available in a way that is clear for the public.

Mr. Kiely thanked the Committee for its confidence and stated he is not opposed to having someone look at anything we do adding we currently have 3 independent financial audits annually by conducted by certified public accountants: the Town audit; End- of-Year report which is the data we provide to the Department of Education which is represented in per pupil spending and Chapter 70 funding that is the source of that data and it is independently audited annually; and the annual Federal funding audit or the single audit.

Mr. Kiely stated it would make zero sense to do a financial audit; in terms of the study, the scope is unclear adding he does not know what answers are needed to satisfy the people who hope we do a study noting the Police Department is doing a study for appropriate staffing levels which is being referenced when talking about our potential study; if a study on staffing levels was proposed we could do it but I don't want to pay for it adding this is additional work especially writing an RFP (Request for Proposal).

Mrs. Amaral added it seems wasteful to hire someone to repackage information that is already publicly available.

Ms. Beckwith stated tomorrow's meeting is critical and it would be great to hear more about what folks are seeking at our next committee meeting adding if the Town seeks an override at any point we and the School Department will be called upon to provide information.

Ms. Beckwith asked if it would be helpful if we got information from similar sized school districts to compare percentages of respective town budgets.

Mr. Oliver stated he believes he, Ms. Coughlin and Mr. Kiely have enough to "go on" for tomorrow's Budget Advisory Group meeting.

Proposed Meeting Dates (July 2026 through June 2027): Ms. Beckwith stated Dr. Saba-Maguire has proposed the following meeting dates for July 2026 through June 2027 and asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the dates that were provided in the meeting packet and asked if there is any discussion or questions: **2026** July 20th; August 31st; September 14th; October 5th and October 26th; November 16th; December 14th; **2027** January 11th and 25th; February 8th; March 1st and 22nd; April 12th; May 3rd and 17th; and June 7th and 21st.

Mrs. Amaral stated she would be unable to meet at the proposed 5:00 p.m. start times for July and August.

Ms. Beckwith asked if 5:30 p.m. would be agreeable.

Dr. Saba-Maguire asked if the summer meetings would be better on a different day.

Mrs. Amaral stated she will do her best to make the 5:30 p.m. start time.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Ms. Coughlin to approve the meeting dates as proposed and to a 5:30 start time for summer meetings. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0.

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

- Teaching and Learning Update: Successful first year of CKLA implementation; Senior Capstone Presentations will take place this week at Dartmouth High School; May 29th three teams from DHS and DMS will participate in the Regional civics showcase at UMASS/Dartmouth; on June 3rd students from DeMello Elementary and Dartmouth Middle School will attend the Invention Convention at Bridgewater State University.
- Safe and Supportive Schools Update: Mr. Kiely and building principals have been meeting with District Fire Chiefs to review and strengthen evacuation procedures.
- Family and Community Engagement Update: No shortage of celebrations this time of year; Step Up days, Grade 8 graduation, Junior Banquet, Senior Prom and seniors will have graduated by the time this meeting meets next; survey being conducted on District communication practices.
- Budget and Capital Improvement Update: Town Meeting taking place on June 2nd Article 10 which supports funding for school capital improvements and Article 12 which supports operational funding for the District is to be voted on at this meeting. Mr. Kiely expressed gratitude for Town Boards are recommending approval of those articles and hopes they pass so the District can start the new fiscal year in the right way; update on current posted positions.
- Kindergarten enrollment update.

Report of the Chair: The Committee agreed to schedule a workshop for either August 18th or August 25th at 5:30 p.m. pending the availability of the Massachusetts Association of School Committee's representative who will be invited to participate.

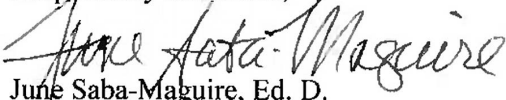
Other Matters that may not have been anticipated at the time of Agenda posting: Ms. Beckwith noted MASC and Division 10 are offering professional development options.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting: The Chair stated 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 on Monday, June 8, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to adjourn at 7:26 p.m. into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) and 22 (g) to review executive session minutes for potential release and not to return to open session. On a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously: 5-0. Ms. Coughlin– Yes; Mr. Oliver – Yes; Mrs. Amaral – Yes; Mr. Nunes - Yes and Ms. Beckwith – Yes.

Respectfully submitted,


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

Open Session - Documents/Exhibits

- Agenda
- Brief
- Superintendent's Certificates of Excellence
- Regular and Executive Session Minutes for May 4, 2026
- Proposed Meeting Dates