

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee, held Wednesday, April 27, 2016 at Charlton Middle School, Oxford Rd. Charlton, 7 p.m.

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Mary N. Antocci
Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair
Raymond J. Chalk, Vice Chair
Catherine M. Kabala
Joseph M. Pietrzak
Elaine M. Rabbitt
Stephanie A. Reed

Jack Bugar, Student Representative, was not in attendance

Also in attendance were Gregg J. Desto, Superintendent of Schools, Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators: Lorinda Allen, Terri A. Caffelle, Jody A. O'Brien, Dean W. Packard, John D. Paire, Mary A. Pierangeli; district teachers Diane Seibold, Kevin Foley; Charlton resident Stefan Sage; media representatives Debra LaPlaca, Telegram, Richard Earle, audio-visual coordinator, Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday April 13, 2016*

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by S. Reed to approve the minutes of Wednesday, April 13 with the additions as provided by Mrs. Antocci, and with a wording revision of one point by Mrs. Kabala, was approved by unanimous vote.

B. *Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, April 13, 2016*

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by S. Reed to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, April 13, 2016, was approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of Warrant

The following warrants were distributed and signed by a majority of members without further comment or questions:

Warrant #	Amount
51	\$845,074.78
52	<u>\$429,808.66</u>
Total	\$1,274,883.44

V. School Spotlight – Charlton Elementary School

This item was tabled.

VI. Citizens' Forum

No one spoke at this time.

VII. Communications

Mr. Desto had no communications.

1. Mrs. Antocci reported on an email she received from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees regarding a workshop on superintendent evaluation scheduled for May 7, which is the Charlton Town Election Day. An MASC field director will conduct the workshop as a free service of the MASC. Mrs. Antocci suggested potential dates on which the district could host the workshop and perhaps invite local districts to participate. She distributed an information brochure and offered potential dates on which the district could schedule its own workshop: May 16, 18, 23, 25, 31; June 1, 2, 7, 8. The committee agreed to host the event on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at 5 p.m., preceding the regularly scheduled school committee meeting at Charlton Middle School.

2. Mrs. Rabbitt reported on the MASC's workshop The Opiate Epidemic and Education, scheduled for Saturday, April 30 in Marlborough. She said this workshop supports the work of the district's Social/Emotional Wellness Roundtable.

3. Mrs. Rabbitt reported on Day on the Hill event sponsored by the MASC. She attended the session at the State House in Boston with Mrs. Reed, Mrs. Antocci and Mr. Mathieu. An opportunity to lobby for budget needs. Representative Alice Peich, D Wellesley, and Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, D, Boston spoke about the committee they co-chaired which reviewed the foundation budget funding formula.

Mrs. Rabbitt reported on the address by State Auditor Suzanne Bump at the Day on the Hill regarding recommendations for reducing the impact of state mandates on municipal finances. Policy recommendations come as part of a report from Ms. Bump's Division of Local Mandates which reviewed laws passed from 2011-2015 and found that municipalities are being inadvertently impacted by the cost of implementing programs mandated by the state. In her address to school committees and superintendent's, Ms. Bump spoke about the work of her office to ensure that when the legislature passes new requirements on to local governments, they provide the resources to implement the programs that are deemed important.

Mrs. Rabbit said the district delegation visited with Senator Ryan Fattman's Chief of Staff, and Representative Durant. She reported that Senator Anne Gobi was recognized during the event as the 2015 Legislator of the Year. This is the first time the award has been given to a freshman senator. Mrs. Rabbit said Ms. Gobi has done much in support of regional schools.

Mrs. Rabbit said Day on the Hill provided a fruitful opportunity for advocacy, and highlighted the talents of vocational school students who provided the luncheon.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

1. Mr. Desto extended thanks to committee on behalf of the Shepherd Hill Marching Band, for approving the request to travel to Disney World over April vacation. There are photographs on the district website showing the band marching down Main Street at the Magic Kingdom.

2. Mr. Desto said the Shepherd Hill Foreign Language Club concluded its travel to London, Madrid and Barcelona, returning home on Monday, April 25. He asked Principal Mary Pierangeli to report on the successful trip.

Mr. Desto said he is proud of the students' behavior and the work of the chaperones.

Mrs. Pierangeli said it was an outstanding trip. After a two-hour flight delay, the group left Boston at midnight and arrived in London on Saturday, April 16. Activities included riding the London Eye, touring the Globe Theater, and Jack the Ripper's crime scenes, roman ruins and baths in Bath, Stonehenge, Windsor Castle and Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum before moving on the Madrid and Barcelona.

3. Mr. Desto reported on several upcoming events:

- April 28: Leaders' Breakfast featuring Senator Gobi and Representative Durant at 8:30 a.m.
- April 29: Charlton Elementary School Super Hero Spirit Day will be held at 2 p.m.
- April 29 and 30: Shepherd Hill Drama Club presents *Guys and Dolls* each evening at 7 p.m.
- 29th and 30th ***Guys and Dolls*** at 7 p.m.
- April 30: Charlton Earth Day with roadside cleanup, music, food and a pet show.

IX. Student Representative Report

This item was tabled.

X. New Business

A. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Update

Mrs. Rabbitt reported on the Budget and Finance Subcommittee meeting of Monday, April 25. She said the ability to have the house numbers in place and to see the positive changes in the numbers from the governor's proposal was very helpful, and hopefully, the numbers hold. Among the positive changes in the House budget is the Chapter 70 per pupil increase of an additional \$55.

Mrs. Rabbitt commended Mr. Desto and Mr. Mathieu for their methods of presenting information in a way that the subcommittee can really study it. She said the subcommittee unanimously supports the recommendations to be made this evening. She said the subcommittee members have worked in a manner that is respectful of what the district needs while recognizing what the towns can support.

The next subcommittee meeting will be Tuesday, May 10 at 9 a.m. to allow discussion prior to Charlton's Annual Town Meeting, which will be held on May 16. Dudley's meeting in May 23.

B. FY 2017 Budget (*Vote Required*)

Mr. Desto said everyone is aware of the budgetary issues the district is facing. Budget Memo #8 outlines proposals to reduce the budget to a level of assessments that he is hopeful the towns can support.

The proposed reductions include existing personnel: eliminating the Shepherd Hill director of student resources and one library media specialist in the district. The latter would leave two specialists. One would staff the Shepherd Hill library, with the other possibly splitting time between the two middle schools. Also proposed for reduction are the proposed positions of Grade 2 teacher at Dudley Elementary School, and an adjustment counselor at Shepherd Hill.

Mr. Desto said the FY 17 budget includes revenue of \$24 million for Chapter 70, or an increase of \$212,410 from last the present fiscal year, \$1.7 million for regional busing reimbursement, or a \$139,296 increase, and \$1.4 million for completed school construction. The kindergarten grant has been restored at \$80,000, and the district is also contributing an additional \$131,213 for a total of \$1.2 million, from its reserves. School Choice funds will provide \$1 million.

Mr. Desto said Senator Gobi had assured municipal leaders in March that the state aid increase and the kindergarten grant, while not 100% guaranteed, are reasonable expectations.

Mr. Desto said these decisions reflect difficult choices, and are based on the reality that we live in. He said the committee is put in the position to make decisions based on what is best for students. He said all these positions matter, the ones that are staying and the ones that are being cut.

These reductions reflect an additional \$696,170 above the \$462,176 that was cut at the April 13 meeting. While the budget does not meet the request by the Dudley Board of Selectmen for a maximum increase of 2.5%, it reflects only the increase as mandated by the state.

New positions being kept in the budget are grade 1 at Mason Road School; math/computer science teacher at Shepherd Hill, which restores a position cut two years ago; special education teacher at Heritage School, which is necessitated by a substantially separate program that will have 12 students next year.

Mr. Mathieu said there is risk involved in tonight's presentation. The original budget memo was written on April 22. He said he feels much more confident in the numbers after speaking with legislators at the Day on the Hill. He said the currently proposed FY 17 budget reflects an increase of 3%, or \$1.4 million over the current fiscal year.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by R. Chalk to accept a proposed FY 2017 budget of \$48,873,113, with assessments to Charlton of \$11,880,890, and to Dudley of \$7,259,813 for a total district assessment of \$19,148,703, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Sage asked what the Chapter 70 funds were. Mr. Mathieu replied that the governor's budget funded a \$20 per student increase, which was restored to \$25. The House budget shows a \$55 per pupil increase. This is reflected in the district's proposed budget.

C. Finance Director Update (*Vote May be Required*)

Mr. Mathieu presented for the committee's consideration several donations:

Dudley Elementary School Caring Continues Account	\$160
Dudley Middle School morning breakfast account	\$2,000

484 Phi Alpha Foundation donation to two middle schools \$2,000

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by J. Pietrzak to accept the donations as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu recommended the committee vote to withdraw the warrant article placeholders in both towns. The Department of Revenue has indicated it is not possible for regional schools to sponsor warrant articles seeking debt exclusions. Instead, in the future, the district will vote an assessment to the towns and it would be in the towns' jurisdiction to fund the assessment or not through an appropriate mechanism.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by J. Pietrzak to withdraw the annual town meeting warrant article placeholders, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu said the French River Education Collaborative has bid an electricity future contract, which would run from November 2017 to November 2019 and bring all FREC participants to the end of the commitments at the same time. Mr. Mathieu said this would allow for larger aggregation in the future. The proposed contract price is a slight savings over the current contract.

Mr. Mathieu recommended the committee extend its electricity contract through French River Education Collaborative with Champion Energy Services at the rate of .08192 per kilowatt hour.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by J. Pietrzak to authorize the finance director to extend its electricity contract with Champion Energy Services at the rate of .08192 per kilowatt hour, was approved by unanimous vote.

D. Consideration to Amend Policy JKA, Student Restraint (*Vote Required, First Reading*)

Mr. Desto amended the policy in response to Mrs. Rabbitt's concerns for the outlet for parent engagement. A summary of the policy and a link to the full policy will be included in the school handbook with the changes highlighted.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by S. Reed to waive the reading of Policy JKA, was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to amend the policy on first reading, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Rabbitt clarified the component of the parent engagement by saying the language in the handbook needs to direct parents to where they can get more information about the restraint policy.

She also requested that the schedule of reporting to the school committee include an annual notice of the numbers of restraints that will be reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

E. School Choice – Discussion

Mrs. Antocci requested this item to begin discussion on ways to reduce the district's dependency on School Choice overall. Mrs. Antocci said it is worthwhile for the committee to hold additional meetings to look at the budget in a different way and determine creative funding avenues. She said it is important to begin this discussion in advance of next year's budget.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the district's delegation to Day on the Hill spoke to the representatives about School Choice. In looking at next year's budget discussions, she said the district has no alternative. She said the committee has to come at this in a different manner and look at how the district budget is built. She said this is the last year that we can move forward without making dramatic, painful choices. Everyone's perspective is important, she said, so the issue cannot be confined to subcommittee meetings.

Subcommittee members will discuss new ideas at the meeting of May 10 and will include discussion of proposal for how new ideas can be explored.

It was suggested that meetings be scheduled after the FY 17 budget is settled.

Mrs. Antocci agreed with this schedule.

XI. Next Meeting Dates

Thursday, April 28, 2016

- Leaders Breakfast, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 8:30 a.m.
- Wage and Benefits Schedule for Support Personnel negotiations, 10:30 a.m.

May 10, 2016

- Budget and Finance Subcommittee, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, at 9 a.m.

School Committee Meetings

- Wednesday, May 11, 2016 - Shepherd Hill Regional High School, Dudley, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 25, 2016 - Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, 5 p.m. beginning with MASC workshop

XII. Future Agenda Items – FY 2017 Budget, Policy JKA, second reading, STEAM Director update, Finance Director's contract, preparation for town meeting (in superintendent's report).

XIII. Executive Session – “...to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation.”

The chair entertained a motion to enter executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, and to return to open session for any necessary votes and adjournment, and this was approved on unanimous roll call vote at 8:06 p.m.

The committee returned to open session at 9:08 p.m.

XIV. Adjourn

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by S. Reed to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 9:08 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include:

Agenda for April 27, 2016	Superintendent's Report of Friday, April 22, 2016	Minutes of Regular School Committee Meeting of April 13, 2016	Minutes of Executive Session of April 13, 2016
Finance Director's Reports 1 and 2	FY 2017 Budget Memo #8	District Policy JKA	Charlton Earth Day Flyer

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary