

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee
Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Rd. Dudley, 7:00 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, Karen Ares, Terri A. Caffelle, Doris Dono, Jody A. O'Brien, Dean W. Packard, John D. Paire, Mary A. Pierangeli; district teachers Brooke Beverly, Julianne Winans, Diane Seibold, Cindy Rawson; principal appointees: Robin Parmley, William Chaplin; John Grondalski; media representatives, Rich Earle, audio-visual coordinator, Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday March 23, 2016*

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Wednesday, March 23, 2016, was approved by unanimous vote.

B. *Minutes of the Executive Session of Wednesday, March 23, 2016*

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, March 23, 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
48	\$628,698.33
49	\$56,112.63
Total	\$684,810.96

V. School Spotlight – Dudley Elementary and Heritage School

Heritage School Art Teacher Cindy Rawson introduced the children who read statements about their involvement with the African Arts in education program that has been enjoyed at Heritage School for the past three years and was shared with Dudley Elementary School this year. Julianne Winans introduced the students from Des. The program links art, music and engineering as children constructed masks and joined in a concert featuring the African drums and dance.

The program is made possible by grant funding from both the Janet Malser Humanities Trust and the Dudley Charlton Education Foundation.

VI. Citizens' Forum

Michelle Lilly, Smith Road, Charlton, expressed her concerns about the effect of school choice students on class sizes at the middle school.

She also stated it would be helpful for parents of seventh graders to get a sense of what is available at Shepherd Hill to aid in the decision of where to send their child for high school.

VII. Communications

Mr. Desto had no communications.

Mrs. Rabbitt had two items:

She attended the Rural Schools Workshop sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools on April 12 at Pathfinder Regional High School in Palmer. Although the district does not fit the criteria of a rural school, we face the same challenges of providing high quality schools with declining enrollment and limited financial resources. Resources can be expanded by partnering with other districts.

Mrs. Rabbitt recognized Catherine Fengler, an eighth grader at Charlton Middle School, who participated independently in Project 351, a leadership program established by former governor Deval Patrick for students interested in public service. Through the Cradles to Crayons initiative, Miss Fengler collected clothing and supplies for underserved individuals.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Desto called attention to several upcoming events:

Friday, April 15: The Shepherd Hill Foreign Language Group leaves for London, Madrid, and Barcelona.

Wednesday, April 27: STEAM Night at Dudley Elementary School. Star Wars theme.

Thursday, April 28, 2016, Leaders Breakfast, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 8:30 a.m.

Thursday, April 28, 2016: Representatives from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health will lead a workshop on emotional health with the topic of anxiety and stress, at 8 a.m.

IX. Student Representative Report

This item was tabled.

X. New Business

A. Principal Search Committees Update

The Mason Road School and Shepherd Hill Principal Search Committees have concluded their work, and Mr. Desto introduced the two new principals who were in attendance.

The Mason Road committee of Jody O'Brien, Catherine Kabala, Lori Pacheco, Theresa Veilleux, Kim Lundquist and Karen Swenson chose Robin L. Parmley at the next principal. Mrs. Parmley is currently a principal of the A.M. Chaffee School in Oxford. Mr. Desto thanked Mrs. Dono for her assistance throughout the process, and for her devotion to the school, which helped the committee choose the perfect leader.

The Shepherd Hill committee of Raymond Chalk, Mary Antocci, Lorinda Allen, John Paire, Christopher Stowe, Thomas Courtemanche, Jamie Congdon, and Connie Galli chose William F. Chaplin as the next principal. He currently serves as assistant principal at King Philip Regional High School in Wrentham. Mr. Desto thanked Mrs. Pierangeli for her insight into the school, which allowed the committee to make the right decision.

Mrs. Parmley said she is thrilled to return to her roots in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District. Mr. Chaplin said it is an honor and privilege to join the district.

B. Consideration of School Choice Participation, 2016-17 School Year (*Vote Required*)

Mr. Desto said the district has been successful with School Choice. It has aided the district financially and has brought wonderful students to our community. Mr. Desto said he shares the concern for class sizes, and noted the Strategic Plan initiative to reduce class sizes at grades 1, 2, 3. He cautioned about allowing the revenue to overshadow the concern for class size.

Mr. Desto recommended opening 11 spots at Charlton Middle School: 7 seats in Grade 5; 2 seats in Grade 6; 2 seats in Grade 7; and 30 spots at Shepherd Hill.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve School Choice as recommended, was approved by a vote of 4-3. In favor were Mr. Pietrzak, Mrs. Kabala, Mr. Chalk, and Mrs. Aucoin. Opposed were Mrs. Reed, Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Antocci.

Among the concerns discussed were:

- First and foremost, impact to students and learning as a result of increased class sizes
- The history of actual school year class sizes exceeding the projected sizes of classes with school choice students
- The per pupil expenditures of \$11,000 exceed the \$5,000 per pupil revenue received from school choice
- The increasing necessity to support the "whole child," their needs and all that this means also raises the real costs per pupil
- Increases in student numbers raises the potential for the need for additional teachers and/or support personnel, increasing salary and benefit costs
- If student numbers decrease in any given year, we then are faced with either further increasing school choice numbers to fill the classroom, or eliminating positions, neither of which is desirable
- Use of school choice revenues to fund salaries increases our dependence on school choice, and perpetuates the situation we are in
- Increases in school choice students increases the very real situation in which some of our in-district students are not able to get into classes or opportunities because they are vying for the same

opportunities with school choice students (for example, foreign language classes, pathways, sports, show choir, band)

- While it may look good on paper to help meet budgetary obligations, it warrants a closer look at the costs to our in-district students

Also presented was the numbers of actual class sizes experienced in September 2015:

- 78 sections of classes at Shepherd Hill of 24 or more
- 52 sections of class at Shepherd Hill of 25 or more
- 23 sections of classes at Shepherd Hill of 27 or more
- 6 sections of classes at Shepherd Hill of 30 or more

(These numbers exclude physical education and music classes)

- 6 classes at the elementary and middle schools with 25 or 26 plus students

Supporters said school choice funds have helped fund several positions while it supports the operating budget. Voting it down this year would create a \$205,000 gap.

Mr. Pietrzak said he accepts the recommendation of the administration that the proposed seats will not have adverse effects on the learning environment.

Mr. Desto said neighboring districts are participating aggressively in school choice.

C. FY 2017 Budget (*Vote Required*)

Mr. Mathieu presented two budget memos, #6 and #7 to outline potential budget reductions. He said a decrease in special education tuition, not purchasing the social studies curriculum and cutting the 1.5 middle school foreign language positions totals \$172,176. He also brought forward additional reductions in health insurance, custodial substitute hours and cutting the proposed grade 3 teaching position for a total of \$290,000 possible reduction. The total proposed reduction is \$462,176.

The Health Insurance Advisory Committee is recommending the district consolidate its health plan offerings next year to one carrier – keeping the PPO and HMO plans as currently offered by Blue Cross/Blue Shield, in addition to a new, higher deductible plan. The school committee must vote to approve this proposal which will help balance the Health Trust Fund.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to approve the one carrier – Blue Cross / Blue Shield's PPO and HMO, and a higher deductible plan, was approved unanimously.

Mr. Mathieu said the House budget released this afternoon shows an increase in state aid of \$135,170 in Chapter 70, and \$180,173 in regional transportation, for a total potential reduction of \$777,519. This would reduce the proposed increase to the FY 2017 budget to \$2 million.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to reduce the FY 2017 budget by the combined totals in budget memos 6 and 7, with the increased state aid as provided by the House budget, or \$777,519, was amended.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to approve a reduction of the FY 2017 budget with the figures outlined on budget memos 6 and 7, or \$462,176 for a total budget of \$49,407,900, was approved by a vote of

5-2. Voting in favor were Mrs. Antocci, Mrs. Aucoin, Mr. Chalk, Mrs. Kabala, Mr. Pietrzak. Opposed were Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Reed.

Members agreed they were not confident about the Chapter 70 increase of \$135,170.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk, to direct the finance director to lower the town assessments based on the House budget increase of \$180,173 in regional transportation reimbursements, and the \$105,000 gained from the additional 21 school choice spots approved earlier, for a total of \$285,173, was approved by a vote of 5-2. Voting in favor were Mrs. Antocci, Mrs. Aucoin, Mr. Chalk, Mrs. Kabala, Mr. Pietrzak. Opposed were Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Reed. Mr. Mathieu will compute the change to the assessments for a vote later in the meeting.

D. Finance Director Update (*Vote May Be Required*)

Mr. Mathieu said the facilities assessment of Shepherd Hill has been completed and is being reviewed. The company will discuss the findings with administrators and ultimately with the school committee at an upcoming meeting.

The district business office is developing an accounting procedures manual as recommended by the auditor, and this will be presented to the committee in June.

E. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Update

Mrs. Rabbitt reported on the subcommittee's meeting of Monday, April 11, 2016, in which the members reviewed possible budget reductions and recapped the March 31 Joint Financial Planning Meeting. The next meeting will be held Monday, April 25, at 11 a.m. to review the cuts made this evening, and to adjust the budget in preparation for town meeting.

F. Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative, 2nd Quarter Report – *Discussion*

The 2nd quarter report was presented to the members for their review.

Members complimented the report as comprehensive as it highlighted the collaborative's excellent work.

G. Consideration to Amend District Policy JKA, Restraint of Students in Public Schools, First Reading (*Vote Required*)

The committee received a redlined amendment of Policy JKA necessitated by new legislation which took effect in January.

A motion was made by M. Antocci, seconded by S. Reed to waive the actual reading of policy JKA, and this was approved.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the policy on first reading.

Mrs. Rabbitt sought clarification regarding reporting requirements.

Mr. Chalk withdrew his second, Mrs. Reed withdrew her motion.

Changes will be made and the policy will be brought back at the next meeting for first reading.

H. Consideration of Request for Leave of Absence, 2016-2017 School Year, Article XV, Item L (*Vote Required*)

Shepherd Hill teacher Jacquelin Govoni has requested a leave of absence for one year to allow her to study nursing. She said the coursework will benefit her classroom biology instruction, but ultimately is a means to a career change.

Policies of this nature can only be approved for one year, and the leave is unpaid.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to approve the request for a leave of absence consistent with Article XV, Item L. of the Agreement Between the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District and the Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association, was approved by unanimous vote.

I. Consideration to Authorize Chaperones, 2016 European Travel (*Vote Required*)

At its meeting of Wednesday, June 10, 2015, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee approved the request by the Shepherd Hill Foreign Language Club for travel to London, Barcelona and Madrid during the April 2016 vacation, the chaperones were not known. Mr. Desto recommended for approval the request of Mrs. Pierangeli to authorize the 11 chaperones of the 69 students to receive discounted travel, including lodging, transportation and some meals, as the educational benefit outweighs the value of these items.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to authorize the chaperones consistent with CMR 5.05Ck, to receive discounted travel, including lodging, transportation and some meals, as the educational benefit outweighs the value of these items, was approved by unanimous vote.

J. Consideration of Request for Home Instruction, Policy IHGB (*Vote Required*)

A Dudley resident has requested to home school her daughter in grade 5 for the remainder of the 2015-2016 school year. She has enrolled her daughter in the Pearblossom Private School, Inc., an online home school program. Mr. Desto said this request is unusual this late in the year; however, after investigating the reason for the request, he recommends approval.

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the request for home instruction as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

K. Consideration to Post Essential Positions, 2016-2017 School Year (*Vote Required*)

In keeping with tradition, Mr. Desto requested the committee's authorization to post 2016-2017 essential positions. These are budget positions that are opening due to retirements or resignations. The positions are: Shepherd Hill: teacher of social studies, school nurse, teacher of special education, teacher of chemistry; Mason Road School/Dudley Elementary School: teacher of physical education; Dudley Elementary School: Teacher of Grade 2 special education; Charlton Middle School: school nurse; Heritage School: teacher of grade 2; Dudley Middle School: teacher of grade 8 social studies.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the request to post essential positions for the 2016-2017 school year as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

XI. Next Meeting Dates

- Budget and Finance Subcommittee, Monday, April 25, 2016, Shepherd Hill, 11 a.m.

- Wednesday, April 27, 2016 - Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, April 28, 2016 – *Leaders’ Breakfast*, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 8:30 a.m.
- Wage and Benefit Schedule, April 28, 10:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, May 11, 2016 – Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 7 p.m.

XII. Future Agenda Items – FY 2017 Budget, policy JKA, pick up and drop off of students.

Mr. Mathieu recapped the budget actions made this evening. The original budget was \$49,870,076, which reflects revenues of \$1,793,075 in regional transportation reimbursement based on the House budget increase released today, and \$24,151,183 in Chapter 70 aid based on the governor’s budget.

Reductions this evening were
 \$462,176 from the reductions proposed in memos 6 and 7
 \$105,000 from 11 additional School Choice seats

With the total reduction made this evening of \$567,176, the FY 2017 budget is proposed as \$49,302,900, with assessments to Charlton of \$12,262,771, and to Dudley of \$7,582,102.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to approve a proposed FY 17 budget of \$49,302,900, with assessments to Charlton of \$12,262,771, and to Dudley of \$7,582,102, was approved by a vote of 5-2. Voting in favor were M. Antocci, P. Aucoin, R. Chalk, C. Kabala, J. Pietrzak. Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Reed were opposed.

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 or litigation, and to reconvene in open session for a vote if necessary and to adjourn. This was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 9:05 p.m.

The committee returned to open session at 9:57 p.m.

XIV. Adjourn

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 9:57 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include:

<i>April 13, 2016 Agenda</i>	<i>Superintendent’s Report of April 8, 2016</i>	<i>Regular Meeting minutes of Wednesday, March 23, 2016</i>	<i>Executive Session Minutes of Wednesday, March 23, 2016</i>
<i>Budget Memos #6 and 7 Finance Director’s Report</i>	<i>Chaperone Disclosure</i>	<i>Class Counts IEP</i>	<i>Policy JKA proposed for amendment</i>
<i>Letters to Selectmen</i>	<i>MCAS Remediation</i>	<i>SWCEC 2nd Quarter Report</i>	<i>School Choice Recommendations</i>