

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee
Wednesday, January 11, 2017, at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley Oxford Road, Dudley, MA
01571, 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 was not in attendance
Elaine M. Rabbitt
Stephanie A. Reed

Jack A. Cederberg, Student Representative

Also in attendance were Gregg J. Desto, Superintendent of Schools, Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators: Lorinda Allen, Karen Ares, William Chaplin, Jody A. O'Brien, Dean W. Packard, John D. Paire, Robin L. Parmley, Diane Seibold; Charlton resident Stefan Sage; media representatives Deb LaPlaca, Telegram, Rich Earle, audio-visual coordinator, Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Moment of Silence

The chair called for a moment of silence in memory of students, Katie LaPrise, age 6, and Emily Dabrowski, a Shepherd Hill senior.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, December 14, 2016*

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Wednesday, December 14, 2016, as amended, was approved by a vote of 5-0, with Mrs. Reed abstaining.

B. *Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, December 14, 2016*

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, December 14, 2016, as amended, was approved by a vote of 5-0, with Mrs. Reed abstaining.

V. Approval of Warrant

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

Minutes of the School Committee
Meeting of January 11, 2017

Warrant #32 -	\$1,428.68
Warrant #34	\$286,348.67
Warrant #112D	\$464,841.92
Warrant #112P	\$1,172,979.31
Total	\$1,925,598.58

VI. Citizens' Forum

No one spoke at this time.

VII. School Spotlight – Dudley Elementary School

Interim Principal Diane Seibold introduced students who modeled the school's social skills curriculum for the committee. The program teaches social skills and social thinking. Dudley Elementary School has been using this program for five years, and it has been expanded to the entire building. Student Detectives search for expected and unexpected behaviors, and demonstrate whole body listening.

Mrs. Rabbitt asked for a follow up on social thinking curriculum in the other schools. Mrs. Rabbitt said this approach is usually offered as a direct service to individual students and is pleased that the concept is used throughout the whole school.

VIII. Communications

Mr. Desto had no communications to report.

Mr. Chalk announced a blood drive in Emily Dabrowski's memory will be held Saturday, February 11 at the Charlton Public Library from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mrs. Aucoin received a letter from the Dudley Middle School National Junior Honor Society thanking her for attending the induction ceremony in December.

IX. Superintendent's Report

1. Mr. Desto informed the committee that he was contacted by the State Department of Labor Relations regarding the negotiations with the Massachusetts Nurses Association on behalf of the district's nurses. The district needs to obtain a person or agency to serve as a neutral party. Mr. Desto asked the committee to authorize the Department of Labor Relations to serve in that capacity.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to authorize the Department of Labor Relations to serve as the neutral party throughout negotiations with the Massachusetts Nurses Association, was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Mr. Desto thanked Mrs. Allen for organizing a meaningful day of professional development on January 3 with author Dave Burgess.
3. Mr. Desto and Mr. Chaplin accompanied Matthew Spahl and Joshua Martin-Jaffe to the awards luncheon sponsored by the Worcester County Superintendent's Association held January 10 at Clark University, Worcester.

4. Mr. Desto will host area superintendents for a Regional Budget Task Force meeting Thursday, January 12. Participants will explore cost sharing possibilities.
5. The award winning Dudley Middle School and Charlton Middle School show choirs will participate in the Mill City Show Choir festival Saturday, January 14.
6. Shepherd Hill will host the 2017 Central Massachusetts Show Choir Festival Friday, February 3 at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, February 4 at 9 a.m. (unisex and small mixed choirs) and 5:30 p.m. (large, mixed choirs).
7. Mr. Desto thanked the students and staff at Shepherd Hill for coming together to help each other through the difficult time following the death of Emily Dabrowski. Mr. Desto said the staff conducted themselves with compassion and strength and set a great example.

X. Student Representative Report – Jack Cederberg

1. Mr. Cederberg expanded on Mr. Desto’s statement, and thanked him and Mr. Chaplin for their support in these difficult days.
2. Shepherd Hill Student Council conducted a very successful Sock Drive to benefit Andy’s Attic at South High, Worcester. The drive netted 440 pairs of socks, as well as hats, gloves. The council was also able to provide a \$150 donation to the cause.

XI. New Business

A. FY 2018 Budget Update

Mr. Desto discussed the FY 2018 budget schedule. He plans to present budget priorities at the Jan. 25 meeting. The initial budget will be presented on Feb. 8.

The committee will have a budget workshop on Feb. 15 in lieu of a second monthly meeting. Mr. Desto requested the committee allow some of the administrators to present their budget requests at that meeting.

The public hearing will be held on March 22.

Mr. Desto will set a date for the Leaders’ Breakfast.

Mrs. Rabbitt asked if the budget and finance subcommittee will schedule more frequent meetings.

B. Director of Finance and Operations Report (*Vote Required*)

Mr. Mathieu presented two donations:

Charlton PTO to Charlton Middle School for headphones in technology and STEM labs	\$563.60
Anonymous donation to Dudley Middle School for technology	<u>\$100.00</u>
	\$663.60

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

Mr. Mathieu presented a list of surplus equipment, which he said is primarily from the Shepherd Hill weight room. Mr. Mathieu said the equipment is not being used as it is old, and broken.

Mr. Mathieu requested the committee declare the items as obsolete and authorize the finance director to dispose of the items using best business practices.

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by M. Antocci to declare the weight room equipment as obsolete, and authorize disposal by the finance director, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu presented a 2016-2017 staffing report showing the budget perspective. Mr. Mathieu estimates the savings as between \$80,000-\$90,000, which will be returned to salary accounts.

Mr. Mathieu and the Wage and Benefit Subcommittee provided updated job descriptions for food service director and cafeteria managers. Mrs. Kabala said the descriptions do not need approval. She said the subcommittee may revamp other positions in the spring.

Mr. Mathieu distributed Excess and Deficiency figures from the state, saying the amount of \$1,562,479 is as anticipated, He said this will be used toward the FY 18 budgeting process.

Mr. Mathieu said there are deficits of \$265, 927 due to the health insurance fund, and \$10,006 for FY 16 Title IIA.

C. Consideration to Approve Stipend for Quinsigamond Community College Course at Shepherd Hill
(Vote Required)

Mr. Desto said one of the district's goals is to offer more college courses at Shepherd Hill Regional High School. STEAM Director Karen Ares has been working with QCC to teach classes at Shepherd Hill under the Dual Enrollment Partnership Grant. As a result, MNT 101: Mechanical CAD 1 will be offered during the Spring 17 semester during the regular school day for 3 QCC credits, and will be taught by Shepherd Hill Mechanical Drawing Teacher Shaune Ducharme. The grant offers free tuition, fees and \$150 toward books for up to 18 students interested in taking college credit course in high school.

In addition, Mrs. Ares sought the committee's approval of a \$2,500 stipend for a member of the Shepherd Hill faculty to teach a QCC course, CIS 111 Introduction to Microcomputer Applications, after school hours.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by S. Reed to approve the \$2,500 stipend as requested, was approved by unanimous vote.

D. Consideration to Amend District Policy JQ, Student Fees, second reading (Vote Required)

The correct version of the policy was presented for amendment on second reading.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to waive the reading of policy JQ, was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by S. Reed to approve and adopt the amended policy JQ on second reading, was approved by a vote of 5-0 with Mrs. Aucoin abstaining.

E. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Report

There was no meeting on which to report.

F. Shepherd Hill Building Committee Report (*Vote May be Required*)

The district has been notified by the Massachusetts School Building Authority that its Statement of Interest (SOI) was not selected for further consideration for the Core Program. Mr. Desto said the district is moving forward on its plan to conduct a feasibility study and submit another SOI for the Core Program by April 7, 2017. Mr. Desto said this allows time to submit an SOI that is different and, hopefully, more appealing, than the previous ones which have been unsuccessful.

Mr. Mathieu and Mr. Desto have contacted consulting firms specializing in helping districts and communities with crafting SOIs.

In addition, Mr. Desto has reached out to Bay Path administrators to see if they employed a firm prior to their building project. The MSBA will present a full day seminar at Bay Path on Feb. 6, which will walk participants through the process that lead to that school's renovation and addition.

Mr. Desto said the formal building committee members will be formed in the spring.

G. Consideration of Request for Overnight Travel, Policy IJOA (*Vote Required*)

Mr. Chaplin has presented the Shepherd Hill Student Council's request to travel to Hyannis March 8-10, 2017, to attend the Massachusetts Association of Student Councils Conference. Advisors Daniel Duffy and Corey Stefan will travel with 16 council members to the event at the Resort and Conference Center and at the Cape Codder Hotel. The conference provides students with motivational and educational experiences that enhance the workings of Shepherd Hill's council throughout the year. Mr. Desto recommended approval of the travel, as well as to authorize the chaperones to receive free and/or discounted travel, meals and lodging in the course of these duties, as the educational benefit to the students outweighs the cost of these items.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the request for overnight travel by the Shepherd Hill Student Council, and to authorize the chaperones to receive free and/or discounted travel, meals and lodging in the course of these duties, as the educational benefit to the students outweighs the cost of these items, was approved by unanimous vote.

H. Consideration to Approve 2017-2018 School Year Calendar (*Vote Required*)

Mr. Desto met with Mrs. Antocci and Mrs. Reed, Mrs. Allen and Kevin Foley and David Deremian of the Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association to craft a calendar that is traditional, yet contains exciting new additions:

1. No school on Sept. 1, to enable long weekend.
2. Early release on Dec. 22
3. Family Comes First Night, moves to March
4. Move away from spring parent conferences, as the sessions are more sparsely attended due to the availability of ongoing communication.

A motion was made by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the 2017-2018 school year calendar; however, the item was tabled after discussion.

Mrs. Rabbitt asked the committee to give more consideration before moving away from the spring parent-teacher conferences as she said this is valuable for some parents. Mrs. Rabbitt is concerned that this method of communication would be removed for those who do not have the technology to access online reporting. Mrs. Rabbitt asked that the district first devise a plan for staff to communicate with parents in lieu of that day.

Mr. Desto said the district needs to be more proactive in communicating with parents. The web portal had been expanded to allow parents to view students' grades. With attendance at spring conferences diminishing, Mr. Desto said the message is that there may be a better way to communicate.

Mrs. Kabala said she does not see the point of doing away with the spring conference.

Mrs. Reed said parents need to know before March whether their child is having academic issues, would not need the spring conference for that purpose. Mrs. Antocci agreed that the value of the conference is diminishing over time. Parents who need to attend are often those who don't.

This item was tabled. Mr. Desto will have an update at the next meeting; however, more than two weeks may be needed to come up with something more effective.

I. Consideration of Request for Home Instruction, Policy IHBG (Vote Required)

Mr. Desto presented the request by Judith Belezos of Dudley, to home school her daughter, Mia, in grade 6, for the remainder of the school year.

Mr. Desto said while the request arrives late in the year, he recommends approval based on the child's best educational interest.

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

J. Additional item:

Mr. Desto requested of the chair to present an additional item. Diane Seibold is requesting an uncompensated leave of absence from her position as School Psychologist at Dudley Elementary School to serve as interim principal at the school until the conclusion of the 2016-2017 school year. The request is made consistent with Article XV, item J of the Agreement Between the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District and the Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association 2016-2019.

Mr. Desto recommended approval.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to approve the request by Diane Seibold for a leave of absence for the remainder of the 2016-2017 school year, was approved by unanimous vote.

XII. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meetings:

- Wednesday, January 25, 2017, Charlton Middle School, 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 8, 2017, Shepherd Hill, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 15, 2017, Charlton Middle School (Budget Workshop), 6 p.m.

Budget and Finance Subcommittee:

- Wednesday, January 18, 2017, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 5 p.m.

XIII. Future Agenda Items – Auditors’ Report, FY 2018 Budget Priorities, Busing and Here Comes the Bus App, Colliers update and other firms

XIV. Adjourn

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 8:19 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include:

Agenda for Jan. 11, 2017	Superintendent’s Report of Jan. 6, 2017	School Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of Dec. 14, 2016
School Committee Executive Session Minutes of Dec. 14, 2016	2017-2018 school year draft calendar	Dual Enrollment Stipend Request and Course Description
Finance Director’s Report	Policy JQ amendment	Overnight Travel Request

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary