

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee of Wednesday, December 12, 2018, 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, Vice Chair
Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair
Cathleen Carmignani
Catherine M. Kabala
Elaine M. Rabbitt
Stephanie A. Reed
Jamie L. Terry

Ceilidgh O'Brien, Student Representative

Also in attendance were Kristine E. Nash, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools; Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators: Lorinda Allen, William Chaplin, Jennifer Desto, Barbara Marderosian, Diane Seibold, Christopher Starczewski; Dudley-Charlton Teachers Association President Kevin Foley; Charlton residents: Jody O'Brien, Stefan Sage; media representatives Rich Earle, Audio Visual Coordinator, Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. School Spotlight – Shepherd Hill Chorus

The Shepherd Hill Show Choir Fantasy performed two selections from the recent Holiday Spectacular.

Dr. Nash recognized Eric J. Prussman, who is the second recipient of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents' Award of Academic Excellence. Mr. Prussman was unable to attend the meeting in November. Eric is ranked second in his class with a 4.3 GPA. He served as class treasurer for four years, was a member of the drama club, student council, math team, foreign language club, Game Changers. The Dudley resident has been a member of the National Honor Society for three years and has earned perfect attendance awards in grades 9, 10, and 11. He is enrolled in four AP classes. Eric plans to go to college to become a cardiologist.

The committee recessed for photos at 7:14 p.m.

The committee returned at 7:21 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, November 14, 2018

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by S. Reed to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, November 14, 2018, as corrected, was approved by a vote of 5-0, with Mrs. Terry abstaining.

V. Approval of Warrants

The following warrants were distributed for signature without further comment or questions:

Payroll Warrant	Subcommittee Warrant	Accounts Payable Warrant
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Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
1246D	\$461,293.19	52	\$217,542.36	62	\$4,025.37
1246P	\$1,226,200.62	53	\$442,370.15	63	\$30.00
1247d	\$461,103.82	54	\$30.00	64	\$126,805.06
1247p	\$1,22,851.68	55	\$61,361.59		
		56	\$15.00		
		57	\$695,170.24		
		58	\$55,584.72		
		59	\$30.00		
		60	\$151,234.86		
		61	\$4,273.00		
Total	\$2,148,597.63	Total	\$1,627,611.92	Total	\$130,860.43

VI. Student Representative Report – Ceilidh O’Brien

Miss O’Brien reported on the beginning of the winter sports season. The Holiday Spectacular has become so popular and well attended, a third show was added on Saturday afternoon.

The Shepherd Hill chorus and band have their Holiday shows on Tuesday, December 18.

The NHS raised money to support nine community families during the season. The Toy Drive concludes on Dec. 14. Jace Porter was crowned Mr. Shepherd Hill in November. Eric Prussman was the first runner up.

VII. Citizens’ Forum

Mr. Stefan Sage, Charlton, reported on the results of the recent Telegram awards *Best of Central Massachusetts*. Charlton Elementary School, Dudley Middle School and Shepherd Hill were the best in their categories. Others in the running, Charlton Middle School, and Dudley Elementary School.

VIII. Communications

Dr. Nash reported that District Counsel James Cosgrove has donated to the Charlton Chip-In in the name of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee.

Dr. Nash expressed her appreciation and admiration of the Dudley Middle School Marching of the Gifts held Tuesday. Donations were delivered to the Tri-Community YMCA to support 344 children.

Mrs. Aucoin attended the National Junior Honor Society Induction ceremony at Dudley Middle School. She congratulated all the inductees.

Mrs. Terry noted that Heritage School’s annual pajama drive netted 400 pair for toddlers through fourth graders.

IX. Superintendent’s Report

- A. Special Topics Report: District Office Reorganization Report – MARS representative (*Vote May be Required*);

The committee invited representatives of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools to speak in support of its proposal to assist them in a study of district office staffing and provide a report on reorganization.

MARS Assistant Executive Director Steve Hemman and MARS Consultant Paul Gagliarducci are both retired superintendents who have conducted such studies for other area schools. The goal is to have the study completed by the time the permanent superintendent comes on board.

Mr. Hemman said the cost of the study will not exceed \$11,000. The study will consist of interviews with support staff, technology and facilities, and will conclude with a report by March 1 for budgeting purposes, should the recommendation be for an assistant superintendent. Mr. Hemman said a superintendent with 4,000 students and seven principals and four administrators reporting directly to him/her is daunting.

A motion by E. Rabbitt, seconded by M. Antocci to hire the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools to consult with the district in a study of the Central Office Operations, Technology and Facilities, at a cost not to exceed \$11,000, was approved by a vote of 5-2.

Voting in favor were M. Antocci, C. Carmignani, E. Rabbitt, S. Reed, J. Terry. Opposed were P. Aucoin, and C. Kabala.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the study will lead to a solution that allows for better utilization of our superintendent and how the central office runs so not everything is going into the superintendent's office. She continued, the cost investment provides a foundation of analysis to work with our new incoming superintendent. Mrs. Rabbitt said our structure does not have a second in command or clear definition of authority in the superintendent's absence.

Mr. Mathieu said the cost for the study will come from the Contingency account.

Mrs. Kabala said we are spending money from this account regularly with the hiring of Massachusetts Association of School Committees to conduct the superintendent search. Mrs. Kabala said the outcome of the study is to support an assistant superintendent at \$100,000. Mrs. Kabala said the committee should wait for a new superintendent to come on board to get involved. The recommendation may be to hire an assistant superintendent, which may cost \$100,000, and is something she could not support.

Mrs. Terry asked if the committee believes that any recommendations are possible now or as a long term plan and direction we should try to budget for.

Mrs. Rabbitt said if recommendation is for another administrator that may lead to redefining other positions, not necessarily adding a position. Mrs. Rabbitt said this will define our organizational structure and provide a foundation and analysis that does not prohibit the new superintendent from putting his/her stamp on it. Recommendations may take more than one year to implement. Mrs. Rabbitt said the committee cannot assume the next superintendent will be experienced. This study is an opportunity to rely on seasoned, experienced people to help us define the district.

Mrs. Aucoin said she would prefer the new superintendent be involved in this process.

Mrs. Terry said the new superintendent may well be appreciative that the committee had listened to the concerns expressed by previous superintendents about the nature of the position.

Mrs. Antocci said the study may uncover some inefficiencies in central office procedures that can lead to recovery of some of the \$11,000 spent on the study.

B. *FY 20 Budget Timeline*

Dr. Nash presented a draft budget timeline. She said the proposal to have all seven principals present their budgets at one meeting will not work. Dr. Nash is proposing to add another meeting to the schedule for the sole purpose of hearing the proposals.

The committee agreed to set those meetings on Wednesday and Thursday, February 6 and 7 at 7 p.m., in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings of February 13 and 27. The committee will vote its preliminary FY 2020 budget on Feb. 27.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to suspend policy BE, Time and Place and Special Meetings, to set meetings on Feb. 6 and 7, 2019 at 7 p.m., was approved by unanimous vote.

X. New Business

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

Mr. Mathieu presented donations for the committee's acceptance:

To Charlton Middle School from Charlton PTO for scanner	\$318.74
To Shepherd Hill from Sitkowski & Malboeuf Funeral Home to support the Annual First Honors Dinner	\$200.00
To Technology Department from Brian Lilley, two windows based computers	

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to accept the donations as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu provided an update on school choice funding. In FY 20, begin to build this fund back up. FY 16 budget compromise we used funding, balance, and has been a gradual decrease. Move STEAM Director to regular budget and shift away from the reliance on school choice.

Mr. Mathieu reported that Renee Paire has completed the requirements to establish the Friends of John Paire, Inc., as a 501C3 charitable organization with the Internal Revenue Service. An employee identification number and a bank account has been established for the funds raised through donations to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District following Mr. Paire's death in September 2017.

Mr. Mathieu recommended transferring the funds to the charitable organization.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Terry to transfer the funds from the John Paire Student Support Fund to the Friends of John Paire, Inc., was approved by unanimous vote.

B. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Report *(Vote May be Required)*

Mrs. Rabbitt said because there is only one school committee meeting this month, the subcommittee asked to bring forward an item relative to roof repairs at Charlton Middle School, Dudley Middle School, and Shepherd Hill. The subcommittee has discussed a process, but this was changed due to a successful bid protest against a vendor. To proceed with the process of looking at these repairs, the committee needs to solicit quotes from architects. Mr. Mathieu presented a timeline, which he termed as fairly aggressive, to get this matter before the town in preparation for budget season. The plan is to restore the roofs this summer at Dudley Middle School and Charlton Middle School, and replace a section of the roof at Shepherd Hill near the auditorium as it is beyond restoration. Mr. Mathieu asked the committee to allow the subcommittee to make a motion to authorize him to solicit quotes. If those quotes exceed \$30,000, the committee will need to go out to bid.

A motion by E. Rabbitt, seconded by S. Reed to authorize the finance director to solicit quotes for an architects design to restore Charlton Middle School and Dudley Middle School roofs, and to repair a section of the Shepherd Hill roof, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Kabala clarified that the bid protest had nothing to do with the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District.

Mr. Mathieu requested to be authorized to reach out to the town clerks to clarify the debt exclusion process.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to instruct the finance director to inquire about the debt exclusion process with Dudley and Charlton town clerks, was approved by unanimous vote.

C. Superintendent's Search Committee Update

Mrs. Rabbitt reported the applications for the Superintendent's position were closed on Nov. 30. Mrs. Rabbitt said 20 applications were received, and the information has been distributed to the search committee. The search committee will convene Wednesday, December 19 at 6 p.m. and will immediately go into executive session to review the applications and select semi-finalist candidates for interviews.

According to Tracy Novick of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, the district received tier one applicants. The search committee held its orientation meeting on Wednesday, November 28, 2018.

D. MASC/MASS Joint Conference Report

Mrs. Antocci reported on the sessions she attended at the Joint Conference of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents.

Among them were a Basics of Policy workshop. Mrs. Antocci said the committee's policies should not be detailed directions, and should be consistent with law. Committee need to determine whether the proposed policy is a current practice, and to determine whether current policies are working, and to repeal those that are not. Contracts trump policies.

Mrs. Antocci also attended a session that offered updates from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning educational preparation programs, teacher ambassadorships, licensure policy review, barriers to school entry, and blizzard bags.

Concerning the next generation MCAS 2.0, and efforts to update assessments, DESE is working on social science and history tests.

Mrs. Rabbitt said she will send the committee materials relative to sessions she attended.

E. Consideration to Amend 2018-2019 School Year Calendar *(Vote Required)*

Dr. Nash reported the current school year calendar contains parent-teacher conferences for fall, but not for spring 2019 for grades 5-12. At the time the calendar was approved, the subcommittee was awaiting information on an alternative to the spring conferences. The middle school and high school principals have proposed student showcases at their respective buildings on March 26 and 28 from 6-8 p.m. This will be a time to exhibit student work and directly ties in to the district's focus on Project Based Learning.

Dr. Nash recommended approval, saying the proposal has been vetted by the Dudley-Charlton Teachers Association.

Mrs. Kabala said she remarked at the time that this will present more work for the teachers who now have to produce something for this showcase. She said she has not heard a response.

Mr. Chaplin said it the showcases are student driven, and serve as a learning exposition. It will be combined with a college/career fair and open house for the eighth grade.

Mr. Foley said the union is in agreement, particularly as we are trying to boost attendance in the spring.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the amendments to the 2018-2019 school year calendar as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

F. Consideration to Approve 2019-2020 School Year Calendar *(Vote Required)*

The calendar for the 2019-2020 was presented for the committee's approval. Similar to the 2018-2019 calendar, dates were presented for the spring showcases.

Mrs. Terry and Mrs. Reed said due to the extreme heat experienced this past August, the committee had discussed possibly starting school later.

Mrs. Antocci said the subcommittee did discuss this possibility, but decided it is as warm at the beginning of the school year as it is at the end. A later start date means possibly going late into June.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the district reviewed feedback from a survey several years ago. Mrs. Terry suggested conducting another survey to ask if parents want to use the February vacation.

Mrs. Reed said to start school when it the weather is cool means starting in October.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the 2019-2020 calendar as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Rabbitt said if a survey is created, it needs to be specifically worded, and solicit priorities / options as responses do not often give the information necessary to move forward.

Mrs. Terry said the November 2020 election should be scheduled as a professional development day.

Mrs. Antocci and Mrs. Reed both commented that calendar options for election days have been discussed several times, and a PD day had been scheduled for the 2020 Presidential election.

Mrs. Antocci suggested that a change of venue for voting could be considered.

G. Request for Additional Staffing, 2.0 FTE Instructional Assistants (*Vote Required*)

Dr. Nash presented the request by Special Education Director Lorinda Allen for instructional assistant staffing to support students returning from out of district placements. In her memo, Mrs. Allen said the district supports the cost of these positions at the out of district facilities, so the money is already in the budget.

Mrs. Allen wrote that the district will save \$40,000 with the students' return from out of district.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to approve two additional 1.0 FTE instructional assistants, was approved by unanimous vote.

XI. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meetings:

- Wednesday, January 9, 2019, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, January 23, 2019, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.

Budget and Finance Subcommittee:

- Wednesday, January 9, 2019, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 4:30 p.m. time may change
- January 30, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 4:30 p.m., time may change

Negotiation Subcommittee:

- Thursday, January 10 and Thursday, January 24, 2019, 4-6 p.m. at Shepherd Hill Regional High School

Superintendent Search Committee

- Wednesday, December 19, 6 p.m.
- Saturday, January 5, 2019, 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 8, 2019, 6 p.m.
- Thursday, January 10, 2019, 6 p.m.

Policy Review Subcommittee:

- TBA

XII. Future Agenda Items –FY 20 Budget, Policy Review Subcommittee, Superintendent Search Update
 Mrs. Terry asked whether there can be a second signature sheet for signing the warrant. The answer was no. Mrs. Aucoin stated there is a subcommittee to sign the warrant when needed.

XIII. Adjourn

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 9:05 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include

<i>Agenda for Wednesday, December 12, 2018</i>	<i>Minutes of Wednesday, November 14, 2018</i>	<i>Superintendent’s Report: Special Topics New Business Items</i>
<i>Report of the Finance Director, 12/12/18</i>	<i>Minutes of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee Meeting, 11/14/18</i>	<i>Additional Staffing Request</i>
<i>2018-2019 School Calendar, proposed for amendment</i>	<i>2019-2020 School Calendar, proposed for adoption</i>	

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary