

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, MA 01507, 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

Rebecca Moore, 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: Karen Ares, Daniel D’Arcangelo, Jeffrey Ferranti, Lori A. Pacheco, Dean Packard, Robin Parmley, Kathleen E. Pastore, Diane Seibold; district teacher, Angela Muller Crone, Kevin Foley; Charlton parents and students Rachel Gormley, Maggie Mullaly, Jacob Bowser, Jenna Defosse, Francesca Monighetti, Sophina Zacek, Aiden Hachey, Emma Leclair; Dudley resident Ken Korch; , 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.

The chair called for a moment of silence in memory of 17 students and staff who died in the school shooting in Parkland, Florida on February 15.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, February 14, 2018*

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, February 14, 2018, as corrected, was approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Citizens’ Forum

Ken Korch, 63 West Dudley Road, Dudley, recognized the thankless job of the school committee to do more with less funding from the state. Mr. Korch said there is an uprising happening inside Route 128, and said it is a good time for the district to join the fight against inadequate

funding. He cited the efforts by Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, the towns of Everett in the face of layoffs, and Brockton, which has filed a lawsuit against the state for failure to supply adequate funding. Mr. Korch recommended the committee consider talking with other districts schools as you we are all in the same boat. He said the override will increase his taxes by over \$300 and that poses a difficulty for him.

Mr. Desto said we can find out whether other districts in the region are taking this into consideration and explained the funding formula for education changed in 2008. The so-called Wealth Formula seeks more funding from tax dollars than from state aid.

Mrs. Rabbitt mentioned the legislation filed by Senator Harriette Chandler of Worcester that seeks to establish a commission on regional school district foundation budgets. Mrs. Rabbitt said there is a high disparity in Central Massachusetts, and urged Mr. Korch to lend his support to advocacy groups and social media platforms.

Mr. Desto will keep Mr. Korch informed of the district's efforts to advocate for more funding.

V. School Spotlight – Charlton Middle School

Mr. Packard introduced a group of 5th and 6th graders who requested community service opportunities. The group decided to connect with Darlene Emco Rollins and the Charlton Chip-In food pantry.

Sixth grade Speakers were Chairperson Maggie Mullaly, one of the first members of the group, Jacob Bowser, who appreciates the ability to give back to his community, and Rachel Gormley, who said volunteering is making a difference in our communities.

Ms. Emco-Rollins said the effort has taught the kids how to work as a team, as well as given them insight into nutrition, and maintaining confidentiality.

Fifth graders who were in attendance were Jenna Defosse, Francesca Monighetti, Sophina Zacek, Aidan Hachey, and Emma LeClair. Other members who were not present were Isabel McLam, Eva Lombardi, Jayden Remillard, and Alberto Ingram.

Mr. Packard invited the committee to attend the school's intergenerational program with the senior center on Wednesday, March 7.

VI. Communications

1. Mr. Desto attended the Dudley Board of Selectmen's meeting Monday evening, at which time the board voted to approve the district's request for an override election on Tuesday, April 3. One of the selectmen asked Town Administrator Greg Balukonis to write to State Auditor Suzanne Bump seeking her assistance to form a bi- partisan, multi-community solution to the challenges she outlined in her report. The board is hoping to host a meeting with the state auditor's office, members of the Dudley and Charlton boards of selectmen, the school committee, town managers and other town officials.

2. Mrs. Antocci reported on a recent parent seminar sponsored by District Attorney Joseph Early's office held at St. Joseph's Church in Charlton this weekend focusing on the opioid addiction problem. Mrs. Antocci suggested this could be offered as professional development in the district. Topics included physical and behavioral signs of drug use, signs of an overdose, possible hiding places, and resources.
3. Mrs. Kabala had received a call from Ken Korch, and invited him to attend this evening's meeting.

VII. Superintendent's Report

1. The Shepherd Hill Girls Varsity Basketball team is playing Holy Name tonight in the district playoffs. The Boys Varsity districts begin Thursday night.
2. The Boys Varsity Basketball Team won the 79th annual Clark Tournament Sunday evening in Worcester.
3. The Fourth Annual Family Comes First Night will be observed Wednesday, March 7. Mr. Desto thanked teachers and Dudley-Charlton Teachers Association President Kevin Foley for cooperating by not scheduling homework, rehearsals and practice to allow families to spend some time together on this evening.
4. The Shepherd Hill Girls Track Team has qualified for two relays at the National championship to be held in two weeks in New York. Emma Sullivan, Rebekah James, Makayla Norton and Madison Marsh hope to continue their winning ways.
5. Women in STEM Night will be held March 13, at Shepherd Hill from 6-8 p.m.
6. Mr. Desto reported the district successfully submitted its Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority.
7. In response to the school shooting in Parkland, Florida on February 14, Mr. Desto said this is the 18th shooting since January 1. He said this one will mark a turning point as students have decided we are not going to take this anymore. Mr. Desto said the district's safety plans cannot be made public for understandable reasons, but assured the community that crisis plans are in place and practiced regularly. Administrators are trained in the latest safety techniques and protocols. All school doors including classrooms are locked during the day, and visitors must be buzzed in.

Mr. Desto will meet with Dudley Police Chief Steven Wojnar, and Charlton Police Chief Graham Maxfield on Tuesday to review the district's crisis plans.

Mr. Desto said the greatest safeguard is practiced regularly in the district: knowing, caring and connecting with our students.

8. In a related matter, there is much discussion about a planned nation-wide school walkout on March 17th. Mr. Desto said the district is working on a plan that is safe, organized, meaningful and age appropriate for middle schools and high school students who wish to participate. Mr. Desto said information about this event will be sent to parents next week.

VIII. Student Representative Report – Rebecca Moore

This item was tabled in Ms. Moore's absence.

IX. New Business

A. FY 2019 Budget:

- i. Administrators' Budget Presentations – Special Education / Technology
Interim Special Education Director Jeffrey Ferranti said the special education department currently serves 566 students with disabilities who require IEPs. Of those, 60% are in full inclusion classes in the district, and less than 40% in substantially separate program. Mr. Ferranti said the latter is consistent with the state average.

There are 37 students currently in collaborative, private day or residential programs.

Mr. Ferranti said he anticipates more students returning to the district next year. This will be determined at Team Meetings between now and June. The goal is to improve in-district programming to meet students' needs.

Mrs. Rabbitt said she appreciates Mr. Ferranti's report showing the information in a different light. She encouraged him to analyze this data, plot out a year or two ahead, to see if there are any trends or differences among the grade levels, and whether we are budgeting accordingly. The special education population continues to rise. Mrs. Rabbitt inquired whether one behavioral specialist is sufficient.

Daniel D'Arcangelo presented the technology budget showing upgrades of desktops, laptops, Chromebooks, Smartboards and software throughout the district during FY 18. Similar upgrades are requested for FY 19. Additional expenses in FY 2018 included the device lease of technology for a total of \$457,000.

The proposed projects and upgrades to network switches, additional technology and wiring is not included in Mr. D'Arcangelo's \$630,000 budget, but are the focus of the district's override request.

The committee thanked both Mr. Ferranti and Mr. D'Arcangelo for their presentations.

- i. FY 2019 Proposition 2 ½ Override Election

Both towns have pledged their support for the district's override request, and have set an election date of Tuesday, April 3, 2018.

Mr. Desto presented a draft of information he would like to begin posting to the district website, including an opportunity for community members to ask questions.

Mr. Desto said the document has been cleared by the Office of Campaign and Political Finance. He will outline what can and cannot be done by staff regarding the override so all will know their role.

He asked the committee to provide feedback on the document that was sent to them yesterday.

Mrs. Kabala offered several suggested changes.

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

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

The district has the potential to receive a donation of six to eight computer monitors. Mr. D'Arcangelo indicated the district can use this equipment.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to accept the donations of computer monitors, was approved by unanimous vote.

Charlton PTO to Heritage School, donation of \$1,040 to support a trip to the Worcester Art Museum.

ExxonMobil's Education Alliance Program to Heritage School, donation of \$500 to be used for the maintenance and support of the school in the area of math and/or science.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to accept the donations as presented, as approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu said the bids to replace the district school bus have gone out, with an opening scheduled for Wednesday, March 14, 2018, at 3 p.m. Mr. Mathieu may have the results available for the committee meeting that evening.

Mr. Mathieu provided an update on the Warrant Procedure. The language presently reads that warrant training is encouraged. Mrs. Rabbitt requested the language be changed to read that new members are required to attend training by the district or other organizations such as the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

A training session will be held in the district with District Treasurer Melinda Ernst Fournier on Friday, March 2 at 3 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, the snow date is Friday, March 9.

C. Strategic Plan Update – Mrs. Allen, Mr. Desto

Mr. Desto said a draft was included in Friday's packet as a result of the work of many people in and out of the district.

The highlights of the draft plan are academic, personal and interpersonal competencies. Mr. Desto said the timeline is for the plan to be approved in April, printing and publicizing in May-June, with the plan taking effect in July.

Mr. Desto said the district received news today that U.S. Lacrosse has selected Shepherd Hill Regional High School as a 2018 First Stick grant recipient. Through this program, the school will receive 20 field player sticks, 20 pairs of gloves, 20 pairs of arm pads, 20 pairs of shoulder pads, goalie equipment including stick, gloves, helmet, throat guard and chest protector. The grant includes complimentary high school level membership for up to 20 new players and coach level membership for up to two adult coaches. The retail value of the equipment is \$10,500.

Mr. Desto asked the committee to accept this grant.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to accept the 2018 First Stick Grant from US Lacrosse, was approved by unanimous vote.

The committee asked Mr. Desto to send a letter of congratulations to Lacrosse coach and Assistant Athletic Director Mark Kelley.

D. Special Education Parent Advisory Council Update – Mrs. Rabbitt

Mrs. Rabbitt said this item is brought to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee because establishing a SEPAC is the committee's responsibility. The district currently is on a waiver as we have been unable to form a SEPAC. In order to go forward, the committee must agree to open nominations and elect board members. A SEPAC meeting will be held by the end of the year.

Mrs. Rabbitt recently met with Interim Special Education Director Jeffrey Ferranti and Charlton resident Sam Bitar, who has already made strides in forming a PAC. A meeting has been set for Wednesday, March 21 and is open to parents throughout the district, interested staff and community members.

The committee agreed to support the SEPAC, and thanked Mr. Bitar for stepping forward.

E. Consideration of Request for Non-Resident Enrollment, Policy JF (*Vote Required*)

A former Dudley resident has requested that her daughter be allowed to complete the school year at Mason Road School while they live temporarily out of the district. It is the family's intent to move back to Dudley. Mr. Desto recommended approval of this request.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the request for non-resident enrollment, was approved by unanimous vote.

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

Mr. Desto presented the request of a family who recently moved to Dudley from Worcester where they were homeschooling their children in grades 9 and 5. The family requests to continue homeschooling for the remainder of the 2017-2018 school year. Mr. Desto recommended approval of this request.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to approve the request for home instruction for the remainder of the 2017-2018 school year, was approved by unanimous vote.

X. Approval of Warrants

The following warrants were presented to the school committee members who signed without further comment or question.

Accounts Payable Warrants		Payroll Warrants	
Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
90	\$756,328.19	1191P	\$1,164,844.32
91	\$361,635.60	1191D	\$443,830.15
92	\$301,040.78		
Total	\$1,419,004.57		\$1,608,674.47

XI. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meetings:

- Wednesday, March 14, 2018, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 7 p.m. Public Hearing,
- Wednesday, March 28, 2018, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.

Budget and Finance Subcommittee:

- Tuesday, March 6, 2018, District Office, 9 a.m.

XII. Future Agenda Items – FY 2019 Budget, MSBA Update, Strategic Planning, lunch policy, Show Choir Festival and moving the April meeting.

XIII. Adjourn

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 8:42 p.m.

Items used for this meeting included:

<i>Agenda for Wednesday, February 28, 2018</i>	<i>Superintendent's Report of Friday, February 23, 2018</i>	<i>Minutes of Wednesday, February 14, 2018</i>
<i>Finance Director's Report of Friday, February 23, 2018</i>	<i>FY 2019 Technology Budget</i>	<i>FY 19 Special Education Budget</i>
<i>Strategic Plan Draft</i>	<i>Wellness Works Flyer</i>	<i>FAQ document</i>

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.