

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee, held Wednesday, April 25, 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

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, Daniel D’Arcangelo, Jeffrey Ferranti, Lori A. Pacheco, Dean Packard, Kathleen E. Pastore, Christopher E. Starczewski; district staff Julianne Winans; Charlton school committee candidates Jamie Terry, Kenneth LaFerriere, Sam Bitar; Charlton resident and former school committee member Michael McConville; 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

The meeting began with a Public Hearing on the subject of the state-sponsored School Choice Program.

Mr. Desto stated that the district began participating in School Choice a decade ago for budget considerations, and have maintained the program for that same reason. Mr. Desto said the committee has considered withdrawing from the program, but needed it financially. The committee has opted not to participate at the middle school for the last couple of years, as not to increase class sizes.

No one from the public spoke at this time.

Mrs. Aucoin closed the hearing at 7:03 p.m.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Tuesday, April 10, 2018*

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to approve the minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, April 10, 2018, as corrected, was approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Citizens' Forum

No members of the public spoke at this time.

V. School Spotlight – Heritage School

This item was tabled. Heritage School will present on its Wax Museum at the first meeting in June.

VI. Communications

Mrs. Aucoin had requested an agenda item to discuss the lighting at the entrance to Charlton Middle School. Mr. Desto said this is underway, with Mr. Packard and Mr. Rivera seeking quotes on regular and solar powered lighting.

Mrs. Rabbitt reported on the Massachusetts Association of School Committees' Regional Schools meeting held last week. Several important items were discussed, such as the amendments relative to the House budget, and focus on specific amendments for transportation reimbursement.

It was noted that the Senate bill supporting a study on the regional school funding formula was not included in the consolidated amendments, and did not move forward.

Mrs. Rabbitt learned that \$2 billion in tax incentives have not been utilized, and those in attendance were encouraged to work with their legislators to identify small ticket items for consideration.

VII. Superintendent's Report

1. Mr. Desto said he has received several positive reports about the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Vendor Fair held last evening. The mini resource fair was an effort to gather parents together. Mrs. Rabbitt said both towns were well represented.

The evening resulted in the formation of a SEPAC. Laura Alderson Rotondo and Jillien Anderson will serve as co-chairs. Other board members include Holly Lempicki, vice chair; Mande Bush, recording secretary; Stacy LePage, publicity secretary, and board members at large are Lisa Scola, Brenda Waleski, Kayla Hinkley, Cathy Smith, and Sam Bitar.

Mrs. Rabbitt thanked Mr. Bitar and Interim Special Education Director Jeffrey Ferranti, and vendors the Center of Hope, Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative, Diamond is the Sky, HMEA's Autism Recourse Central, Kids OT, Family Behavioral Health, and Karen Bodamer Tutoring Services.

2. Mr. Desto reported the 146 students and chaperones arrived home safely from their European travel on Monday. All were tired but in school on Tuesday. Global Awareness Program Director Mary Pierangeli and students will offer a summary of the trip at the next meeting.
3. The district's Wellness Committee is sponsoring a Family Fun Fair and 5K road race during the Charlton Earth Day Festivities on Saturday, April 28, 2018.
4. The District Art Show will be held Friday, May 4 at Shepherd Hill. This will mark the first awarding of the Catherine Dube Art Award to honor the late district art teacher. One student from each elementary school will earn an award.
5. Mr. Desto and Mrs. Kabala have been approached about the possibility of naming the Shepherd Hill Auditorium in honor of Constance V. Galli, who served as music teacher, department chairperson, and show choir director since the 1980s until her retirement last June.

Mrs. Kabala said this is a great tribute to Mrs. Galli and the music program she shaped for many years.

Mrs. Antocci cautioned against setting a precedent in naming things after former staff, but recognized that Mrs. Galli has made a tremendous impact on this district.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to ask the superintendent to look into policies or procedures for naming the auditorium for Connie Galli, and this was approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Rabbitt asked that this procedure, once established, be documented in the minutes.

VIII. Student Representative Report – Rebecca Moore

1. Miss Moore said she would concur with the request to name the auditorium in honor of Constance Galli. Miss Moore has enjoyed being a part of the music department for the last four years, and experienced first-hand how Ms. Galli has impacted many lives.
2. Miss Moore reported that Shepherd Hill Varsity Softball team member Sophia Sciarrapa got her 100th hit this spring.
3. The Shepherd Hill Drama Club presents *It's all Greek to Me* Friday and Saturday, April 27 and 28.
4. The Shepherd Hill National Honor Society will be assisting during the upcoming Wellness Fair in Charlton district-wide art show at Shepherd Hill on Friday, May 4.

IX. New Business

A. FY 2019 Budget

Mr. Desto said the district is on track to present its assessments to the towns at Annual Town Meetings in May.

Meanwhile, the budget continues to be deliberated at the state level. Mr. Desto said the House budget is in, minus the amendments, while the Senate continues to work on its budget.

Mr. Mathieu recommended the committee make no changes to its revenue budget until the state budget process is finalized. Mr. Mathieu said the district is using additional excess and deficiency funds than initially planned. Final approved increases to Chapter 70 funds will allow the district to lower this use.

Mr. Mathieu noted the House budget shows an increase to Chapter 70 and transportation reimbursement, which, when finalized, will allowed the district either build up its Transportation Revolving Account to help offset future assessments, or lower the FY 19 transportation assessment.

The district received the bills from the town elections in Dudley, (\$5,267) and Charlton (\$6,074).

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

Wiring Contract – E-Rate

The bids for the network wiring projects are significantly below estimates, and allow for the possibility of adding Shepherd Hill to the project. Mr. Mathieu provided a revised detailed budget to show the proposed work. Because this is funded through E-Rate, Shepherd Hill would not be added to the project until next spring.

The district received two bids, with Ockers Company, of Brockton, the low bidder.

Mr. Mathieu asked the committee to award the district network wiring project bid to Ockers Company at a price of \$407,873.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by J. Pietrzak to award the District Network Wiring Project Bid to Ockers Company of Brockton, in the amount of \$407,873, was approved by unanimous vote.

First Student Update

Mr. Mathieu reported on discussions with First Student regarding implementation of the First Parent App and routing software which accompanied the firm's winning transportation bid. To successfully implement the software before the opening of the 2018-2019 school year, Mr.

Mathieu presented the possibility of the district engaging First Students' sister company – Versa Trans, to manage this process at a cost of \$1,250 per month.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by J. Pietrzak to authorize the finance director to hire Versa Trans, the First Student sister company to assist with the implementation and management of the routing software and for at least the first year of operation, at a cost of \$1,250 per month, was withdrawn.

Mrs. Antocci asked whether the cost of buying and implementing the routing software and app cannot save the cost of a bus, is it worth the cost?

Mr. Chalk asked whether we need the consultant for the whole first year, suggesting even six months is a long time.

Mr. Chalk's amended motion to read "until such time as the district is capable of assuming the responsibilities, up to 12 months" was seconded by Mr. Pietrzak, and subsequently withdrawn

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by J. Pietrzak to authorize hiring First Student Sister Company Versa Trans to assist with the implementation and management during the first year of operation, at a cost of \$1,250 per month until such time as the district is capable of assuming the responsibilities, up to 12 months, with a monthly review, was also withdrawn.

Mr. Mathieu will investigate whether the company requires a year of support.

Mr. Mathieu reported that two companies have donated items for the District Wellness Fair being held Saturday, April 28 at Heritage School. Krave Beef Jerky is donating product samples of its jerky products, and Polar Beverages has donated eight cases of seltzer and water.

These samples will not be sold, but given away free to those who attend.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by J. Pietrzak to accept the donations from Krave Beef Jerky and Polar Beverages as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu reported the net metering contract has been signed with Sea Board Solar.

C. Consideration of Requests for Overnight Travel, Policy IJOA (Vote Required)

The Shepherd Hill Chorus Program is requesting to travel to Orlando, Florida March 22-26, 2019, to compete in the Heart of America Festival, a new festival on the circuit. The group of 115 students plus chaperones would travel by air at an anticipated cost of \$1,700 for transportation, accommodations, festival admissions and workshops, sightseeing, activities, and food. The show choir works with families in need of financial assistance.

Chorus Director Becky Bussiere has indicated there is financial aid available for families in need.

Mr. Desto recommended approval of the trip to enable plans to move forward at this time, with specific chaperone names to come at a later date.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the request by the Shepherd Hill Regional High School Chorus to travel to Orlando, Florida March 22-26, 2019 to compete in the Heart of America Festival was approved by unanimous vote.

Members expressed concern about the cost of the trip, and whether the dates conflict with MCAS testing.

Mrs. Rabbitt shared concerns about the number of days missed from school by students involved with more than one school activity, i.e. foreign language, band, etc.

Mr. Desto said any time missed is made up in terms of educational value.

C. Consideration to Establish Summer Reading program for At-risk Readers (Vote Requested)

Curriculum Director Lorinda Allen has proposed a new program for our young, at-risk readers, providing specialized instruction. Mrs. Allen said district reading specialists have reported there are 10-20 students at each grade level needing intervention, or who are special education, Title I, and ELL learners.

The program would operate for four weeks in July and August for three hour per day, offering instruction in phonics, reading comprehension, in an effort to close the gaps and keep them from regressing over the summer.

The program would employ 16 teachers and 80 students in small groups of five or less, at a cost of \$5,760. Mrs. Allen said all but \$1,044 of this cost can be covered by Special Education 240 Grant funding. With the committee's approval, the remainder can be paid either through the school budget or the John Paire Student Support Fund.

Mr. Desto recommended the funds be taken from the Paire fund.

If approved, Mrs. Allen will send personal invitations to the families.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the 2018 summer program for at-risk readers, utilizing the John Paire Student Support Fund for anything not covered by the 240 Grant, was approved by unanimous vote.

Students will be administered testing each week to provide benchmarks of their progress.

Mrs. Kabala suggested establishing bylaws for the John Paire Student Support Fund. Mr. Desto said this is in progress.

D. Consideration to Approve Participation in State-sponsored School Choice Program, 2018-2019 (Vote Required)

Mr. Desto recommended opening 33 seats to replace the graduating seniors at Shepherd Hill. Mr. Desto said this will maintain the school choice account to defray the cost of eighth graders going to Bay Path or to private or online schools.

Mrs. Aucoin entertained a motion to participate in School Choice for the 2018-2019 school year, and this was made by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk, and approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Aucoin entertained a motion to open 33 spots in the School Choice program to replace the graduating seniors, and this was made by M. Antocci, seconded by S. Reed, and approved by unanimous vote.

E. Superintendent of Schools Hiring Process (Vote May be Required)

With the announcement that Mr. Desto is stepping down as superintendent June 30, the school committee must agree on the process to fill the position.

The issues include:

whether to post the position as an interim due to the timing, or as a permanent position. Whether to form a search/screening committee. Should the interviews be conducted as a whole committee or by a search committee. Mr. Desto said the search committee may conduct its interviews in executive session.

Include a salary scale or negotiable in the posting?

Estimated Timelines

- Application Review
- Preliminary Interviews
- Finalist Interviews
- Job offer and Contract Negotiation
- Public Announcement

The committee agreed to form a search committee comprised of the following:

2 teachers

3 administrators

2 community members, one from each town

3 school committee members – Joe Pietrzak, Elaine Rabbitt, Stephanie Reed.

1 Student

Mrs. Aucoin entertained a motion to utilize an 11-member search (or screening) committee made up of no more than three school committee members and, additionally, representatives from district administration, teaching staff and community (optional) because having preliminary screening discussions in an open session will limit the committee's ability to attract the most qualified candidates for the position of superintendent, and this motion was made by R. Chalk, seconded by M. Antocci, and approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to post the superintendent vacancy as an interim position for the 2018-2019 school year, and to state in the posting that the successful candidate will have the option of being a considered for the permanent position for the following year, 2019-2020, was approved by unanimous vote.

The deadline for applications is May 14, and the candidate will start the position on June 25 to work with Mr. Desto.

The committee requested a copy of the superintendent’s job description.

F. Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative FY 2018 Second Quarter Report

The committee received and reviewed copies of the report.

X. Approval of Warrants

The following warrants were distributed for signatures. There were no comments or questions.

Subcommittee Warrant		Payroll Warrant	
Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
111	\$195,951.06	1198D	\$1,445.08
112	\$492,547.60	1198P	\$3,697.68
113	\$2,000.00	1199 Void	-\$320.00
Total	\$690,498.66	1200P	\$320.00
		1201D	\$419,517.45
		1201P	\$1,152,702.99
		Total	\$1,577,363.20

XI. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meetings:

- Wednesday, May 9, 2018, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 23, 2018, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.

Budget and Finance Subcommittee:

- Wednesday, May 9, 2018, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 5 p.m.

XII. Future Agenda Items – FY 2019 Budget, Strategic Plan, Superintendent Hiring, Auditorium naming, new member from Charlton.

Before entering into executive session, Mrs. Aucoin paused to honor Mr. Chalk and Mr. Pietrzak, who are not seeking reelection in Charlton and Dudley respectively. Tonight marks Mr.

Chalk's last meeting, as the election is May 5. Mr. Pietrzak will serve until the Dudley elections in honor Joe and Ray, Ray's last meeting. Joe leaving in June.

Mr. Chalk, thanked Mrs. Aucoin and Mr. Desto for their words. He thanked the administrators and wished Mr. Desto well in his new position.

Mr. Pietrzak said being on the school committee has been one of the best experiences. He said he was recruited for this position, and is thrilled for how it worked out through the graciousness around the table. Mr. Pietrzak said he learned a ton in this role.

The meeting was recessed at 8:59 p.m. for refreshments

The meeting resumed at 9:16 p.m.

XIII. Executive Session – “To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.”

Mrs. Aucoin entertained a motion to enter executive session to conduct strategy in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, and said the committee will return to open session for the purpose of a vote, or votes, if necessary, and for adjournment. This was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 9:17 p.m.

The committee returned to open session at 10:02 p.m.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the salary for the 2018-2019 director of special education as \$107,000, was approved by a vote of 5-1. Voting in favor were P. Aucoin, R. Chalk, C. Kabala, J. Pietrzak, S. Reed. Voting no was M. Antocci. Mrs. Rabbitt abstained.

XIV. Adjourn

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 10:03 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include

<i>Agenda for April 25, 2018</i>	<i>Minutes of Tuesday, April 10, 2018 Meeting</i>	<i>Superintendent's Report April 20, 2018</i>
<i>Finance Director Report April 20, 2018</i>	<i>Summer Reading Program Proposal</i>	<i>Overnight Travel Request</i>
<i>SWCEC quarterly Report October-December 2017</i>		

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary