

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee, held Wednesday, May 23, 2018 at Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, MA 01507

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Mary N. Antocci
Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair
Catherine M. Kabala
Joseph M. Pietrzak
Elaine M. Rabbitt
Stephanie A. Reed
Jamie L. Terry

Rebecca Moore, Student Representative

Also in attendance were Gregg J. Desto, Superintendent of Schools, Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators: Karen Ares, William Chaplin, Jeffrey Ferranti, Lori A. Pacheco, Dean Packard, Robin Parmley, Kathleen E. Pastore, Diane Seibold; Dudley-Charlton Teachers Association President Kevin Foley; Mason Road School parents and children; Ray Chalk, 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 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, May 9, 2018*

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the minutes of the regular meeting as corrected, was approved by unanimous vote.

B. *Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, May 9, 2018*

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, May 9, 2018, was approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Citizens' Forum

No one from the public spoke.

V. School Spotlight –Mason Road School

The Mason Road School grade 1 students are preparing for the Memorial Day show tomorrow evening, 6:30 p.m. A sneak preview offered a couple of songs.

VI. Communications

1. Mr. Desto sought guidance from the committee regarding a conversation with a parent, Mrs. Lisa Tinsley, who spoke out two months ago concerning opting out of MCAS testing. Mr. Desto has put four steps into motion with principals regarding those who want to opt out of the test. With Mr. Desto's departure, Mrs. Tinsley asked if this could be set as a procedure that students opting out of the test will remain in the testing area but be required to read a book while other students complete the test.

Parents are asked to submit in writing their intent that their child will not take the MCAS. This allows the building principal and staff time to prepare for this alternative.

Mrs. Reed agreed that the opt-out activity cannot be one which other students will want to be a part of.

The committee expressed concern that someone sitting beside a tester reading a book could influence the tester, an even other parents to opt out.

2. Mrs. Rabbitt reported the Massachusetts Senate took action on Bill 242 which would require 100% regional transportation reimbursement failed. An amendment filed by Senator Anne Gobi calling for 72% reimbursement has passed.

Further action is needed to move this onto the governor's desk.

VII. Superintendent's Report

1. Mr. Desto congratulated the faculty and 500 students who attended the Junior Prom on May 19. He said the even was smoothly run. He thanked the staff and students who planned it and all the students who were well behaved.
2. Mr. Desto reminded the committee of the upcoming Memorial Day Concerts: Heritage School, Grade 2, May 24 for parents at 10:30 a.m., and 1:30 p.m. An encore show for Veterans will be held Friday, May 25 at 1:30 p.m.: Dudley Elementary School Memorial Day Concert will be held May 25 at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mason Road School Grade 1 program will be held Thursday, May 24 at 6:30 p.m.; at Charlton Elementary School, May 25 is American Pride Spirit Day.
3. Mr. Desto invited the committee to attend any of the upcoming Senior Class Activities. Senior Banquet on Thursday, May 31 at the Hogan Center at the College of the Holy Cross at 6 p.m., Graduation on Sunday, June 3 at the DCU Center, 6 p.m. Other senior dates to remember are: • May 17-25 Senior Final Exams (Block A) • Monday, May 21 Senior BBQ (11:06 am-1:00 p.m.) • Wednesday, May 30 Senior Class Trip to High

Meadows (7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.) • Friday, June 1 Class Photo in Cap & Gowns (8:00 a.m.);
Last Assembly (9:30-10:55 a.m.)

4. Mr. Desto thanked Mr. Pietrzak, who is attending his final meeting as a school committee member.

VIII. Student Representative Report – Rebecca Moore

Miss Moore thanked the committee, especially Mr. Desto and Mr. Chaplin for selecting her as the student representative. This is her last meeting as she will graduate on June 3. Miss Moore plans to attend Worcester State University in the fall to study biology.

IX. New Business

A. District Office Staffing, MARS / MASC Analysis – Discussion

The committee would like to analyze district office staffing and invited Glenn Koocher, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, to speak about the services offered.

Mr. Koocher said he could conduct some focus groups among the faculty to get an idea of needs, saying only the committee and its constituents know what is needed in terms of school administration and staffing.

Mr. Koocher said the best time to think about staffing changes or position realignment is during a transition such as Mr. Desto's resignation.

Mrs. Terry asked about the timeframe for a focus group as she would like Mr. Desto to be a part of it.

Mr. Koocher said it is important to talk to the stakeholders. He said unless there is real trouble in the district, people are not coming out at night for meetings. Town officials may have some thoughts, as well as ideas for shared services.

Mr. Koocher said he would want to talk to administrators to see what they feel they are missing, and to ask teachers how the administration can help them.

Mrs. Rabbitt said most districts the size of Dudley-Charlton Regional School District have an assistant superintendent, as well as a director of human resources. Without these personnel, the superintendent becomes the point person for all disputes.

Mr. Koocher spoke about utilizing an electronic survey prior to assembling a focus group. This shows the staff they are valued.

Mr. Koocher reviewed an organizational chart, and said having job descriptions for all of the positions represented will be helpful.

B. FY 2019 Budget

Mr. Desto said having an approved budget in both towns feels better than it has before. The budget passed at both town meetings, and he again thanked those who played a part in approving the Propositions 2 ½ override.

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

1. Mr. Mathieu said after explaining the district's financial situation and the committee's desire to have cameras in the special education vehicles, VanPool has agreed to modify its pricing to a one-time fee of \$5,000 (not \$5,000 per year) for all vehicles, both in-district and out. The company recognizes the benefit to all parties to have this equipment, and commits to having this done for the start of the 2018-19 school year.

Mr. Mathieu asked the school committee accept this proposal.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by S. Reed to accept the proposal by VanPool to install cameras on special education transportation vans at the one-time fee of \$5,000, was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Dudley Middle School's hot water heater gave out a day before the new one was installed at a cost of \$50,000.

D. Naming of District Facilities Procedure (*Vote Required*)

Mr. Desto asked the committee to consider the procedure first and then, if desired, the specific request to name the Shepherd Hill auditorium in honor of retired music teacher, choral director and department coordinator Connie Galli.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to accept the procedure as amended, for naming district facilities was approved unanimously.

Mr. Desto said Mrs. Galli joined the district in 1982 and fulfilled any musical responsibility. Over the course of her career, she built the finest music program in Massachusetts, possibly even in New England. Mr. Desto noted her poise and class as she taught music to thousands of students, showing them how to be a winner. Mr. Desto recommended approval to naming the auditorium in Mrs. Galli's honor.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by M. Antocci to instruct the superintendent to put in place the necessary steps to name the Shepherd Hill Regional High School auditorium in honor of Constance V. Galli, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Rabbitt suggested there be a ceremony at the holiday show.

Mrs. Kabala said steps should be taken to maintain the name in the event the building changes in the future.

Mrs. Antocci voiced concern that by putting this action out there it will invite people to submit requests to name rooms, etc. She wanted it to be known that this is a rare occurrence.

The music parents group has an idea for a commemorative sign that is as cost effective as it is meaningful.

E. Superintendent’s Hiring Process Update – Discussion

Search Committee Chair Mr. Pietrzak said the search committee met on two occasions so far. The meetings were very productive as the field of 24 candidates was reduced to four to bring into a first round of interviews to be held June 5 and 6. It is the plan to have names forwarded to full committee for interviews at a special meeting of Monday, June 11 at 4 p.m. 5:15 and 6:30 if there is a 3rd candidate.

The search committee also discussed questions for the candidates.

Committee members were concerned that Mr. Pietrzak will not have the opportunity to vote on the superintendent on June 13, as he will no longer be a member, and the new Dudley member will not be on board on the 11th.

It was noted that the meeting will be uploaded to the district’s YouTube channel and can be viewed prior to the 13th.

F. Consideration of Request to Enroll Foreign Exchange Student, Policy JF (*Vote Required*)

This item was tabled from last meeting due to the withdrawal of the student. The same Charlton family has secured another student to spend her junior year at Shepherd Hill Regional High School. Sibile Urbelyte is from Lithuania and meets the criteria as outlined in Policy JF. Mr. Desto and Mr. Chaplin recommend approval.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by C. Kabala to approve the request to enroll a foreign exchange student for the 2018-2019 school year, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Antocci urged the district to utilize agencies that pay to place foreign exchange students.

X. Approval of Warrants

Accounts Payable		Subcommittee Warrant		Payroll Warrant	
Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
123	\$125,506.75	119	\$9,261.48	1204D	\$428,609.44
		120	\$1,530,606.85	1204P	\$1,193,061.69
		121	\$35,367.33		
		122	\$583,375.12		
Total	\$125,506.75	Total	\$2,158,610.78	Total	\$1,621,671.13

XI. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meetings:

- Wednesday, June 13, 2018, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 27, 2018, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.

Budget and Finance Subcommittee:

- Wednesday, June 13, 2018, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 5 p.m.

Superintendent Search Committee

- Wednesday, May 23, Charlton Middle School, 4 p.m.
- Tuesday, June 5, 2018, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 6, 2018, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 5:30 p.m.

Special Meeting of the School Committee (Interim Superintendent Finalist Interviews)

- Monday, June 11, 2018, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 4 p.m.

G. Future Agenda Items – FY 2019 Budget, School Improvement Plans, Review/Approval of Student Handbooks, 2018-2019 school year, recognize retirees by selecting books.

XII. Executive Session – *“To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.” Also, “to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting will have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body.”*

The chair entertained a motion to enter executive session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting will have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 8:48 p.m.

The committee returned to open session at 10:27 p.m.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to set an annual salary rate for the Interim Curriculum Director as \$96,000, with 25 vacation days, and this was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to authorize the superintendent to negotiate with district administrators to effect salary increases totaling \$30,000, was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to offer the Director of Finance and Operations five additional vacation days per year was approved by a vote of 4-2 with one abstention. Voting in favor were P. Aucoin, C. Kabala, J. Pietrzak, J. Terry. Opposed were E. Rabbitt, M. Antocci. S. Reed abstained.

XIII. Adjourn

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by S. Red to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 10:30 p.m.

Items used for this meeting included:

Agenda for May 23, 2018	Superintendent's Report Friday, May 18, 2018	Minutes of regular meeting of Wednesday, May 9, 2018
Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, May 9, 2018	Report of the Director of Finance and Operations 5/18/18	District Office Open Positions
Foreign Exchange Student Request	Procedure for Naming Facilities	Spring Musical – Memorial Day Concerts
J. Winans' letter to school committee		

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary