

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, October 28, 2015 at 7 p.m. at Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Rd., Charlton.

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
Jack Bagan, 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, Terri A. Caffelle, Dan D'Arcangelo, Theodora Dono, Jody A. O'Brien, Lori A. Pacheco, Dean W. Packard, John D. Paire; Kathleen E. Pastore, Mary A. Pierangeli, district teachers Diane Seibold, Ericka Thibaudeau-Dragon, Maureen Davis, Brooke Beverly; Charlton Middle School students and parents; media representatives: Deborah 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. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, October 14, 2015*

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, October 14, 2015, was approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of Warrant

Warrant #21 in the amount of \$274,466.15 was signed by a majority of members without further comment or question.

V. Citizens' Forum

No one spoke at this time.

New Business

School Spotlight: Charlton Middle School

Mr. Packard reported on a recent school-wide lesson for which students created a project connecting a summer activity to an element of science, technology, engineering, arts or math (STEAM). The project was spearheaded by District STEAM Director Karen Ares and was modeled after the Lockheed Martin effort *#Made My Summer*, for which students and adults were asked to Tweet their entries. At Charlton Middle School, entrants created posters beginning with the first day of school during exploratory classes.

Mr. Packard reported there were 20 winners from among 100 entries.

VI. Communications

1. Mr. Desto reported that superintendents and principals have received a letter from Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester regarding the Board of Education's upcoming decision whether to replace the MCAS with PARCC testing. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee has voted its opposition to PARCC.

In his message, Mr. Chester introduced a third option that builds on the state's investment in PARCC to create what he has called MCAS 2.0.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the commissioner's statements indicate that the commissioner has heard the message that Massachusetts parents want to maintain autonomy over curriculum. She said the board is looking to take what is best with MCAS and the Common Core and move forward

The Board of Education is expected to vote on November 17.

2. Mrs. Kabala shared notes written to the committee by the students in Room 202 at Charlton Elementary School, for whom she was a reader on Community Reading Day.

3. Mrs. Antocci also enjoyed serving as a Community Reader for an eighth grade class at Charlton Middle School, and remarked that the students were very responsive and well mannered.

4. Mrs. Rabbitt reported on the Regional Statewide Committee meeting of October 15. Among the discussions was a change in the classification of low income to economically disadvantages. This group will now be recorded in the general education population rather than high needs. Low income data has been used to determine school nutrition, Chapter 70, state grant awards is reported as a subgroup in the MCAS results. Mrs. Rabbitt said we will need to monitor this subgroup. Mrs. Rabbitt voiced concern that some of our schools have just qualified for services related to the low income population and that we may now be losing that.

5. Mrs. Antocci said over 40,000 signatures have been collected on the petition to End Common Core ballot initiative. The deadline for signatures is November 18.

VII. Superintendent's Report

1. Charlton Middle School Guidance Counselor Erika Dragon reported on the efforts of the Guidance/Psychology Roundtable. With the support of Mr. Desto, Mrs. Allen and principals, health and physical education teachers from every school are encouraged to form a Wellness Committee. The group has been convening regularly to provide extra support to students, faculty, families, and has organized a Wellness Works Health and Wellness Fair to be held Tuesday, November 17, 2015, and Thursday, March 3, 2016 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School from 5-7 p.m.

Mr. Desto thanked this group as they go out of their way to inform families of available services.

2. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) concluded its accreditation visit today at Shepherd Hill Regional High School with a wrap-up meeting to discuss preliminary findings. Mr. Desto thanked the staff for stepping up to meet the demands for information and compliance.

NEASC representatives commended the administrators and staff for its culture, climate, spirit, genuine concern for kids, respect between staff and students, and taking pride in the building.

Recommendations included: WiFi, improvements to the facility, and common planning time for staff.

The official report will be out in March.

3. Mr. Desto reported that 70 Shepherd Hill Seniors will earn John and Abigail Adams Scholarships for advanced scores on MCAS. The students are rewarded with free tuition at state universities. A breakfast will be held in their honor on Friday at 8 a.m.

4. STEAM Director Karen Ares and Director of Curriculum Lorinda Allen are joining with the Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation for a Meet and Greet with community business partners on Thursday, November 19 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, from 8-9 a.m.

VIII. Student Representative Report

This item was tabled as Jack Bugar was not in attendance.

IX. New Business

- A. Review of 2015 MCAS Results – School Level Presentations
 - a. Grades K-4 (Mrs. Pacheco, Mrs. Dono, Mrs. Pastore, Mrs. Caffelle)

As a follow-up to Mr. Desto's and Mrs. Allen's presentation on the overall results of the Spring 2015 MCAS test, each school principal reported on areas of celebration, concentration and innovation.

Mrs. Caffelle said Dudley Elementary School students narrowed the proficiency gap and increased the student growth percentiles. In writing, all grade 4 students in the district scored 5% higher than the state.

Mrs. Pastore said the aggregate populations and all subgroup improved their CPI in math, while the high needs students improved their ELA and math.

Charlton Elementary School and Mason Road School don't test but collaborate with Dudley Elementary School and Heritage School. Innovations for K-4 include reviewing the current Title One model, offer staff development on Written Expression/6 Traits, and research the feasibility of a full day preschool.

Mrs. Dono said the K-4 staff and administrators support a review and revision of homework guidelines. Homework needs to be meaningful and students need to be motivated to do it.

Mrs. Pacheco said administrators will look at other schools to learn how they allocate their resources

Mrs. Rabbitt asked how the committee can assist the administrators in targeting these individual. Mrs. Pacheco said the committee's creation of a full time ELL teacher was an important step. Mrs. Caffelle said the staff put faces to the data. She said staff knows who the students are and what their individual learning needs are. Small class sizes are necessary.

Mrs. Reed advocated for the six-week STARS program, saying she would like to see it extended, and suggested creating packets for parents who wish to work with their children at home.

Mr. Desto said guidance is understaffed at the elementary level.

b. Grades 5-8 (Mr. Packard, Mr. Paire)

Mr. Packard said Charlton Middle School is above the state average for a vast majority of standards, such as grade 5 science and technology, at 26% compared to the state average of 16%. There have been continued improvements in 7th grade writing. The school has seen improved ELA, science and math CPI in the subgroups.

Mr. Pair said Dudley Middle School students scored an overall ELA advance/Proficient of 79%, compared to 75% in the state. The Math overall Advanced/Proficient was 63%, compared to 66% in the state.

Mr. Pair said Grade 7 math has historically done very well, but had a slight decrease this year.

Charlton Middle School will concentrate on areas that need attention: ELA and math with a dual focus on students with disabilities.

At Dudley Middle School, math overall needs to improve for first time in four years, and Title One is below average in advanced proficient category.

Innovations at Charlton Middle School include self-reflection, looping with special education teachers on a two-year cycle, increase collaboration among all disciplines, and a scheduling committee to study better ways to utilize our time.

At Dudley Middle School, Title One and special education groups can be better served. The staff is making an effort to increase and improve benchmarking, and to increase PLC time. There are two separate mentoring programs for fifth graders and a reading mentorship with Nichols College.

Mr. Paire said the school has vacillated between putting a huge emphasis on the test and treating it as if it is just another test to try to diminish the intensity.

c. Grades 9-12 (Mrs. Pierangeli)

At Shepherd Hill, student achievement is above the state average in all categories with 98% of the students passing the test on the first attempt. Mrs. Pierangeli said the subgroups also showed improvement. Math: 98% passed, 87% scored in advanced or proficient vs 78 for the state.

The English department has noted a weakness in identifying key ideas in reading selections. The math department will use graphic organizers to break down multi-part questions.

B. FY 2016 Budget / Director of Finance and Operations Update, *(Vote Required)*

Mr. Mathieu presented lists of surplus and obsolete items from several district buildings. These are items that have been used and have reached the end of their proper life cycle.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by M. Antocci to authorize the finance director to dispose of the surplus items by using good practices, was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by M. Antocci to authorize the finance director to dispose of the obsolete items using good business practices, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu reported there are new audit requirements in place for student activities accounts. The School Committee needs to authorize the various groups and clubs that are part of the student activity account. He asked the committee to vote to approve the specific activities as outlined in his memo of October 2, 2015.

Audit guidelines have been updated, school committee should vote to approve the student activities as presented on Mr. Mathieu's list: Classes of 216, 2017, and 2018, Anthology, AP and Other Exams, Athletics, Bank Interest, Bowling Club, Cheerleaders, Community Service Project, Drama Club, Environmental Committee, Field Trips, Foreign Language Club, Friends on the Hill, General, GSA, Gifts/ Donations, JCL, Library Resource, Math Team, Music, Music Summer, National Art Honor Society, National Honor Society, Ramshorn, SADD, Senior Student Council, Services – Books, Services – Locks, Sheila Glynn Award, Ski Club, Student Awards, Store 206, Students Give Back, Summer Reading Account, Transcripts, Yearbook.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the specific activities as listed above, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu reported that he has four proposals for lighting upgrades at the elementary schools. National Grid offers the incentive of an extended payback period for lighting upgrades.

FY 15 closeout: Mr. Mathieu is in the process of certifying the excess and deficiency fund at \$1.7 million.

Due to a \$220,000 deficit in the health insurance trust fund, there will be a balance of \$1.5 million.

Noting that there were initial projections of a much larger deficit in the E&D, Mr. Desto thanked Mr. Mathieu, Mr. Trifone, Mrs. Para and Mrs. Cerbone for their work.

C. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Report

Mrs. Rabbit reported on the October 21 meeting during which the subcommittee reviewed area athletic fees and concluded they will recommend no action be taken but to continue to monitor the items over the development of the budget.

Subcommittee members also reviewed class sizes, noting there are some areas of concern. Those will be monitored as well.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the reclassification of the economically disadvantaged subgroup represents a reduction in this subgroup for our various schools. This can impact our qualifying for various funding such as e-rate and MSBA Funding.

Mrs. Rabbitt reported the committee will review Mrs. Dono and Mrs. Pacheco's proposal for a full time preschool program.

D. Consideration of Request for Negotiation – *Agreement Between the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District and the Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association, (Vote Required)*

As reported at the last meeting, Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association President Kevin Foley has requested to open the Agreement Between the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District and the Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association, which expires in June 2016.

Mr. Desto recommended the committee vote to accept the letter.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to accept the letter from the Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association, was approved by unanimous vote.

- Formation of Negotiation Subcommittee:

Mr. Pietrzak and Mr. Chalk volunteered to serve on the negotiation subcommittee.

Mrs. Rabbitt left the meeting at 8:59 p.m.

E. Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative 1st Quarter Report

No action by the committee is required other than to read into the minutes that this report was reviewed. Dudley-Charlton Regional School District has the largest population of students in the Collaborative.

The committee requested Collaborative Director Elizabeth Fitzmaurice be invited to speak at an upcoming meeting. This is Ms. Fitzmaurice's first year in this position. She was previous a special education director in Franklin.

F. Consideration of Request for Childrearing Leave of Absence, *(Vote Required)*

Mrs. Amanda Curtis, a biology teacher at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, has been on maternity leave since the beginning of the school year, and had initially indicated she would return at this time. She has requested a childrearing leave for the remainder of the 2015-2016 school year.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the request for a childrearing leave of absence for Amanda Curtis, was approved by a vote of 6-0. Mrs. Rabbit was not present for the vote. She returned at 9:02 p.m.

G. Consideration to Amend District Policy GCG, Substitute Teachers, *(Vote Required)*

This policy has been resubmitted following further review and revisions.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by R. Chalk to waive the reading of policy in open session, was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the policy on first reading, as corrected, was approved by unanimous vote.

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

In order to obtain the best price for students, planning is underway for the April 2017 Foreign Language Club trip. Club Advisor Mary Pierangeli is seeking the committee's approval for overnight travel during the April 2017 school vacation to Rome, Florence, Munich and Prague. The request is based on the possibility that Friday, April 14, 2017, or Good Friday is a school holiday, and the group would miss only one day of school. The Calendar Review Subcommittee is exploring the possibility of scheduling this as a school day. In this instance, the group will miss two days.

Mr. Desto recommended approval.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the request as submitted, noting the possibility of two days of school missed, was approved by unanimous vote.

Other items:

Non-resident enrollment, Policy JF. Donna Nesto, formerly of Dudley, has requested that her son, Harrison, be allowed to complete the 2015-2016 school year, his senior year, at Shepherd Hill Regional High School. The family has moved to Southbridge. Mr. Desto recommended approval.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to approve the request, contingent upon the family's provision of transportation to and from school, was approved by unanimous vote.

Consideration to Accept Donation: Robert Puchalski, owner of P&P General contractors of Charlton, whose grandchildren attend Dudley Elementary School and Dudley Middle School, has donated \$2,500, giving \$1,000 for the breakfast program at each of those schools, and \$500 to the Food Share Program at Dudley Elementary School. Mr. Desto recommended approval.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to accept the donation with gratitude, was approved by unanimous vote.

X. Next Meeting Dates

- Budget Subcommittee, Wednesday, November 18, 2015, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 9 a.m.
- Wednesday, November 18, 2015, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 9, 2015, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, 7 p.m.

XI. Future Agenda Items

Presentation of Awards

1. Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) Award of Academic Excellence – *Gregg J. Desto*
2. Secondary School Principals Association Leadership Award – *Mary A. Pierangeli*
3. MASC/MASS update
4. Photography
5. Preliminary dates for contract negotiation
6. Assessment of testing in the district

XII. Adjourn

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by M. Antocci to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 9:13 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include:

<i>Agenda for meeting of October 28, 2015</i>	<i>Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, October 14, 2015</i>	<i>Superintendent's Report of October 23, 2015</i>	<i>MCAS Presentations Heritage School/Dudley Elementary School; Charlton Middle School/Dudley Middle School; Shepherd Hill Regional High School</i>
<i>2015-2016 School Council Rosters, Meeting Dates</i>	<i>Finance Director's Report</i>	<i>Athletic Fees Survey, Athletic Department Budget</i>	<i>Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association Opening Letter</i>
<i>Foreign Language Club Request</i>	<i>Policy GCG Proposed for first reading</i>	<i>John and Abigail Adams Scholarship</i>	<i>October 28, 2015 Medicare plans</i>
<i>SWCEC First Quarter Report</i>	<i>Wellness Works</i>		

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary