

**DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Rd. Dudley, at 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
- 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, Doris Dono, Jody A. O'Brien, Dean W. Packard, John D. Paire, Mary A. Pierangeli; district teachers Brooke Beverly, Diane Seibold, Kevin Foley; Stefan Sage, Jean Tilly, John Grondalski, Bay Path Regional Vocational High School representatives, John LaFleche, Superintendent/Director, Clifford Cloutier, Principal; 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 p.m.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Approval of Minutes**

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, December 9, 2015*

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, December 9, was approved by unanimous vote.

**IV. Approval of Warrant**

The following warrants were distributed and signed by a majority of members without comment or questions:

<b>Warrant #</b>	<b>Amount</b>
31	\$713,206.08
32	\$448,176.38
33	\$524,148.18
1031D	\$442,718.01
1031P	\$1,123,942.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,252,191.29</b>

**V. Citizens' Forum**

Cameron Bodamer, a seventh grade student at Charlton Middle School, said the school's lunch period is too short to allow most students to eat their lunch. Mr. Desto responded that the administration is studying the possibility of lengthening the lunches as well as incorporating recess into the schedule.

#### **VI. School Spotlight – Dudley Elementary School**

Seven students from Dudley Elementary School's Peer Mentoring Program were in attendance to explain the school-wide efforts to stop bullying and other emotional-social issues involving fellow students. In total, 19 students are either peer buddies or peer mentors. This program began nine years ago as a tutoring service and has expanded its focus. Heritage School has a similar program.

#### **VII. Communications**

1. Mr. Desto read a letter from Congressman Richard Neal, in appreciation for Mr. Desto's letter of recommendation on behalf of Jack Bugan. Mr. Neal said he is nominating Mr. Bugan for admission to the Naval Academy.
2. Mrs. Antocci reported on the End Common Core initiative. She said certified signatures were delivered to the state and through the certification process. The Legislature has time until May to decide whether to vote on the initiative; a yes vote is the end of Common Core, a no vote will mean 11,000 additional signatures are needed to get it on the ballot in November.

#### **VIII. Superintendent's Report**

1. Superintendent/Director John LaFleche and Principal Clifford Cloutier presented the school committee with a plaque in appreciation for the district's its support throughout the school's three-year renovation project. Mr. LaFleche thanked the district, saying Mr. Desto and Mr. Packard offered space for Bay Path to conduct summer school, and the parking lot during school events. Mr. LaFleche further commended the school committee for its stability and leadership, both of which are evident in the quality of the students who go on to Bay Path.
2. Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation presidents Jean Tilly and John Grondalski spoke to the committee about the annual appeal. They announced that Karl Storz has offered a matching grant of up to \$7,500. The foundation is sponsoring the *Awesome '80s* Dance on April 8. The deadline for grant applications is March 18. Mr. Desto noted Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation Grant enabled the district to bring in Todd Whitaker on January 4 as a kick-off to the second half of the year. A staff survey garnered 300 responses. Of those, 89% said the presentation was excellent, and 9% said it was good. The day also featured a wellness fair that was visited by 116 people.
3. Mr. Desto congratulated Michaela White and John David Raucci, who were honored on January 7 as the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents' Award of Academic Excellence. The banquet was held for all Worcester County winners at WPI in Worcester. Mr. Desto noted that all 81 scholars from Central Massachusetts mentioned in their achievements that they are involved with visual or performing arts, sports, community service, and church activities. He said this emphasizes the importance of committing to those things that are passions for the kids outside of the classroom.
4. Mr. Desto said the district office recently acted on Mrs. Reed's suggestion, and established a survey of home school/school choice families.

## **IX. Student Representative Report**

Jack Bugan reported on the Shepherd Hill Drama Club's presentation of *The Crucible* last weekend. He said the Show Choir competition season gets underway at Shepherd Hill on Saturday. Mid-terms begin Thursday.

## **X. New Business**

### **A. MSBA Notification / Future Action**

Following the MSBA's notification of the district's unsuccessful statement of interest, Mr. Desto met with Mr. Mathieu and Mr. Millette to discuss future action. Mr. Desto said he initially thought the next step would be to apply for the MSBA's Accelerated Repair program but has concluded this is not a good option for the district.

The Accelerated Repair Program assists with roofs, boilers, windows and doors, and Mr. Desto said none of these items are in urgent need of repair. He asked the committee to consider submitting another statement of interest to the Core Program.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the Budget and Finance Subcommittee discussed making a recommendation for a feasibility study of Shepherd Hill. Mr. Mathieu has reached out to several firms and estimates the cost at around \$16,000. Mr. Mathieu said he is required to get three quotes and to choose the most cost effective.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to instruct Mr. Mathieu to solicit quotes for a facilities assessment of Shepherd Hill, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Desto suggested we should submit a SOI for Core Program for Shepherd Hill, but said that a vote is not needed at this time.

### **B. FY 2017 Budget Presentation – Part 1**

Mr. Desto said the budget presentations this year will provide a new way of looking at information. He started what will be a three-part introduction by looking at the budgetary challenges and unveiling some new ideas to consider such as creative deployment of staff, an increased use of school choice, solar energy options, and partnering with town services.

The driving vision remains as the current and future Strategic Plan, which will be revisited in March as the committees reconvene. The schools must play a greater role in meeting the needs of social, emotional and mental health.

At the next meeting, Mr. Desto will focus on the district's educational vision.

### **C. Finance Director Report**

Mr. Mathieu said the wireless project at Shepherd Hill Regional High School is in progress and should be completed by next week.

The district continues to look at health insurance options.

### **D. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Report**

Mrs. Rabbitt reported on the subcommittee's January 7 meeting. Discussion centered on the MSBA decision, the budget schedule and the message to the communities.

### **E. Mental Health First Aid Program – Discussion**

As a follow-up to Mr. Pietrzak’s discussion about mental health first aid opportunities, Mr. Desto reported that the district Wellness Committee will meet with Anita Amante of the Central Massachusetts office of the Department of Mental Health, on January 27 to discuss mental health training for district staff.

Mr. Pietrzak said the meeting with Ms. Amante will also provide an overview of how the child/adolescent division of his department can be of service to the district, as well as an overview of services for children experiencing mental health issues. Mr. Pietrzak spoke about the DMH’s Community Conversations program which focuses on removing the stigma of mental illness while providing information on how the department can be helpful in the community.

**F. Schedule of Dates for Collective Bargaining Agreement Negotiations – Discussion**

Mr. Desto provided a memo with dates of the negotiation meetings. Executive sessions with the full committee will be scheduled in between those meetings.

Mr. Chalk reported on the first negotiation session during which the parties established ground rules, and set a deadline for submitting new proposals.

**G. Consideration of Request for Home Instruction, Policy IHBG – (Vote Required)**

Mr. and Mrs. John Oakes, Charlton, have requested to home school their daughter, Kathryn, in grade 9 for the remainder of the 2015-2016 school year.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the request as submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Oakes, was approved by unanimous vote.

**H. SWCEC Annual Report and Auditor’s Report – Discussion**

The committee received copies of the Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative’s annual report and audit. Mrs. Kabala said the reports were thorough.

Mr. Desto said the Collaborative staff has made great strides in erasing a deficit. The committee agreed to invite the Collaborative administrators to an upcoming meeting.

**XI. Next Meeting Dates**

- Budget and Finance Subcommittee Meeting: Wednesday, January 20, 2016, 9 a.m.
- School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, 7 p.m.
- Executive Session Review Subcommittee  
Friday, January 22 9 a.m.

**XII. Future Agenda Items – 2016-2017 Calendar, amending the Student Restraint Policy**

**XIII. Adjourn**

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by S. Reed to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 8:20 p.m.

*Items used for this meeting include:*

<i>Agenda for January 13, 2016</i>	<i>Superintendent’s Report of January 8, 2016</i>	<i>FY 2015 SWCEC Financial Statements</i>
<i>FY 2017 Budget Introduction</i>	<i>Minutes of December 9, 2015</i>	<i>Finance Director’s Update</i>
<i>School Attending Children Survey</i>	<i>FY 2015 SWCEC Annual Report</i>	<i>MSBA Notification</i>

*Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary*