

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 6:00 PM Via Live Stream - Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/dcrsd>, <https://vimeo.com/503196240> and Video Conferencing - Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/94678475165>.

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Kenneth J. Laferriere, Chair
Pauline J. Aucoin, Vice Chair
Cathleen Carmignani
Jordan W. Evans at 6:29 PM
Catherine M. Kabala
Stephanie A. Reed arrived at 6:45
Jamie L. Terry
Michaela Cluett, Student Representative

Also in attendance were Steven M. Lamarche, Superintendent of Schools, Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations, Brian J. Ackerman, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Lorinda C. Allen; district administrators William F. Chaplin, Jennifer A. Desto, Lori A. Pacheco, Dean W. Packard, Kathleen E. Pastore, Christopher E. Starczewski, Kelly True, Andrew Leach, Michael Tucker, Peter Olson, Michael Resener, Global Awareness Program Director Mary Pierangeli, Covid-19 Coordinator Anne Marie DeMorris, MASC Field Director Tracy O'Connell Novick, Rich Earle, Sandra Sullivan, secretary, attendees from Zoom and Vimeo live streaming.

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

The chair entertained a motion to waive district policy BE – Time and Place, to allow the meeting to begin at 6 p.m.

This motion was made by J. Terry, second by P. Aucoin, and approved by roll call vote:

C. Carmignani: yes
J. Evans: not present
C. Kabala: yes
S. Reed: not present
J. Terry: yes
P. Aucoin: yes
K. Laferriere: yes

II. Pledge of Allegiance *Audrey Bonaventura, grade 8 student at Dudley Middle School led the pledge. Ms. Bonaventura is the 2020-2021 Dudley Ambassador to the state's Project 351 program.*

III. Moment of Silence

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, January 13, 2021*

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, January 13, 2021, as corrected, was approved by roll call vote.

C. Carmignani: yes
J. Evans: not present

- C. Kabala: yes
- S. Reed: not present
- J. Terry: yes
- P. Aucoin: yes
- K. Laferriere: yes

The secretary will review the meeting tape to clarify a statement made during the citizens' forum.

V. Approval of the Warrant

The following warrants were signed by a majority of members electronically.

Warrant #	Amount	Payroll Warrant #	Amount
40	\$83,443.02	1419D	\$494,162.69
41	\$65,120.15	1419P	\$1,325,537.19
42	\$264,497.12		
43	\$631,019.87		
Total	\$1,044,080.16		\$1,819,699.88

VI. Citizens' Forum

No one spoke at this time.

VII. Communications

Mrs. Carmignani said she has received feedback from parents asking teachers to be mindful of the work given to elementary students on Wednesdays.

VIII. Student Representative Report – Ms. Michaela M. Cluett

Ms. Cluett reported on the start of the athletic season as both boys' and girls' basketball teams held their first games this week.

The Shepherd Hill Student Council has planned several winter events including a drive-in movie night February 12, and a diaper drive.

Shepherd Hill's Equity Club, A Better Hill, is reviewing school handbooks with the goal of implementing changes to promote equity.

PSAT administration was held Tuesday, January 26, 2021 to 10th and 11th graders.

IX. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Lamarche shared recent experiences with the transmission of COVID-19 at Charlton Elementary School. The district's administrators continue to work with the Charlton and Dudley Boards of health and the towns' health director and health agent, as well as meeting with school nurses and principals to conduct exercises and learn and share processes.

Mr. Lamarche announced the district has hired Anne Marie DeMorris as the District COVID Coordinator. Ms. DeMorris is a 20-year employee of the district who is excited to begin this new role.

The Dudley-Charlton Leadership Council is working on a website for incoming Shepherd Hill Regional High School freshmen. He recognized Henry Weiland as the project manager.

Mr. Lamarche recognized the dedication of two principals who are retiring at the conclusion of this school year: Heritage School Principal Kathleen E. Pastore, and Charlton Elementary School Principal Lori A. Pacheco. The positions have been posted, and Mr. Lamarche asked for school committee representation on the two screening committees, Mr. Laferriere's appointments were:

Charlton Elementary School: Kenneth Laferriere, tentative

Heritage School: Jamie Terry

The Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents has established a Legislative and Advocacy Platform, seeking legislative action to amend 30B requirements to procure bids in the amount of \$50,000 to \$100,000, as well as a 90% reimbursement rate for all special education costs in excess of \$250,000, or four times the state average per pupil foundation cost. MASS is also seeking to modernize transportation to elicit more competition and to increase regional school district transportation reimbursement, suspend MCAS for 2020-21 and align with National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), and suspend ACCESS testing for 2021-22.

On Monday, January 25, the district added an incremental change to its current learning model by increasing live instruction. The next scheduled change is March 15 to five half days of in person learning with synchronous remote learning the afternoon. These efforts will help meet the Student Learning Time requirements.

Mr. Lamarche thanked citizens for their patience.

X. New Business

A. Superintendent Evaluation Discussion – Chair Laferriere/Tracy O'Connell Novick, Field Director, MASC
Ms. O'Connell Novick supported the committee as it considers evaluating the superintendent. The evaluation system was amended in 2011 to support efforts to align with closing student achievement gaps. Ms. O'Connell Novick explained the three key components of this process as a 5-steps cycle, with two-part tools to establish goals and standards in the superintendent's multi-part rating system.

The superintendent's goals, which are accepted by the school committee, must discuss the following:

1. Professional practice
2. Student learning
3. District improvement

The superintendent is evaluated on instructional leadership, management and operations, family and community outreach, and professional culture. Each member of the school committee offers an evaluation, and one member is charged with creating the composite evaluation, which becomes the official evaluation.

Ms. O'Connell Novick said the evaluation can be a year-long process that is monitored throughout the year. The committee can adopt its own time frame to account for town elections and the possibility of new members arriving on the board.

The committee must agree on the superintendent's goals which may be focused on and contain pieces of the standards. The committee must also decide on the indicators and the weight placed on the standards. The board may discuss artifacts of evidence, which may be the focus of agenda items and other outcomes.

The chair will schedule further discussion at a future meeting.

B. Global Studies Travel Update – Mary Pierangeli

In November 2019 the committee approved student travel to Paris, Florence and Venice for April 2021. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Mrs. Pierangeli said this trip cannot take place. The committee canceled the trip scheduled for April

2020, with many of those students joining the April 2021 trip. Mrs. Pierangeli recommends rescheduling the trip, noting the final payment is due at the end of January. She has advocated for the best outcomes with EF Tours for students and parents and presented several options for the committee's consideration.

Option 1: change the travel dates to August 8-19, 2021 to allow for vaccines and a slowing of the virus. OR Reschedule the trip to April 15-25, 2022. This would exclude this year's seniors.

Option 2: Cancel and reservation and receive or reinstate a fully transferable Future Travel Voucher for 100% of all money paid to EF Tours.

Option 3: Cancel the tour with each traveler receiving a cash refund of all payments, less \$350.

The committee must vote to cancel the April 2021 trip to allow consideration of these options.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to cancel the GAP trip scheduled for April 2021 was approved unanimously by roll call vote:

C. Carmignani: yes
J. Evans: yes
C. Kabala: yes
S. Reed: yes
J. Terry: yes
P. Aucoin: yes
K. Laferriere: yes

A motion to approve all three options for rescheduled or canceled travel by the Global Awareness Program as outlined by Mrs. Pierangeli, was approved unanimously by roll call vote:

C. Carmignani: yes
J. Evans: yes
C. Kabala: yes
S. Reed: yes
J. Terry: yes
P. Aucoin: yes
K. Laferriere: yes

Mrs. Pierangeli will inform parents of these options. She said EF's current COVID Peace of Mind Program at 45 days or more before departure allows for a cash refund less \$500 for those with a 2021 voucher or \$565 for those with a 2020 Voucher. The cancellation terms allow EF to partially cover costs related to these non-recoverable payments to suppliers and staff.

Students who enroll on the rescheduled dates (August, 2021 or April, 2022) would be subject to the new tour's COVID Peace of Mind Program terms (with cash refund less \$500 or \$565) up to 45 days before departure and would not be eligible for the cash refund less \$350 option unless EF once again needs to cancel travel as a result of continued government restrictions. If travel has resumed, at 44 days prior to departure the standard cancellation policy would be in effect and there would be no refund option.

C. Report of the Budget and Finance Committee – Catherine Kabala

The subcommittee met Tuesday, January 26. The main topic was the FY 21 budget. The last piece of it is the new Covid-19 Stimulus Grants which were announced today. Mr. Mathieu recommended waiting until February to update the committee on the budget.

This so-called ESSER 2 grant (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief fund) gives the district \$1.08 million, although the rules for use have not been released. Of this amount, \$10,000 is reserved for student support services. Mr. Mathieu reminded the committee that the district has continued to fund all of the positions hired with the first phase of relief monies that expired on December 30.

The subcommittee began discussion on the FY 22 budget. The subcommittee listed as areas of focus are:

1. Class sizes
2. Analytical platform for students
3. Transitional help for students
4. Contractual obligations.

Mrs. Kabala reminded the committee that a level-funded budget requires cuts. The subcommittee has scheduled meetings on February 8th and 23rd.

- D. Report of the Director of Finance and Operations – Richard Mathieu
1. FY21 School Budget

This item was tabled.

2. HVAC update

Mr. Mathieu reported all of the MERV 13 filters have been received and Airadigm has been on site since January 13 to balance those units and continue the work in the classrooms.

The work at Heritage School continues but has experienced delays with shipping and availability of key components. Installation of the Energy Management System at Heritage School continues with completion anticipated on Friday, January 29.

3. Transportation preparations for March 15, 2021

Mr. Mathieu included a letter drafted for parents to publicize a survey that will help to determine the need for busing. With transportation guidance limiting the number of students on a bus, families must request transportation. Mr. Mathieu said if all families indicate they want to use District transportation, there is a potential of doubling the bus fleet. Many families opt to transport their children to and from school. Parents will be asked if they need the bus. Their cooperation is needed to gather accurate information.

- E. School Year 2020-2021 Calendar

The committee will vote on a revised calendar as discussed at the January 13 meeting. The 2020-2021 school year is comprised of 171 days, with school ending for students on June 17, 2021, followed by an in-service day for teachers on June 18.

Mr. Lamarche said the Student Showcases will not be held this year and there will be early release days for virtual parent teacher conferences on February 11 for PK-4, and March 11 for 9-12. .
The committee agreed to move the in-service day originally scheduled on April 30 to March 10.

It was noted that early release means there is no live instruction in the afternoons.

A motion by J. Terry, second by S. Reed to accept the proposed 2020-2021 School Year calendar with the changes, was approved unanimously by roll call vote:

- C. Carmignani: yes
J. Evans: yes
C. Kabala: yes
S. Reed: yes

J. Terry: yes
P. Aucoin: yes
K. Laferriere: yes

F. MARS Update – Chair Laferriere

Mr. Laferriere was appointed as an associate member to this Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools' Board of Directors. Mr. Laferriere said there are no voting privileges, but there is an opportunity to learn about the processes, which he will share with the school committee. Mr. Laferriere will share the information from the Special Commission on improving regional school transportation efficiencies. The board discussed bussing issues in rural areas.

G. Equity Committee Update – Dr. Brain Ackerman

Mr. Lamarche said one of his Superintendent's goals was to advocate for a district-wide culture that embraces equity for all students, staff and community members.

Dr. Ackerman provided a review of the committee's accomplishments and orient the committee on its goals for the year. The committee last met on January 11.

Dr. Ackerman said one of the committee's goals was to hire a consultant to evaluate the district's programs, policies and materials for sources of bias. This has been accomplished through the work of Dr. Sheldon Eakins of the Leading Equity Center. A Better Hill, the Shepherd Hill student equity committee will work with Dr. Eakins at some point in the near future.

The Equity Committee has compiled a compendium of electronic and online resources for battling racism.

The group is poised to recommend tangible policy changes for equitable practices of discipline and grading. The committee will continue to review all handbooks.

Dr. Ackerman said the committee has begun to establish a network of colleges such as Worcester State University, Lesley University, Northeastern University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Springfield College through which to begin intentional recruitment of a diverse staff of educators.

Future goals are to make an intentional shift in curricula to address issues of bias, to explore immersion options, and to continue to identify and train staff to ensure all students in traditionally underserved groups have a trusted adult to whom they can turn to when needed.

The committee has crafted a mission statement:

"Collectively, the entire DCRSD community; students, staff, administration, and caregivers, are on a journey. Racism against Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color, bigotry and bias against the LGBTQIA+ communities, and ableism exist everywhere, and that includes our schools. We have a responsibility to make our schools safe and equitable, and must be explicit in calling this reality out in Dudley and Charlton. Silence perpetuates these injustices."

Mr. Lamarche said the School Committee's vote to accept this mission statement would be a great endorsement of the Equity Committee's work.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by J. Evans to adopt the Equity Committee's mission statement as presented this evening was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

C. Carmignani: yes
J. Evans: yes
C. Kabala: yes

S. Reed: yes
J. Terry: yes
P. Aucoin: yes
K. Laferriere: yes

The statement will be posted on the district website.

Ms. Evans is proud of the work of the Equity Committee, and noted the efforts are also the focus of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and the state as well. She said she would like to see the superintendent draft future goals based on this work.

H. Professional Development Update - Dr. Brian Ackerman

Mr. Lamarche said one of the superintendent's goals is to establish methods and methodologies to identify individual student achievement and progress as a result of the various models of learning implemented during the COVID-19 Pandemic, and asked Dr. Ackerman to provide this update.

Dr. Ackerman said the district continues to make progress in implementing the elementary reading grant. The administrative team and core members have attended a virtual symposium led by Melissa Orkin, a nationally known expert on the science of reading. This work meshes with prior symposiums led by David Kilpatrick, and help build an intellectual and empirical foundation on how children learn to read.

Work continues with Project Lead the Way, a K-12 STEM program, which is currently in our high school and middle schools. The district had coordinated a grant to implement PLTW in the elementary schools; however, there were competing priorities this year and the new target date is the 2021-22 school year.

Shepherd Hill Regional High School has been recognized as a distinguished designee for offering a bio-medical pathway, which is a PLTW initiative.

XI. Next Meeting Dates

Via Video Conferencing

School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 7:00 PM
Budget and Finance Subcommittee: Monday, February 8, 2021, 4 PM
Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 4 PM

Curriculum Subcommittee

for Teaching and Learning: TBD

Capital Outlay/Safety Subcommittee: Friday, February 5, 2021, 11 AM

Policy Review Subcommittee: Friday, February 5, 2021, 9 AM

XII. Future Agenda Items: Update HVAC (ongoing), Update Fiscal Year 2021 (ongoing), Update Equity Committee (ongoing), Update Plan Transitions (February), Update Student Services Department (February), MASC/MASS Conference Report (February), School Year 2021-2022 Calendar (February) Fiscal Year 2022 (February and March), School Choice (April), Superintendent's Evaluation.

XIII. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by J. Terry, second by S. Reed was approved unanimously by roll call vote at 8:48 PM.

C. Carmignani: yes
J. Evans: yes
C. Kabala: yes
S. Reed: yes
J. Terry: yes

Minutes of the School Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, January 27, 2021

P. Aucoin: yes

K. Laferriere: yes

Items used for this meeting include:

<i>Agenda for Wednesday, January 27, 2021</i>	<i>Minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, January 13, 2021</i>	<i>Superintendent's Report</i>
<i>Director of Finance and Operations Report</i>	<i>Report of the Equity Committee</i>	<i>Report of the Professional Development Committee</i>
<i>GAP Program Update</i>	<i>Revised School Year Calendar – 2020-2021</i>	<i>MARS Professional Development Series</i>
<i>Special Committee Report on Transportation</i>	<i>FY 2021 Budget Revised</i>	<i>Superintendent's Evaluation Handout</i>

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, Secretary