

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, February 10, 2021, at 7 PM via video conferencing.

Live Stream - Vimeo:

<https://vimeo.com/dcrsd>
<https://vimeo.com/508018864>

Video Conferencing - Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/95669947579>

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Kenneth J. Laferriere, Chair
Pauline J. Aucoin, Vice Chair
Cathleen Carmignani
Jordan W. Evans
Catherine M. Kabala
Stephanie A. Reed
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, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; district administrators William F. Chaplin, Daniel D’Arcangelo, Jennifer A. Desto, Lori A. Pacheco, Dean W. Packard, Kathleen E. Pastore, Christopher E. Starczewski, Kelly True; moderator Rich Earle, Sandra Sullivan, secretary.

I. Call to Order

The chair called the fully remote meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance- Cole Desrosiers, grade 2, Dudley Elementary School, led the pledge of allegiance.

III. Moment of Silence

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, January 27, 2021*

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, January 27, 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

V. Approval of the Warrant

The following warrants were approved virtually by school committee members:

Accounts Payable		Payroll	
Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
40	\$1,619,131.13	1420D	\$508,179.09
45	\$152,631.64	1420P	\$1,371,132.85
Total	\$1,771,762.77	Total	\$1,879,311.94

VI. Citizens' Forum

No one spoke at this time.

VII. Communications

Members received an email this evening from Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association President Kevin L. Foley. The chair read the letter dated February 10, 2021, into the record:

February 10, 2021

Dear DCRSD School Committee Members,

I hope this letter finds you all safe and doing well.

I am writing to express the DCTA's concerns over the approaching SLT Model change scheduled for March 15, 2021.

To the dismay of many of our members, Governor Baker has moved teachers further back on his list of essential vaccine recipients. It is now very likely that DC teachers will not have access to COVID vaccinations prior to our district's planned transition to increased in-person classroom time and reduced social distance limitations. This reality is problematic.

According to statements made by school committee members during the last few meetings, staff vaccinations play a pivotal role in determining when a return to more in-person class time can be implemented safely. The DCTA could not agree more with this opinion.

As students are too young to receive vaccinations, the responsibility of preventing school related transmission of the virus falls squarely upon the staff. We are doing all that we can by following the protocols of mitigating factors. However, considering the Governors' decision mentioned above, we consider any premature transition to either Model C or D to be an irresponsibly risky undertaking.

We hope that you understand our perspective and continue to advocate sensibly for all parties involved as we navigate through this challenging year together.

Respectfully,

Kevin Foley

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

Ms. Cluett reported on the many activities underway at Shepherd Hill Regional High School:

The National Honor Society is hoping to garner 500 pairs of socks during its upcoming drive.

- The Student Council is holding a drive-in movie night on Friday featuring the Greatest Showman and the Hunger Games.
- A Diaper Drive will begin on Friday, February 12 and run through Friday, March 5.
- The Shepherd Hill Drama Club is holding virtual auditions for The Show Must Go On
- The DCLC (Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Leadership Council) is looking for new members.
- The Show Choir is practicing for its first competition to be held March 6.
- The Athletic season is busy with girls' and boys' basketball and registration set for Fall II sports offerings ongoing.
- Ms. Cluett said students at Shepherd Hill are excited for vacation week.

IX. Superintendent's Report

1. The transition to the new learning model is set for Monday, March 15 with all students in the building 5 half days each week. Mr. Lamarche said this is a big undertaking as the district remains student centric, focusing on students' well-being, as well as on their mental, emotional and academic health. The learning model has also had an impact on families and teachers, who are at their best when their students are in front of them in person. The new learning model will require a distance of not less than 3'. Mr. Lamarche said the district has always been not less than 5'. Many districts are not less than 3', and Mr. Lamarche said there are no conclusive studies about transmission rates.
2. Vaccinations have not been tied to any learning plan because there is no guarantee about the availability or that everyone wants to be vaccinated.
3. The district is asking parents to commit to a learning model for the remainder of the school year, whether it is the hybrid or fully remote.
4. There has been a significant drop in cases with one since last Saturday. There is a drop in the number of quarantines, testing and positive cases.
5. Pool testing – the district is awaiting action on its application for pool testing. One step in this process was hiring the Covid-19 coordinator.
6. DESE actions: district report cards are now available. The state will administer MCAS tests as a diagnostic measure. The window for competency testing of the class of 2021 has been shortened.
7. Feb vacation: Mr. Lamarche said with snow predicted for most of the vacation week, there will be those who will want to travel to warmer climates. Mr. Lamarche reminded all that the state's travel order is still in place requiring 10-day quarantines after travel to all states except Hawaii. Staff, students and parents are reminded to self-monitor their symptoms and follow mitigating strategies such as hand washing and sanitizing.
8. The district has posted a survey to determine the transportation needs among parents. This will drive any further funding needs.

Mrs. Terry asked how many students could be allowed in the building with a 6' distance.

X. New Business

A. Report of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee – Catherine Kabala

Mrs. Kabala said the subcommittee met on Monday, February 8, and discussed three items that will be addressed by the finance director under item B of New Business: FY 21, FY 22, and the Capital and Safety Subcommittee.

B. Report of the Director of Finance and Operations – Richard Mathieu

1. Donation

Mr. Mathieu recommended acceptance of a donation of \$34 from Box Tops Inc to Dudley Elementary

School.

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to accept the donation of \$34 from Box Tops Inc. 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

2. Snow plow bid - DES/MRS

The district is going through this process for the second time as the original bidder withdrew. One bid was received on Monday, February 8 from the company who has served in the interim.

Mr. Mathieu recommended awarding the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 snow plow contract for Dudley Elementary School and Mason Road School to PGBCO LLC, of Webster, at a price of \$12,500 per year at Dudley Elementary School, and \$11,000 per year at Mason Road School.

This motion was made by P. Aucoin, second by J. Evans, and 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

3. HVAC update

Mr. Mathieu said Airadigm will wrap up work on six schools by Friday. The firm said some of the older univent systems in some classrooms are going to struggle to come up to the standards. The windows in those rooms may need to be kept open.

Mr. Mathieu said most of the work is complete at Heritage School with work on the EMS system continuing.

Mr. Lamache said staff is encouraged to keep windows open for safe ventilation. Mr. Lamarche complimented Mr. Mathieu's work on this project.

4. Fiscal Year 21 update

Mr. Mathieu requested a vote to lower the FY 21 budget to meet expected revenues affected by the change in Chapter 70 monies from the spring to when the state budget was finalized in December. Mr. Mathieu proposed taking the \$107,000 from the two unfilled technology positions at the elementary schools. The specialists resigned prior to the start of the school year and were not filled. These positions will return in the FY 22 budget, Mr. Mathieu said.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by P. Aucoin to adjust the FY 21 budget by \$107,000 by using money designated for two teaching positions, 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

Mr. Lamarche noted the original need was for a \$5 million reduction.

5. Fiscal Year 22 priorities

Mr. Mathieu said to balance the FY 21 budget for town meeting purposes in May we utilized savings from transportation for last one-third of the last school year, plus reserves that are normally used to offset the FY 22 budget. Mr. Mathieu noted even if we level fund our budget, the towns will be looking at a hefty assessment increase, between \$500,000 to \$700,000.

The district does have access to the ESSER 2 grant, about \$1 million. This will offset our expenses in FY 22. We can explain to towns who will request that this be used to offset assessments, that this won't affect their assessments.

B. Report of the Capital Outlay/Safety Subcommittee – Richard Mathieu

The subcommittee met last Friday to review the list of capital items for each school. The subcommittee agreed to make the towns aware of the district's needs.

The middle schools' roofs need replacing or repairing, and the district has received many differing opinions. Mr. Mathieu proposed using up to \$10,000 in School Choice monies to hire an architect who can identify the best course of action.

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by J. Terry to authorize the finance director to use up to \$10,000 to hire an architect to study the middle schools' roofs, 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

C. Report of the Curriculum Subcommittee – Cathleen Carmignani & Jamie Terry

Mrs. Terry reported on Tuesday, February 9 meeting which featured a discussion about mechanisms used to measure student learning. The present method, IXL, does not give us the ability to compare nationally. Such software is a great tool for teachers to assess in real time about learning gaps.

Dr. Ackerman is meeting with middle school science teachers and then math and social studies teachers this week to determine where we are across the district in terms of curriculum.

Efforts continue to establish Project Lead the Way at the elementary level.

Subcommittee members Mrs. Terry and Mrs. Carmignani discussed the needs in our towns for before and after school programs, and the possibility of establishing onsite enrichment programs.

D. Report of the Policy Subcommittee – Steven Lamarche

The policies were adopted last year; however, a review by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education revealed the need for several edits.

1. JFABD – Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services – 1st Read

A motion to waive the reading aloud of policy JFABD by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala, 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 by P. Aucoin, second by J. Evans to accept the revisions to policy JFABD, was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

2. JFABE – Educational Opportunities for Military Children – 1st Read

A motion by C. Kabala, second by P. Aucoin to waive the reading aloud of policy JFABE was approved by unanimous 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 by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to accept the revisions to policy JFABE as presented, was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

K. Laferriere: yes

3. JFABF – Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care – 1st Read

A motion by S. Reed, second by J. Evans to waive the reading aloud of policy JFABF, was approved by unanimous 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 by C. Kabala, second by P. Aucoin, to approve the revisions to policy JFABF as presented was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

C. Carmignani: yes

J. Evans: yes

C. Kabala: yes

S. Reed: yes

J. Terry: yes

P. Aucoin: yes

K. Laferriere: yes

E. Update Student Services Department - Lorinda Allen

Mrs. Allen reported on some great things happening in the student services departments.

Massachusetts Associate Commissioner Russell Johnston and his team visited virtually with Charlton Middle School to learn about programmatic services for students with special needs with a particular focus on Cohort D. A follow-up email from the associate commissioner said the team was amazed by the program and thanked everyone involved for providing this positive learning experience.

Dudley Middle School's alternative learning center was the site of recent training for a behavioral program entitled AIM – Accept, Identify, Move. This program raises the bar for what best practice can be for children struggling with social discomfort, challenging behaviors and the daily struggles of life.

The department will expand its implementation of the use of a web-based literacy tool called Kurzweil 3000.

Mrs. Allen is partnering with Dr. Ackerman and principals for reading interventions.

Mrs. Allen praised special education teachers, therapists and service providers for working exceptionally hard to complete all back-logged evaluations from the spring shutdown.

Students in the 18 to 22-year-old program at Shepherd Hill have not been able to transition to community programs.

The Special Education Parent Advisory Council meets on the first Wednesday of each month via Zoom. The Pupil Personnel Services Department continues to update its website to provide resources for mental wellness and supports.

G. Superintendent's Evaluation – Steven Lamarche

Mr. Lamarche provided the committee with the evaluation rubric that includes the goals previously approved by the committee. Tied in focus indicators, 4 indicators

1. Student Learning Goal, 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. Focus Indicator I-B.
2. Professional Practice Goal, Establish Dudley-Charlton Regional School District organizational leadership to navigate and implement a high quality, comprehensive learning program to all students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Focus Indicator II-A and III-D.
3. District Improvement Goals, Advocate for a district-wide culture that embraces equity for all students, staff and community members. Focus Indicator IV-B.

Mr. Lamarche recommended the timeline as follows:

February 10 - present goals

April 14 – present self-evaluation

May 26 – present evidence

June 23 – School Committee completes evaluation process

The committee expressed concern for language in Mr. Lamarche's contract that would stipulate a date on which members need to provide feedback.

Mrs. Terry expressed concern as the dates offered is after the town elections, which would preclude a current member completing the process.

Mrs. Reed asked if the timeline could be shortened to allow completion by May 1, which is the date of the Charlton Town Election.

Members argued that timeline could be too aggressive in view of budget meetings.

A motion by J. Terry, second by C. Carmignani to set the timeline for Mr. Lamarche's evaluation to complete by the end of April to allow Mrs. Reed to participate, was approved by a roll call vote of 6 in favor, 1 opposed.

C. Carmignani: yes

J. Evans: yes

C. Kabala: yes

S. Reed: yes

J. Terry: yes

P. Aucoin: yes

K. Laferriere: no

Mr. Lamarche will display evidence at the meeting of Wednesday, April 14 and the committee will compile its evaluation.

XI. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 7:00 PM

Budget and Finance Subcommittee: Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 4:00 PM

Policy Review Subcommittee: Friday, March 5, 2021, 9:00 AM

Curriculum Subcommittee for Teaching and Learning: TBD
Capital Outlay/Safety Subcommittee: Friday, March 5, 2021, 11:00 AM

XII. Future Agenda Items: Update HVAC (ongoing), Update Fiscal Year 2021 (ongoing), Update Equity Committee (ongoing), Update Plan Transitions (February), MASC/MASS Conference Report, School Year 2021-2022 Calendar (February) Fiscal Year 2022 (February), Shepherd Hill Athletic Fields Update (March), School Choice (April)

XIII. Adjourn

A motion by J. Terry, second by S. Reed to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 9:36 PM

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

Items used for this meeting include

Agenda for Wednesday, February 10, 2021	Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, January 27, 2021	Superintendent's Report – Friday, February 5, 2021
Superintendent's Performance Goals	Report of the Director of Finance and Operations	Report of the Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Capital Improvement documents	Capital and Safety Subcommittee memo	Letter from DCTA President Kevin Foley
FY 21 Revenue Budget	FY 22 Personnel Ranking	Policies: JFABD, JFABE, FJABF

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, Secretary