

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, 7:00 PM and open to the public via

Live Stream - Vimeo:

<https://vimeo.com/dcrsd>

<https://vimeo.com/516780396>

Video Conferencing - Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/99332543617>

Attending the meeting in person were:

Kenneth J. Laferriere, Chair
Cathleen Carmignani
Stephanie A. Reed
Michaela Cluett, Student Representative

Attending remotely were:

Pauline J. Aucoin, Vice Chair
Jordan W. Evans
Catherine M. Kabala
Jamie L. Terry, joined Zoom at 7:39PM

Also attending in person 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; attending remotely were 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, Nicole Heroux, Rich Earle, Sandra Sullivan, secretary, for a total of 82 participants via Zoom and Vimeo live streaming.

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mason Road School Kindergartner Victoria Santos led the pledge.

III. Moment of Silence

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, February 24, 2021

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Wednesday, February 24, 2021, was approved by six votes in favor, one absent:

C. Carmignani - yes
J. Evans - yes
C. Kabala - yes
S. Reed - yes
J. Terry - not present
P. Aucoin - yes

K. Laferriere - yes

B. *Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, February 24, 2021*

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, February 24, 2021, was approved by a vote of 6 in favor, one not present:

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

V. **Approval of the Warrants**

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

Accounts Payable		Payroll	
Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
50	\$56,412.22	1424 D	\$491,918.32
51	\$168,989.51	1424P	\$1,300,535.26
52	\$215,941.80	1425D	\$18.41
		1425 P	\$176.93
		1428D	\$502,547.40
		1428P	\$1,342,624.30
Total	\$471,343.53	Total	\$3,637,820.62

VI. **Citizens' Forum**

Mr. Laferriere read policy BEDH.

1. Derek Donohue, Dudley, thanked everyone at all levels of the district and the school committee on down for everything they have done and efforts to get everyone in.
Cecelia Donahue, grade 5, Dudley Middle School, said it will be so helpful to her education to return to school where she can see her teachers more often.
Amelia Donahue, grade 4, Dudley Elementary School, thanked the committee for bringing students back to school for five half days.
2. Caitlynn Panczyk, Dudley, referenced the state Board of Education meeting held last Friday, and encouraged the public to watch it. During that meeting, doctors spoke about the issues they encountered during the pandemic, and why the recommendation to return students in grades K-5 to school with urgency. Doctors said the numbers of young people expressing thoughts of and even attempts of suicide has tripled from month to month. She expressed some disappointment that the change in learning model will not include all students on April 5. She said there is a lot of ground to cover and many gaps to fill.
3. Emma Panczyk, grade 5, Dudley Middle School, is looking forward to returning to school for five full days and to see all of her classmates and teachers, and not sit in front of a computer all the time.

VII. Communications

This item was tabled in view of the work being undertaken by the policy review subcommittee to work on policies relative to communications. Committee members were asked to present any communications under Citizens' Forum this evening.

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

Ms. Cluett said students enjoyed a no school day today for PD and no school in the afternoon on Thursday for parent-teacher conferences.

The Student Council is sponsoring the Battle of the Borders, collecting paper goods at the one-year anniversary of the Covid shutdown. This will become an annual event and competition. This year the drive runs through March 26.

The recent Sock Drive netted 900 pair, which were donated to a local center.

Ms. Cluett said in the athletic department news, Fall II sports are up and running with football, unified basketball, and volleyball.

The Shepherd Hill Regional High School Pit Band and Show Choir will compete this weekend.

VIX. New Business

Mr. Laferriere said the Policy Review Subcommittee is working on policies regarding meetings. Mr. Laferriere said he has studied Roberts Rules of Order, and will be setting some expectations during meetings. He said when there will be a motion on the floor before any discussion and deliberation can be initiated. The person who makes the motion gets to speak first, and people who make the motions do not necessarily need to vote in the affirmative.

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

1. Donations

In celebration of Black History Month, the Student Council at the high school chose to purchase three books for the Heritage School library. Mr. Mathieu recommends acceptance of that donation:

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to accept the donations of books the Heritage School library, was approved by a vote of 6 in favor, one not present:

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

2. FY20 Excess and Deficiency

Mr. Mathieu said the district Excess and Deficiency funds were certified by the Department of Revenue and Division of Labor Services as \$1,517,104. This is an increase of \$100,000 over last year. Mr. Mathieu

said the district does use these funds to support the budget each year, which is capped at \$1.1 million.

3. Update Food Service

The Food Services Department is preparing for the upcoming change to the learning model. Students will be able to pick up lunches and breakfasts. Mr. Greenberg will reach out to families choosing to remain in the remote learning model. Discussions have begun on eating in schools beginning in April.

4. Update HVAC

Mr. Mathieu provided the committee with the final report from Consulting Engineering Services. The work started in August, with the district engaging state recommended vendors to review the HVAC systems. In September, the engineers worked with Airadigm Solutions to begin testing and balancing of mechanical systems while it awaited delivery of the Merv -13 filters. Once installed, the units were tested and the resulting report is positive. The bottom line is to continue the mitigating strategies of hand-washing, mask wearing and social distancing.

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

Mrs. Kabala said the subcommittee met Tuesday, March 9, with one item on the agenda: the FY 22 budget. Mr. Mathieu and Mr. Lamarche attended the meeting of the Dudley Finance Appropriations and Advisory Committee. Discussion was deferred to the following agenda item.

C. Fiscal Year 2022

Mr. Lamarche and Mr. Mathieu asked the committee to approve the preliminary FY 22 budget as a starting point. They have met with both finance boards to discuss the district's position.

Mr. Mathieu said the FY 22 budget season is starting in a different place than last year. There are many unknowns but there is a little more solid information than for FY 21. The Senate has passed a relief fund with many dollars devoted to schools.

The town of Dudley requested the district lower the assessment by using monies earmarked for FY 21.

Mrs. Kabala said one of the questions asked by Dudley officials concerned was about School Choice. She explained that the district receives \$5,000 for each of its 160 students, or \$800,000. Mrs. Kabala said it costs far less than that to educate these students. She said School Choice has become a great funding source for the district.

The chair entertained a motion to accept the FY 22 Preliminary Budget as \$52,571,801, with assessments to Charlton as \$14,789,261, and to Dudley as \$9,890,252, and this motion was made by C. Kabala, second by C. Carmignani.

Mrs. Kabala said the committee realizes this budget needs work. We will start with a high number and work our way down with funds to offset.

The motion was approved by a vote of 6 in favor, one not present:

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

Mrs. Terry entered the meeting remotely after this vote.

D. Update Equity Committee – Dr. Brian Ackerman

Dr. Ackerman said the committee held its 14th meeting and continues to build its online footprint. The statement is posted on the district website.

The committee is investigating how other schools are working on equity by evaluating anti-bias and anti-racist messages as part of its purpose to identify high priority goals. At Shepherd Hill Regional High School, the committee has begun looking at curriculum, artwork and the student handbook. Links have been made with the student group, A Better Hill. The committee hopes to have further conversations about instructional materials. Shepherd Hill Regional High School Science Teacher Gracie Batista serves on the Equity Committee and is staff advisor to A Better Hill.

E. Update Teaching and Learning – Dr. Brian Ackerman

Dr. Ackerman reported on the meetings held to discuss elementary science curriculum in February and to review recent the history of instruction and curriculum in the district. Initial steps have been taken to have linked conversations across the educational levels. Dr. Ackerman said the long-term goal is to move to a regular cycle of curriculum review. Dr. Ackerman has taken steps to review the writing program. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is putting together a network of support groups as district establish a curricula evaluation cycle. Dr. Ackerman would like the Dudley-District to be a part of that network.

F. MASC/MASS Conference Report – Jordan Evans

This item was tabled.

G. Update Principal Search Groups – Director Lorinda Allen and Dr. Brian Ackerman

Mrs. Allen served as the facilitator of the Charlton Elementary School Principal Search Committee. The group reviewed 20 applications and selected five candidates to interview. Mrs. Allen said there was one internal candidate and one withdrawal. The group interviewed four and unanimously selected Jennifer Lilley as the ideal candidate. Since 2014, Ms. Lilley has served as assistant principal at Briggs Elementary in Ashburnham-Westminster.

Dr. Ackerman chaired the Heritage School Principal Search Committee. Dr. Ackerman said the outstanding interview team reviewed 20 resumes, interviewed seven candidates and selected two finalists: Peter Olson, currently assistant principal of Charlton Middle School, and Melissa Provost, currently a principal in Hudson.

The finalists will be presented to Superintendent Steven M. Lamarche who said he will check references and conduct individual interviews. He is hopeful for a decision by the end of April.

The committee thanked Dr. Ackerman and Mrs. Allen for facilitating the search.

H. Report of the Policy Subcommittee – Steven Lamarche

These policies were sent to the district for feedback and none was received. Mr. Lamarche said regulatory adjustments were made to these policies.

1. JFABD – Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services – 2nd Read

A motion was made by P. Aucoin, second by J. Terry to waive the reading of the policy, and this was approved by unanimous 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 S. Reed, second by J. Evans to adopt the amendments to policy JFABD, on this second reading, 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 – 2nd Read

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to waive the reading 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 to adopt the amendments to policy JFABE was approved by unanimous 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 of Foster Children – 2nd
Read

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to waive the reading 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 S. Reed, second by J. Terry to adopt the amendments to 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

4. BE – School Committee Meetings – 1st Read

Mr. Laferriere read the policy aloud:

A motion was made by S. Reed, second by C. Kabala to approve the amendments to policy BE.

Mrs. Carmignani asked if the committee needed to meet twice per month. Mrs. Kabala said two meetings are important to consider the items that come up during the school year. Miss Evans agreed, saying with the amount of work the committee does, two standing meetings allows an opportunity to plan.

Members cited the amount of time spent in the meetings and the lack of a break between meetings.

Mrs. Reed suggested tabling the items until after the election.

Mr. Lamarche said the work is built through the efforts of the subcommittees who then report on that work at the full committee meetings.

The roll call vote resulted in a tie:

C. Carmignani - no
J. Evans - no
C. Kabala - yes
S. Reed - abstain
J. Terry - yes
P. Aucoin - yes
K. Laferriere - no

With three votes in favor, and three opposed, there is no action on this item.

5. BEDH – Citizen’s Forum – 1st Read

The chair read the policy aloud:

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to approve the amendments to policy BEDH on first reading 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

I. Update, planned transitions

1. March 15, 2021

Mr. Lamarche this date has been on our agenda for months, which is Monday. This is a first step transition to five half days of full in person learning. The District has been preparing for a while, and in our 50/50 world, this will feel like the first day of school.

2. Update, MA Board of Education, Friday March 5, 2021

Mr. Lamarche said state regulations have been amended as it has been determined that neither hybrid nor remote learning will count toward Student Learning hours. New Guidance was provided yesterday by the Commissioner of Education. Parents may still select the fully remote option for their children.

Mr. Lamarche's presented three recommendations:

- i. All students in K-will 4 return to five full days on Monday, April 5;
- ii. The district will file a waiver for grade 5 to remain with their designated grade span, and will begin fully in person on Wednesday, April 28, 2021. The committee's vote is required to direct the superintendent of file the waiver.
- iii. With lack of designated date for high school students, the district will maintain May 3 as the date to return to five full days, pending further guidance from commissioner.

A motion was made by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to authorize the superintendent to file a waiver with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for grade 5 to remain with the middle school schedule, and begin full five days on April 28.

Grades 5-12 will remain in the five half-day schedule until their transition.

Mrs. Carmignani asked why wait until April 28. Mr. Lamarche said this is the date provided by Commissioner Riley, but the committee can choose a date.

A motion by C. Carmignani, second by J. Evans to amend the motion to read that grades 5-8 students will begin on Monday, April 26 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

The amended motion was approved.

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to authorize the superintendent to file a waiver with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for grade 5 to remain with the middle school schedule, and that all middle school students will begin full five days on Monday, April 26, 2021, was approved by a vote of 6 in favor, one opposed:

C. Carmignani - yes
J. Evans - no
C. Kabala - yes
S. Reed - yes
J. Terry - yes
P. Aucoin - yes
K. Laferriere - yes

The spacing for lunches has been discussed among administrators and staff, with seating at a 6' distance.

J. Superintendent's Evaluation

1. Timeline - Steven Lamarche

Mrs. Carmignani asked to make a motion:

Motion made by C. Carmignani, second by J. Evans to revise the Superintendent Evaluation timeline to be completed no later than the regularly scheduled August meeting. The chair will work with Superintendent Lamarche to determine dates.

Mrs. Carmignani offered the rationale as having reached out to neighboring communities and to have received a better appreciation of how the superintendent handles the evaluation involving all of his administrators to show his outcomes for the year. This is a time-consuming process and the superintendent should be given the ability to show his outcomes for the year while allowing him to put his efforts into safe reentry to schools.

Mr. Laferriere reported on the clarification he received from District Counsel James Cosgrove. The committee will need to notify the superintendent by June 30 of its intent to renew the contract and that they will enter negotiations. He said negotiations could take a year, it is non-binding. The decision can be made closer to June 30 and the evaluation held at a later time.

Mrs. Carmignani said that when this issued was first raised, she did not understand this is a non-binding decision for the subsequent contract.

Mrs. Terry asked why August was chosen and whether it could be July? She said there could be discussion reopening in the fall.

Mrs. Carmignani said it can be whatever the chair and superintendent deem necessary. She said August allows flexibility.

Mr. Laferriere will decide the dates for an upcoming meeting.

Ms. Evans agreed with the need to be flexible with the time frame.

Mr. Lamarche indicated his support of the recommendations.

The motion 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. Indicators – Kenny Laferriere

Mr. Laferriere received a recommendation from Tracy Novick of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees that since the school committee did not discuss the indicators on which to evaluate the superintendent, we are responsible that all indicators are met. Next year, the committee will set up a formalized timeline.

Mr. Laferriere said we should remain flexible.

A motion was made by J. Terry, second by C. Carmignani that because we did not set indicators we will evaluate the superintendent on all indicators.

Mrs. Terry said the committee has been guided to do this by our professional organization and in future years we can conduct this differently.

Mrs. Aucoin said since we did not set any indicators, this should be the superintendent's choice as he did choose some indicators. She said this is a very unusual year.

The roll call vote on the motion failed with five opposed, one abstention and one in favor:

C. Carmignani - no
J. Evans - no
C. Kabala - no
S. Reed - abstain
J. Terry - yes
P. Aucoin - no
K. Laferriere - no

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by P. Aucoin to evaluate the superintendent on the revised timeline on the indicators he has provided passed by a roll call vote of 6 in favor, one abstention:

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

X. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, March 24, 2021 7:00 PM, Charlton Middle School, and via video conferencing for the public and those who choose.

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

Policy Review Subcommittee: Friday, April 2, 2021, 9:00 AM

Curriculum Subcommittee for Teaching and Learning: Monday, March 15, 2021, 4 PM

Capital Outlay/Safety Subcommittee: Friday, March 19, 2021, 11:00 AM

XI. Future Agenda Items: Update HVAC (ongoing), Update Equity Committee (ongoing), Update

**Minutes of the School Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, March 10, 2021**

Plan Transitions (ongoing), School Year 2021-2022 Calendar (March) Fiscal Year 2022 Public Hearing (March), Shepherd Hill Athletic Fields Update (March), School Choice (April)

Next meeting: Student Opportunity Act filing, New Covid Coordinator has launched a Covid dashboard.

Mrs. Reed requested a report on how many School Choice slots were filled this year and those that are still available.

Mrs. Reed asked the committee to consider continuing to offering the meetings via live streaming for the public.

XII. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn

A motion was made by S. Reed, second by C. Carmignani to adjourn the meeting and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 9:08 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 March 10, 2021	Superintendent's Report 3/5/2021	Minutes of Regular session of February 24, 2021	Minutes of Executive Session of February 24, 2021
Approved minutes of Policy Review Subcommittee, February 5, 2021	603 CMR 27.00 underscore version	Policies: BE, BEDH, JFABD, JFABE, JFABF	BOE Agenda and Regulatory Memo
Principal Finalists Resumes	Teaching and Learning Report	Equity Committee Report	Director of Finance and Operations Report

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, secretary