

**DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee, Wednesday, March 13, 2019 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571, 6:30 p.m.

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

- Mary N. Antocci, Vice Chair at 6:38 p.m.
- Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair
- Cathleen Carmignani
- Catherine M. Kabala
- Stephanie A. Reed
- Jamie L. Terry

Celeidgh O'Brien, Student Representative

Elaine M. Rabbitt was not in attendance.

Also in; attendance were Kristine E. Nash, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools, Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators William F. Chaplin, Jennifer Desto, Dean W. Packard, Diane Seibold, Christopher E. Starczewski, Lesa Patrock, Jennifer Hegedus, Kristin Nolle, Christine LaPorte, Kevin Foley; Richard Sullivan of Powers and Sullivan, district auditor; Chris Nunnally of Gallagher; media representatives Rich Earle, audio visual coordinator, Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Approval of Minutes**

- *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, March 5, 2019*

Motion to approve the minutes of the regular session Wednesday, March 5, 2019

1<sup>st</sup> C. Kabala 2<sup>nd</sup> S. Reed, as corrected, unanimous.

- *Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, March 5, 2019*

Motion to approve the minutes of the executive session

1<sup>st</sup> C. Kabala 2<sup>nd</sup> S. Reed, as corrected, unanimous.

**IV. Approval of Warrants**

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

Payroll Warrant		Subcommittee Warrant		Accounts Payable Warrant	
Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
1280D	\$461,108.62	96	\$44,800.00	97	\$665,675.36
1280P	\$1,222,476.04			98	\$45.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,683,584.56</b>		<b>\$44,800.00</b>		<b>\$665,720.36</b>

**V. Student Representative Report – Ceilidh O’Brien**

- Two Shepherd Hill athletes placed at the New Balance Indoor track nationals. Emma Sullivan, and Brian Santos, who is ranked first in New England in the 50m dash, 8<sup>th</sup> in nation for 60m dash.
- Spring sports begin Monday, March 18, record numbers for chemical health night
- Baseball team has nearly sufficient numbers from fielding four teams
- The Third Annual John Paire *3 vs 3 Basketball Tournament* will be held Saturday, March 16, at Shepherd Hill Regional High School.
- Shepherd Hill’s SADD will host motivational speaker Sarah Panzau in time for prom season.
- Shepherd Hill’s 2019 Color Guard and Percussion home show will be held Sunday, March 24.

**VI. Student Spotlight – Dudley Middle School**

Mr. Starczewski introduced students who represent some of the school’s service projects designed the benefit the school and community. The students demonstrate outreach, compassion, leadership and investment through such groups as Soles 4 Souls, Helping Hands Community Service Club, October Saves, Cards for Soldiers, UMass Pediatrics Collection Drive, Where the First Graders are, Be Better Group, Dudley Middle School Food Drive, Study Center Tutoring Program with Dudley Middle School alumni, National Junior Honor Society, YOU Inc. Holiday Collection Drive, Project 351 Ambassador.

**VII. Citizens’ Forum**

No one spoke at this time.

**VIII. Communications**

Mrs. Kabala said she has received concerns from retired teachers about the proposed insurance joint purchasing group. Mrs. Aucoin said she has received concerns from retirees as well as current employees about the joint purchasing group. This items is on the agenda for discussion this evening.

**IX. Superintendent’s Report – Special Topics**

Dr. Nash has received a draft report on the Central Office reorganization recommendation from Dr. Steven Hemman and Dr. Paul Gagliarducci of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools. Dr. Nash said the item will be scheduled for a vote at the committee’s next meeting on Wednesday, March 27.

Dr. Nash noted a report of student suspensions of five days or more are included in the packet mailed to members on Friday.

**X. New Business**

A. Report of the District Auditors, Powers and Sullivan

- The auditors visited the district in two separate time periods, May 29 and August 31.
- Pension liability and OPEB are major areas of the audit.
- We pay attention to cash,

Mr. Sullivan said the information provided to the auditors by business office staff is accurate and timely, resulting in an unqualified opinion, which is the best rating possible.

Mr. Sullivan said it was a clean audit. We had planned for a larger loss and it did not happen. The district lowered its expenses, and because 95% of the budget is expended points to a sound budgeting process.

Mr. Sullivan said the district’s health trust rebounded nicely as a result of a \$1.5 million increase in 2018.

In its management letter, Powers and Sullivan noted the need to finalize accounting and financial policies and procedures, as well as fraud risk assessment. Mr. Sullivan recommended that an outside agency be hired to complete this assessment.

Mr. Sullivan noted the need to formalize internal controls of federal awards, which involves documenting how federal grants are processed.

Mrs. Kabala asked Mr. Mathieu to send letters to commend the staff on a job well done.

Mr. Mathieu commended Mr. Sullivan's staff as they worked in the district daily at two times of the year.

B. Joint Purchasing Agreement Update (*Vote may be Required*)

For the last nine months, Mr. Mathieu and the Insurance Advisory Committee has been studying the possibility of entering into a joint purchasing group. Chris Nunnally from Gallagher Benefits Services, formerly Group Benefit Strategies, presented an informational overview of the proposal. The district would join with Webster, Dudley and Stoughton in providing benefits for employees at same cost or less for the same plan as is currently being offered by Blue Cross / Blue Shield.

Gallagher represents eight other purchasing groups in Massachusetts. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is currently self-funded and controls its own costs. Mr. Nunnally said the purchasing group allows those advantages to become stronger by lowering fixed costs. The downside is a loss of some autonomy over the total plan design. The purchasing group's plan design will not change for at least two years, Mr. Nunnally said.

Mr. Nunnally spoke about the three commonly asked questions:

- Same plan?
- Same doctor?
- What is it going to cost?

- Same plan

The group will offer the same plan about with a different carrier – Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, which is part of the United Health Care Network.

- Same doctor

A larger group means more creativity. The Harvard Pilgrim Network in New England, is wrapped United Health Care Network, which is the largest in the country. There will be a network disruption of behavioral health options to treat alcohol and drug rehabilitation, chiropractic.

- What is it going to cost

Mr. Nunnally said there will be an immediate one-year reduction in the cost for joining this plan.

Mr. Nunnally agreed to research the percent of claims rejected by Harvard Pilgrim.

Mr. Nunnally reported that Blue Cross / Blue Shield did not participate in the bid. He noted that three of the four towns in the group currently have BC / BS, and all agreed HP is the best of the proposals received. Mr. Nunnally said it is exactly the best in terms of plan design, and best for cost.

Mr. Mathieu said in terms of how many claims HP denies, as a self-insured group, employees can appeal that claim.

Dudley Middle School teacher Jennifer Hegedus, who is also the union representative, said she has received many questions, and asked for Harvard Pilgrim's definition of preventative measures, and a comparison of preventative measures that are covered by Harvard Pilgrim and BC / BS.

The school committee will be asked to vote on the joint purchasing group at the March 27 meeting.

The teachers in attendance said there has been a lack of communication about this proposal, and said they hope the decision is not based solely on the cost of the insurance.

Neither the union nor the other employee groups has voted on this proposal as the groups are represented on the Insurance Advisory Committee.

Mrs. Antocci said change is difficult no matter what. The more information we share will help make everyone comfortable with the decision making process.

Mr. Mathieu said research into this process began nine months ago but did not come together until February. He said this opportunity is late breaking.

Mrs. Kabala said the school committee has only just learned about this proposal.

The chair took the **Dudley Middle School Student Spotlight** out of order on the agenda and the presentation was made at this time.

Mr. Starczewski concluded the presentation saying he is most proud of the great individuals the students are becoming.

C. Report of the Director of Finance and Operations (*Vote may be Required*)

1. Construction on the Charlton water loop for Heritage School and Charlton Middle School will begin this summer and completed by the time school opens in August. However, full road repair and paving will be completed over the winter months into next summer.
2. Mr. Mathieu presented the request by Dudley Middle School to dispose of a clothes dryer that is beyond repair.

A motion to authorize the finance director to declare the item as surplus equipment, and authorize disposal.  
1<sup>st</sup>: C. Kabala – 2<sup>nd</sup> S. Reed, unanimous.

D. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Report (*Vote may be Required*)

Mrs. Kabala reported on the subcommittee's last meeting of March 12.

The subcommittee continued its discussion on contracting for a Capital Plan Study. A vendor, DRA, is scheduled to make a presentation at the March 27 School Committee Meeting at 8 p.m.

The subcommittee has also discussed moving the district to automated substitute teacher management, and has looked at Frontline. The subcommittee will now look at a new program, Ready Sub, which is roughly 1/3 of the cost of Frontline.

Mrs. Kabala reported the subcommittee would like to provide talking points for the upcoming Joint Financial Planning Meeting with the towns and areas legislators on March 20. The topics will include School Choice, and the district's use of E&D funds.

The subcommittee has also looked at the contract language for administrators, as well as a possible insurance holiday where no contributions are made either by employees or the district toward health insurance. This may result in as much as \$500,000 being available to fund a new reading program for grade 1-4.

Mrs. Terry said she would not support spending this money on this program, based on own research.

Dr. Nash said the committee would need to vote to accept a new reading program, and the committee would see a presentation ahead of that vote.

E. Policy Review Subcommittee Report - Consideration to Amend District Policies

The Policy Review Subcommittee met on Monday, March 11 to review a number of policies. Some will be brought forward for the committee's consideration at its next meeting on March 27.

Mrs. Kabala said the Negotiation Subcommittee has talked about Policy GCCBA, Additional Sick Leave, and suggested the Policy Review Subcommittee looks at that.

Dr. Nash said this policy is on the list of those to be reviewed.

- JF, School Admission Residency, Second Reading and Adoption (*Vote Required*)

There were no changes since the last school committee meeting. Dr. Nash said this policy is not trying not to make this exclusive but inclusive of people who do not own homes, but who are on short term rentals and therefore cannot provide the documentation that current policy requires. A section has been added regarding verification of residency.

Mrs. Kabala noted one small change.

A motion was made to waive the reading of the policy into the record.

1<sup>st</sup> S. Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> M. Antocci, unanimous.

A motion was made to approve the policy on its second appearance on the agenda, and to adopt the changes.

1<sup>st</sup> S. Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> M. Antocci, unanimous.

#### H. Consideration of Requests for First Time Use of Facilities, Policy KF (*Vote Required*)

Dr. Nash presented two requests this evening:

Revival Dance Academy of Leicester, requests to use the Heritage School auditorium on Saturday, April 6, 2019, for a dance recital.

Michele Mandella is representing RDA, and explained this is a one-time use request, and the recital features 20 dancers. The Heritage School Head Custodian Christopher Tittle, will volunteer to work that evening, negating the custodial charges. Principal Kathleen E. Pastore has indicated her support.

A motion was made to approve the request by Revival Dance Academy of Leicester for one time use of Heritage School on Saturday, April 6, 2019, with no charges.

1<sup>st</sup> C. Kabala, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sr. Reed, unanimous.

Sheri Zanca of Charlton, is forming a co-ed adult volleyball league at Heritage School for 11 weeks, on Fridays from 6:30-9 p.m., beginning March 22. The school is staffed with a custodian on Friday evenings until 10 p.m., negating the custodian charges. Principal Pastore has indicated her support.

A motion was made to approve the request by Sheri Zanca to use the Heritage School gymnasium on Friday evenings for 11 weeks, pending availability, with no charges.

1<sup>st</sup> C. Kabala, 2<sup>nd</sup> M. Antocci, unanimous.

#### I. Update on High School Program of Studies (*Vote may be Required*)

Changes include the separation of the Engineering Certificate Program and the Bio Medical Certificate Program, which is consistent with the addition and vision of Project Lead the Way Engineering courses beginning next year. Shepherd Hill will also offer a new Criminal Justice certificate pathway, and a new courses such as Journalism II, Elementary Probability and Statistics, Zoology, Structure of the Animal Body, Medical Interventions, Advanced Digital Photography and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Manufacturing.

A motion was made to approve the changes to the Shepherd Hill Regional High School 2019-2020 Program of Studies as presented this evening.

1<sup>st</sup> S. Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> C. Kabala, unanimous.

Mrs. Kabala commended that this is certainly a different-looking high school from five years ago with the variety of courses being offered.

#### J. Consideration of Requests for Home Instruction, Policy IHBG (*Vote Required*)

Dr. Nash brought forward two requests from Charlton families to establish home school programs for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school year. Both students are in grade 7. Dr. Nash recommended approval.

A motion was made to approve the requests for home instruction by two Charlton families as presented.

1<sup>st</sup> M. Antocci, 2<sup>nd</sup> S. Reed, unanimous.

- XI. Next Meeting Dates**  
**School Committee Meeting:** Wednesday, March 27, 2019, Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, 6:30 p.m.  
**Budget and Finance Subcommittee Meeting:** Tuesday, March 26, 2019, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 8:30 a.m.  
**Policy Review Subcommittee:** Monday, March 18, 2019, 9 a.m.  
 Joint Financial Planning Meeting March 20, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
- XII. Future Agenda Items – Vote Final FY 2020 Budget; MARS Update, School Choice Consideration, Joint Purchasing Group decision, Report of the Policy Review Subcommittee, April 10 - Update on Teaching and Learning, DRA presentation, 8 p.m. Vaping detectors.**
- XIII. Executive Session:** “to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if any open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares,” and “to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel...”  
*Dudley-Charlton Teachers Association*  
*Superintendent- Elect Contract and Salary*

The chair entertained a motion to enter executive session “to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if any open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares,” and “to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel...” and to return to open session for the purpose of a vote, if necessary, and to adjourn, and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 8:58 p.m.

The committee returned to open session at 10:04 p.m.

**XIV. Adjourn**

The chair entertained a motion to adjourn, and this was approved by unanimous vote at 10:04 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include:

Agenda for March 13, 2019	Minutes of Regular School Committee Meeting of Tuesday, March 5, 2019	Minutes of Executive Session of Tuesday, March 5, 2019
Superintendent’s Report: Special Topics	Superintendent’s Report: New Business Items	Rental requests: Revival Dance Academy and Sheri Zanca, Volleyball
Shepherd Hill Program of Studies Changes	Finance Director’s Report	Policy JF, School Admission /Residency
Budget and Finance Subcommittee Minutes of February 25, 2019	Powers and Sullivan Audit Reports Management Letter Basic Financial Statements Report on Federal Award Programs	

*Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary*