

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee, held Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 7:00 PM, Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, and Via Live Stream - Vimeo:

<https://vimeo.com/dcrsd>
<https://vimeo.com/522328643>
Video Conferencing - Zoom:
<https://zoom.us/j/96772561187>

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

School Committee members attending in person were Kenneth J. Laferriere, Chair, Cathleen Carmignani, Stephanie A. Reed, Jamie L. Terry.

Attending remotely were Pauline J. Aucoin, Vice Chair, Catherine M. Kabala, and Michaela Cluett, Student Representative. Member Jordan W. Evans, was not in attendance.

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, Sandra Sullivan, secretary.

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, James Scanlon, Rich Earle, Rachel Lemansky and family. There was a total of 45 remote participants.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Lemansky family of Charlton, Mae, Lev, Rudy and Owen, led the pledge.

III. Moment of Silence

IV. Call to Order- Fiscal Year 2022 Public Hearing

The Public Hearing opened at 7:06 PM. Mr. Lamarche said this is an opportunity to ask questions about the proposed budget, which has not changed since the preliminary vote in February. Many changes are coming, however as Mr. Lamarche said there is relief money for municipalities and the school district. Meetings with town leadership are ongoing.

Mr. Mathieu reviewed the numbers. The budget stands at \$52,571,801, or an increase of 2.86% from FY 2021. Mr. Mathieu said the budget increases can be attributed to expenses relating to health insurance, changes in state assessments to the district, and requests for new positions such as a nurse for the middle schools, and occupational therapist, and a district-wide facilities director. Mr. Mathieu said town assessments have increased more than the towns would prefer. A primary reason is the governor’s budget estimate for regional transportation reimbursements is based on FY 20 actual numbers. Mr. Mathieu and Mr. Lamarche have communicated with Sen. Gobi to advocate for change in these

projections. Also, \$373,000 of one-time revenues were used to meet the assessments.

Mr. Mathieu said we can expect an increase in regional transportation, and will work with the towns to reach agreeable numbers as we recognize their own fiscal uncertainties. Mr. Mathieu said we will utilize one-time available resources such as E&D, and School Choice.

The floor was opened to the public and school committee and there was no discussion.

The hearing closed at 7:11 PM.

V. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, March 10, 2021

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, March 10, 2021, was approved by a vote of 6-0:

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

VI. Approval of the Warrant

Warrants continue to be signed electronically.

Accounts Payable Warrants		Payroll Warrants	
Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
53	\$69,396.72	1430D	\$498,401.29
54	\$106,231.78	1430P	\$1,331,528.78
55	\$651,207.23		
56	\$3,432.85		
57	\$446,584.91		
Total	\$1,276,853.49	Total	\$1,829,930.07

VII. Citizens' Forum

No one spoke at this time.

VIII. Communications

This item held pending policy revisions.

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

Shepherd Hill students are thrilled to be back in school five half days per week, with extra curricular events starting to feel normal.

The Indoor Track team held a mock race, while the Volleyball team began its matches. The Unified Basketball teams and Cheerleaders have begun practicing.

The Football team won its opener against Leominster, and the Show Choir advanced to the finals with a live stream performance scheduled for Saturday.

The Battle of the Borders ends Friday as schools in the district collected paper goods.

Shepherd Hill's C of 2021 held its first class event earlier today, distributing class T-shirts and a treat from the local Dunkin's.

Mr. Lamarche said as the district prepares for the retirement of two of its principals – Kathleen E. Pastore and Lori A. Pacheco, the search for new principals has ended. He announced the Jennifer Lilley has accepted the position of principal of Charlton Elementary School, and Peter Olson will be the new principal of Heritage School. Both will be introduced at the April 14 meeting.

X. New Business

A. Report of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee and the Director of Finance and Operations – Catherine Kabala and Richard Mathieu

Mrs. Kabala said the subcommittee recommends the proposal to hire three adjustment counselors at the elementary and middle school levels.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to approve the proposal to hire three adjustment counselors to serve at the elementary schools and both middle schools, was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

- Donations

Mr. Mathieu asked the committee to accept the donation to Shepherd Hill Regional High School from the Jae S. Lim Foundation for math and science prizes, in the amount of \$3,000.

A motion was made by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to accept the donation as presented, and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

- School Facility Rental

Mr. Mathieu said the district will allow outside field usage beginning in April, but will hold off on any use of indoor spaces until next school year.

- Health Insurance and Dental Renewal

The Insurance Advisory Committee was poised to support a 5% increase in health insurances, but as a result of updated plan usage information proposed a 1% increase in the rates, as well as a \$5 increase to co-pays, and a 0% increase in the rates for dental insurance.

Mr. Mathieu recommended approval of this proposal.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by C. Carmignani to approve the 1% increase in health insurance rates, a \$5 increase to co-pays, and a 0% increase to dental insurance, and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

Mr. Mathieu said the Strategic Health Group will review its rolls to find members aged 65 and older who are not on Medicare as they have not paid in enough quarters. The health consortium will absorb those penalties and enroll those 17 individuals.

- FY22 Budget

Most of the available information on the FY 22 budget was covered during the public hearing. Mr. Mathieu said the district is expecting an increase in Regional Transportation.

B. Update Shepherd Hill Athletic Fields – Principal Chaplin and AD Scanlon

Principal Chaplin offered an overview of efforts that began last year to upgrade the baseball and softball fields. At that time, the school committee accepted a donation from the Field Renovation Subcommittee of the Booster Club in the amount of almost \$9,000. Despite the Covid-induced delays, some maintenance was completed. The softball backdrop will be replaced and dugouts built for the team.

The softball/baseball season is delayed this year and is starting at the end of April.

Athletic Director James Scanlon thanked the Booster Club and volunteers such as Russell Jennings and others who continue to assist with the project.

C. Update COVID Dashboard – COVID Coordinator Anne Marie DeMorris

This item was tabled.

D. Request for enrollment of an exchange student at Shepherd Hill RHS – Principal Chaplin

The school committee considered the request for student enrollment in the 2021-2022 school year.

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by S. Reed to accept the application, was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

E. Student Opportunity Act DESE submission – Steven Lamarche and Dr. Brian Ackerman

With the passage of the Student Opportunity Act prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the district was required to submit a plan for using the additional resources. Mr. Lamarche said the district receives minimal resources that do not add much to our operating budget. The plan shows how the district is using the funds, estimated at \$50,000.

Dr. Ackerman said the funds supported the purchase of the new literacy instructional materials.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to approve the submission of a Short Form Plan, was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

F. Report of the Policy Subcommittee – Kenny Laferriere and Steven Lamarche
1. BEDH – Citizens' Forum Agenda Item – 2nd Read

This policy is presented for approval on second reading.

A motion was made by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to waive the reading of Policy BEDH, and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

A motion was made by P. Aucoin, second by C. Kabala to adopt the amendments to Policy BEDH on second reading, and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

2. BE – School Committee Meetings – 1st Read

This policy was reintroduced from last meeting and the changes were discussed and highlighted.

A motion was made by J. Terry, second by C. Kabala to waive the reading of Policy BE, and this was approved by a roll call vote of 5 in favor, one abstention, one absent:

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

A motion was made by J. Terry, second by C. Kabala, to approve BE on first reading.

Mrs. Carmignani asked if the subcommittee compared the district's meeting schedule with neighboring towns.

Mr. Laferriere said he researched neighboring towns and found a mix of meeting times.

Mrs. Carmignani asked if the administrators were polled about any toll of the meeting schedule.

Mrs. Kabala said this draft will be distributed to the community for feedback. Mrs. Kabala noted that a majority of the subcommittee was not in favor of one meeting per month. Mrs. Kabala reminded the committee that administrators were told by a previous superintendent that they are not required to attend school committee meetings, and the subcommittee suggested that Mr. Lamarche inform the administrative team that they did not have to attend every school committee meeting.

Mr. Lamarche noted this is a school committee meeting and not an administrative meeting.

Mrs. Carmignani said her requested feedback was regarding the subcommittees and whether two meetings are needed.

The motion approving the policy on first read passed by a vote of 3 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention, and 1 absent:

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

3. BH – School Committee Public Communications – 1st Read

Mr. Laferriere read this policy.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to accept policy BH on first reading, was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

C. Carmignani - yes
C. Kabala - yes
S. Reed - yes

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

4. BHC – School Committee Staff Communications – 1st Read

Mr. Laferriere read this policy.

A motion was made by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to accept Policy BHC on first reading.

Mrs. Terry asked why this was brought forward as a policy and whether it was needed as it corresponds with the Public Records Law. She asked if all questions she receives from the community need to be brought forward.

Mr. Laferriere said the policy will help to clarify anonymous letters that are brought forward, and will highlight the Public Records Law.

This motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

5. KE – General Complaints from the Community – 1st Read

A motion was made by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to waive the reading aloud of policy KE, and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

Mr. Lamarche highlighted the proposed changes to this policy.

A motion by J. Terry, second by C. Kabala to accept Policy KE on first reading was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

6. IKE – Promotion and Retention of Students – 1st Read

A motion by S. Reed, second by J. Terry to waive the reading aloud of Policy IKE, was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

This policy existed in the district but spoke about grade placement for students return from charter schools.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by J. Terry to approve Policy IKE on first reading, was approved by unanimous vote:

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

G. School Year 2021-2022 Calendar – Steven Lamarche

Mr. Lamarche said the calendar was delayed due to other pressing matters facing the district. Mr. Lamarche recommended the school committee approval of the 2021-2022 school year calendar as presented. He noted it is presented as if the district will return to full in person learning on August 31.

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by J. Terry to approve the 2021-2022 School Year Calendar as presented, was approved by a vote of 4 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention:

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

Mrs. Carmignani inquired about the professional development days being held on Friday and asked if they are productive.

H. Update, planned transitions

- Monday, April 5, 2021 Grades K-4

Mr. Lamarche said the administration is moving forward with its plans to welcome back grades K-4 to full in person learning on April 5. Mr. Lamarche said the five half days are going well. He said there has been an uptick in quarantines.

- Monday, April 26, 2021 Grades 5-8

Mr. Lamarche said the district was successful in its waiver application to allow grade 5 to return with all middle school students on Monday, April 26, 2021.

Mr. Lamarche recommended grades 9-12 return on April 26 rather than on the originally designated day

of
Monday, May 3, 2021.

A motion by S. Reed, second by J. Terry to adjust the timeline to bring back students in grades 9-12 with middle school students on April 26, 2021, was approved by unanimous roll call vote:

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

XI. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, April 14, 2021 7:00 PM, Shepherd Hill Regional High School

Budget and Finance Subcommittee: Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 4:00 PM

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

Curriculum Subcommittee for Teaching and Learning: TBD

Capital Outlay/Safety Subcommittee: Friday, May 7, 2021, 11:00 AM

XII. Future Agenda Items: Update Equity Committee (ongoing), Update Plan Transitions (ongoing), School Choice (April)

XIII. Executive Session: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining [**Dudley-Charlton Paraprofessionals Association**] and [**non-union personnel**] if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.

The chair entertained a motion and it was made by C. Carmignani, second by J. Terry to enter executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining [**Dudley-Charlton Paraprofessionals Association**] and [**non-union personnel**] as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and to return for a vote if necessary, and to adjourn, and this was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 8:51 PM.

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

The committee returned to open session at 9:29 PM.

The chair stated no votes were required and entertained a motion to adjourn.

XIV. Adjourn

A motion by J. Terry, second by C. Carmignani, to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 9:30 PM:

C. Carmignani - yes

**Minutes of the School Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, March 24, 2021**

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

Items used for this meeting include:

Agenda for Wednesday, 3/21/2021	Minutes of Wednesday, 3/10/2021	Superintendent's Report of 3/19/2021	Report of the Director of Finance and Operations 3/24/2021
Policies: BE, BEDH, BH, BHC, KE, IKE	School Year Calendar 2021-2022	Budget and Finance Subcommittee Minutes of 2/23/2021	Capital Outlay and School Safety Subcommittee Minutes 2/5/2021
Request to enroll Foreign exchange student	Student Opportunity Act		

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, Secretary