

**DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Unapproved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571, 7 p.m., and via

[Zoom: https://zoom.us/j/92651632984](https://zoom.us/j/92651632984) and [Vimeo: https://vimeo.com/dcrsd](https://vimeo.com/dcrsd) and <https://vimeo.com/454423121>

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Kenneth J. Laferriere, Chair  
Pauline J. Aucoin, Vice Chair, remotely via Zoom  
Cathleen Carmignani  
Jordan W. Evans  
Catherine M. Kabala  
Stephanie A. Reed  
Jamie L. Terry

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; district administrators Lorinda C. Allen, 121 attendees via Zoom and Vimeo: William F. Chaplin, Daniel D’Arcangelo, Jennifer A. Desto, Lori A. Pacheco, Dean W. Packard, Kathleen E. Pastore, Christopher E. Starczewski, Andrew Leach, Michael Tucker, Peter Olson, Michael Resener, Kelly True, James Scanlon, Nicole Heroux, Judith Powell; representatives, Sandra Sullivan, secretary.

**I. Call to Order**

The chair called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Moment of Silence**

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

*Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, August 26, 2020*

A motion by C. Kabala, second by J. Evans to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Wednesday, August 26, 2020, 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

*At this point, technical difficulties in the meeting at Shepherd Hill Regional High School prohibited committee members and members of the public joining online to hear the proceedings clearly. The committee agreed to adjourn the meeting and reconvene at 8 p.m. after all those attending at Shepherd Hill Regional High School could return to their homes and join the meeting remotely via the same Zoom and Vimeo links.*

**Minutes of the School Committee  
Meeting of Wednesday, September 9, 2020**

A motion by S. Reed, second by C. Kabala to adjourn the meeting until 8 p.m. and reconvene online, was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 7:17 p.m.

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

*The meeting reconvened at 8:01 p.m. via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/92651632984> and Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/dcrsd> and <https://vimeo.com/454423121>*

Mr. Laferriere informed the public that the meeting that opened at Shepherd Hill Regional High School had adjourned and reconvened due to technical difficulties. At this point there were 103 attendees via video conferencing.

*Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, August 26, 2020*

A motion by C. Kabala, second by J. Evans to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, August 26, 2020, 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

**V. Approval of Warrant**

Vendor Expense Input & posted Treasury Warrant 12 was signed by a majority of members remotely. Payroll Deduction Warrant 9/10/20 and Payroll Warrant 9/10/20 were signed by a majority of members remotely.

**VI. Citizens' Forum**

The chair moved this item to the end of the meeting.

**VII. Communications**

Mrs. Reed said she would save the communications she received until the end of the meeting as the questions could be answered during the discussions.

Mr. Laferriere said following a discussion with Mrs. Aucoin and Ms. Evans it is prudent to explain the process leading to the committee's entering executive session during the special meeting called for Friday, September 4, 2020 at 7 a.m. As required by the Open Meeting Law, the committee did open the meeting in public session and immediately entertained a motion to enter executive session to discuss strategy relative to collective bargaining. Mr. Laferriere clarified that the meeting was conducted legally and was a special meeting.

Mrs. Aucoin said the error was in calling it an emergency meeting when in fact it was able to be posted within the proper 48-hour time frame.

**VIII. Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Lamarche reported on several items:

1. Staff reentered buildings last week and this went well.
2. Mr. Lamarche continues to send out communications to staff and parents concerning the reopening plan, emphasizing the need for cooperation between home and school. The messages will be succinct.
3. Mr. Lamarche said the intent of the district's plan is to minimize the impact to staff and students during the transition from remote to hybrid learning. The integrity of the plan rests on the student-teacher relationship, and the district is ensuring the student has the same grade level and content teacher of record throughout. The plan allows for autonomy in the classroom but through linear pacing and rigor, it may appear that we are not meeting clock hours or expectation, but we are weighing heavily on quality over quantity. Mr. Lamarche said this is our starting point and will evolve over time.

While the district has an approved budget, the state does not. Covid-19 relief funds have brought us to a level funded budget; however, the Covid-19 funds must be expended by Dec. 30, 2020. This works against our efforts to expand our staff.

**IX. New Business**

A. Report of the Director of Finance and Operations

Mr. Mathieu began with an update on the FY 21 budget, stating Mr. Lamarche had explained the logistics and time line issues we face with increased funding to open the schools, as well as the reduction in state aid. Mr. Mathieu said during a call today with Education Commissioner Jeffrey Riley, there remains hope for additional funds in the spring or next year, or at a minimum the deadline will be extended through June 30, 2021.

Mrs. Kabala asked about the cost of providing WiFi for those families who can't afford it, and Mr. Mathieu said this could be paid for through the grants. Mr. Lamarche said the district is working with local cable providers to ensure everyone has access.

● Vote District Transportation Amendment

Mr. Mathieu explained that at the committee's executive session of Wednesday, August 26, the contract amendment with First Student Inc. was discussed but the committee did not vote in open session as they were unable to reconvene publicly. The amendment addresses the reduction of 10 days from school year, and includes Wednesdays as non-transportation days, the unknown of potential daily or extended shutdowns. Mr. Mathieu is asking the committee for its formal vote this evening to enter into this amendment.

A motion by P. Aucoin, second by S. Reed to approve the amendment to the Transportation Contract with First Student Inc., was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

C. Carmignani: yes

J. Evans: yes

C. Kabala: yes

S. Reed: yes

J. Terry: yes

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P. Aucoin: yes  
K. Laferriere: yes

Mrs. Kabala thanked Mr. Mathieu and the bus company for this agreement as it saved the district a lot of money.

Mr. Mathieu reported the Town of Dudley has been awarded a FY 2021 Green Communities grant. Energy reduction projects for the three Dudley schools were included in the application. Mr. Mathieu said the projected cost of the projects is \$157,000 with the grant covering about \$84,000 and incentives from National Grid contributing another \$73,000.

**B. 2020-2021 School Reopening Plan**

Mr. Lamarche expressed his appreciation for the school committee's attendance at the reopening with staff on Sept. 1, as well as the administrators who worked throughout the summer to devise this plan.

- **Staff Training and Professional Development - Dr. Ackerman**

Dr. Ackerman highlighted the first several days of professional development and staff training, which elicited positive feedback.

Dr. Sheldon Eakens provided a two-part Leading Equity webinar on bias and implicit bias, and ways in which we can actively confront that bias. A staff survey elicited 88% positive. Of the 279 responses, 248 said they felt the session was worth their time, 244 said they were eager to attend his follow up session, on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

Secondly, staff received three-hour, in-depth training in the Google Suite products. Feedback was positive, with 96 attendees in the beginner section, 88 of which said the plan was well worth their time while 87 said they were eager for the follow up session. There were 168 enrolled in the intermediate session. Of those, 138 said the session was worth their time. Another 141 said they were excited for follow up. Dr. Ackerman said the sessions provide multiple lanes of understanding, and help staff where they are with remote learning and pedagogy.

Thirdly, time was dedicated to developing curricular and instructional blocks, aligning content area standards and provided a time for comingling of staff across the two towns.

Dr. Ackerman said the final piece will begin at the end of next week, with presentation on social emotional health and well-being led by our own staff members. Dr. Ackerman will provide further updates. Building based trainings with a special education-focused trainings have also been positive.

- **Review Current Starting Plan**

Mr. Lamarche reviewed the dates and times for the starting plan. Staff returned to buildings on Tuesday, September 1 with a great reentry. Much has been going on in schools such as practicing mitigating strategies and self-certifying with their travel and any symptoms.

Wednesday, September 16 is the first day for students. The district received clearance from boards of health. We will need to make clear our expectations for mitigating strategies in the Covid-19 era.

Remote learning begins for two weeks, with the exception of cohort D, which comes to school on Thursday September 17. Mr. Lamarche said in-person hybrid learning begins for cohorts C and B PK-4 on Thursday, October 1. The first day for cohort A, PK-4 will be Monday, October 5. Cohorts C and B for

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grades 5-12 will begin on Thursday, October 15, and on October 19 for cohort A, grades 5-12. At this point, 600 students have selected full time remote. Schools will continue to send out more detailed information to parents. Getting to Go in this Covid era is daunting as changes are constant.

Mr. Lamarche sought the committee's action on two recommendations regarding student transitions, with a third informative item.

1. Families and caregivers who have selected full time remote and who request to transition to hybrid 2 to 4 weeks

A motion by C. Kabala, second by C. Carmignani to accept the recommendation for a time period to transition to hybrid as two to four weeks, was amended by C. Kabala, second by C. Carmignani to state that the transition from remote to hybrid could take up to 30 days to transition from remote learning to hybrid learning.

The vote on the amendment 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

Mr. Lamarche said further amendments might be necessary, reiterating that this is a starting point and not where we hope to be in June. Mrs. Aucoin said perhaps the committee did not need to make a motion but indicate its support of the recommendation and allow the administration to expand the plan.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to allow administration to let families and caregivers know it could take up to 30 days to transition students from a full remote plan to the hybrid plan, and this 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. To inform parents and caregivers of students who have selected to home school who request to transition back to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District would begin initially as full time remote and then hybrid and that process may take up to 30 days.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by P. Aucoin to inform parents and caregivers of students who have selected to home school and who request to transition back to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District would begin initially as full time remote and then hybrid and that process may take up to 30 days, was approved by a vote of 5 in favor, 2 opposed:

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

Mr. Lamarche said the district would like a starting point for that transition to school from home school.

3. Once we are in hybrid learning, we are exploring recorded and live structured opportunities for those Wednesdays

- Common Student Schedules - Principals

Mr. Lamarche said the staff has collaborated on this process. Sister schools worked together, the complexity rises with the grade level. These schedules pull in the majority of students while others receive services. Again, Mr. Lamarche said all is subject to change.

Mason Road School Principal Jennifer A. Desto, and Charlton Elementary School Principal Lori A. Pacheco created a schedule that will be mirrored in each school. Mrs. Desto said the biggest focus while kids are in school will be math, reading/writing, social skills to maximize the time they are in the building.

Mrs. Desto reviewed a typical day, stating the schedules to allow teachers to have some autonomy in the classroom, but that they target the same skills across the district, and strive to meet the best needs of each student.

While in remote, there will be two 30-minute sessions with a live teacher, augmented by recorded (asynchronous) lessons. The fully remote schedule is broken up as if the student is in the school with his/her cohort.

Mason Road School and Charlton Elementary School will send out information regarding synchronous (live) and asynchronous (recorded) assignments.

Dudley Elementary School Principal Kelly True, and Heritage School Principal Kathleen E. Pastore presented the schedule.

Mrs. Pastore explained the hybrid model will begin with a staggered entrance and mitigating protocol. That time may condense over time. Once settled, students will jump to reading block. We are all working to maximize learning time while children are in the building. Their students' needs will guide the teaching.

Learning will resume at 1:45 when students arrive at their homes, have had lunch, exercised and readied for the second part of the day. The morning meetings will now be at the end of the day. Unified arts will be offered on the student's home days.

Mrs. True explained the remote model, which is similar to the hybrid in that it is broken up by cohorts. The day will begin with a morning meeting before leading into ELA instruction.

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Dudley Middle School Principal Christopher Starczewski and Charlton Middle School Principal Dean Packard said the schedules have built upon what was started last spring but dive deeper into the scope and sequence with creativity and enthusiasm.

Mr. Starczewski said the schedules provide an insight into how the schools are trying to provide a sense of normalcy. The middle schools will replicate a version of consistent mods and bell schedule, grades follow a sequence that will be what they experience when they return to school. The blocks are with shorter blocks than typical 60 minutes, and 40 minutes for unified arts.

Students will experience four core classes per day at 45 minutes each. On Wednesdays, teachers will provide a learning shell in the evenings for families and students to view a learning outline for Thursday through the following Wednesday.

Mr. Packard said the schedule does not replicate a school day and accounts for the family structure, allowing kids to move and take breaks.

The day is finished with office hours for parents to reach out to teachers.

The principals agree that students do not need hours of homework each night, and a differentiated homework is proposed to help students keep pace. Mr. Packard said in this Covid-19 ears, educators are reinventing and rethinking what is important to kids.

Shepherd Hill Regional High School Principal William F. Chaplin

As the time was 10:40 and in view of the district's policy BE prohibiting meetings from flowing past 11 p.m., the chair entertained a motion to suspend the policy to allow the meeting to continue, and this was made by S. Reed, second by J. Evans, and approved by unanimous roll call vote at 10:40 p.m.

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

Mr. Lamarche said a key element introduced last spring will be carried over to the new school year. Staff reached out to every student.

Mr. Chaplin said there are many similarities to what has been presented this evening. Shepherd Hill's remote learning begins September 16 and momentum builds around all of the student's courses. After safety, the most important factor is offering a true high school experience.

The hybrid model keeps the cohorts in step and aligned as they move toward the fully in person model. The goal is to have cohorts A and B come together on Wednesdays.

- A. Extracurricular Activities Shepherd Hill Regional High School
  - Athletics - AD Scanlon

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Athletic Director James Scanlon shared the guidance as culled from surrounding districts as well as athletic directors and principals within and outside of our athletic league. Following evidence-based guidelines and modifications, Mr. Scanlon and Mr. Chaplin are proposing the following:

- Gradual phased in approach to interscholastic athletics
- Modifications
- Continuous monitoring
- Season Structure

Fall 1, September 18-November 20, cross country and golf

Winter, November 30-February 21, Basketball, indoor track, winter cheer, ice hockey, wrestling

Fall 2, February 22-April 25, Soccer, field hockey, football, fall cheering, unified basketball, volleyball.

Mr. Scanlon proposed moving field hockey and soccer to the Fall 1 schedule.

Mr. Scanlon said this plan is just a jumping off point, and there will likely be significant revolutions throughout the year as the plan is reassessed.

Modifications are being made to rules and game day procedures. Geographic pods will be created and athletes will play not just for competition but to maintain a geographic sense by playing teams that are local to mitigate risk and exposure in travel.

Mr. Scanlon recommended establishing the Fall 1 season to include cross country, golf, field hockey and soccer.

A motion by S. Reed, second by J. Terry to accept the recommendation of Mr. Scanlon and Mr. Chaplin, and approve Golf, Cross Country, Field Hockey and Soccer as Fall I season sports, 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

Mr. Scanlon said he will work with Mr. Packard and Mr. Starczewski to provide some competition for middle school teams.

- Music Department - Principal Chaplin

Mr. Chaplin said the music department is requesting to begin some show choir and band rehearsals working within the DESE guidelines and requirements of regional organizations. The band and show choir would like to conduct virtual rehearsals, with dance rehearsals moved to outside, using safety guidelines. The band has been ready to go since July.

There is no vote needed to begin this schedule, but in view of the approval for sports, Mr. Chaplin said the music department would like the green light on these activities to provide options for students. The committee indicated its approval.



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Mr. Laferriere requested a written report from the music department to support its requests.

Mrs. Reed inquired about building safety, requesting a follow up on the study of the buildings' HVAC systems.

Mr. Mathieu said the field work is completed and a report is due by mid-September.

Requested that questions be submitted in advance of meeting so that answers can be provided.

Item VI. Citizens Forum

Heather Furtado, Charlton, thanked the committee and administrators for their work regarding the reopening plan.

Vicki Burlingame, Charlton, asked how students on fully remote will have contact with their teachers.

**X. Next meeting dates**

**Budget and Finance Subcommittee:**

Tuesday, September 22, 2020, via Video Conferencing - 4 p.m.

**School Committee:**

The chair said that he would like to try another in-person meeting, and suggested moving the meeting to Tuesdays, to allow custodians to complete a deep cleaning. He proposed setting the meeting on Tuesday, September 22, at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, at 7 p.m.

Mrs. Terry had a conflict with her work schedule.

Mr. Laferriere suggested Thursday, Sept. 24, 2020. This would require waving the policy.

Mrs. Kabala and Mrs. Aucoin are not in favor of moving the meeting date and said the meetings should remain remote. Mr. Laferriere, Mrs. Terry and Ms. Evans agreed that in person meetings should be reestablished as staff and students are returning to schools.

The chair entertained a motion to move the meeting to Thursday. There was no motion; therefore, the issue is dead and the meeting was established as Wednesday, September 23, 2020, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, 7 p.m., and via video conferencing.

Policy BE must be suspended to allow the second meeting to be held at Shepherd Hill.

A motion by C. Kabala, second by S. Reed to suspend policy BE to allow the committee to meet at Shepherd Hill on Wednesday, September 23, 2020, and this was approved by a vote of 6 in favor, one opposed:

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

**Policy Review Subcommittee: TBD**  
**Curriculum Subcommittee for Teaching and Learning: TBD**  
**Capital and School Safety Subcommittee: TBD**

**XI. Future agenda items**

FY21 Budget, Reopening Update, Equity Committee, numbers regarding per grade level K-1, 2-4 and 5-8, and 9-12. Mrs. Reed requested a report on the number of students who have left to enroll in private schools.

**XII. Adjourn**

A motion by S. Reed, second by J. Evans to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 11:26 p.m.

- 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 September 9, 2020                     | Minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, August 26, 2020 | Superintendent's Report 9/9/20  |
| Director of Finance and Operations Report 9/9/20 | District Common Schedules                            | District Transition Planning    |
| Cohort Enrollment Totals                         | District Athletic Director recommendations           | Professional Development Update |
| Minutes of the Executive Session 8/26/2020       |  |                                 |

**Respectfully Submitted by Sandra Sullivan, Secretary**