

## DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, June 14, 2017 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571, 7 p.m.

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Mary N. Antocci  
Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair  
Raymond J. Chalk, Vice Chair, at 7:12 p.m.  
Catherine M. Kabala  
Joseph M. Pietrzak  
Elaine M. Rabbitt  
Stephanie A. Reed

Also in attendance were Gregg J. Desto, Superintendent of Schools, Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators: William Chaplin, Lori A. Pacheco, Dean W. Packard, John D. Paire, Robin L. Parmley, Kathleen E. Pastore, Diane D. Seibold; district retirees Marianne Galante, Ray Goozey, Andy Panayiotou, Jay Kast-Tuttle, Charles Aucoin, teachers; media representatives Deb LaPlaca, Telegram, Rich Earle, audio-visual coordinator, Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

### **I. Call to Order**

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

### **II. Pledge of Allegiance**

### **III. First Order of Business: Reorganization of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee**

This item was tabled pending Mr. Chalk's arrival.

- A. Chair:
- B. Vice Chair:
- C. Secretary:
- D. Treasurer:
- E. Assistant Treasurer:
- F. SWCEC Representative:
- G. Borrowing Authorization:

### **IV. Approval of Minutes**

*Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, May 24, 2017*

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by J. Pietrzak to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, May 24, 2017, as corrected, was approved by unanimous vote.

*Minutes of the Executive Session of Wednesday, May 24, 2017*

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, May 24, 2017, was approved by unanimous vote.

### **V. Approval of Warrant**

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

Warrant #	Amount
81	\$654,381.79
82	\$633,655.32
83	\$481.85
84	\$13,189.50
85	\$49,424.66
1132D	\$504,946.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,856,079.71</b>

**VI. Citizens' Forum**

Vicki Choinski, of Charlton, said she is representing other parents expressing concern about cutting the fifth grade honor roll. Ms. Choinski said grade 5 is a transition year for students and attaining the honor roll becomes a goal for some children who need the challenge. She said there should be instruction on coping strategies for those students who experience anxiety when they do not make the honor roll. Ms. Choinski said learning to cope is part of life and students need to learn how to transition through it.

Mrs. Aucoin said the committee will discuss the honor roll under Communications later in the meeting.

**VII. School Spotlight – Honoring our District Retirees**

Mr. Desto talked about the enormity of being an educator, and the dedication exhibited by each staff member retiring this year. Mr. Desto has established a tradition whereby each retiree selects a book that will be donated to a school library of their choice in their honor.

Present this evening were Charles Aucoin, Shepherd Hill Regional High School special education teacher; Marianne Galante, grade 8 math, Mary LaChance, grade 6 science/social studies, Dudley Middle School; Ray Goozey, grade 7 social studies, Jay Kast Tuttle, music/band, Charlton Middle School; and Andreas Panayiotou, district food services director.

Not present were Connie Galli and Joan Kelleher.

Name	Name of Book	Library
Charles Aucoin	<i>The Hobbit, J.R.R. Tolkien</i>	Shepherd Hill
Marianne Galante	<i>A Wrinkle In Time, Madeleine L'Engle</i>	Dudley Middle School
Connie Galli	<i>The Silver Chalice, Thomas Costaine</i>	Shepherd Hill
Ray Goozey	<i>The Killer Angels by Michael Shaara</i>	Charlton Middle School
Jay Kast Tuttle	<i>Razzle Dazzle, Riedel</i>	Charlton Middle School
Joan Kelleher	<i>The Birchbark House by Louise Erdich</i>	Dudley Elementary School
Mary LaChance	<i>The Man Who Counted: A Collection of Mathematical Adventures by Malba Tahan</i>	Dudley Middle School
Andy Panayiotou	<i>Democracy for the Few, Michael Parenti</i>	Shepherd Hill

Upon Mr. Chalk's arrival, the first order of business was considered.

Mr. Desto entertained nominations for the following:

**I. First Order of Business: Reorganization of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee**

**A. Chair:**

Mrs. Kabala nominated, Mr. Chalk second, Mrs. Aucoin as chair, and this was approved by unanimous vote.

- B. Vice Chair:  
Mr. Pietrzak nominated, Mrs. Antocci second, Mr. Chalk as vice chair, and this was approved by unanimous vote.
- C. Secretary: Mrs. Kabala nominated, Mr. Chalk second, Mr. Desto as secretary, and this was approved by unanimous vote.
- D. Treasurer: Mrs. Kabala nominated, Mrs. Antocci second, Melinda Ernst Fournier as treasurer, and this was approved by unanimous vote.
- E. Assistant Treasurer: Mrs. Kabala nominated, Mrs. Antocci second, Mr. Desto as assistant treasurer, and this was approved by unanimous vote.
- F. Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative Representative: Mrs. Kabala nominated, Mr. Chalk second, Mr. Desto as SWCEC Representative, and this was approved by unanimous vote.
- G. Borrowing Authorization: A vote is necessary to address any short-term borrowing needs by authorizing the treasurer to borrow from time to time, in anticipation of revenue of the financial year beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018, in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws, and to issue a note or notes, therefore, payable within one year, and to renew any notes or notes as may be given for a period of less than a year.

A motion to approve this authorization was made by Mrs. Kabala, seconded by Mr. Chalk, and approved by unanimous vote.

Wage and Benefits Subcommittee: Mrs. Kabala and Mrs. Aucoin agreed to serve.

Budget and Finance Subcommittee: Mrs. Reed, Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Kabala agreed to serve, with Mrs. Aucoin as the alternate.

## **II. Communications**

1. Mr. Desto read a letter from Shepherd Hill Music Teacher and Chorus Director Connie Galli, thanking the committee for the invitation to attend this evening's meeting. In offering the name of the book to be donated to the Shepherd Hill Library, Mrs. Galli thanked the superintendent and committee for their support of the arts throughout the years.
2. Mrs. Aucoin received a letter of thanks from Dudley Middle School grade 6 Mary LaChance for the district's retirement gift.
3. Mrs. Antocci reported on the verbal and written feedback she received regarding the cut of the grade 5 honor roll. She read portions of those communications which reveal parents' disappointment. The parents agreed the honor roll provides incentive and is a motivator.

Mrs. Aucoin and Mr. Desto received similar correspondence.

Mr. Desto took issue with the tone of the letters. He said the Charlton Middle School Council's recommendation to cut the honor roll was made with the best interests of the students in mind. Mr. Desto said, however, the committee's vote may have inadvertently penalized many to shield a few.

Mrs. Pastore spoke about the anxiety and pressure felt among students of all ages to perform and achieve for their parents' sake.

Mrs. Rabbitt said she has received correspondence from many parents who agree with cutting the fifth grade honor roll. She asked whether there is a deeper issue involved that cannot be solved with or without the honor roll. She asked at what point in time are we creating this pressure that students need to perform.

Mr. Desto agreed with Mrs. Rabbitt, saying the fifth grade honor roll is not the problem. He said every household needs to do something to bring awareness to mental health and the effects of stress, and to design a way to educate people better. Mr. Desto recommended the committee reconsider its vote to do away with the honor roll.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to reconsider the vote concerning the 5<sup>th</sup> grade honor roll and to reinstate it.

Mr. Pietrzak said the committee's previous vote was not intended to be punitive to those students who earn the honor roll. He said he will defer to the educators.

Mrs. Antocci said the issue is not whether or not we have an honor roll. It's something else. It's transition. There is so much to the transition that is stressful to the child. The honor roll is something that is there to strive for, and it is important to have something for kids to aspire to. She is in favor of providing another reward system that students can attain.

Mr. Packard said we are winning because we are having this dialogue. Learning has no boundaries and his goal is to make sure everyone has the opportunity to soar. We will support kids whether they make honor roll or are struggling.

Mrs. Kabala sought to amend her motion to establish the fifth grade honor roll after the first quarter to allow them to get used to the grading system. Mrs. Antocci did not withdraw her second as she wanted the honor roll to begin immediately.

The chair entertained a motion to vote on Mrs. Kabala's amendment to establish the fifth grade honor roll after the first quarter to allow students to acclimate to the grading system. The vote was five in favor of the amendment. Mr. Chalk and Mrs. Antocci were opposed.

The motion by Mrs. Kabala, seconded by Mrs. Antocci to establish the fifth grade honor roll after the first quarter to allow students to acclimate to the grading system passed by a vote of 5-2. Voting in favor were Mrs. Aucoin, Mrs. Kabala, Mr. Pietrzak, Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Reed. Mr. Chalk and Mrs. Antocci were opposed.

### **III. Superintendent's Report**

1. Mr. Desto congratulated the 290 Shepherd Hill graduates, and thanked the Shepherd Hill staff for the hours of work spent planning the senior events and graduation, as well as helping those students get to this point in their lives.

The enclosed destination report shows 84% of the class of 2017 is going on to college; 12% will seek jobs; 3% will join the military, and 1% are non-graduates.

2. Mr. Desto thanked the Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation for providing nearly \$25,000 in enrichment grants. The foundation members will be invited to attend one of the committee's fall meetings to kick off their annual fund raising campaign.

#### **IV. New Business**

##### **A. School Improvement Plans – Principals**

Mrs. Parmley offered highlights from the school year, including the focus on students' mental and emotional health. Programs at the school were designed to look at the whole child by helping to build character, establish common language. Among her goals, Mrs. Parmley stated a need to bring volunteers into the school and to build on the foundation of a safe and supportive leadership team.

Mrs. Pacheco said a major accomplishment in the school was the expansion of technology. A fundraiser netted \$4,000 to support the purchase of Smart Boards. Teachers provided more opportunities for their students to move throughout the day. A second recess was added, and a Chill Zone was established for those children who need to take a break before behaviors escalate. Mrs. Pacheco said this resulted in 47 fewer discipline referrals. Ongoing efforts include enhancing safety in the school and community.

Mrs. Pastore thanked the school committee for approving the tutoring positions in grade 3 at both Heritage School and Dudley Elementary School for the 2016-2017 school year.

Among the accomplishments at Heritage School were the collaborative STEAM night with Charlton Elementary School at Heritage School. The Safe and Supportive Schools initiative strives to meet the needs of all children. Mrs. Pastore said team teaching allows expanded social thinking curriculum to reach children before behavior escalates. Students consider how their behavior affects people around them. The effort for 2017-2018 is to establish this as school language.

Mrs. Seibold cited the school's successful partnership with the Big Brother/ Big Sister program through Nichols College. Students also benefit with social-emotional programs from Harrington Hospital. STEAM activities include Vbots to increase and enhance engagement in learning. Mrs. Seibold has established a Safe and Supportive Leadership team who have created peace places in the classrooms. Dudley Elementary School Staff has benefited from advanced responsive classroom training. The school's technology team directs initiatives to allow teachers to do peer visits.

Mrs. Rabbitt commended the focus at all elementary schools for calming places. She said this is reflective of the earlier conversation about stress.

Mr. Paire has designed building activities to address climate, culture, and civility. Staff has developed and implemented service projects with an emphasis on giving back to the community through such events as the Mummy Run, the student-faculty basketball game, volunteering at the Mustard Seed soup kitchen. At school, staff and students participated in the Bow Tie Day to raise money in the fight against esophageal cancer. Mr. Paire said recess was established for all four grade levels this year with good results. Dudley Middle School will form a partnership with Big Brother/Big Sister next year.

Mr. Packard said the Charlton Middle School Improvement Plan encompasses programs that provide high quality education. Educators improve their teaching through collaboration, learning walks and Google Docs. Charlton Middle School has successfully implemented the Coffee and Conversation event, and hopes to collaborate with Charlton Elementary School and Heritage School next year. In addition, there will be expanded curriculum options and will build on project-based learning. The school will distribute staff and parent surveys seeking feedback on all that the school offers.

Mr. Chaplin said Shepherd Hill has focused on communication and community engagement. Students may enroll in courses at Quinsigamond Community College and Nichols College in sports management and criminal

justice. Mr. Chaplin said plans are in place to engage the community and both middle schools. The Shepherd Hill Enviro-thon team has partnered with Buffumville. Highlights of its focus on climate and culture include the team of students training as Game Changers with Northeastern Sports Society and the New England Patriots for discussions on domestic violence. Plans are underway to create a unified sports team for those with and without disabilities. Mr. Chaplin said the school's goal is to expand the alumni network by creating a hall of fame for sports and performing arts. Another goal is to create hands-on student-driven initiatives that feed into the curriculum, such as a school store.

The committee thanked the principals and school councils for their work.

B. Director of Finance and Operations Update (*Vote Required*)

Donations:

Youth Art Month supplies to Shepherd Hill	
Stop and Shop reward program to Shepherd Hill,	\$45.98
Charlton PTO to Charlton Elementary School for grade 1 field trip busing	\$824.06
Dudley and Charlton PTOs to District for alternative seating	\$325.00

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci to accept the donations as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu presented the results of four French River Education Center Collaborative Cooperative Purchasing bids:

*Copy Paper:* This item was bid two ways with either a single or multiple locations. A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by S. Reed to award the FY 18 Copy Paper Bid to W.B. Mason for delivery to one location at the unit price of \$20.68 per carton, and to Contract Paper Group for delivery to multiple locations at the unit price of \$21.73 per carton, was approved by unanimous vote.

*Bread and Rolls:* A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by S. Reed to award the FY 18 Bread and Rolls Bid to Duva Distributors, was approved by unanimous vote.

*Milk:* A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by S. Reed to award the FY 18 Milk Bid to Maine's Paper and Food Service, Inc., was approved by unanimous vote.

*Market Basket Frozen Foods:* A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by M. Antocci to award the bid to Thurston Foods at unit prices, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu will present additional FREC bids at the June 28 meeting, as well as the School Supplies bids.

Mr. Mathieu reported on year-end expenses. One of his priorities is to replace the oldest four or five copiers in the district, and also to repair exhaust fans at Mason Road School.

Mr. Mathieu said projections are coming up short against the goal to return money to the district's Excess and Deficiency Account.

Mr. Mathieu will report at the next meeting the technology leasing plan.

C. Report of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee (*Vote may be Required*)

There was no meeting.

Mr. Desto, Mr. Mathieu and Mrs. Rabbitt attended an end of year report training last week, with Mark Abrahms who has been commissioned by the town of Charlton to review its financial state. Mr. Desto said as a result, the school committee will need to meet with town officials to discuss these studies, as well as a plan for presenting an override request. Mr. Desto will seek the committee's assistance in scheduling those meetings before the end of the summer.

The district has commissioned a study by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools.

D. Consideration to Amend Policy IJNDBA, second reading (Vote Required)

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by M. Antocci to waive the reading of policy IJNDBA, was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by M. Antocci, to approve the amendments to policy IJNDBA on second reading, was approved unanimously.

E. Selection of Delegate, MASC/MASS Joint Conference

Mrs. Antocci will attend the conference.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak, to elect Mrs. Antocci as the committee's delegate to the Joint Meeting of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, in November 2017, was approved by unanimous vote.

F. Consideration to Approve Leave of Absence (Vote Required)

District Behavior Specialist William Gammetto has requested a one year leave of absence for the 2017-2018 school year under the Agreement Between the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District and the Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association, Article XV, item J, to serve as the substantially separate classroom teacher at Mason Road School.

Mr. Desto said it is in the district's best interest to have Mr. Gammetto establish this program, which has run successfully at Charlton Elementary School. The behavior specialist position will be posted as a one-year extended employment substitute to allow Mr. Gammetto the option to return to this position the following school year. Mr. Desto recommended approval.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by M. Antocci, to approve the request by William Gammetto for a one-year leave of absence, was approved by unanimous vote.

G. Consideration of Meeting Dates for July and August

The committee meets once per month in July and August.

The committee set the following dates:

- Wednesday, July 12, 2017, Shepherd Hill, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 16, 2017, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.

V. **Next Meeting Dates**

*Regular Meetings –*

- Wednesday, June 28, 2017, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 12, Shepherd Hill, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 16, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.

**VI. Future Agenda Items** – FY 2018 Budget, Superintendent’s Evaluation, Discuss School Committee meetings and their availability to Charlton. Strategic Plan expires in 2017. CORI checks of groups/volunteers with district students.

**VII. Executive Session** – “to discuss strategy with respect to litigation or collective bargaining if an open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body.”  
 The chair entertained a motion to enter executive session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation or collective bargaining, and stated that an open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and that the committee will return to open session for the purposes of a vote if necessary and to adjourn. This was approved by unanimous roll call vote at 9:34 p.m.

The committee returned to open session at 10:18 p.m.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by M. Antocci to set a salary ranges for the position of Dudley Elementary School Principal as \$95,000-\$98,000, was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve a salary range for the position of Dudley Middle School Principal as \$98,000 to \$114,000, was approved by a vote of 6-1. Mrs. Reed was opposed.

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by C. Kabala, to set a salary range for the position of Interim Special Education Director as \$95,000 to \$105,000 was approved by a vote of 6 in favor. Mrs. Rabbitt abstained.

**VIII. Adjourn**

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 10:21 p.m.

*Items used for this meeting include*

<i>Agenda for June 14, 2017</i>	<i>Superintendent’s Report of June 9, 2017</i>	<i>Minutes of the regular meeting of May 24, 2017</i>	<i>Minutes of the executive session of May 24, 2017</i>
<i>Finance Director’s Report</i>	<i>Policy IJNDBA</i>	<i>Retiree Book Donation</i>	<i>Class of 2017 Destination Report</i>
<i>School Improvement Plans: Charlton Elementary School Heritage School Mason Road School Dudley Elementary School Charlton Middle School Dudley Middle School Shepherd Hill Regional High School</i>			

*Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary*