

## **DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee Budget Workshop, held Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, 6 p.m.

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Mary N. Antocci  
Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair  
Raymond J. Chalk, Vice Chair  
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: Lorinda Allen, Karen Ares, Dan D’Arcangelo, Jody O’Brien, Dean Packard, John Paire; Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

### **1. Call to Order**

The chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

### **2. Warrant**

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

<b>Warrant #</b>	<b>Amount</b>
40	\$73,382.61
41	\$8,653.36
42	\$155,140.09
115D	\$460,884.74
115P	\$1,192,134.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,890,195.45</b>

### **3. FY 2018 Budget Presentations**

- Technology, Mr. D’Arcangelo

Mr. D’Arcangelo outlined technology achievements during the last year. Included among them is the replacement of 135 computers in five labs and libraries throughout the district, deployment of Chromebooks and carts, SmartBoards, multiple A/V projects in cafeterias and auditoriums, and closing 1,600 Help Desk tickets.

#### Technology overview

Mr. D’Arcangelo said district technology allows students and teachers to access web-based services, curriculum and applications. In the last year, the district has issued G Suite accounts, digital curriculum in the areas of math, science, social studies and foreign language. Teachers access Google Classroom and web-based tools for grading and collecting assignments. Parents can also monitor their child’s progress in grades 5-12 using the School Brains community portal.

## Goals and Objectives

Mr. D’Arcangelo said the department continues to upgrade off-warranty devices, while maintaining, evaluating and upgrading all network infrastructure. Among the goals is to deploy 14 netbook carts with 420 Chromebooks and increase internet speeds.

Mr. D’Arcangelo provided an overview of costs to projects and upgrades.

The Chromebook carts are used constantly. WiFi at the high school level is a concern. The focus for elementary schools are technology and devices. Charlton Elementary School and Mason Road School use iPads, while Heritage School and Dudley Elementary School use Chromebooks, with iPads. The committee is concerned about the number of devices, and whether there is a sufficient number for the MCAS 2.0 testing requirements.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the technology is cut each year, thereby backtracking on its goals. Mrs. Rabbitt said the district cannot provide optimal testing conditions in terms of technology without affecting the ability to use the devices every day in the classroom. The goal is to provide technology in the classroom to allow for every day learning, not just for testing periods.

Mr. D’Arcangelo said deploying seven of the 14 requested Chromebook carts would allow access to an entire grade level at each building.

Mr. Desto distributed a draft of a technology roadmap, which shows where the district needs to be in the next three years. To invest in adaptable and far reaching technology and infrastructure may require the committee to seek a debt exclusion from voters.

- Special Education, Ms. O’Brien

Mrs. O’Brien has no staffing increases proposed for FY 2018. She said there will be some shifts to instructional assistant staffing at the end of the school year. Special Education services are supported by the general fund and grants. The State Circuit Breaker reimburses the district for tuitions exceeding \$44,000.

Mrs. O’Brien said the district sends the most student to the Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative, particularly the GROW School. The district has successfully established collaborative-like programs in the schools, and has worked to reduce the number of residential placements to three.

Mrs. O’Brien said there is a need to build social-emotional supports at a younger age. The district has secured three school psychologist interns from Worcester State University for the current year, with a goal to secure one intern for each school in FY 2018.

Mrs. O’Brien reviewed anticipated enrollment in the district’s substantially separate program, and the staffing needs that result. Special education teachers may be reassigned where needed.

## **4. Review of Budget**

Mr. Mathieu said there is no additional information from the state regarding the FY 2018 budget. The committee agreed to use the upcoming Leaders Breakfast to send a message to town officials about the true cost of education.

The committee discussed the towns’ targeted contribution. Dudley’s minimum local contribution has increased dramatically, and Charlton officials do not support any increases.

## **5. Discussion of Possible Reductions**

Mr. Desto provided a list of potential budget reductions and revenues, outlining cuts that could be made throughout the next several months. The committee indicated which items they would support.

Discussion points included health insurance, buses, technology, staffing requests, and School Choice participation.

The committee agreed it would support opening School Choice only at the high school.

## **6. Chaperone Authorization**

At the meeting of June 21, 2016, the Shepherd Hill Show Choir received permission to travel to Virginia for the Mid-Atlantic Choral Spectacular during February Vacation 2017. The show choir will leave on Friday February 17, necessitating one missed day of school.

### ***State Ethics Regulations, 930 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 5.05***

At the time, the chaperones for the trip were not known. Among the 19 chaperones are 10 district employees as either full time, or as receiving extra-curricular stipends. While the nine chaperones do pay for meals and reduced hotel costs, the staff members do not. Mr. Desto recommended the committee authorize their free meals and lodging in conjunction with their duties as the educational value to the students far outweighs the cost of these amenities.

The staff members are: Connie Galli, Becky Bussiere, Ashley Racicot, Jana Deren, Kristin Marengo, Lester Boggio, Zachary Moore, Vicki Niro, Heather Larsen and James French.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to authorize the chaperones consistent with State Ethics Regulations, 930 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 5.05, was approved by unanimous vote.

## **7. Adjournment**

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 8:55 p.m.

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

- Leaders' Breakfast – February 17, 2017, 9:00 AM, Shepherd Hill
- Regular Meeting – March 8, 2017, 7:00 PM, Shepherd Hill
- Budget and Finance Subcommittee – March 15, 2017, 5:00 PM, Shepherd Hill
- Regular Meeting – March 22, 2017, 7:00 PM, Charlton Middle School