

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING**

November 9, 2015

Francis Mills Communication Center, E115, Danvers High School

**School Committee Members Present:** Eric Crane, Chair  
Jeffrey Kay  
Connie Pawlak  
Arthur Skarmeas  
David Thomson, Secretary

**VOTED:** DPS Policy on Restraint/Positive Behavior Support – Mr. Skarmeas moved to approve the DPS policy on Restraint/Positive Behavior Support for a first reading. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VOTED:** Fundraising requests – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the fundraising requests for the DHS classes of 2016 and 2018 and the DHS Girls Tennis, Basketball and Gymnastic teams. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VOTED:** Minutes – Mr. Thomson moved to approve and release the minutes from the October 19, 2015 regular meeting and to release the Executive Session meeting minutes from January 12, February 25, March 31, April 15, May 11 and August 10, 2015. Ms. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VOTED:** Adjournment – Mr. Thomson moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:36 p.m. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Crane called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Mr. Crane read the DPS Mission statement. He inquired if anyone in the audience was recording the proceedings and identified Jeff Pope, Danvers Herald, in the audience as recording the meeting.

**I. ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT, COMMITTEE AND COMMUNITY**

Mr. Thomson congratulated the DHS Girls Soccer team for their most recent win and also expressed gratitude to Mrs. Ambrozavitch for her help with a medical emergency that occurred after the game.

Mr. Crane introduced Representative Ted Speliotis and congratulated him on his recent Legislator of the Year award presented by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. Mr. Speliotis thanked the committee for their recognition.

Fields Update - Mr. Taverna informed the committee about the progress being made on the Fields project with information about the turf, track, lights, grandstand foundations and field markings. He stated that the project is still running on schedule.

**II. INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE** – Olivia Thompson presented information from the seven Danvers schools.

**III. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT**

1. **Danvers PRIDE** – Thorpe School principal, Rita Ward, Gr. 4 teacher Suzanne Dignard and several Gr. 4 students presented information about their use of Chromebooks in Writing Workshop. Mrs. Dignard spoke about the professional development she attended during the summer to prepare for Writing Workshop and the Thorpe PAC's generous donation of 30 Chromebooks to the school. She outlined the writing work being done by her students on the Chromebooks and their great progress being made. Each student spoke about how the Chromebooks was helping him or her with the writing process.

The committee congratulated the students on their presentations. Mrs. Dignard spoke about the enthusiasm of the students for writing using the Chromebooks, the quality of the work being done by the students and the increase of their abilities.

2. **DanversCARES Update** – DanversCARES director, Peg Sallade provided a DanversCARES update to the committee. Ms. Sallade introduced the new DanversCARES Asst. Director Lyle Harrod, who is overseeing all of the youth programs.

Ms. Sallade spoke about the review of data as a result of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the focus/priorities identified as a result of the review that will guide their work for the 15-16 school year. These priorities will include marijuana use and e-cigarettes and vaping.

Priority initiatives discussed were the creation of a Friends of DanversCARES organization; online YRBS pilot at Holten-Richmond Middle School; Youth group expansion and integration; regional collaborative work on opiate and substance abuse prevention; strengthening and expanding partnerships and the completion of the Behavioral Health grant.

Ms. Sallade reviewed the results of a DanversCARES survey conducted with parents of Danvers and the correlation between those results and the Youth Risk Survey results.

Mrs. Pawlak commented on the low participation rate for the parent survey and encouraged all parents to respond to surveys sent out by the district and DanversCARES.

Mr. Kay inquired about the validity of the survey results and wondered if consideration of the parents who responded played a role in analyzing the results. Ms. Sallade stated that she considered the fact that those who responded were more engaged and concerned with the issues. Mr. Kay also wondered if “incentifying” the survey would yield a greater response rate.

Mr. Skarmeas thanked Ms. Sallade for the “invaluable work” that DanversCARES does.

Mr. Crane suggested making the surveys available at parent/student event, such as parent/teacher night, to increase survey participation.

#### **IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none**

#### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. DPS Policy on Restraint/Positive Behavior Support – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the Restraint/Positive Behavior Support policy (JKAA) for a first reading. As voted.

Mrs. Pawlak stated that due to changes in MA state laws, the policy needed to be re-written and the proposed policy is a result of suggestions from MASC and the Student Services department. She reviewed some of the revisions/additions included in the new policy.

Mr. Thomson noted that the policy subcommittee expressed concerns about the number of trained faculty and stated that Dr. Dana would look into opening up opportunities for others to attend the training.

Mr. Crane asked for clarification on the distinction between restraint and positive behavior support. Dr. Dana invited Highlands School teacher Jody Sheehan to explain the types of positive behavior supports she uses in her classroom.

SEPAC co-chair, Keri Holian, inquired whether the district may need an additional BCBA Director as a result of the new policy.

- B. Fundraising requests – The Superintendent recommended the approval of fundraising requests for the DHS classes of 2016 and 2018 and the DHS Girls Tennis, Basketball and Gymnastic teams. As voted.

**VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- A - **Communications** – Dr. Dana reviewed the communications in the packet, which included an agenda and meeting minutes from the North Shore Education Consortium.

- B. **Legislation** – none

- C. **Subcommittee/Liaison Update:**

Mrs. Pawlak spoke about MASS/MASC conference that she recently attended.

DanversCARES - The coalition voted affirmatively on a resolution that school committees take a position on the legalization of marijuana. As a result, DanversCARES will be working on a position paper to present to the committee.

DEEP – Mrs. Pawlak spoke about the success of the DEEP Wine/Food Tasting in raising over \$21,000 and a record-setting attendance.

SEPAC – Co-Chair, Keri Holian, spoke about the most recent meeting/presentation, “managing challenging behavior” and advised the committee of the upcoming meeting date and topic, “organizational skills.”

**VII. MINUTES** – As voted

**VIII. BUDGET**

Mr. Taverna presented the October 2015 budget report and review the draft Town of Danvers Budget Policy/Timeline. He advised that the current amount for homeless transportation is estimated to be \$299,000 for 140 students.

**IX. PERSONNEL**

*Announcement of Resignations, Leaves of Absence and Appointments* – Dr. Dana presented Mrs. Ambrozavitch’s memo dated October 2015. Dr. Dana congratulated two recent DPS retirees, Janice Pendergast and Ellen Bresner, and spoke about their years of service to the students of Danvers.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, December 14, 2015 at 7 p.m. in the Francis Mills Communication Center at Danvers High School.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Thomson, Secretary  
Danvers School Committee