

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

February 22, 2016

Francis Mills Communication Center, E115, Danvers High School

School Committee Members Present: Eric Crane, Chair
Jeffrey Kay
Arthur Skarneas
David Thomson, Secretary

VOTED: Public Hearing on the Proposed DPS 16-17 Budget - Mr. Skarneas moved to open the public hearing on the proposed DPS 16-17 budget. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Skarneas moved to close the public hearing on the proposed DPS budget. Mr. Thomson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous

VOTED: Holten – Richmond Middle School 16-17 Program of Studies – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the Holten-Richmond Middle School 16-17 Program of Studies for a second reading. Mr. Skarneas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Policy Updates – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the proposed Access to Digital Resources, Empowered Digital Use, Emergency Plans policies and the removal of policy IJNDC-R from the DPS policy manual policy for a second reading. Mr. Skarneas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: SBRIT Health screening policies – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the DPS policies IHAMA and JLC, to include information regarding the Substance Abuse Screening, Brief Intervention Referral and Treatment Process (SBIRT) for a first reading. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Amended 2015-2016 Calendar for March 1 Presidential Primary - Mr. Skarneas moved to approve the amended 15-16 DPS Calendar that reflected the change of March 1st to a professional development day to accommodate the election turnout for DHS teachers only. Mr. Thomson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Homeschooling Application – Mr. Thomson moved to approve one homeschooling request. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous

VOTED: Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice – Mr. Skarneas moved to open the public hearing on School Choice. Mr. Thomson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Thomson moved to not accept school choice students for the 16-17 school year. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Thomson moved to close the hearing on school choice for the 16-17 school year. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Out of State Field Trips – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the out of state field trip requests from the DHS Science team to travel to Cape Elizabeth, ME on April 12, 2016 and the DHS Ski Club to travel to Gunstock Mountain, NH on February 27, 2016, the DHS Fine Arts trip to China on April 13-24, 2017 and the DHS Wrestling Team to travel to Providence RI from 3/5 – 3/6/16. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote to approval all was unanimous.

VOTED: Fundraising requests– Mr. Skarneas moved to approve the fundraising request of the DHS Band and Parents of Music Excellence and the DHS Gymnastics and Tennis teams. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Minutes – Mr. Thomson moved to approve and release the minutes from the January 11, 2016 and the special meeting minutes from January 7, 2016. Mr. Thomson also moved to approve the minutes from the January 11, 2016 Executive Session meeting, not to be released. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Thomson moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:00 p.m. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Crane called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

Dr. Dana was pleased to present the final MSBA vote for the Smith School project and DPS will move forward with a contract at their March meeting.

Mr. Crane formally announced the resignation of committee member Connie Pawlak and thanked her on behalf of the town, the district and committee members for her years of service. He spoke highly of her commitment to the students of Danvers. Mr. Thomson and Mr. Kay spoke about how helpful Mrs. Pawlak was to them as new members of the committee. Mr. Skarmeas said that Mrs. Pawlak brought an educators view to what the committee which was very helpful in the decision making process.

Mr. Crane stated that even though the committee has the ability to fill the open position immediately, the committee agreed that they will wait until the May election to give other candidates the chance to fill the remaining two years of Mrs. Pawlak's term.

II. INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE –

Olivia Thompson presented information from the seven Danvers schools.

III. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. Danvers PRIDE – Highlands Principal Elizabeth Matthews, Highlands teacher Mrs. Sinapius and two grade 5 students presented books that they had created in Writer's Workshop, which included a "Welcome to Highlands School" informational book. The committee expressed their appreciation and congratulated the students and teachers on their work.
2. Technology Initiative Update – Director of Technology, Jeff Liberman, along teachers Theresa Oakes and Karin Butterworth and four HRMS students presented an update on the 1:1 Chromebook Initiative at Holten-Richmond Middle School. Both teachers talked about how Google Classroom has helped their students with their studies and projects. Students presented PowerPoint presentations about how the Chromebooks help them with their writing and research in Social Studies, World Language, Music and Art.

Mr. Liberman presented an overview on the growth of the use of Google Classroom and Docs, Sheets, Presentations, Forms and Draw from 2014 to when the Chromebook Initiative began.

Mr. Thomson inquired whether there has been a marked improvement in the quality of student writing. Both teachers agreed that the quality and quantity has increased due to the ease of making revisions. Teachers also reported that the technology, overall, has been very reliable.

Mr. Kay was encouraged with the enthusiasm expressed by both students and teachers. Mr. Skarmeas asked why students needed a DPS Chromebook rather than using their own. Mr. Liberman advised that by using a single device instead of individual devices, curriculum and updates can be uploaded to all Chromebooks at the same time. The process is much more effective.

The committee expressed their appreciation to the teachers and students for their presentation.

3. FY16 Overview – Dr. Dana presented the FY 16 Overview, which included the announcement of the new DPS Mobile App, which will be launched in March 2016. She presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining all of the features of the new app.
4. 15-16 DPS Mid year Accomplishments - Dr. Dana outlined some of the highlights of the DPS 15-16 midyear accomplishments, which included mid year data meetings, digital data walls, Google Classroom work, Danvers Pride presentations focusing on curriculum and how students are learning, the new DPS logo, the new mobile app, Skillful teacher for professional development,

“Making Thinking Visible” program for teachers, new teacher aide orientation and the NEASC accreditation work for DHS, Enhanced lockdown program in the elementary schools, breakfast program increases, and learning commons at the Thorpe School library. Individual schools reported the creation of new Twitter accounts, mural work, positivity and writer’s workshop successes.

Mr. Crane commented on the very successful first half of the 15-16 school year and congratulated the Superintendent and her staff for their many accomplishments.

5. Perspectives on the Schools Survey - Dr. Dana thanked all those who participated in taking the survey and presented highlights of the 15-16 Perspective on the Schools Survey which included an increase in participation, an overall grade of A-B for the schools, strong agreement that DPS is focused on the strategic plan, in family & community engagement, on school improvement, the support of the mission and vision, the variety of extra curricular activities, that DPS partners with the community, appreciation of diversity, goals are communicated well, high teacher quality and collaboration, access to technology and well-maintained school buildings. Dr. Dana did outline some areas of the survey that still need work by the District which included class size, supporting all students and consistency in student discipline. Overall, Dr. Dana was very pleased to report the very positive survey results.

Dr. Dana also reported on the results of two calendar survey questions regarding starting school before Labor Day and eliminating all religious holidays.

Mr. Skarmas noted that he was pleased at the positive responses, especially those of the high school students. Mr. Thomson asked that the survey questions be reviewed to make sure they are as “tight” as possible to reduce the number of “I don’t know” responses. Mr. Kay for more research into what people are not satisfied with.

6. Grants Update – Mrs. Ambrozavitch provided a grant update the committee on grant funding opportunities for the district. She noted that many administrators are taking on grant writing/applications and have procured funding for their projects.

IV. **PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED DPS 16-17 BUDGET** – As voted.

Mr. Taverna and Dr. Dana presented the proposed 16-17 DPS budget. Dr. Dana thanked all of the DPS administrators for their work in preparing the budget and provided an outline of the process and timeline for finalizing the budget. She noted the collaboration between the district and the town manager.

Mr. Taverna spoke about specifics in the budget, which included contractual obligations, staffing needs, retirement savings, technology upgrades, Chromebook lease payments, special education, textbooks/licenses and software, equipment, non-salary requests and transportation. Mr. Taverna announced that the proposed budget total for the district is \$38,632,834, an increase of 3.1% over the FY16 budget.

Dr. Dana and Mr. Taverna fielded questions about technology, transportation, supplies, staffing and class sizes from the committee. The committee agreed that the proposed budget is fiscally responsible, solid, and fair and meets the needs of the district for the upcoming school year.

IV. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Holten – Richmond Middle School 16-17 Program of Studies - As voted.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

1. SBRIT Health screening policies – As voted. Mr. Skarmas volunteered to fill the vacancy on the Policy subcommittee resulting from Mrs. Pawlak’s resignation. Mr. Thomson advised the committee on the specific changes made to the proposed policies.

2. Amended 2015-2016 Calendar for March 1 Presidential Primary – As voted. Dr. Dana advised that the change to the calendar was made to accommodate the anticipated large voter turnout expected for the March 1st Presidential Primary Election at Danvers High School.
3. Homeschooling Application – As voted.
4. Public Hearing on School Choice – As voted.
5. Out of State Field Trips – As voted.
6. Fundraising requests– As voted.

VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS

A - **Communications** – Dr. Dana reviewed the communications in the packet.

B. **Legislation** – none

C. **Subcommittee/Liaison Update:**

DanversCARES – Dr. Dana spoke about the Mural project at Riverside, opiate committee work, and the position paper on the legalization of marijuana.

DEEP – Teacher grants are due March 1st.

SEPAC – Co-Chair Keri Holian announced the upcoming SEPAC Resource Fair to be held at HRMS on March 2, 2016 and spoke about the many vendors that will be available for information to all parents planning to attend.

VII. MINUTES – As voted.

VIII. BUDGET

Mr. Taverna presented the January 2016 budget report and stated that DPS is on budget to date. Homeless transportation costs remain the same.

IX. PERSONNEL

Announcement of Resignations, Leaves of Absence and Appointments –Mrs. Ambrozavitch presented her personnel memo dated February 2016.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, March 14, 2016 at 7 p.m. in the Francis Mills Communication Center at Danvers High School.

Respectfully submitted,
David Thomson, Secretary
Danvers School Committee