

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

March 14, 2016

Francis Mills Communication Center, E115, Danvers High School

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

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), second reading. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous

VOTED: FY 16-17 Budget – Final Adoption Vote – Mr. Thomson moved to adopt the FY 16-17 DPS Budget. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: FY 16-17 DPS School Calendar/Early Release Days – Mr. Thomson moved to accept the FY 16-17 DPS School Calendar/Early Release days for a first reading. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: North Shore Consortium Amended Articles of Agreement – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the North Shore Consortium Amended Articles of Agreement. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Out of State Field Trips – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the out of state/overnight field trip request for 6-12 DHS students to travel to Germany on February 16-25, 2017. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Fundraising Requests – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the fundraising requests of the DHS Softball team, DHS Spring Track team and DHS Baseball team. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Mr. Thomson moved to approve and release the regular meeting and public hearing minutes from February 22, 2016. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Thomson moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:50 p.m. Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Crane called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and DPS Mission statement were recited. Mr. Crane inquired whether the meeting was being recorded by audience members and announced that the meeting was being recorded by DCAT.

II. ITEMS OF INTEREST TO SUPERINTENDENT, SCHOOL COMMITTEE, COMMUNITY

Dr. Dana was pleased to inform the committee about the progress made in the Smith School Building project and that the district continues to work with MSBA and town hall to move the process forward.

Mr. Thomson congratulated the DECA team on their recent wins at the Boston competition.

III. INTRODUCTION AND INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE – Olivia Thompson was not in attendance at the meeting.

IV. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. Danvers Pride Presentation – Smith School – Principal Tracey Mara, teacher Brea Plummer and some 5th grade students spoke about the kindness initiative at Smith, the “Butterfly Effect”. Students spoke about how the Smith community as a whole is participating in performing and recording acts of kindness.

2. Student Services Update – Dr. Mary Tatem introduced school psychologist Kristen Marancelli and Riverside Preschool teacher Amber Adair who presented about the Riverside Pre School program. Both spoke about the integrated model that is part of the preschool program and peer screenings that match peer partners with students needing services. Peer partners serve as role models for positive behavior, gross and fine motor skills and receptive and expressive language.

Ms. Adair spoke about her work in developing a pre-school curriculum that aligns with the Common Core. Once the curriculum is finalized, she will be piloting it in September 2016. She stated that this curriculum will ensure that all students have the required skills needed as they move up to kindergarten. Secondly, she was pleased to inform the committee that the special education students have been provided iPads with apps that help students with communication with their teachers and peers.

Mr. Thomson commented that he was pleased to hear about the use of technology in the classroom. Mr. Kay inquired about how the iPads were funded. Dr. Tatem stated that they were provided by the DEEP grant and the Riverside PAC. Mr. Skarmeas stated that the presentation was very informative. Dr. Tatem stated that presently there are 54 students in the program and that they receive referrals to the program all year long from preschools in the area, Early Intervention and Head Start.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SBRIT Health screening policies – The Superintendent recommended the approval of DPS policies IHAMA and JLC, to include information regarding the Substance Abuse Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment Process (SBIRT), second reading. As voted.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. FY 16-17 Budget – Final Adoption Vote – The Superintendent recommended the adoption of the FY 16-17 DPS Budget. As voted. Mr. Crane noted that the budget was presented to the Board of Selectmen and they were supportive of the proposed budget. The budget will be presented to Fin Comm on April 13th.

2. FY 16-17 DPS School Calendar/Early Release Days – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the FY 16-17 School Calendar/Early Release Days, first reading. As voted. Mr. Thomson inquired about the no school days listed in November and March – Dr. Dana stated that the district was successful this month in accommodating the Presidential Primary election voting at the high school and felt it was a good plan for the 16-17 school year.

Mr. Kay asked that the district keeps investigating alternatives to snow days and for providing schoolwork to students to complete when there is no school due to weather. He also noted that the calendar for the first half of the year seemed “choppy” due to the many holidays and professional development days.

Mr. Skarmeas said he felt that the only way to prevent school ending at the very end of June would be to start school before Labor Day and that would be part of the discussion with the DTA in their next negotiations.

Mr. Crane asked Dr. Dana whether DESE is looking into alternatives to snow days. Dr. Dana said that the Commissioner is reviewing proposals, but that some communities did not want to do away with all snow days and may put a limit to the number of snow days before initiating alternatives.

Mr. Crane spoke about an email he received from the Acton-Boxborough School Committee regarding adopting a new vacation schedule in response to recommendations made by the DESE to combine the February and April vacations to one March vacation and the conflict caused by the schedule for standardized testing. He suggested that the district and the committee have no plans on changing the vacation schedule. Committee members said that they did not wish to take action with Acton-Boxborough with this initiative at this time.

3. North Shore Consortium Amended Articles of Agreement – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the North Shore Consortium Amended Articles of Agreement. As voted.

4. Out of State/Overnight Field Trip – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the out of state field trip for 6-12 DHS students to travel to Germany on February 16-25, 2017. As voted.

5. Fundraising request – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the fundraising request of the DHS Softball team, DHS Spring Track team and DHS Baseball team. As voted.

VII. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A - **Communications** – Dr. Dana reviewed the communications in the packet.
- B. **Legislation** – Dr. Dana noted that the Governor had signed the Opiate Law today and that the updated DPS substance abuse policies have been updated to reflect the new law.
- C. **Subcommittee/Liaison Update**

DEEP – Dr. Dana spoke about the large number of teachers and administrators who applied for the DEEP Teacher grants and that many focused on technology. She thanked those who coordinated another successful DEEP Spelling Bee.

DanversCARES – Dr. Dana noted that many new members have participated in the DanversCARES monthly meetings. She also informed the committee that the DanversCARES Safety Brochure is almost complete and will be available before the prom season. Finally, DanversCARES is planning a spring event, which is still in the discussion stage.

SEPAC – Mr. Skarmeas read an email from Co-Chair Keri Smith Holian, who spoke about the success of the Resource Fair held on March 2, 2016. She stated that it was very well attended and many vendors. She also reminded the committee about “Light it up Blue” day on April 1st in observance of National Autism Day.

VIII. BUDGET

Mr. Taverna presented the February 2016 Monthly Budget report and invited questions from the committee. He noted that the Special Education budget is favorable and he expects to see savings and that the monies held at the end of the year will be released to fulfill any needs of the schools.

IX. PERSONNEL

Announcement of Resignations, Leaves of Absence and Appointments – Mrs. Ambrozavitch presented her memo dated March 2016 and asked the committee to contact her with questions. She noted most were coaching appointments for spring sports.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, April 11, 2016 at 7 p.m. in the Francis Mills Communication Center at Danvers High School.

Respectfully submitted,

David Thomson, Secretary
Danvers School Committee