

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING**

September 14, 2015

Francis Mills Communication Center, E115, Danvers High School

**School Committee Members Present:** Eric Crane  
Jeffrey Kay  
Connie Pawlak  
David Thomson

**VOTED:** 2015-2016 Danvers Public Schools District Goals – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the DPS 15-16 District Goals for a second reading. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VOTED:** K-12 School Improvement Plans– Mr. Thomson moved to approve the proposed 2015-2016 School Improvement Plans, second reading. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VOTED:** Homeschooling Proposals – Mr. Thomson moved to approve three home school proposals. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VOTED:** Fundraising requests – Mr. Thomson moved to approve the fundraising request for Smith Elementary School and the DHS Boys and Girls Soccer teams. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VOTED:** Minutes – Mr. Thomson moved to approve and release the August 10, 2015 regular meeting minutes. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VOTED:** Adjournment – Mr. Thomson moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:16 p.m. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Crane called the meeting to order at 7:05 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 in the audience as recording the meeting.

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

Mrs. Pawlak expressed her appreciation to the other committee members for voting to support the moratorium on state testing and said that she had attended one of the public forums held by DESE regarding PARCC testing. She stated that she was in favor of their vote. Mrs. Pawlak also spoke about the school calendar and asked that the district include questions about the first day of school schedule and religious holidays in the Perspectives of the District Survey this November. Mr. Crane asked that the survey note that no changes could be made until the next teacher contract negotiations.

Mr. Thomson congratulated the DHS DECA program for the new calendar project and wished them success.

Mr. Crane noted that, due to a business commitment, Mr. Skarmeas would not be in attendance at the meeting.

**II. INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE** – Olivia Thompson presented school information to the committee

**III. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT**

1. 15-16 Opening of Schools – Dr. Dana thanked to the DPW, administrators, technology department and staff for their work in preparing DPS for the 15-16 opening of schools. She spoke about the annual DPS tour of the schools. Faculty began the year on September 8<sup>th</sup> with a

presentation by noted psychologist, Dr. Robert Brooks. Dr. Brooks will also be speaking to parents on October 27<sup>th</sup> at DHS.

Dr. Dana spoke about the NFL 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event at DHS and honoring former NFL player and DHS graduate, Mark Bavaro.

She noted the Chromebooks and Writing initiatives and the ongoing professional development for teachers on both initiatives.

Dr. Dana gave the preliminary total enrollment number and noted that the exact number will be presented at the October meeting. She noted that there were two elementary grades (gr. 1 at Riverside and gr. 3 at Smith) that had higher numbers than usual 25 maximum and will be working with those schools to provide support as needed to address student learning.

The number transitional students went down from 146 in the 14-15SY to 111 students. Mr. Thomson asked how many middle school boys left DPS to attend the new St. John's Prep middle school. Mr. Taverna advised that approximately 6-8 students left DPS, most of who are 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

2. Introduction of Interim HRMS Curriculum Director – Dr. Dana introduced Ellyn Feerick, interim curriculum director for HRMS and highlighted Ms. Feerick's education and accomplishments. Ms. Feerick addressed the committee and thanked the administration for the opportunity to serve as interim curriculum director.

3. 2015 Summer School Program – Dr. Dana introduced Mark Strout, who informed the committee about the successes of the DHS Summer school program and the students attending. Mr. Thomson asked how many students were Danvers students; Mr. Strout said the majority were Danvers students. Mr. Crane congratulated Mr. Strout on once again conducting such a successful program.

4. New Teacher Orientation and Summer Professional Development – Mrs. Ambrozavitch spoke about the new teacher orientation held on August 26<sup>th</sup> for 26 new teachers hired by the DPS. Overviews of policies, expectations, special education, technology and benefits were provided, along with an overview of the mentor/mentee program. Each teacher met his or her mentor and the program was discussed.

Ms. Wermers spoke about the Summer Professional Development, which included 24 workshops. Well over 200 teachers participated in the workshops. She stated that the professional development focused on the two new initiatives, Chromebooks and Writing Workshops. A K-12 Standards – based unit development workshop was offered, with over 80 teachers participating. Ms. Wermers noted that the September 23<sup>rd</sup> in-service day will include a guest speaker, Mary Errinworth from the Teachers College.

Ms. Wermers noted that technology training on the use of the Chromebooks was provided and professional development tying the Chromebooks and writing initiative was provided to many teachers.

Mrs. Pawlak asked if Ms. Wermers would provide information on the workshops offered and the number of teachers who participated.

Mr. Kay wondered how the feedback was from teachers on the Chromebooks training and the use of Google apps. Ms. Wermers stated that the teachers were very enthusiastic and that more training will be built in during their department meetings.

Dr. Dana spoke about the willingness of the faculty to participate in professional development and being able to continuously move it forward during early release days.

5. Student Services Update – Dr. Tatem introduced Ms. Amy DiCicco, the teacher for the new language-based classroom, who spoke about her work during the summer to prepare for welcoming students to the program. Amanda Diefenbacher, HRMS psychologist and Kim Silva, elementary school social worker, spoke about the summer social skills and academic program and presented a slide show highlighting the students and their activities.

Dr. Tatem noted that professional development regarding transition planning was offered during the summer, along with safety training.

Mr. Thomson was very pleased with the progress of getting the program off the ground and congratulated Ms. DiCicco on her preparation. Mrs. Pawlak thanked SEPAC for bringing the need of the program to the attention of the committee.

6. Fields Update – Mr. Taverna spoke about the progress of the fields work and outlined the schedule for upcoming work to be done, noting that the project is on/or ahead of schedule. Mr. Thomson asked for confirmation that the stadium would be ready for graduation in June 2016. Mr. Taverna said that, yes, the stadium should be ready for graduation. All sports will resume at DHS in the fall of 2016.

#### **IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. 2015-2016 Danvers Public Schools District Goals – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the proposed 2015-2016 Danvers Public Schools District Goals, second reading. As voted. Mrs. Pawlak commended the district for the transparency of the goals established.
- B. K-12 School Improvement Plans, The Superintendent recommended the approval of the K-12 School Improvement Plans, second reading. As voted. Mrs. Pawlak outlined some of the highlights of each school’s plan.

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

- A. Homeschooling Proposals – The Superintendent recommended the approval of three homeschool proposals. As voted.
- B. Fundraising requests – The Superintendent recommended the approval of fundraising request for Smith Elementary School and the DHS Boys and Girls Soccer teams. As voted

#### **VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- A - **Communications** – Dr. Dana reviewed the communications in the packet, which included thank you notes from DHS scholarship recipients.
- B. **Legislation** – Mr. Crane spoke about the change in the Homeless transportation policy made by the state that affect homeless students transitioning to a new school. He also noted that Sen. Lovely has advised that there may be a decrease in the number of Danvers hotels/motels housing transitional families from two to one.
- C. **Subcommittee/Liaison Update**: none

DEEP – Mrs. Pawlak and Mr. Strout reminded the community about the DEEP Wine and Food Tasting taking place on October 29<sup>th</sup> at Danversport Yacht Club. Dr. Dana reminded them of the date for the first DEEP meeting of the school year.

DanversCARES – Mrs. Pawlak spoke about the first meeting held on Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> and the introduction of the new assistant director, Lyle Harrod.

SEPAC – Co-chair, Keri Holian- Smith spoke about the first meeting scheduled, which will include a presentation on Basic Rights. She outlined the topics of the monthly meetings for the 15-16 school year.

#### **VII. MINUTES** – As voted

#### **VIII. PERSONNEL**

Announcement of Resignations, Leaves of Absence and Appointments – Mrs. Ambrozavitch presented her memo dated September 2015 and asked the committee to contact her with questions. She also thanked all those involved in the hiring process over the summer.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, October 19, 2015 at 7 p.m. in the Francis Mills Communication Center at Danvers High School.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Thomson, Secretary  
Danvers School Committee