

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

February 25, 2015

Francis Mills Communication Center, E115, Danvers High School

School Committee Members Present: Eric Crane
Jeffrey Kay
Connie Pawlak
Arthur Skarmeas, Chair

VOTED: Holten – Richmond Middle School 15-16 Program of Studies – Mr. Crane moved to approve the HRMS 15-16 Program of Studies, second reading. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Bidding Requirements Policy Update – Mr. Crane moved to accept the updated Bidding Requirements policy, second reading. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice – Mr. Crane moved to not accept School Choice students for the 2015-2016 school year. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities Civil Rights Policy update – Mr. Crane moved to accept the Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities Civil Rights Policy update for a first reading. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Out of State Field Trip – Mr. Crane moved to approve the out of state field trip request from the Danvers High School Ecology students (12 students) to travel to Central Amazonia, Brazil from April 15 - April 22, 2016. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Crane moved to adjourn the Budget hearing at 8:35 p.m. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Kay moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:05 p.m. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

I. CALL TO ORDER - Mr. Skarmeas called the Budget hearing to order at 7:04 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and DPS Mission statement were recited. Mr. Skarmeas inquired whether the meeting was being recorded by audience members and announced that the meeting was being broadcast on DCAT.

1. FY15 Review/DPS 14-15 Mid-year Accomplishments

Dr. Dana presented an overview of the 14-15 mid-year accomplishments. She thanked the district team for their work on the district-wide goals. The overview of the mid-year accomplishments included:

Theme I Academic Achievement - work in the Universal Design for Learning, close reading, response to intervention, understanding by design, logic models, performance-based assessments and the use of Google classroom.

Theme II Family/Community Engagement – research on more ways to communicate with the community, work with DPS Community Partner, DCAT, Website updates, Blogs, Facebook, new DPS logo and information packet.

Theme III Human Resources and Management – Work regarding new FMLA regulations, reorganization of the personnel department and functions.

Theme IV Management and Operations – District-wide Google calendars, multi-year budgets, new safety policies and work regarding enhanced lockdown in all schools, upgrades in technology infrastructure.

Dr. Dana spoke about the midyear accomplishments of School Councils included in the report and how they align with the strategic plan. School council work included work with data, culture, handbooks, technology 1-1 initiatives, preparing for PARCC testing, recycling, school websites, UDL, library commons and working on professional development with Landmark School.

2. FY16 Overview

DCAT Video Dr. Dana presented a video produced by DCAT about DPS Student Success and the use of technology. She thanked all of the participants who were involved in the production.

HRMS Technology Initiative Update – Jeff Liberman spoke about moving from the technology plan's vision and planning and implementing technology updates. He shared data with the committee regarding the increase in the use of Google Drive and Google apps for education.

Middle School Curriculum Director, Sarah Stone spoke about the use of Chromebooks in the classroom and their effect on the writing process – how teachers use them; how students engage in writing and the immediate feedback to students from teachers on the process. She stated that the 1-1 initiative for Chromebooks at HRMS will allow for the use of online textbooks, for student access both at school and at home.

Grade 8 Social Studies teacher, Amy Fessette, informed the committee on the use of Chromebooks in her classroom. She spoke about the improvements to student writing as a result of the use of Chromebooks and Google classroom.

Mr. Kay inquired about expanding the use of Chromebooks. Dr. Dana stated that the funding for the 1-1 initiative at the middle school would come from a town warrant article for 15-16. The high school's school council has been researching 1-1 initiatives and they would be presented in the 16-17 DPS budget. He also asked about teacher training – Mr. Liberman outlined the professional development done at HRMS with teachers and staff. Finally, Mr. Kay asked about security concerns in Google Cloud. Mr. Liberman noted that DPS has total control over the security settings for students and staff.

Mrs. Pawlak asked about the costs of using the Chromebooks – Dr. Dana advised that parents would be asked to purchase an insurance policy for \$28.00/year.

Mr. Crane spoke about the advances in technology at the middle school over the last nine years and was pleased to see how faculty is embracing the new technology.

3. FY16 Budget

Dr. Dana presented the proposed budget to the committee. She reviewed the annual budget process, how the budget was built based on reviews of programs and accounts and priorities, the identified needs of the FY16 budget and specifics about the budget proposal.

Mr. Crane spoke about the increase in athletic fees and rentals in the budget. Mr. Taverna explained that due to the new fields complex renovations, all fall games and practices will have to be at other facilities and this will cause increases in venue rental and bus costs.

Mr. Crane asked the changes in staffing outlined in the budget, specifically the proposed language based program. Dr. Tatem explained that the administrators were identifying students, researching locations and other logistics for the new program.

Mr. Kay asked Dr. Dana to clarify staffing needs and to explain certain job duties, which included the out-of-district coordinator and the planning room facilitators.

Mrs. Pawlak asked Dr. Dana to explain the process for developing the new language-based program. Dr. Dana stated that identifying the students who would need these services and said that the logistics were still being identified.

Dr. Dana explained the ELL program to the committee and outlined the staff required, based on student needs.

Mrs. Pawlak commended the administrators for their work tying the multi-year budget process with the 13-18 Strategic Plan.

Mr. Skarmeas inquired about the homeless transportation costs, which Mr. Taverna said was approximately \$303,000. Mr. Skarmeas spoke about the concerns that the state will not reimburse the district for those costs. He expressed concern about the \$1+ billion dollar deficit in the state's next fiscal year budget and how it will affect local cities and towns. Mr. Crane spoke in agreement and added that reimbursements have been much less than the costs incurred by the town.

Mr. Skarmeas spoke about the budget process – board of selectmen, FinCom and finally, town meeting- and the push back that the district has historically experienced with the budget for the schools. He also spoke about the management reserve amount will be used once contracts are settled.

Mr. Skarmeas invited audience members to address the committee regarding the FY16 budget proposal. Some Danvers residents and a teacher addressed the committee on the budget process and asked specific questions about line items in the proposed budget.

Dr. Dana noted that the town government meets to work on a final balanced budget. She stated that there may be some changes to the school budget and that she will keep the committee informed before their vote on the budget at the March 9th meeting.

II. CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Skarmeas called the Regular meeting to order at 8:35 p.m.

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

Mrs. Pawlak reminded the community of the DEEP Hall of Honor taking place on March 5th at the Danversport Yacht Club.

Mr. Kay advised the community now has access to meeting materials through the district's website.

Mr. Skarmeas invited the public to address the community, reminding audience members that there would be no discussion about the teacher contract negotiations and that the time limit for speaking is five minutes. Two Danvers residents addressed the committee.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Holten – Richmond Middle School 15-16 Program of Studies – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the HRMS 15-16 Program of Studies, second reading. As voted.

2. Bidding Requirements Policy Update – The Superintendent recommended the acceptance of the updated Bidding Requirements policy, second reading. As voted.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice – The Superintendent recommended the School Committee vote to not accept School Choice students for the 2015-2016 school year. As voted. Dr. Dana stated that due to lack of space, Danvers cannot accept school choice students.

2. Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities Civil Rights Policy update – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities Civil Rights Policy update, second reading. As voted.

3. Out of State Field Trip – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the out of state field trip request Danvers High School Ecology students (12 students) to travel to Central Amazonia, Brazil from April 15-April 22, 2016. As voted.

VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS

A - **Communications** – None

B. **Legislation** – None

C. **Subcommittee/Liaison Update**

DanversCARES– Mrs. Pawlak reminded the community about the presentation by Katie Greer, Internet Safety Expert scheduled for March 9th. She also spoke about a parent survey being launched on March 9th regarding alcohol and drug use. Finally she advised the committee about a Prom Safety booklet being created for distribution to high school students

SEPAC – Keri Smith-Holian reminded the community about the SEPAC Resource Fair being held on March 4th at HRMS.

VII. BUDGET

Mr. Taverna presented the January 2015 Monthly Budget report and invited questions from the committee.

VIII. PERSONNEL

Announcement of Resignations, Leaves of Absence and Appointments – Mrs. Ambrozavitch presented her memo dated February 2015 and asked the committee to contact her with questions.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, March 9, 2015 at 7 p.m. in the Francis Mills Communication Center at Danvers High School.

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Davarich, Clerk
Danvers School Committee