

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

June 8, 2015

Francis Mills Communication Center, E115, Danvers High School

School Committee Members Present: Jeffrey Kay
Connie Pawlak
Arthur Skarmeeas
David Thomson

Chair Eric Crane was not in attendance. Mr. Thomson, School Committee Secretary, acted as temporary chair and conducted the meeting.

VOTED: Domestic Violence Leave Policy – Mr. Skarmeeas moved to approve the Domestic Violence Leave policy for a first reading. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: K-12 Student /Parent Handbooks – Mr. Skarmeeas moved to approve the 2015-2016 K-12 Student/Parent Handbooks, first reading. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Fundraising request – Mr. Skarmeeas moved to approve the fundraising request of the DHS Class of 2017. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Out of state field trip request – Mr. Thomson moved to approve of a group of DHS students to travel to Greece (number of students to be determined) during February vacation, 2016 (the week of February 15, 2015). The Superintendent also recommends the approval of the HRMS All year art students (50 students) to travel to New York City, April 28 – 29, 2016. Ms. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Minutes - Mr. Kay moved to approve and release the regular meeting minutes from May 11, 2015. Mr. Kay moved to approve the minutes from the Executive Session meeting held on May 11, 2015 not to be released. Mr. Skarmeeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Skarmeeas moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:44 p.m. Mrs. Pawlak seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

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

Dr. Dana thanked Mrs. Ambrozavitch and faculty and staff for a successful graduation ceremony and congratulated the Class of 2015. She noted that \$274,000 was awarded in over 340 scholarships to graduating seniors and thanked the over 130 businesses and organizations for supporting the scholarship program. School committee thanked Mr. Strout for organizing the ceremonies and Mrs. Ambrozavitch for making the scholarship night a meaningful event.

Mr. Christopher Hopkins, President of DTA presented information on a bill for a moratorium on high-stakes testing and asked for the members' support. The School committee took this information under advisement for consideration at their August or September meeting. Mr. Skarmeeas asked for clarification on how many school committees in other districts are supporting the bill.

II. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. DEEP Certificates of Merit – Gayla Bartlett, DEEP President and Mark Strout, President of Deep presented Certificates of Merit to DPS retirees, DEEP volunteers, officers and support staff for their work and tenure. Committee members thanked the retiring teachers for their work and dedication to the students of Danvers.

2. DEEP Community Achievement Awards – Merchants Liquors, Kelly's Roast Beef, Gayla Bartlett, Diane Langlais former DEEP treasurer, Matthew Schroeder, former DEEP president, Glenn Bouchie, former DEEP Officer, Curt Alboth, former owner of Merchants Liquors and DEEP supporter, and Maria DiChiara, DEEP administrative assistant received DEEP Community Achievement Awards.

3. DEEP Teacher Grants – Grant checks totaling almost \$20,000 were awarded to the recipients for the 15-16 school year. Ms. Bartlett congratulated them and thanked them for taking the time to write the grants. Mrs. Pawlak asked for follow up on the projects that were funded by the grants.

4. 2015-2015 School Committee Student Representative introduction – Mrs. Ambrozavitch introduced Olivia Thompson as the 15-16 Student representative to the committee. Ms. Thompson introduced herself and spoke about her many activities at Danvers High School.

5. Danvers Public Schools FY15 Final Accomplishments – Dr. Dana highlighted some of the many accomplishments of the Danvers Public Schools for the 2014-2015 school year. She outlined the four themes of the strategic plan and spoke of accomplishments from each theme.

Theme I accomplishments included work on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), logic models, curriculum, standards based units, performance and benchmark assessments, meeting the needs of all learners, Skillful Teacher training, the use of technology (Google Drive, Google classroom), sharing curriculum work with students, Chromebooks, iPads, Library learning commons and online testing.

Theme II - Family and Community Engagement accomplishments included the Danvers Pride presentations at school committee meetings, open houses, engaging more parents in achievement, a special education feedback survey, websites, partnership with DCAT and the new DPS logo.

Theme III – Human Resource Management and Development accomplishments focused on new Personnel staff, policies and procedures and work with contract negotiations.

Theme IV – Management and Operations work included updating staff job descriptions, district-wide calendars, sharing mission and vision statements, safety policies and enhanced lockdown, food services improvements and work with Library commons, multi-year budgets and implementing infrastructure improvements in technology.

School Councils reported individual schools' final accomplishments – communication, positive culture, school-wide reads, updated websites and work with UDL.

Elementary Curriculum Director, Julie Posternack, addressed the committee regarding collection of data and data-driven curriculum decisions made based on the results. She described the local assessments created by the teachers and what they learn from these assessments, based on student performance. She outlined the process teachers use to identify student learning problems through assessments and changes needed in classroom instruction to address those problems.

Mrs. Ambrozavitch spoke about the district's goals for the AP program and the need to increase the number of teachers who are willing to teach the AP curriculum so that more students can benefit from the program. She noted that AP scores for DHS continue to rise on a yearly basis.

Mrs. Pawlak and Dr. Dana mentioned that the 15-16 school committee meetings could focus on Achievement (Theme I) presentations, in the same manner as the Danvers Pride presentations made by the individual schools.

Violetta Powers addressed Mr. Thomson's inquiry about the success of the school-wide book reading initiative at Riverside. Ms. Powers enthusiastically spoke about the success of the program and endorsed it for the upcoming school year.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Domestic Violence Policy – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the DPS Domestic Violence Policy for a first reading. As voted.
- B. K-12 Student /Parent Handbooks– The Superintendent recommended the approval of the proposed 2015 - 2016 Student /Parent Handbooks for a first reading. As voted. Dr. Dana and Mrs. Ambrozavitch outlined some of the policies that have changed in all three handbooks.
- C. Fundraising request – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the DHS Class of 2017 fundraiser from October 7 – 21, 2015. As voted.
- D. Out of state field trip requests– The Superintendent recommended the approval of a group of DHS students to travel to Greece (number of students to be determined) during February vacation, 2016 (the week of February 15, 2015). The Superintendent also recommended the approval of the HRMS All year art students (50 students) to travel to New York City, April 28 – 29, 2016. As voted.

VII. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A - **Communications** – Dr. Dana reviewed one item of communication in the packet.
- B. **Legislation** – none
- C. **Subcommittee/Liaison Update:**

DEEP – Mrs. Pawlak reminded the committee about the Wine tasting date and that DEEP membership renewals are being accepted.

DanversCARES – Mrs. Pawlak spoke about the DanversCARES annual meeting and outlined all the accomplishments of DanversCARES over the past year.

Dr. Dana also spoke about Highlands Elementary School winning a Community Service award from the Danvers Community Council for their work with the Danvers Food Pantry and other community service projects.

VIII. MINUTES – As voted

IX. BUDGET

Mr. Taverna presented the May 2015 Monthly Budget report and invited questions from the committee. He noted that the homeless transportation is at the forecasted \$325,000 amount.

X. PERSONNEL

Announcement of Resignations, Leaves of Absence and Appointments – Mrs. Ambrozavitch presented her memo dated May 2015 and asked the committee to contact her with questions. She thanked the School Committee members for their attendance at the DHS graduation ceremony.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, August 10, 2015 at 7 p.m. in the Francis Mills Communication Center at Danvers High School.

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Davarich, Clerk
Danvers School Committee