

DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
October 18, 2021

School Committee Members Present: Eric Crane, Chair
Arthur Skarmeas, Secretary
Alice Campbell
Robin Doherty
Jeffrey Kay

VOTED: MASC Resolutions - Mr. Skarmeas motioned to have Dr. Doherty, as the Committee Delegate, to vote favorably on the MASC Resolutions. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Consent Calendar- Mr. Skarmeas motioned to approve the Consent Calendar items as presented. Dr. Doherty seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Minutes – (The Secretary) moved to approve and release the minutes from the September 13, 2021 regular meeting and the September 17, 2021 special meeting. Dr. Doherty seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Skarmeas moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:09 p.m. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Regular Meeting Call to Order

Mr. Crane called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and the Danvers Public Schools Mission statement were recited. Mr. Crane inquired whether the meeting was being recorded by audience members and announced that the meeting was being broadcast on DCAT.

II. ITEMS OF INTEREST

- A. Dr. Dana announced that the SEPAC Resource Fair would be held on October 21st from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Holten Richmond Middle School and thanked SEPAC for organizing the event.
- B. Audience member Jim Morose spoke regarding his concerns that in today's times he may not be allowed to speak openly about difficult issues to the Committee. Mr. Crane ensured Mr. Morose that the Committee is always happy to hear from the community as long as people speak reasonably and appropriately.
- C. Audience member Mark Zuberick expressed his concerns over the DESE mask mandate and asked when the parent survey that was addressed at the previous meeting would take place. Mr. Crane answered that given the timeline and effectiveness of the survey, at this point it was decided to send the survey out at a later date.

III. INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

In Lil Montevercchi's absence, Mr. Federico shared that many clubs have started this week, activity fairs will be held for each grade level the following week, the "Why you matter" campaign continues and Kindness Week began today (October 18th) and will be ending Friday with whole school activities.

IV. COVID STATISTICS AND NEXT STEPS

Mr. Taverna explained the ongoing safety measures and highlighted the quarantine and test and stay programs. He stated that positive COVID numbers are decreasing and hopes the trend will continue, noting there were only 2 positive cases within the test and stay program. It was mentioned that DESE has updated the mask mandate to continue until November 1, 2021 when it will be revisited. Mr. Taverna said we continue to collect vaccination cards, as a voluntary act and they are treated in a confidential manner and shared Town and State vaccination rates as well as rates in the high and middle schools and for the staff.

V. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Academic Excellence Award - Dr. Dana and Mr. Federico presented Chase Kassiotis with the M.A.S.S. Academic Excellence Award. Dr. Dana said this award is given to students in the top 5% of their class and feels Chase represents the District's Core Values. Mr. Federico shared Chase's accomplishments throughout his scholastic career saying Chase is an accomplished member of the Jazz Band, participates in Cross Country and Track, serves the Community and is in 5 AP Courses. The Committee congratulated Chase and pictures were taken.
- B. Strategic Plan - Dr. Dana read the DPS Vision Statement and followed that with an explanation of the focus being placed on the first of three pillars - Coherent Curriculum Instruction & Assessment. Mrs. Wermers presented goals by level stating the District is looking to reestablish the Multi-Tier System of Support. She went over the MTSS that began in 2019-2020 and said prior to that the focus was on teacher development and using formative assessments for a data source. We are now at Student Achievement and External Assessment as a data source. Mrs. Wermers shared a presentation for student achievement showing the numbers of students participating in AP classes, PSAT, SAT and MCAS tests in the previous year for the high and middle schools. She continued to show the MCAS landscape for grades 3 and 8 noting last year's testing was modified using the sampling approach. She also explained that students who were remote had the opportunity to come in for testing or test remotely and that in the Spring of 2021 many students opted out of taking the MCAS. Mrs. Wermers then spoke about grade 2 reading data. She moved on to reasons to reestablish MTSS as being fostering a sense of belonging and partnership among students and families, continuously monitoring students' understanding and ensuring strong grade-appropriate instruction with just-in-time scaffolds when they are needed. She showed data collection samples of formative assessments and went over the next steps. Examples of criteria for "Portrait of a Graduate" were listed as being Responsibility, Global Citizen and Caring/Empathy. Dr. Dana spoke on flexibility with next steps and timeline as working with Transcend we need to be aware of their availability. She stated her want to build on community partnership and receive their input. Curriculum Directors Julie Posternack, Ellyn Feerick and Peter DiMauro spoke on and answered questions, sharing their enthusiasm with the Committee.
- C. Review of the October 1, 2021 student enrollment report - Dr. Dana presented the October 1

Enrollment Report stating we have 3331 students enrolled noting smaller kindergarten and grade 9 classes while grade 1 numbers are larger this year. Discussion took place on enrollment numbers and ways to promote Danvers High School.

- D. Facilities Update - Mr. Taverna showed pictures of the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Smith Elementary School. He thanked Representative Kerans and Senator Lovely for their support.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to address at this meeting.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. MASC Resolutions- The School Committee moved to have Dr. Doherty vote favorably on the resolutions. As voted
- B. Superintendent Evaluation Process/Professional Practice Goal - Dr. Dana said that the State has changed the evaluation requirement to be every other and will share the link with the Committee.
Dr. Dana explained her Professional Practice Goal for 2021-2022 saying by June 2022, she will demonstrate courageous caring in leadership so expectations for adults align with the District's core values. She plans to communicate the District's 3 priorities, interrupt moments of bias, use the words "impact on students" - listen, ask questions and provide resources for success. This will show that all students are valued and have the opportunity for success. Student safety is a priority and adult actions will focus on that.

VII. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Consent Agenda - motion to approve fundraising requests, homeschool requests, fundraising requests, FY21 Final Budget Report, 2021-2022 Budget Transfer Report, September 2021 Budget Report/donations and personnel memo. As voted
- B. Minutes - (The Secretary) moves to approve and release the minutes from the September 13, 2021 regular meeting. As voted
- C. Communications
NEC - Dr. Dana shared the audit review would start tomorrow (October 19th) and will continue through next week.

Legislation – Mr. Crane said Representative Kerans and Senator Lovely will attend the November 8, 2021 meeting, The Educator Diversity bill came in for additional funding and ARP funds may be available.

Subcommittee/Liaison Update - Mr. Crane said the Subcommittee/Liaison chart would remain on the agenda as a point of reference.

Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee - Dr. Doherty said they reviewed the multi-tier system, tracking student performance and noting the teachers are doing awesome things. The Committee reviewed the strategic plan and shared October 29th to be their next

meeting and October 22nd will be the next Equity Subcommittee meeting.

Policy - Mr. Skarmas reported no subcommittee meetings took place

DEEP – Mr. Skarmas noted the DEEP teacher’s grant application acceptance will close on October 22nd,. He asked that the Community save the date of December 4th for the tree lighting, DECA will host a job fair on December 1st and the Spring will see the annual Food & Wine tasting. The next DEEP meeting will be held on November 7th.

DanversCARES – Mr. Kay shared that their next meeting will be held on November 1st and touched base on the Atlas/Athena program, using the community block for equity training and said the “Every Day Matters” program launched October 13th at the Beverly YMCA.

SEPAC - Dr. Doherty shared that SEPAC is looking for parent liaisons for each school.

DHRIC - Mr. Crane said DHRIC’s main focus this meeting was on MLK Day events and they are discussing having student liaisons.

The next meeting will be held on November 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m in the Francis Mills Center, room E105 at DHS..

Respectfully submitted,
Arthur Skarmas, Secretary
Danvers School Committee