

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

March 14, 2022

School Committee Members Present:

Eric Crane, Chair
Arthur Skarmeeas, Secretary
Alice Campbell
Robin Doherty
Jeffrey Kay

- VOTED:** Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice – The Acting Co-Superintendent recommended the School Committee vote not to accept School Choice students for the upcoming 2022-2023 school year. Mr. Skarmeeas moved to approve the recommendation. Dr. Doherty seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Acting Co-Superintendents' Extended Contracts - Mr. Skarmeeas motioned to amend the Acting Co-Superintendent's contracts, extending it for the period of April 12, 2022 through May 31, 2022. Dr. Doherty seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Student Opportunity Act - The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the approval of the Student Opportunity Act as presented. - Mr. Skarmeeas motioned to approve. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Policy - The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the approval of revised policy manual of Section D as per MASC revised model policy for a first reading. - Mr. Skarmeeas motioned to approve. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Policy - The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the approval of review of Danvers School Lunch charging procedure for a first reading. - Mr. Skarmeeas motioned to approve. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** 2022-2023 School Calendar/Early Release Days –The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the approval of the 2022-2023 school calendar/early release days for a first reading. - Mr. Skarmeeas motioned to approve. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Special Education Stabilization Fund - The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the approval of the establishment of the special education stabilization fund. Mr. Skarmeeas motioned to approve. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Final Adoption of FY23 Budget– The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the final adoption of the FY23 Budget. Mr. Skarmeeas moved to approve. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Consent Calendar- Mr. Skarmeeas motioned to approve the Consent Calendar items as presented. Mrs. Campbell seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Minutes – (The Secretary) moved to approve and release the minutes from the February 14, 2022 regular meeting and approve and not release the minutes from the February 14, 2022 Executive Session. Mrs. Campbell seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Skarmear moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:09 p.m.
Dr. Doherty seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Regular Meeting Call to Order

Mr. Crane called the meeting to order at 7:30 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

SEPAC Co-Chair, Amanda Belotte, spoke on SEPAC's objective and gave its mission statement. She explained that the organization helps families understand and navigate the IEP and Special Education process. Ms. Belotte shared the Annual Basic Rights Night, hosted by the Federation of Special Needs will be held on April 6, 2022 via Zoom and noted her contact information and facebook page. The Committee thanked SEPAC for their important work.

III. INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

There were no student representative updates this meeting.

IV. COVID STATISTICS AND NEXT STEPS

Mr. Taverna reviewed the past weeks of cases, noting the lower positivity rate throughout the schools and Town. He said the COVID update would be transitioning out of the agenda but will continue to be updated on the dashboard on the danverspublicschools.org website. He thanked the school community for their support during this trying time.

V. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Safe and Supportive Schools Update from January Presentation - Mrs. Wermers gave a brief summary of what Safe and Supportive Schools look like. She shared a presentation that showed strategies focusing on "Everyone Belongs". The importance of building relationships between both students and teachers was discussed as well as the SEL work that is being done. Examples of work with students throughout the District was shown. As part of the presentation the High School and Highlands Elementary School presented.

- I. Danvers Pride Presentation - Highlands - Mr. John Obremski introduced teachers representing grades 3-5 sharing his respect for their commitment to the school and students. Pictures of classrooms, field day and daily experiences were shared showing the school culture and climate. Mr. Obremski spoke on creating a "Post COVID" Expectations Committee as well as bringing back the school wide meetings. Students in grade 3, Emmanuel (Manny) DeLeon Emmaleigh Stretton, shared their work with a book titled "Have you filled the bucket?" which details things to do that would "fill your bucket" such as saying nice things to others, voting a MVP, most viable person, each week, sharing different parts of their lives, pictures and interests with one another. Grade 4 students, Noah Prien, Summer Horgan and Penelope Tavilla, presented their work with SEL and shared how they are learning to appreciate others feelings and differences. They have been discussing and doing activities regarding family history, equality and racism and say they now feel comfortable and safe

having such discussions. Grade 5 students Marie Jatta and Ella Gasinowski, told how they start their day with SEL, choosing books such as “No voice is too small”. They shared games that they play which can help them to get through a difficult day and face challenges they may have. The Committee gave kudos to the students noting there is still work to continue.

- II. Danvers Pride Presentation - DHS Community Block Leaders - Mr. Alex Grover explained that in Community Block students are learning how to speak honestly and respectfully to each other while building relationships, working on their social skills, communicating effectively with others and working on post high school skills. Grade 12 students Emily and Lucy spoke on mentoring younger students and going into classrooms and sharing lessons. They said they are learning leadership skills, public speaking skills and are now able to approach difficult conversations with confidence and in a calm, non-biased way. The students said they are now having conversations with other students they would have never imagined speaking with before this class. The Committee gave positive feedback and had questions answered.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTE ON SCHOOL CHOICE

Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice – The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the School Committee vote not to accept School Choice students for the 2022-2023 school year. For clarification, Mrs. Campbell explained this would have Danvers Public Schools opt out of having students from other districts/towns attend. As voted

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion and potential vote, if necessary, for changes to the Administrative Team based on personnel changes - Mr. Crane spoke on the Administrative Team structure sharing the need for a Human Resources Manager upon Mr. Taverna’s resignation. The Committee thanked Mr. Taverna for his years of service and support. It was also discussed to extend the Acting Co-Superintendents contract through May 31, 2022. As voted
- B. Student Opportunity Act - Mr. Taverna noted the Student Opportunity Act presentation was shown as part of the final budget slide. He mentioned the increase in funding for Chp. 70 and said that although the enrollment has declined the additional funds will be used to increase the staffing FTEs to accommodate the students with higher needs. As voted
- C. Policy - The Acting Co-Superintendents recommend the approval of the revised policy manual of Section D as per MASC for a first reading. Mr. Taverna explained the changes that are proposed by the MASC. As voted
- D. Policy - The Acting Co-Superintendents recommend the approval of review of Danvers School Lunch charging procedure for a first reading. Outlines were given for a better quality lunch and the Governor's executive order. As voted
- E. 2022-2023 School Calendar/Early Release Days –The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the approval of the 2022-2023 school calendar/early release days for a first reading. As voted

- F. Special Education Stabilization Fund - The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the approval of the establishment of the special education reserve fund. Mr. Taverna gave a brief summary reiterating the explanation from the previous meeting. As voted

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Final Adoption of FY23 Budget - The Acting Co-Superintendents recommended the adoption of the FY23 Budget. - Mr. Taverna gave a summary of changes made to the budget which included the Student Stabilization Fund and Opportunity Act. Mrs. Campbell said she is waiting to see how this healthy budget helps the students to succeed. As voted

IX. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Consent Agenda - motion to approve fundraising requests, homeschool requests and field trip requests as presented. As voted
- B. Minutes - (The Secretary) moved to approve and release the minutes from the February 14, 2022 regular meeting and approve and not release the minutes from the February 14, 2022 Executive Session. As voted

C. Communications

NEC - Mr. Taverna said the NEC budget is in process with the second reading taking place in April.

Legislation – Mr. Crane shared Senator Lovely would be attending the April meeting.

Subcommittee/Liaison Update - Subcommittee/Liaison chart remains on the agenda as a point of reference.

Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee - Mrs. Wermers said the Curriculum Subcommittee will be meeting virtually on April 1, 2022.

Equity - Mrs. Wermers said the Equity subcommittee will be meeting virtually on March 23, 2022.

Policy - Mr. Taverna commented that policy was covered earlier in this meeting.

DEEP – Mr. Skarmeas announced the next meeting would take place on the following Wednesday at 8:00 am at the Brookline Bank.

DanversCARES – Mr. Kay said covered at the last meeting were the topics of Light the Night Purple, Behavioral Health Family Resource Center and leadership updates.

SEPAC - Mr. Crane said this was covered earlier in the meeting.

DHRIC - Mr. Crane mentioned Spring planning and the possibility of presenting to the Selectboard, asking that they declare racism a public health crisis in Danvers.

X. BUDGET and DONATIONS

Mr. Taverna shared the budget report for February 2022.

XI. PERSONNEL

Announcement of Resignations, Leaves of Absence and Appointments – Mr. Taverna presented his memo dated February 2022 sharing personnel changes.

The next meeting will be held on April 11, 2022 at 7:00 p.m in Room E105 at Danvers High School.

Respectfully submitted,
Arthur Skarmas, Secretary
Danvers School Committee