

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

March 11, 2024

School Committee Members Present:

Dr. Robin Doherty, Chairperson
Allic Campbell, Secretary
Eric Crane
Joshua Kepnes
Gabe Lopes

VOTED: DHS Program of Studies: Mr. Crane motioned to approve the High School Program of Studies for a second reading. Mr. Lopes seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: 2024-2025 School Calendar- Mr. Crane motioned to approve the 2024-2025 School Calendar for a first reading. Mr. Lopes seconded the motion. The vote was 4 - 1.

VOTED: Minutes: Mrs. Campbell moved to approve and release the minutes from the January 22 and February 12, 2024 regular meetings and approve but not release the minutes from the February 9, 2024 Executive Session. Mr. Crane seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Fundraising & Homeschool: Mrs. Campbell moved to approve the fundraising and homeschool request. Mr. Crane seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Adjournment – Mrs. Campbell moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:02 p.m. Mr. Kepnes seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Regular Meeting Call to Order

Dr. Doherty called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and the Danvers Public Schools Mission statement were recited. Dr. Doherty inquired whether the meeting was being recorded by audience members and announced that the meeting was being broadcast on DCAT.

II. ITEMS OF INTEREST

Public: Mary Beth Verry spoke on behalf of DEEP and their upcoming fundraiser. It is the largest fundraiser of the year. DEEP not only gives back to faculty through grants but it grants scholarships to students who otherwise would not be able to fully afford a trip to Nationals for DECA.

Several community members spoke to the Committee on comments made at the last meeting regarding some of the content students are reading that may be too dark and difficult for the grade level. Another parent who did not identify herself spoke to the healthy race relationships children attain through reading. Dr. Doherty spoke to the point she was trying to make was to make sure the teachers had the proper training for the content being read.

Keith Stefanek spoke to the Committee about his concerns with regard to eliminating the Public Speaking/Drama class from the middle school. Dr. Doherty advised that there would be a curriculum update at the March 25, 2024 meeting.

School Committee: Mr. Lopes spoke of receiving emails from the community regarding the content in the readings. He advised he took the time to read the books himself before answering any questions. Mr. Lopes stated he can relate to what the public is saying and he appreciates Dr. Doherty clarifying

III. INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Julia updated the Committee on the events that have occurred over the past few weeks. DECA participated in the state competition and 38 students qualified for Nationals, Boy's track had a 4 X 1 mile relay team recently compete in the Nationals held in Boston, Act's performance has moved into the semi-finals and as March is Women's History month, each morning during announcements students have been highlighting a woman who has made a difference in history.

IV. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Great Oak & HRMS Pride: Principal O'Leary spoke on behalf of Great Oak School with student Abbey Lanphere. Highlighted was the Dragon Den. This is an activity where older students are paired with younger students with whom they may never have interacted with. Not only are students engaged in learning, they are performing team building skills. Principal Colantuoni was present with 8th grade student Kyle Hampey who spoke about his involvement with the Project 351 non-profit. The experience has been enlightening and has enabled him to give back. Mr. Colantuoni also introduced 8th grade student Jefferson Seymour who helps with the monthly Hawkes News. Jefferson spoke to the positive start and continuance the school has had to date. Many events have been brought back (field trips and team building events) which has had a positive impact on the climate of the school.
- B. SEPAC UPDATE: Jen Corsino was present to update the Committee on initiatives that have been put into place thus far. There is a treasure hunt event occurring soon at the Peabody Institute Library that all are welcome to attend. They would love to see students of the community participate. They have board positions that are open if anyone is interested. A question was asked if your student needed to be a special education student in order to be on the Board - the answer is your child would need to be on a 504 or IEP. Dr. Doherty asked if other than the budget if there was anything the Committee could do to help support them. Jen responded that it would help with educating the community about SEPAC. Mr. Crane thanked them for all they do and Mr. Kepnes added their passion for the students.
- C. Updates - Great Oak Principal & HRMS Assistant Principal: Mr. Bauer updated the Committee that first round interviews have been conducted for the Great Oak Principal position with second round and forums scheduled with the finalists. As far as the HRMS Assistant Principal, the job has been posted and the committee chosen. Interviews will begin shortly.
- D. Superintendent Evaluation Process: Mr. Bauer presented an overview of the timeline process. The Superintendent's evaluation is the only evaluation that is public. Mr. Bauer is putting together all of his informed information and will be sharing it with the Committee soon. Mr. Crane explained that although he has been through the process before, it is not an easy one. Many things that are accomplished are behind the scenes and not publicly seen.
- E. Student Services Director Search Update: Mr. Bauer advised that the job had been posted, correspondence has gone out seeking any interested party to join the screening committee. Mary Wermers will be the Chair of the committee. The timeline is a tight one but the district wants to move quickly.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. The Superintendent recommends the approval of the High School Program of Studies for a second reading. Mr. Crane motioned to approve the High School Program of Studies for a second reading. Mr. Lopes seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. The Superintendent recommends the approval of the 2024-2025 School Calendar for a first reading. Mr. Crane motioned to approve the 2024-2025 School Calendar for a first reading. Mr. Lopes seconded the motion. Discussion: As previously stated, Mr. Lopes knows that the start of school is linked with the DTA contract, however, he expressed concern from parents regarding the first three days of school being early release days. Once the calendar is voted on, is there any room for adjustment? The vote was 4 - 1.

VII. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Minutes - Mrs. Campbell moved to approve and release the minutes from the January 22 and February 12, 2024 regular meetings and approve but not release the minutes from the February 9, 2024 Executive Session. Mr. Crane seconded. As voted
- B. Fundraising & Homeschool Approvals: Mrs. Campbell moved to approve the fundraising and homeschool request. Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- C. Legislation - Senator Lovely and Representative Kearnes to attend April 8th meeting
- E. Subcommittee/Liaison Update -
Curriculum & Assessment - No update
Policy - No update
DEEP - Previously Updated
DanversCARES - Working on Health & Safety Guide. Date for Lite the Nite Purple set.
SEPAC - Previously Updated.
DHRIC - Mr. Lopes spoke on the Black Excellence Celebration event that was held in February at senior center. Mr. Bauer spoke on the Nexx Gen groups event held at the Peabody Institute Library.

The next meeting will be held on March 25, 2024 at 6:30 p.m Virtual

Respectfully submitted,
Mrs. Alice Campbell, Secretary
Danvers School Committee