

**APPROVED**

1-22-24

**DENNIS-YARMOUTH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Minutes of a School Committee Meeting**

Monday, January 8, 2024

A Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School Committee meeting was held on Monday, January 8, 2024, at the Dennis-Yarmouth Intermediate/Middle School in South Yarmouth, Massachusetts.

Members Present: Jeni Landers, Chairperson; Jennifer Rose, Vice Chairperson; Marilyn Bemis, Secretary; Tomas Tolentino, Treasurer; Joseph Tierney.

Members not Present: Phillip Morris; Joe Glynn.

Others Present: Dr. Marc Smith, Superintendent of Schools; David Flynn, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Maria Lopes, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and Instruction; Eileen Whalen, Recording Secretary to the School Committee; Michael Bovino, Principal, Dennis-Yarmouth Middle School; Michelle Dunn, DYEA; James Hardy, Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

At 6:03 p.m., Jeni Landers, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

**Reports**

FY2025 Initial Budget Presentation

Superintendent Marc Smith

Assistant Superintendent David Flynn

Superintendent Smith began the initial budget presentation by reviewing the information that was included in the packet; the overall goal which is maintaining the same level of educational service while looking closely at programs for efficiencies. He said that there are factors influencing the FY25 Budget including staff-related contractual obligations, the ending of ESSER funds, and upward inflationary pressure on most fixed costs over the past two years. He then reviewed the budget timelines and dates.

Dave Flynn then reviewed the budget proposal timeline including the Governor's proposed budget which will be released by January 24<sup>th</sup>. He then reviewed revenues and assessments; student enrollment, which he noted has been rising since COVID; and high needs students. He explained the four criteria for a student to be considered high-needs which are economically disadvantaged, ELL, SpEd; and FLNE (First Language Not English). Because the district has a fairly high needs population this may result in more state funding. He then reviewed college plans; staffing levels; foundation enrollment; state aid update; budget priorities; debt service; and revenue variables.

Dr. Smith then reviewed next steps including class size normalization across the district; student service caseload normalized across the district and region; analyzing the effectiveness of current investments against research; special program review to counter escalating out-of-district costs; and level funding of all non-contractual obligations. A question and answer session followed. Ms. Rose asked about home schooled students; they are not included in foundation enrollment.

Ms. Bemis asked about the Fair Share amendment; Dave Flynn has not seen anything on this. Chair Landers asked if there have been conversations with the two towns; Dr. Smith said meetings are scheduled with both towns. Ms. Landers said that the 9.35 increase is without adding anything; she said this is not going to be well received. Mr. Flynn said that the contractual increases associated with the longer school day were funded by ESSER funds. This will now have to be paid by the district. Ms. Landers said that the budget should align with our priorities and quality instruction is a priority. Dr. Smith said the goal is to maintain services; also, we need to be good stewards of the taxpayer's dollar. Chair Landers noted that the foundation enrollment has steadily decreased while the staff has increased; she feels these figures need to be in alignment. Mr. Tierney would like to know what the ESSER funds were used for.

### **School Committee Business**

#### **Consent Agenda**

On a motion by Tomas Tolentino, seconded by Joseph Tierney, and carried unanimously 5-0 it was

VOTED: To approve the following items as presented in the Consent Agenda:

**Donation:** Move to accept a donation of fifteen \$100 Stop & Shop gift cards to the Ezra H. Baker Innovation School from the Andrea Holden Foundation as per Mr. Depin's December 12, 2023 memo.

**Minutes:** 12-18-23

#### **Bills, Requisitions and Payroll**

The warrants were signed by the committee.

#### **Calendars**

The upcoming calendars were reviewed.

#### **Public Comment**

Mike Bovino, Principal of the Dennis-Yarmouth Middle School, gave an update on field trips that were previously approved by the committee. The Quebec trip has been cancelled due to low enrollment; the Virginia trip has 30 families signed up and they are hoping for 40 to make it work; and the Greece/Rome trip currently has 8 students interested. Chair Landers inquired as to why the low numbers on the Greece/Rome trip; Mr. Bovino has asked Ms. Christopher to look into this to see if it is the cost or the choice of competing field trips.

Michelle Dunn spoke about the Student Opportunity Act, the level service budget, and unsustainable cuts. She said the district has not gone to the towns in years and says that the taxes in Dennis and Yarmouth are among the lowest in the state.

### **Open the Workshop**

#### **Massachusetts Association of School Committees Workshop**

**James Hardy, Field Director**



### School Committee's Responsibilities Regarding Superintendent Evaluation

Dr. Smith introduced Jim Hardy, Field Director from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. Mr. Hardy will be giving a workshop on the School Committee's responsibilities regarding superintendent evaluation.

Mr. Hardy gave a PowerPoint presentation; hard copies of which were distributed at the meeting. District goals should be aligned with superintendent goals. The superintendent evaluation is done in public. There are required elements. An annual evaluation is required the first three years. A mid-cycle review is not formal. He described goal areas and standards; there should be three or four goals and four standards. He then described the rubric for superintendent evaluation. The DESE has a rating system for the chair of the school committee to use. The Committee is not able to directly ask questions to staff about the superintendent but the superintendent could survey the staff.

Mr. Hardy said there should be a timeline; the school committee creates the cycle. He said that they are allowed to weigh the standards; some could even count as double. The Committee should be completing the evaluation all year; the superintendent should bring to the attention of the committee any goals his current work is supporting. Individual evaluations are done separately by each committee member and turned in to the chair who is responsible for the final document. Once it is shared it becomes a public document. Mr. Hardy said it is a majority vote, not an average score. He also noted that individual comments can be shared with the superintendent at the discretion of the chair. Mr. Tierney described the long process the committee formerly used in evaluating the superintendent; Mr. Hardy said they should be evaluating the superintendent throughout the year and that they should be writing their evaluations at home using the online form.

Chair Landers asked about the method of choosing indicators. She also asked about any potential pitfalls in evaluating a first year superintendent. Mr. Hardy said that the committee may not articulate what they are looking for; he advised that they be flexible; it is a learning experience for everyone; they want to become an efficient team. If the committee is looking for more information they should ask for it from the superintendent. He also said that there are good resources on both the DESE and MASC websites. He also suggested planning the year out so that you won't be playing catch-up.

On behalf of the Committee, Chair Landers thanked Mr. Hardy for his presentation.

### **Items Distributed at the Meeting**

Evaluating the Superintendent

Indicator Rubric for Superintendent Evaluation

### **Adjournment**

At 7:42 p.m., on a motion by Tomas Tolentino, seconded by Joseph Tierney, and carried unanimously 5-0; it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

Minutes recorded and prepared by,

Eileen M. Whalen

Eileen M. Whalen, Assistant Secretary