

RSU 56 Board of Directors Minutes
Board Meeting Amended Agenda- April 11, 2023- 6:30 pm
(This meeting will be held at Dirigo High School.
The board meeting will also be available via zoom and live streamed on YouTube.)

School Board Members Present: Barbara Chow, Tim Kelly, Elizabeth Kelly, Don Whittemore, Bruce Ross, Deanna Dolloff, Carl Lueders, Natalie Sneller, Marianne Young (6:33)

School Board Members Absent: Angela Cushman, Larry Whittington, Peru (Vacancy), Student Rep Dianna Cayer

Staff Attending: Mary Dailey, Shawn Murphy, Pam Doyen, Brian Keene, Jason Long, Cathy Arsenault, Kenny Robbins, Heidi Connelly, Brad Conant, Olaf Johnson, Nick Karavas, Heidi Broomhall, Lisa Sanborn, Brandy Bordeau, Gena Cloutier, Brianne Johnston, Andrea Palmer, Beth Edwards, Jay Nicholson, Michele/Chris Araujo, Rebecca Fletcher

Also Attending: Kathleen Szotek, Marianne Hutchinson, Jenn Bell, Sarah Bragdon, some Speech & Debate students.

CALL TO ORDER AND THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Barbara Chow, Board Chair, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30pm. Audience introductions were made. Everyone on zoom and Youtube were welcomed.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Motion to add the following:

VI New Business #5, #6, and #8; VII Supt. Report-New Hires

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

1. Minutes of the March 28, 2023 Board Meeting

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

N. Sneller- Not Voting

Motion Carried

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

No new communications

NEW BUSINESS

1. Consideration of an out of state trip for Speech and Debate (Mr. Conant and team)
This year the Dirigo Speech and Debate Team competed for placements at the NCFL Grand National Tournament with all members of the team successfully qualifying. Two members of the team are able to go, so the team requests permission to attend.

Details:

- a. The NCFL national tournament (<https://www.ncflnationals.org/>) will be held on May 27-28, 2023 in Louisville, KY. We expect to arrive for the tournament on the 26th and depart on the 28th.
- b. We plan to travel by minivan from Dirigo High School, departing at 8am on May 24th and return on Tuesday May 30th.
- c. We will use an RSU 56 vehicle and only RSU 56 employees will operate it.
- d. As of this writing, we have the two competitors, Junbei Chen ('23) qualified in speech, and Jocelynn Ridley ('24) qualified in debate, going along.
- e. As of this writing, we have 3 adults going along; Bradley Conant, coach and driver; Olaf Johnson, debate judge and coach trainee; and Cassie Quinn, speech judge and chaperone.
- f. We will need 3 hotel rooms per night and will travel approximately 2500 miles round trip.
- g. At present our estimated cost is \$3577.57 before meals.
- h. We have a school budget of \$3300 and a team account containing \$1575.66
- i. We can take this trip with no additional fundraising, provide some meals and ask that individuals pay for some meals on their own. No meals provided is our past practice.
- j. If all attend- 2 teachers and 2 students- each will miss 4 days of instruction.

Obviously, additional questions can be answered but this is the outline we have at this time.

Motion: T. Kelly

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

2. Consideration of an overnight trip to Bryant Pond (Charlie Swan)

Charlie Swan wrote a letter to the school board:

Wrote to seek approval for our grade 5 students to again attend a four day three night trip to UMaine Extension at Bryant Pond. He wrote he was NOT requesting any financial assistance for this opportunity other than transportation to and from the site which has been budgeted for. Below are the details for this trip:

WHO? 50 Grade 5 students; 10 Staff & Parent Volunteers

WHEN? Depart DES on Tuesday, May 30 at 8:30 am; Return from Bryant Pond on Friday, June 2 at 1pm; We may need a daily van run to support students with special needs.

WHERE? UMaine Extension at Bryant Pond; 17 Conservation School Road, Bryant Pond, ME 04219

WHAT? Hunter Safety Training (Bow or Rifle); Team Building Activities; Survival Training; Challenge Courses (High ropes & Zip Line); Canoeing; Fishing; Lots of other outdoor activities

WHY? The purpose and goal of this trip is to:

Allow our grade 5 students to bond and continue to build important connections with peers as they begin to transition to middle school.

Provide opportunities for students to be stretched out of their comfort zone with various activities.

Provide students with outdoor skills that are important to many of our families living in Western Maine.

Allow our students to have FUN!

COST? Because we participate in the Hunter Safety Program we have a significant reduced cost for our school.; Total cost we will pay: \$1,768.00; Part of this will come from our budgeted Field Trip Line and part from funds previously raised with our PTO.

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

3. Budget overview at 2.5% and 2.83% (Pam Doyen/ Mary Dailey)

Key considerations:

1. What's best for our students?
2. How do we support our current employees?
3. How do we respond to community concerns?

ED279 State Subsidy

1. Overall ~~down \$99,764.13~~

Up \$60,779.88

Key Points:

MIL rate down to 6.97 (from 7.10)

Valuations up in all four towns

State share down from 68.53 to 67.64

Disadvantaged substantially down (From .6335 to .4755)

Good News!

Insurance came in at 0%

Uncontrollable Increases

Electricity \$29,216; Gas/Diesel \$28,775; Heating Oil \$9,545; Health Insurance \$0; Contractual Wages \$181,649; Other Benefits \$70,348

Total: \$319,533 (2.4% budget to budget inc)

FY 23 to FY24 Budget with no changes to positions (maintain what we have)

Would be a total of **\$13,518,457** reflecting an increase of \$303,317 (**2.3%** FY budget to FY 24 budget)

Impact to towns:

Town	Percentage Increase
Canton	12.057%
Carthage	0.420%
Dixfield	2.998%
Peru	2.947%

At 2.3% increase: What's in? What's out?

Included in budget:

Current employees

Current co-and extra-curricular

Current programs*

Not in budget:

Site improvements

New Bus (\$48,000)

JMG portion (\$13,500)*

Civil Rights Stipend at DES (\$1,300)

*We would lose JMG without the additional \$13,500 going into the budget

Total budget if the add-ons are included:

An additional \$62,800

Would include:

New Bus at \$48,000

Resulting in an additional 0.47%

JMG portion at \$13,500

Increase for a total of \$13,581,257

Civil Rights Stipend at DES at \$1,300

a 2.77% budget to budget increase.

FY23 to FY 24 Budget with add ons: \$13,581, 257

2.77% Increase

Impact to towns:

Town	Percentage Increase
Canton	13.156%
Carthage	1.332%
Dixfield	4.238%
Peru	4.033%

Reductions to get to 2.5% budget to budget increase:

N/A (without add ons)

\$35,738 (with add-ons)

Nutrition \$12,000

DHS Boys and Girls Soccer \$18,800

Course Reimbursement \$4,938

Estimated Town Assessment Sheets for FY 24 at 2.5% budget to budget increase:

Town	Percentage Increase
Canton	12.531%
Carthage	0.813%
Dixfield	3.532%
Peru	3.415%

Estimated tax increase on a home valued at \$100,000 for the proposed 2023-24 school budget-calculated by each town office, as requested

	2.5%	2.83%
Canton	\$132.00	\$140.00
Carthage	\$9.47	\$16.86
Dixfield	\$22.03	\$25.12
Peru	*	*

*Peru responded that “since the year to year differences do not amount to \$100,000 (a mil), taxes would not increase based solely on the figures provided by the school. This answer is based on the RSU 56 appropriation amounts provided in relation to Peru’s 2022 figures since the town does not have access to any actual 2023 figures at this time.”

Percentage increases and impacts on towns:

	2.77%	2.5%	2.3%
Canton	13.156%	12.531%	12.057%
Carthage	1.332%	0.813%	0.420%
Dixfield	4.238%	3.532%	2.998%
Peru	4.033%	3.415%	2.947%

Vote on Bus Garage

Currently have \$500,00 in Capital Reserve.
Will be asking for an additional \$600,00 +/-
to be added for a total of around \$1.1 million.

No additional cost to the FY24 budget as this would be completed with Balance Forward funds through the Capital Reserve Account.

Vote on Revolving Renovations Grant: DHS Bathrooms

Revolving Renovation Grant of up to \$214,750.
Of the \$214,750, 68.53% (\$147,168) would be forgiven while the remaining 31.47% (\$67,582, at 0% interest over five years) would need to be paid by RSU 56.

No additional cost to the FY24 budget as the first payment would be required in the FY 25 budget year.

Adult Ed (Sits Outside the RSU 56 Budget)

FY24 Budget for Adult Ed is \$429,880.91

The portion for Canton, Carthage, Dixfield and Perus is \$111,700.18.
Increase of \$29,170.88 to our four towns.

FY 24 Budget Timeline

April 11, 2023- Board to vote on Budget
April 25, 2023
May 9, 2023- Board to Sign Warrants
May 23, 2023- Budget Hearing/Validation Meeting
June 13, 2023- Budget Referendum Vote in all four towns

4. Vote on the proposed 2023-24 Budget

B. Chow- Asked how many in Adult Ed this year. Pam was not sure of that number. Mary found the number to be 91 for RSU 56. B. Chow also asked about the increase in amount for Adult Ed. B. Ross- replied that there was a new director coming on and some inherent costs were the increase.

Discussion followed regarding the percentages and cuts.

N. Sneller asked what the projection was for participation in soccer this coming year.

N. Karavas replied that with the 8th graders coming up they are predicted to have 10 girls and 4 boys participating in 23-24. N. Sneller- so there wouldn't be enough to field teams? N. Karavas - able to go to an 8 person soccer for both girls & boys as opposed to the traditional 11 person soccer but the numbers are still projected to be low. P. Doyen - wanted to be clear that we have not asked if other students would be interested in playing this year but it was clear that they were not interested in having a combined team with another district. We don't know that we have a definite number of only 4 boys that want to play...that is what we had that played at the middle school & high school. B. Chow asked if we kept it in and found there were not enough to play what is the latest we can drop? N. Karavas replied that the latest he is able to say if we would

have an 8 person or 11 person team or any at all is August 15th.

B. Ross- asked if taking out the money for nutrition would there be anything that is needed for equipment or things? G. Cloutier replied the nutrition dept would be ok. There is nothing that is needed at this time. B. Chow- Asked Kenny or Bruce regarding the new bus. She had gotten some comments about the bus being a want not a need. How do they feel about that? Kenny responded that we are running a bus that is 2006, 2008, & 2009. B. Ross- anytime we are able to get a new bus and retire an old one it is beneficial to us. There was some discussion on the bus and transporting students. Some felt it was important to not get into not getting new buses when the state allows us to. There was a question on how full the buses are. Kenny said the buses are full. There was then discussion about what percentage each board member felt comfortable with for the taxpayers and the towns. Pam always wanted to be clear that if funds became available from somewhere she would love to put soccer back in the budget and not take it out. She wanted to be clear that these were hard cuts. D. Whittemore knows that these cuts didn't come easy. Thank everyone who has worked hard to keep the budget down.

N. Sneller made a motion to proceed with a 2.5% budget to budget for the 2023-24 SY.

Seconded: B. Ross

Motion Carried

5. **Update on bus garage (Bruce Ross) and decision as to how to proceed.**

Bruce reported on the bus garage. The voters last year voted to put \$500k in the capital reserve toward the building of a new bus garage. This year the carry over amount is \$666,690. There were different things that were looked at in the building. The project cost of having the contractor do everything was \$1,154,774.13. It was then looked at what our own employees could do to save some money and those deductions were \$96,270.00. They decided on a 200 amp electrical service not a 3 phase electrical one. The project came in then for a total \$1,058,504.13. It is a lot of money however where we work on buses is not near where the buses are parked. We also rent a space and it's not the best situation. It was talked about putting in an additional \$565,000 move from carryover to the capital reserve.

C. Lueders- Asked how many bids came in. Could we get another bid, maybe next year? Things have been inflated and maybe we could get it done cheaper. If we move forward with it the townspeople can vote it down.

L. Kelly- Asked how far can we push this down the road? The garage is in bad shape.

P. Doyen- Read the contract for the garage lease. We are the leasee so we take care of what we are doing on a daily basis. Any repairs are up to town. We currently pay \$24k to lease and half the heat, water, electricity and sewer.

B. Chow- There are no plans in Dixfield to do any repairs to the garage.

D. Whittemore- The other side of the coin is, if something did happen and we lose the use of the bus garage what would we do? This is a lot more money than we thought we'd get into originally but he feels we need to move and get this going because we'll save money in the long run. This will save the district money.

N. Sneller- I would be a strong advocate for taking control of our own destiny in this situation. Look at this as an investment in the district's future. We have saved for a couple years and we've had carryover money so we're not having to take on debt for this project. It does cost more than we originally anticipated but looking potential longevity of the space we're in, the safe working

conditions and the number of uncontrollable things that we are looking at feels it makes sense to get started with the new bus garage sooner not later. She would like to move this forward.

B. Ross- So all towns are aware, this is not increasing our budget, this is all money that is left over. Yes it is a lot of money. As we've been going through this process this is the right time to do this. He is looking forward to putting it out to the town's people to vote and hear what the town's people have to say. If they are in support of it we'll move forward. If they are not in support of it then we'll know. If we don't put it out there we'll never know.

B. Ross- Made a motion to proceed with our discussion of moving money from our carryover into the capital reserve to put it out to a warrant to see if the town's people will approve to build a bus garage.
Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

6. **Further discussion of the Revolving Renovation Fund (DHS bathrooms)**

B. Chow- Asked the board if they want to have a discussion regarding the bathrooms. M. Dailey went over what the lawyer said the board could do in regards to rescinding the previous vote. The lawyer said if the board does not want to proceed with the project they can rescind their prior vote. The motion could be something like "I move to not proceed with the RRF project and to rescind the board actions to the contrary taken at the board meeting of March 21, 2023.

D. Whittemore- Asked Kenny to come up and discuss what he, Kenny & Bruce looked at previously. Don has had nothing but negative responses. He hasn't had 1 person say they wanted the board to continue and do the Revolving renovations. Kenny said his crew can retrofit the bathrooms. We didn't get exact numbers but I'm sure it will be a lot less than what we were going to finance. We would be able to do the locker rooms on both sides. Kenny spoke: the showers are partitions, which are longer than the bathroom doors. The showers would be fairly easy to do. Needs to get someone to give him specs. He thinks they can buy the panels and retrofit what we have. The bathrooms in the hallway, we have to be careful because there is ventilation, fire alarms, things like that.

C. Lueders- Is this something Kenny & the crew want to do? There is a lot the crew could do.

P. Doyen- Whichever way you go there is no money in site improvements in next year's budget that was presented tonight.

N. Sneller- I made the motion the last time. My primary motivation was to put it in front of the voters. I've heard the same feedback as everyone else. I haven't heard 1 person in favor of it. At the same time I didn't think it was right to sit there at a board meeting without much community input and shoot down 67% of grant money that we would have had funded. I advanced it feeling like that was a good chance it might not pass at the polls but feeling like voters should at least have the opportunity to weigh in on it and they should have the opportunity to weigh in on it at a forum where we get the most feedback possible which is not at the validation meeting but was on the ballots that was going out for the June vote. At this stage, we've all had feedback. I understand there's probably not money budgeted for next year but am definitely in favor of looking at a lower cost option if there's something we can do ourselves over time. I have no problem rescinding it but that was my motivation last time in advancing it.

D. Whittemore- Made a motion to rescind the vote of March 21, 2023 to do the bathrooms

Seconded: M. Young

Motion Carried

7. Vote on which warrant articles to include

Wording and/or inclusion of warrant articles to be voted on at the April 11, 2023 board meeting.

1. Shall the School Board be authorized to transfer amounts exceeding 5% of the total appropriation for any cost center to another cost center or among other cost centers for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, provided that transfers shall not be permitted to increase the authorized total school budget?

2. Shall the School Board be authorized to transfer up to \$565,000 from available fund balances to the Bus Garage Capital Reserve Fund to build a bus garage; and to expend up to \$1,065,000 from said Bus Garage Capital Reserve Fund to build a bus garage?

Note: Approval of this article will not increase the RSU's operating budget or increase the amounts to be raised by each RSU town.

~~3. Shall the School Board be authorized to transfer up to \$ _____ from available fund balances to the Technology Reserve Fund?~~

~~*Note: Approval of this article will not increase the RSU's operating budget or increase the amounts to be raised by each RSU town.*~~

4. In the event that the Regional School Unit receives more state education subsidy than the amount included in its budget, shall the School Board be authorized to use 25% of the additional state subsidy to increase expenditures for school purposes in cost center categories approved by the School Board; to use 25% of the additional state subsidy to transfer to the Capital Reserve Fund for maintenance of plant and minor remodeling; and to use 50% of the additional state subsidy to decrease the local cost share expectation, as defined in Title 20-A, section 15671-A (1)(B), for local property taxpayers for funding public education as approved by the School Board?

5. Shall the School Board of Regional School Unit No.56 be authorized to issue a bond or note in the name of the RSU for purposes of purchasing one school bus in an amount not to exceed \$132,750 to be paid in not more than three annual installments and appropriate the same?

Wording of ballot questions to be voted on at the April 11, 2023 board meeting

1. Do you favor authorizing the School Board of Regional School Unit No.56 (the "RSU") to construct a new bus garage for maintenance and storage of RSU school buses and other vehicles at 1 Middle School Drive in Dixfield (the "Project") with a total Project cost not to exceed \$1,065,000*; and to issue bonds or notes in the name of the RSU for school construction purposes in an amount not to exceed \$0*; and to expend up to \$1,065,000 from the RSU's capital reserve fund to pay the balance of the total Project costs?

*The total Project cost and amount of bonds or notes to be issued include a (% or \$ amount) contingency fund in the event that construction or material costs for the Project are higher than current estimates.

~~2. Do you favor authorizing the School Board of Regional School Unit No. 56 (the “RSU”) to issue bonds and other evidences of indebtedness in the name of the RSU in an amount not to exceed \$214,750 through the State of Maine’s zero interest rate/loan forgiveness School Revolving Renovation Fund (SRRF) Program for bathroom upgrades at Dirigo High School (the “Project”)?~~

~~SRRF Program Funding. The Project costs (up to \$214,750) have been approved for funding through Maine’s SRRF Program. Of this amount, the RSU will receive 68.53% (up to \$147,168) that will be forgiven, and 31.47% (up to \$67,582) that the RSU will repay at zero interest (0%) over a term of five years.~~

Mary went over all the warrant articles.

B. Ross- asked what would happen to the \$101,690 that is left from the carryover money? Could some of that money be put into the Technology fund? Mary said she wouldn’t recommend taking any more out of that amount.

B. Ross- Made a motion to approve in the warrants #1, 2, 4, 5 and wording for Ballot #1

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

8. **Answers to questions asked by Kathleen Szotek during public comment (Pam Doyen)**

Kathleen Szotek spoke on 2 articles she has seen that have disturbed her about Maine education. She read excerpts from one regarding academic learning that takes a back seat to social, emotional, gender & race. In part, traditional learning like reading, writing and math should be a lower priority in Maine schools than social, emotional learning & programming on race & gender. In part on gender, this is telling young students there are dozens of potential gender identities they can choose from. Gender is a social construct unrelated to biological sex. It includes telling students that sometimes doctors make the mistake when observing the gender of a new born child. This also includes telling students that white students have inherent privilege and telling non-white students they have inherent victimhood. 77% of the Maine voters said schools should be focused on the basics rather than spending time on how gender, sexuality & race impact the lives of everyday Americans. Another article she spoke about the Mills administration removing the ability of the public to see how students and schools are doing. In the removal of the standardized test, it leaves parents, taxpayers, school boards and the public at large no longer have any measures to gauge the progress or lack thereof in the public schools to know how students are doing and to compare them to other schools. It leaves our Maine school at risk of losing federal funds. She would like to know on both of these fronts how this school board stands. Do they support these two initiatives, articles? She has heard it said that we need to provide a safe environment for all. She feels the board is very well run. If teachers can’t control their classrooms, that needs to be handled but she doesn’t feel we need gender sexuality & CRT to have a safe environment.

Response: RSU 56 teaches the Maine Learning Results per board policy IGA Curriculum Development and Adoption. The curriculums can be found on our website www.rsu56.org. We have teachers who teach all 8 areas of the Maine Learning Results (which includes: English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, World Language, Health/Physical Education, and Life and Career Readiness.) RSU 56 has not adopted an outside “SEL” curriculum, although we continue to teach the basic appropriate school behavior through our

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) system that has been in the district for well over a decade.

Maine public schools have annual assessments that need to be completed. Those assessments are dictated by the MDOE. Currently the MDOE annual assessment is a version of the NWEA. RSU 56 has used the NWEA for a number of years to monitor student learning. RSU 56 continues to participate in state mandated testing. A link to the MDOE dashboard can be found under the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment portion of our website. RSU 56 does utilize the results of the statewide assessments to monitor our students' academic growth. We also have internal mechanisms to both progress monitor (check in along the way) and to do summative (how did we do for the year) assessments. We have, and will continue to, focus on student academic achievement and growth.

K. Szotek had a few other concerns and questions. Jason Long stated he would be happy to speak with her after the meeting. Kathleen did state that she has visited a number of school boards and this one far gets the thumb up.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Region 9 Updates (Bruce Ross/ Angela Cushman)

We've had 2 different board meetings since the last time I reported. We started receiving reports from the finance committee and there were substantial increases. We had a special meeting on the 20th of March and the director went through everything. The finance committee met to revisit and bring the numbers down to more palliative numbers. We had some pretty significant increases that were put out. Then on March 30th there was another special board meeting at which time the numbers were again recalculated. At that time we found that things were still a lot higher than what they had anticipated. Bruce said that from his perspective and he had a few other directors that supported his thinking. At that time they asked the director to go back and they came in with a number that they would like to see the budget brought down to. They met for their regular board meeting on April 5th, most of the members were there. They got presented with the budget that would be passed on to the towns. When the budget was originally presented it was \$2,422,394. The director came back with a budget of \$2,331,413- about a \$90k savings. After discussion on this B. Ross made a motion to move forward with this amount. It was seconded by another member. At that time it was opened up to more discussion and the finance committee chimed in and they made an amendment to go back to the original amount that was proposed which was an increase of the \$90k. It got seconded by another member, went out for more discussion, then it was put out to a vote. The vote had to be weighted to see how it would pass. 5 members voted for it to approve the amended amount and 3 members that were opposed to it. It came down to weighted vote to allow it to move forward. It got voted on the amended amount, the same members voted for it, the same members voted against it. The budget was then placed with the additional \$90k back into it. Moving forward the warrants have been signed that needs to go to the towns. The next time this will be presented will be the town's meeting on May 3rd at 6pm at Region 9. This is usually a small turnout. If people want to get involved with the kind of increases that are being seen with this budget he would recommend anyone from the 16 towns to show up at that meeting. If you are a resident you have a legal right to vote on this budget and it would allow the townspeople to chime in on if they approve of having this amount or do they want to

turn it down and have it go back to the finance committee to see what they could do to bring it down to what it was this year. It was done and then it was turned around and brought back up. He feels it's up to the voters but if they don't go out and voice their opinion it will continue to move forward.

Another part is about Adult Ed. That was moved forward. There will be a new director that is coming on and will be more of a full time director. There wasn't a lot of increases in running the Adult Ed. It was up some but it was more to get a director on to move the program forward. There are good teachers there and a good program. Backing this will be a win-win for the areas.

Had an update on the project going on that was from the grant money. They have agreed on a contractor that will be doing one of the projects, which is a greenhouse and part of the culinary arts program. They also got a reply from an architectural firm that will look over the 2nd project which is the welding lab that they are looking at doing. Again this is all grant money, not money that is included in their budget. Some good things that are going to be helpful for the Region 9 Center and for the students that go there.

M. Young- There was talk before that Adult Ed was going to go RSU 10 or is it going to stay at Region 9? Bruce replied that it is going to stay at Region 9. They have hired a new director and it will stay centrally located so it can continue on.

B. Chow- Asked with the increase in the Region 9 budget what was our increase from that? Pam replied it is \$20k.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent's Report: Pam Doyen

Reminder that next week is April vacation. Graduation is June 9 at 6:00pm. All board members are welcome to attend.

If any board members would be willing to judge senior portfolios, it will be on May 17 at noon for about 45 minutes. We would love to have you participate. Please let me or Peggy Morse know.

Arts Alive nights at DES will be Monday May 8, for grades 3-5 and Wednesday May 10, for grades K-2. Both nights the art viewing and book fair will be from 5-6 and the music performance will be from 6-6:30. The Specials team at DES would also like to invite any members of the school board that wish to attend.

Administrator's Report: Pam Doyen

Enrollment:

Grade	Freshmen	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Totals
Fall 2022	58	58	57	58	231
April 2023	60	57	55	55	227

Chronic Absenteeism: Chronic absenteeism in Maine is defined as missing 10 percent or more of enrolled school days, including both excused and unexcused absences.

DHS (Students with 13* or more absences.)

Grade	Freshmen	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
# of Students	9	15	11	16

*At 130 days of school, 13 would be 10% and considered chronically absent. This will change throughout the school year as more school days are completed. At 175 days, 17.5 will be the cut number for chronic absenteeism.

With chronic absenteeism measures total absences, including excused and unexcused, truancy measures only unexcused absences. Truancy is defined as missing 7 full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused absences.

Truancy:

Freshmen	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
5	16	11*	16*

*One has not attended at all yet this year. Police were sent to the houses to do well checks.

Process: Mr. Karavas sends letters to families when students are approaching truancy and then again when they reach truancy. Certified letters are sent when truant. Meetings are held to design a plan to intervene with truancy and support the student in attending school regularly. We send the Oxford County Sheriff's Department to connect with parents as needed. Referrals to DHHS occur but are rarely followed through due to the age of our students.

Discipline: Pam showed a graph with the Average Referrals Per Day Per Month and by Grade; also by student.

Thirty-two (14%) students have had 3 or more office referrals meaning 86% of students are doing just what they should be doing.

Consequences include, but are not limited to: Detentions, In School Suspensions, Out of School Suspensions, In School Drug Counseling

Most common behavior infraction: Skipping Class

College: Seventy-three percent (73%) of our current seniors have been accepted to college already. (Maine average = 58.8%, National average= 61.8%)

Some Fun Things at DHS

Our Speech and Debate team qualified for nationals again this year!

Our boys won the state championship two years in a row!

We had a fun pep-rally to send our boys off to the state championship game! Mr. Karavas got Pied in the Face!

Kristin Arsenault was recognized by the Maine Association of School Libraries as Library Support Staff of the Year! Dr. Doyen nominated her. When she did that she put it out to students to see if anyone would like to write something. She immediately had multiple students write some very nice things about her. An amazing moment that she got recognized out of the many librarians in the state of Maine.

Oxford County Sheriff's Department Deputy Jon Wainwright visits our school regularly!

We had a successful Drug Prevention and Wellness Day at DHS with the support of River Valley Rising and many community agencies. A number of groups came and offered different sessions for the students to participate in.

We had a fun Polar Express Day prior to the Christmas Break. A fun way to end before the holidays.

New Hires:

Sarah Bragdon, TWKDMS Science teacher, starting 2023-24 school year

Jason Long introduced and spoke about the new candidate

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: T. Kelly

Motion Carried

Stipended and Coaching Positions:

Beth Edwards, 2027 Class Advisor at DHS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Student Representative Report- Dianna Cayer not able to attend- No report
2. Policy Committee- Not met
3. Finance Committee- Carl: 2.5%
4. Curriculum Committee- Will meet Thurs 4/25 at 5:30pm
5. Buildings & Grounds Committee- Bruce: Vote for bus garage
6. Negotiations Committee- Nothing this year
7. Personnel Committee- Nothing at this time
8. Ad-hoc Committee- Next meeting Thurs. 4/13- 5:30 at DMS

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

C. Lueders- Good meeting

N. Sneller- Anyone who hasn't had the chance to participate in judging the tri-folds she would definitely encourage you to do. Last year was the first time she had participated and she was super impressed. It was a really cool experience. We got to walk around, meet the seniors, and find out their aspirations. Everyone did a great job, from organizers to students. A lot of family members were there to support the kids. It was a unique experience and would encourage anyone to participate if you have the opportunity. 2nd...I've had a few text messages from people about soccer for next year so I would just comment, primarily for administrators, if there are enough kiddos to participate in 8 person soccer at the high school next year and there is any money from any other cost center that would be available I would certainly hate to deny the kiddos any opportunities. She just wanted to put it out there if there is any chance of fielding a team she would love to at least look at that opportunity.

ADJOURNMENT

1. Motion to adjourn

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:47pm