

**Groton-Dunstable Regional School District  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
May 18, 2022 - 7:00pm  
GDRMS Library - 344 Main St, Groton**

**Members Present:** Marlena Gilbert, Pete Cronin, Rafael Glod, Jeff Kubick, Brian LeBlanc, Lacey McCabe, Fay Raynor

**Administration Present:** Dr. Laura Chesson, Superintendent; Kristin DeFrancisco, Ass't Superintendent

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM

**Questions/Comments from the Public -**  
None

**Pledge of Allegiance -** Benjamin LeBlanc, gr K; Ethan LeBlanc, gr. 4 students at Florence Roche. The children presented the outgoing chair Marlena Gilbert with flowers.

**Questions/Comments -** None

**Superintendent - [District Update](#)**

COVID Update - as of 5.7.22: Groton positivity rate is 5.28% after 1155 tests and Dunstable's positivity rate is 10% after 140 tests. The state's positivity rate is currently 6.35%. Dr. Chesson also gave the 14 day average daily positivity rates and the historical high which are from January of this year as well as what her recommendations would be to decide on a return to masking. (All COVID updates are posted to the GDRSD website.)

The Groton BOH representative read a statement asking that the following recommendations be the key components of an evidence-based re-masking policy:

1. Consider the use of voluntary mask recommendations to help reduce potential in-school transmission.
2. The main driver for re=masking should be infection incidence with the schools. Inclusion of community-based metrics may be considered as a secondary factor.
3. The trigger for remasking should be immediate such that the district can quickly respond to an emerging spike in cases. No additional approval or discussion at the BOH or SC should be required once the masking threshold is met.
4. A data-driven policy should be in place for removal of masks should case numbers decrease.
5. The Board should consider a school - by-school policy to allow for a targeted response to outbreaks without requiring masks at unaffected schools.

L.McCabe had a statement from the Dunstable BOH as well. Being that it is close to the end of the school year the Dunstable BOH does not expect the Superintendent to go back to masking

unless the rates rise dramatically and /or there is direction from the state to do so. They would however like something to be offered for immunocompromised students. Dr. Chesson reiterated that there are still tests available for students and testing would continue through the end of school year programs June-August.

School Climate Survey - the superintendent proposed a plan that the district would establish a team that would involve a variety of stakeholders who would answer key questions and set goals for a survey (deadline June 16); that team would choose the instrument which best suits questions/goals (deadline Aug 1); instrument negotiated with GDEA units (deadline start of SY); Q! Gathering data to be collected by Dec. 1, 2022; data analyzed by Jan. 15, 2023; executive summary to SC by February; school leadership and CO senior staff will develop action plans which have been informed by the data analysis, the second SC meeting in March. The SC offered their comments at this time. Mr. Cronin feels this is a good time line but there will be alot of heavy lifting over the summer. Ms. McCabe recommends a school adjustment counselor be added to this team. Ms. Raynor feels that the teachers came to SC with a complaint about the culture/climate of the district so she can't understand why they would have to negotiate the survey being given.

**The Chair entertained a vote to establish the timeline recommended by the superintendent, to establish a team to select a tool, negotiate the use of the instrument with the GDEA, gather data during the first quarter of the FY22-23 school year; data to be collected by December 1, analyzed by January 15, executive summary to the school committee by February, and the SLT/Central Office senior staff will develop action plans and form data analysis by the second March school committee meeting, to be flexible upon the ability of our staff to get things done in a timely manner.**

**So Moved - B. LeBlanc**

**Second - F. Raynor**

Discussion - Mr. Cronin feels the timeline is aggressive and thinks the administration shouldn't put so much pressure on themselves. Dr. Chesson feels comfortable with the added statement "upon the ability of our staff to get things done in a timely manner".

**All in Favor - Motion Approved 7-0**

(note: the Chair asked that the Superintendent report back to the SC as soon as the team and timeline are established. A representative from the SC will be selected after the board is reorganized.)

Capital Budget - A Groton Town meeting was held and the full amount of the request for capital funding was appropriated. The Dunstable town meeting appropriated \$64,202 out of the assessment of \$188,974. In addition, Dunstable voted to add a ballot question to fund the debt exclusion for \$188,974 and that ballot question failed on a 100 against-96 for approval vote. Dr. Chesson reviewed the capital items and the remaining unfunded items. The Selectboard of Dunstable will meet with the SC next week. Dr. Chesson reminded the SC that the district is in

receipt of the promised ARPA money from Groton; however, the district has not yet received these funds from Dunstable.

Education Appreciation Week - Ms. DeFrancisco reported that May 2nd through May 6th was Educator Appreciation Week. She walked the School Committee through the special treats offered to educators during the week, culminating in cookie deliveries on Friday, May 13th staff meetings.

The Special Education Program Review will not be given as ACCEPT Collaborative is experiencing some staff shortages and does not have the final report completed. This will hopefully be ready prior for the June 8 meeting.

#### **Superintendent's Evaluation - Discussion /Vote**

Ms. Raynor reviewed the process and Ms. McCabe read the review/details of the standards and the Superintendent's overall "Proficient" evaluation rating:

**J. Kubick made a motion to accept the final summative evaluation of the Superintendent as presented.**

**Second - R. Glod**

Discussion - None

**All in Favor - Motion Approved 7-0**

#### **OPEB - Discussion/Vote**

**J. Kubick made a motion that the Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee accept the General Laws Chapter 32B, Section 20, and establish an Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund (OPEB Fund), effective May 18, 2022.**

**Second - R. Glod**

Discussion - None

**All in Favor - Motion Approved 7-0**

#### **Liaison/Subcommittee Updates**

R. Glod will invite state legislators to the FloRo ground-breaking event.

#### **New Business -**

Dr. Chesson reported that the Department of Environmental Protection will be in Groton on May 26th in the library with the selectboards to review the PFAS situation at the high school. If there needs to be mitigation and testing the MassDEP will cover the abutters but not the school district.

**The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:39 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

APP'd 5.25.22

Jo Ann Sivazlian  
Secretary

Link to meeting:

<http://schedule.thegrotonchannel.org/Cablecast/public-site/index.html#/search?channel=1&query=school%20committee>

List of documents used by the GDRSC during the meeting:

- Agenda
- District Update
- DLS Information Guidelines
- EBCFA Face Coverings Policy
- EDI Definitions
- Final Summative Evaluation Supt.
- Motion to Establish OPEB