

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

May 20, 2014

Called for 6:00 PM in the School Committee Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge for the purpose of conducting any and all business that may properly come before the Committee.

Members Present: Ms. Cronin, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Harding, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Osborne, and Mayor Maher

Mayor Maher in the Chair.

Also Present: Student School Committee Members Emily Gray and Lucy Sternbach

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM.

1. Public Comment

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to suspend the Rules for the purpose of allowing some the public to speak to a non-agenda item (Peabody School music program).

The following individuals were heard:

- Derek vanBever,
- Allison Gill, Cambridge Street
- Joanna Wahl, South Normandy Avenue
- Salina Gonzales, Walden Street
- Alice Jerrard, Notre Dame
- Mark Lax, Rice Street
- Adeline Sire, Washburn Avenue

On a motion by Mr. Osborne, seconded by Ms. Cronin, it was voted to close public comment. Members thanked the supporters of the Kodaly music program.

Mr. Osborne moved to suspend the Rules for the purpose of bringing forward a **motion from the Governance Sub-Committee**. On a second by Ms. Kelly, it was voted to suspend the Rules for the purpose stated. Motion that the School Committee appoint Mrs. Judith Martin Manager of the School Committee office upon the retirement of the Executive Secretary on August 31, 2014. Mrs. Martin's first day as Executive Secretary will be September 1, 2014. On the following roll call, it was voted to adopt the Governance Subcommittee's motion as presented: Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; and Mayor Maher YEA.

2. Student School Committee Report:

Ms. Sternbach and Ms. Gray reported the following:

- There will be an end of the year celebration on May 30. The event will feature a BBQ, cotton candy, a dunk tank, etc. The 8th graders from the Upper Schools are invited.
- The annual fashion show fundraiser will be held on Friday, May 23. Proceeds benefit Transition House (flier on file in the School Committee office)

- Scholarship night was held last Wednesday. Students were awarded scholarships from organizations and members of the community. It was awesome to see the kids rewarded for their hard work
- Tonight is the last performance for the CRLS orchestra
- May 30 is the last day for CRLS seniors
- Graduation is Thursday, June 5 at 6:00 PM

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval: None

4. Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meetings: None

5. Awaiting Reports:

- ✓ Report by fall 2013 on AP program at CRLS (C13-133)(June 4, 2013)

6. Unfinished Business/Calendar

Members passed over Unfinished Business:

#14-06, Joint Motion by Mr. Harding and Mr. Osborne, that the Superintendent consult with the high school principal and staff around making a change to college preparatory designation for all classes at CRLS. Further, that any potential change of the course name be implemented by the 2014/15 school year.

#13-122, Motion by Mr. Fantini and Mr. Harding that each of the elementary and middle schools be provided with feedback in the form of a written report, provided by a expert consultant retained under the Request for proposal (RFP) process, as to the progress each school is making towards meeting the data-driven, high-quality improvement strategies as noted in the School Improvement Plans, other guiding documents and indicators as designated by the Superintendent, including parent satisfaction. Further, that the Superintendent shall provide copies of each report to the School Committee as part of its annual review of the School Improvement Plan as required by law. Further, the Superintendent shall provide analysis of the progress or lack thereof student achievement.

7. Superintendent's Report/Presentations/Consent Agenda

7a. Presentation:

Dr. Turk introduced Dr. Jon Saphier, President of Research for Better Teaching. Dr. Saphier walked Members through the following:

Historical approaches to improving student achievement:

1. 80's curriculum packages and programs
 2. 90's standards and accountability
 3. 2000 change structure
 4. 2010 use date
 5. Focus on high expectation teaching
- Goal
 - What's the most significant variable in increasing student achievement

PowerPoint presentation (copy on file in the School Committee office):

- A Good Teacher
- **The Big Rock of High-Expertise Teaching**
 1. Content Analysis: Digging deeply into content during planning

2. Error Analysis of student work to deliver re-teaching to those who need it
3. Feedback and Criteria for Success
4. Making Students' Thinking Visible
5. Using a variety of cognitive strategies matched to content and students
6. Attribution Re-Training and Student agency to communicate the 3 critical messages re: effort-based ability
7. Cultural Proficiency and Relationship Building
8. Building a classroom climate of community, risk-taking, and ownership
9. High volume of student reading/writing and explicit embedded literacy instruction including non-fiction writing with complex sentences
10. Direct vocabulary instruction and practice

○ **Skills Pertaining to Planning**

1. Content Analysis in Planning
2. Error Analysis

○ **Skills Pertaining to Instruction**

3. Feedback
4. Students Thinking Visible
5. Cognitive Strategies ("Clarity")

○ **Skills Pertaining to Motivation**

6. Attribution Re-Training
7. Class climate
8. Cultural Proficiency and Personal Relationship Building

○ **Skills Pertaining to Literacy**

9. Reading and Writing
10. Vocabulary

○ Theory of Action

Dr. Saphier responded to the following:

- Tell me a little bit about how you are going to implement this
- Is this doable
- This is exciting, thank you
- This is the perfect time to bring forward something new and improved
- Tell me the quality of the relationship between teachers, principals, coaches
- Please explain the work done to date
- 7 day experience, who is involved
- How do we know where to start
- Describe the 7-day program
- If Cambridge does everything you described tonight, what will we look like 3 or 4 years down the road
- Do you recommend that we visit some of the high achieving schools you talked about
- How do you define an effective educational team
- Who would make up the team
- What role does technology play
- What's the difference between a highly effective teacher and a poorly effective teacher on student learning

- Are lesson plans still effective
- Are schools of education doing their jobs
- Can the School Committee do anything about schools of education
- I have a hard time with this; we have been saying the same thing for a long time
- How can teachers be used as models for teacher in other districts
- Some teachers feel that not all students (high performers) need his/her attention-how do we address this
- Tell me about proficiency based advancement
- What was the process used in Nassau County, New York
- What is the "ask" of our teachers

The Chair and Dr. Young thanked Dr. Saphier for an informative presentation.

7b. Innovation Agenda

7c. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to bring forward for adoption, Superintendent's recommendations **#14-66 through #14-71**. Mr. Harding removed **#14-66**; Ms. Nolan removed **#14-67**. On the following roll call, the following items were adopted:

#14-68, Textbooks: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for textbooks, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

EMC Publishing, 875 Montreal Way, Saint Paul, MN, for the period May 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014, in the amount of \$53,754.59.

#14-69, Plumbing Services: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for plumbing services, funds to be provided from the Grant Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Direct Plumbing & Heating, 23 Pierce Street, Arlington, for the period June 1, 2014 to August 31, 2014, in the amount of \$44,890.00.

#14-70, Computer Hardware: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for computer hardware, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Apple, Inc., 1 Infinite Loop, Cupertino, CA, for the period May 20, 2014 through August 31, 2014, in the amount of \$100,000.00.

#14-71, Grant Awards: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Birth to Grade 3: Early Education Partnership, for the period July 1, 2014 to December 30, 2015, in the amount of \$166,018.00, Project/Grant SC15117.

Description: This grant from the MA Department of Early Ed and Care (EEC) is a RTTT Early Learning Challenge Grant: Early Education Partnerships, Birth to 3rd Grade. With this grant, CPS will work with members of the Early Childhood community across the City to develop a Strategic Plan and begin the process of aligning curricula, instruction, assessments, and professional development across sectors serving children from birth to 3rd grade.

CPS Target Population: Administrators, teaching staff, and children in programs serving children from birth to 3rd grade.

Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: Strengthen cross-sector partnership; development of a Strategic Plan for aligning programmatic elements and beginning of implementation. Improved transition from pre-school to school age programs, and, ultimately, improved outcomes for students.

2. DSAC School Support, for the period July 1, 2014 through August 31, 2014, in the amount of \$8,420.00, Project/Grant SC15118.

Description: This District and School Assistance Center (DSAC; non-Title I) grant will support the development of improvement strategies at the Kennedy-Longfellow and King Open Schools, both of which currently are in Level 3 status. District leadership and an independent consultant will work with these two schools to expand the capacity of the schools' Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) to develop and implement an action plan and engage in effective review and analysis of data to inform instruction.

CPS Target Population: Staff and students at the Kennedy-Longfellow and King Open Schools.

Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: Expanding the skills of the ILTs will have a positive impact on teaching and learning, leading to improved student outcomes and progress towards exiting level 3 status.

3. Reimbursement for Kindergarten Training, for the period May 15, 2014 to June 30, 2015, in the amount of \$20,800.00, Project/Grant SC14119.

Description: With funding from Race-to-the-Top Early Learning Challenge Funds, MA EEC will provide funds to support professional development in the use of Teaching Strategies-GOLD, including substitutes for kindergarten staff to participate in PD during regular school hours.

CPS Target Population: All CPS Kindergarten staff and students.

Outcomes and Measures of Effectiveness: Utilization of the formative assessment tool "Teaching Strategies-GOLD" will support improved instruction for kindergarten students.

4. Title I-DSAC School Support, for the period April 28, 2014 to August 31, 2014, in the amount of \$4,900.00, Project/Grant SC14120.

Description: This District and School Assistance Center (DSAC – Title I) grant will support the development of improvement strategies at the Kennedy-Longfellow School, which currently is in Level 3 status. District Leadership and an independent consultant will work with the Kennedy-Longfellow School to expand the capacity of the school's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) to develop and implement an action plan and engage in effective review and analysis of data to inform instruction.

CPS Target Population: Staff and Students at the Kennedy-Longfellow School.

Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: Expanding the skills of the ILT will have a positive impact on teaching and learning, leading to improved student achievement and progress towards exiting Level 3 status.

5. Title I Support Amendment, for the period September 1, 2012 to September 30, 2014, in the amount of \$3,182.00, Project/Grant SC13604.

Description: This is an increase in the FY13 Title I allocation which serves 5 school-wide Title I schools. These funds provide academic, instructional, and support services for all students, professional development activities for staff, support for parent involvement activities, as well as supplies and materials. Grant funds also support eligible Cambridge students attending private schools.

CPS Target Population: Students in Title I schools and students eligible for Title I services in non-Title I schools.

Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: At 5 school-wide Title I schools, the program will raise the literacy and math achievement of all students to enable them to meet State standards for ELA and math.

6. Hasty Pudding Theatricals, for the period May 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, in the amount of \$12,000.00, Project/Grant SC14775.

Description: These funds will be used to subsidize the purchase of tickets for Cambridge Public School students to attend cultural performance events and exhibits.

CPS Target Population: Approximately 1800 students in grades K-12 will attend cultural field trips to museums, concerts, theatre and other art events.

Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: Students will develop appreciation for the arts and learn appropriate audience behavior; they will also use their skills of discrimination and ability to analyze cultural events. Measures of effectiveness include the fact that students and teachers continue to request funds from year to year, making cultural field trips an essential part of their educational experience, and also the students exhibit an improved ability to speak and write about cultural events.

Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

8. School Committee Agenda (Policy Matters/Notifications/Requests for Information):

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to adopt the following items:

#14-72, Motion by Ms. Cronin that the School Committee sends a letter of recognition and congratulations in academic excellence to the following students for their achievement as winners of the Peabody School's Sixteenth Annual Cambridge Public Library/Cambridge Tree Project:

Jalen Chu, First Place (tie), Second Grade for "The Sea"
William Speight, Second Place (tie), Second Grade for "Crows"
Ella Lehigh, Honorable Mention, Second Grade for "Cat"
Augustin David Donaldson-Gaul, First Place (tie), Fourth Grade for "Will It Never End?"
Robbie Clemens, Third Place (tie), Fourth Grade for "The Memory Vault"

#14-73, Motion by Ms. Cronin that in support of the reconstruction of both the King Open and Tobin Schools, the School Committee, in conjunction with the City staff, should conduct a thorough analysis of demographic and school enrollment trends as well as programmatic needs to ensure new school construction, development and design are both accommodating and flexible in response to the anticipated needs of future student population and academic programs.

#14-74, Motion by Ms. Nolan that whereas the achievements of CRLS students are important to recognize and celebrate, that the School Committee send personal letters of congratulations and invite to the School Committee meeting on June 3 for recognition all students at CRLS who received merit, leadership scholarships worth \$100,000 or more, including but not limited to Posse Scholars, Colby-Sawyer Progressive Scholars and Marquis Scholars. Further, that the Superintendent works with CRLS staff to identify all students who earned such awards so they may be included.

#14-75 was referred to the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee:

Motion by Mayor Maher that whereas we were recently provided with a written report detailing the situation regarding King Open room temperature problems and, whereas there are 125 classrooms in the district without air conditioning that now, therefore be it ordered that we refer this report to Building and Grounds Sub-Committee to review the report and hold a hearing.

The remaining item was adopted:

#14-76, Motion by Ms. Nolan that whereas the Academic Challenge manager position has been in place for two years and whereas the goal of meeting the needs of all learners including advanced learners is important, the School Committee requests a report by the summer meeting on the district's efforts to meet the needs of advanced learners including a summary of accomplishments, a plan for future improvements, how success is measured and specific goals for advanced learners. Further that the district includes CALA and other parent input into the report.

9. Non-Consent Agenda

The following item was placed on the Calendar:

#14-66, Approval of the Process for Evaluating the Superintendent of Schools: that the Members of the School Committee approve the process of evaluating the Superintendent of Schools.

Ms. Nolan moved the adoption, without discussion, of **#14-67, Settlement of Pending Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination Action:** that the School Committee approve the Superintendent's recommendation relative to the settlement of a pending Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination Action in accordance with WR-CN-A. On the following roll call, it was voted to adopt #14-67: Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan NAY; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

10. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolence):

The following motions were adopted by the Whole Committee:

Motion by Mr. Harding that a letter of condolence be sent to the family of John Clinton who recently passed away.

Motion by Mr. Fantini that the School Committee recognize the nine (9) CRLS students who recently competed in a state-wide environmental science competition called "Mass Envirothon" against thirty-two (32) other high schools. CRLS placed in the top five (5) and was the only urban high school to do so. Further, that the nine (9) member team be invited to the next School Committee meeting, June 3, to talk about their experience and to be recognized.

11. Announcements: None

12. Late Orders: None

Patricia A. Berry
Executive Secretary to the School Committee