

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

**Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, February 15, 2005**

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Walser, Mayor Sullivan

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Also Present: Student Representatives James Conway, Spenser Skates

### **Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings**

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted that the Minutes of the following meeting be accepted as presented:

- Special Informal Meeting - January 4, 2005

### **Public Comment on School Committee Agenda**

The following individuals were heard:

- Ronnie Millar, Jackson Street, re Kids' Council Inclusion Policy
- Mary DeCoursey, Walden Street, re Kids' Council Inclusion Policy
- Abraham Sussman, Upton Street, re future of G&P Building
- Bob Binstock, Hamilton Street, re use of vacant schools, including Upton Street
- Dennis Friedler, Corporal McTernan, re vacant buildings
- H. Sussman, Upton Street, re vacant building
- Kathy Podgers, Pearl Street, re motions on bullying and request for information; vacant buildings; Kids' Council
- Drew Parkin, Thingvalla Avenue, re Kids' Council
- Carolyn Shipley, Laurel Street, re vacant buildings
- Larry Adkins, re Kids' Council

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Lummis, it was voted to close public comment.

### **Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members**

James Conway was heard in support of the Kids' Council inclusion policy. Mr. Conway suggested that Central Administration be moved into a different building because 159 Thorndike is inadequate.

### **Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None**

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to suspend the Rules to bring forward **#05-024, Memorandum from Cambridge Kids' Council** requesting adoption of the Cambridge Policy Plan for Inclusion of Individuals with Disabilities in Out-of-School Time Programs. Mr. McGovern was heard in support of the policy. The Members thanked Mr. McGovern, the Mayor and the Inclusion Subcommittee of the Cambridge Kids' Council for a great policy. On the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#05-024, Cambridge Policy Plan for Inclusion of Individuals with Disabilities in Out-of-School Time Programs**: Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi

YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA. Mr. McGovern moved suspension of the Rules for the purpose of moving reconsideration of the foregoing vote. The Rules having been suspended, the motion to reconsider the foregoing vote, hoping the same would not prevail, **failed of adoption**.

### Unfinished Business

Mr. McGovern took the following from the Calendar: "Joint motion by Mr. Fantini and Mr. McGovern that the Superintendent is requested to implement an elementary school, district-wide bullying program that will ensure that all elementary schools are providing the same language, training, support and programs regarding bullying. Further, that schools are then encouraged to add instruction tailored to their particular school setting.", and offered the following substitution: "Joint motion by Mr. Fantini and Mr. McGovern that the School Committee requests that the Superintendent report back to the Committee regarding the feasibility of establishing a district-wide, anti-bullying program in all elementary schools. This program should provide consistency across the District with regard to anti-bullying; however, individual schools should be encouraged to add additional interventions to assist their particular school populations." The Members were heard relative to the substitution. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. McGovern, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt the substitution: Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Mr. McGovern took the following from the Calendar: "Motion by Mr. McGovern that the School Committee instruct the Superintendent to supply any and all documentation requested by one or more members of the Committee. The information requested is at the discretion of the School Committee members and requests, to be made in writing, shall not be refused by the Superintendent unless legally unable to fulfill the obligation. Further, that this information will be forwarded to all members within a week of the request", and offered the following substitution: "When a School Committee Member or Members requests information from the Superintendent, the Superintendent is obligated to provide that information in a timely manner unless legally unable to do so." The Members were heard relative to the substitution. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, on the following roll call, the substitution **failed of adoption**: Mr. Lummis NAY, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser NAY, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi NAY, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan NAY.

### New Business

Mr. Fantini moved, seconded by Mr. Harding, for adoption of items #05-019 through #05-026 with the exception of #05-024 that was adopted earlier. Mr. McGovern removed # 05-019. Mr. Fantini removed #05-022. Mr. Harding removed #05-026. Mr. Lummis removed #05-025. On a motion by Mr. Harding, on the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

**#05-020, Special Needs Contracts for Day Program Services** not available from the Cambridge School Department: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions on the list in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the general fund budget:

1 student	New England Center for Children, 33 Turnpike Road, Southboro	\$ 29,977.50
<u>2</u> students	Perkins School for the Blind, 175 N. Beacon St., Watertown	<u>146,189.31</u>
3 students		\$176,166.81

**#05-021, Special Needs Contracts for Residential Program Services** not available from the Cambridge School District: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions on the list in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the general fund budget:

2 students	The Castle School, 298 Harvard St., Cambridge	\$111,040.08
1 student	Amego, Inc., 115 Plymouth St., Mansfield	181,467.87
<u>2</u> students	Perkins School for the Blind, 175 N. Beacon St., Arlington, MA	<u>291,700.08</u>
5 students		\$584,208.03

**#05-023, Grant Award:** that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

Mark Sandman Music Education Fund, project/grant SC05780, in the amount of \$1,000.00, for the period December 8, 2004 to June 30, 2005. The Mark Sandman Music Education grant will supplement the "Drum Logic" after school curriculum development project. The purpose of this project is to design a drum-making and drum rhythms activity that integrates mathematical problem solving, deductive reasoning and skill development with musical explorations. This project will continue to be implemented at 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Partnership Grant after school sites in Cambridge.

Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

#### **Non-Consent Business**

Mr. McGovern thanked the Superintendent for revising the language in the HSEP policy to reflect more clearly what the program is and what it is going to be. The Superintendent was heard. On a motion by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to adopt **#05-019, Approval of High School Extension Admissions Process**, as detailed in the document.

Mr. Fantini asked to receive the detail and dates on when the listed activities will be conducted. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#05-022, Consultant Agreement:** that the School Committee approve the consultant agreement with the company named, in the amount set forth, funds to be provided as shown:

Cambridge Community Service, Cambridge, MA, in the amount of \$30,367.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org 858626, prog 626, proj./grant SC05691.

Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi ~~ABSENT~~ YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

**#05-025, Motion by Mr. Harding** that the Superintendent is requested to report to the School Committee on current and/or necessary educational needs as related to the potential use of space in the two buildings located on Broadway and Upton Streets. Further, that the Superintendent provide background information required for informed decision-making, a timeline of considerations for forming conclusions about the use of space, and a process for involving the necessary parties and constituents to insure appropriate participation, prior to a recommendation.

Mr. Grassi requested, and received, unanimous consent to be recorded in the affirmative on the previous roll call vote.

Mr. Lummis said that Mr. Harding's motion came from the School Committee Roundtable meeting on vacant buildings and it will help to create and define the process around building use prior to a decision being made. On a motion by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adopt **#05-025, Motion by Mr. Harding** that the Superintendent is requested to report to the School Committee on current and/or necessary educational needs as related to the potential use of space in the two buildings located on Broadway and Upton

Streets. Further, that the Superintendent provide background information required for informed decision-making, a timeline of considerations for forming conclusions about the use of space, and a process for involving the necessary parties and constituents to insure appropriate participation, prior to a recommendation.

Members expressed concern over the number of class cuts in the Discipline Detail Report and said that the report should be shrinking, not growing. The Members were heard relative to the motion. The Superintendent was heard. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to adopt **#05-026, Motion by Mr. Grassi** that the Superintendent of Schools include a category on the monthly Discipline Detail Report that expands each classroom cut infraction to identify whether or not families have been notified of each classroom cut.

The Chair moved to the presentation on Space Plan/Facilities Analysis for the Graham and Parks School Building. The Superintendent said that this presentation is strictly an objective analysis of the space required by administrative offices and whether they could be housed in the Graham and Parks building. Mr. Maloney said that this presentation was scheduled prior to Mr. Harding's motion that in many ways supercedes this presentation. Mr. Philip Poinelli, architect with the firm of Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA), walked the members through a brief presentation that included:

- an existing building analysis
- space needs programming
- conceptual design
- estimate of probable costs.

The Superintendent, Mr. Maloney and Mr. Poinelli responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns raised by Members:

- How does the process of allocating space work
- Has there been any discussion regarding programs in the building
- Hope technology plays into whatever plan comes out
- What is the integrity of the building
- What is the state of the HVAC, boiler, etc
- There is no provision for showers in the plan
- Turn the building over to the City if we can't decide quickly on the use of it
- Committee should hold back on releasing buildings
- Superintendent should talk to Community Development Department regarding the process
- School Department needs need to be articulated
- Community space should be a function of the city
- School Department is not in a position to oversee programs
- Look at some creative ways around parking and foot traffic
- Look at the big picture of what we need now and what we need later
- Discuss implications of School Committee staying in the high school
- Will the Adult Learning Center remain a function of the City
- Does not want the Superintendent in discussions and issues that are not within the sphere of educational goals

The Chair entertained public comment on the presentation.

The following individuals were heard:

- Patricia Wada, Upton Street, re include a stage in the community space; locate Family Resource Center in a better space

- Alice Turkel, Upton Street, re problematic to have School Committee meetings on Upton Street, there is no parking; Longfellow building has better public access; public should be involved; consider issue of evening meetings
- David Salomon, Pleasant Street re building space is inefficient
- Kathy Podgers, Pearl Street, re office space is inconsistent with the neighborhood
- Bob Binstock, Hamilton Street re need to talk about alternatives; is universal pre-school an option
- H. Sussman, Upton Street re how many people use the buildings
- Dennis Friedler, McTernan re in support of R. Binstock statement; look at short-term v. long-term needs

The Chair concluded public comment.

The Members were heard relative to the presentation. The Superintendent was heard and asked the Members to give the Executive Secretary their lists of information they need.

#### **Late Orders**

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mayor Sullivan, it was voted that the Superintendent instruct the appropriate staff in the Physical Education, Health and Athletics Department to survey on the use of Oxycontin in the next Middle and High School Health Surveys. Further, that the City Council be forwarded a copy of this Order.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted that the Superintendent review current policies, current practices and make recommendations on increasing free access to school buildings for Cambridge-based youth organizations.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to adjourn (9:22 p.m.).

Adjourned  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee