

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 15, 2005

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

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

Also Present: Student Representatives James Conway, Spenser Skates

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:28 p.m. The Chair announced that the Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole) will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, March 24 at 6:00 p.m.

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 meetings be accepted as presented:

- Regular Meeting - February 1, 2005
- Special Meeting - February 1, 2005
- Special Meeting - February 9, 2005

Public Comment on School Committee Agenda

The following individuals were heard regarding the budget:

- Dosha Beard, S. Hunt
- Angelica Brisk, Walden Street
- Bill Donaldson, Montgomery Street
- Maria Keeling, Cardinal Medeiros
- Janet Snedeker, Clifton Street
- Pat Williams, Shirley Road, Waltham
- Mary Hampton, CPS clerk
- Nancy Daly, Duff Street, Watertown
- Clare MacDonald, Cambridge Street
- Paul Toner, President CTA
- Laurie Rothstein, Hancock Street
- Michele Sprengnether, Chilton Street
- Elaine Schear, Amory Street
- Larry Aaronson, Cambridge Street

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

Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members

Spenser Skates was heard and expressed concern regarding the number of secretarial cuts in the budget. James Conway was heard asking that nothing be done to hinder the work of the ISP, and in support of keeping clerical staff.

Mayor Sullivan moved, seconded by Mr. Grassi, for suspension of the Rules to bring forward #05-032. The Rules having been suspended, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt item **#05-032**: that the School Committee go into executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy for collective bargaining, strategy for litigation and to consider the purchase, exchange or lease of real property, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining and litigation positions of the School Committee. The Chair announced that no votes will be taken and the Committee will reconvene in open session: Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Executive Session

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

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

Also Present: Thomas Fowler-Finn, Superintendent
Carolyn Turk, Deputy Superintendent
Barbara Allen, Executive Director, Human Resources
James Conry, Chief Financial Officer
Maureen MacFarlane, Legal Counsel
James Maloney, Chief Operating Officer

Members discussed strategies for collective bargaining and strategy for litigation with Legal Counsel.

The Executive Session was adjourned and the Committee returned to Open Session.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 7:33 and announced that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business

Members passed over Unfinished Business.

New Business

Items #05-033 through #05-042. Mayor Sullivan moved that item #05-042 be referred to the Budget Sub-Committee. Mr. Grassi moved that #05-038 and #05-040 be referred to the School Committee's roundtable discussion on facilities. McGovern removed # 05-041. Mr. Harding removed #05-039. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#05-033, Approval of Level III Response to the Cambridge Teachers Association Grievance 11-03-04: that the School Committee approve the Superintendent's recommendation relative to a Level III response to the Cambridge Teachers Association's grievance 11-03-04 in accordance with WR05-74.

#05-034, Agreement with Cambridge Teachers Association dated March 15, 2005: that the School Committee approve the agreement with the Cambridge Teachers Association dated March 16, 2005 in accordance with WR05-74(F).

#05-035, Agreement with Cambridge Teachers Association dated March 15, 2005 for Change in Deadline for Submission of Proposals for Flex-Time Proposals by School or Program Administrators: that the School Committee approve the agreement with the Cambridge Teachers Association dated March 15, 2005 regarding Change in Deadline for Submission of Proposals for Flex-Time Proposals by School or Program Administrators in accordance with WR05-74(G).

#05-036, 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 Operations Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the general fund budget:

1 student	Germaine Lawrence, 18 Claremont Ave., Arlington, MA	\$ 38,833.75
3 students	Boston College Campus, Campion Hall, Room 197, Chestnut Hill, MA	140,584.56
2 students	Dr. Franklin Perkins School, 971 Main St., Lancaster, MA	46,506.00
<u>1</u> student	Devereux Foundation, PO Box 219, 60 Miles Rd., Rutland, MA	<u>10,613.40</u>
7 students		\$236,537.71

#05-037, Approval of Home School Applications for School Year 2004-2005: that the School Committee approve the home school applications for the 2004-2005 school year as detailed in the document.

#05-038, City Council Orders #0-5 and #0-15. **Referred to a Roundtable discussion on facilities.**

#05-040, Motion by Ms. Walser that the Superintendent invite City Councillors to tour the current Central Administration offices on Thorndike Street as part of the continuing discussions on the future relocation of those offices. **Referred to a Roundtable discussion on facilities**

#05-042, Motion by Mr. McGovern that the School Committee directs the Superintendent to make total Central Administration cuts of \$2.5 million in FY05-06. Central Administration is defined as all CPS administrative staff with the exception of principals, asst. principals, deans, family liaisons, aides, and secretaries or clerks servicing individual schools. In order to give the Superintendent sufficient time to evaluate staffing, the Superintendent shall have up to four months to make whatever cuts he deems necessary. **Referred to the Sub-Committee on the Budget**

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

Non-Consent Business

Mr. Harding commended the Superintendent and his leadership team for securing the Safe Environments grant to support Haitian students in our schools. On a motion by Mr. Harding, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#05-039, Grant Award**: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award named below in the amount and for the period indicated:

Safe Environments, Project/Grant SC05800, in the amount of \$25,000.00, for the period

February 16, 2005 to June 30, 2005. There are over 500 Haitian students in CPS, many of whom exhibit symptoms of stress and trauma such as physical complaints, fearfulness, compulsivity, sleep disturbances, poor school work and failure, as well as rebelliousness and anti-social behavior. These funds will be used to create three different mentoring programs; one for students, a second for teachers who serve the targeted student population, and a third for Haitian parents/guardians.

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

The Superintendent requested and received unanimous consent to comment on the above Grant. The Superintendent thanked his staff and said that legislation providing that money was sponsored by Alice Wolf.

#05-041, Motion by Mr. McGovern that, given the contract between CPS and the MMA Consulting Group, Inc. required MMA to "present an opinion regarding the appropriate support staffing levels of the School District" and that no such opinion was in the final report, the Committee directs the Superintendent to invite the MMA to come before the Committee to publicly present such opinions at the April 5, 2005, meeting of the School Committee. Mr. McGovern was heard in support of his motion. Mr. Harding asked the Superintendent why the report came back without an opinion. The Superintendent was heard in support of the report. Mr. Lummis moved the adoption. On the following roll call, Mr. Lummis' motion **failed of adoption**: Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini NAY, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding NAY, Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern NAY, Mayor Sullivan NAY.

The Members continued discussing the MMA report. Mr. Grassi suggested looking at the Rules to change the Superintendent's approval limit. On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adopt **#05-041, Motion by Mr. McGovern** that, given the contract between CPS and the MMA Consulting Group, Inc. required MMA to "present an opinion regarding the appropriate support staffing levels of the School District" and that no such opinion was in the final report, the Committee directs the Superintendent to invite the MMA to come before the Committee to publicly present such opinions at the April 5, 2005, meeting of the School Committee.

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent for presentations. The Superintendent withdrew the scheduled presentation on "Process for Decisions on Vacant Buildings" pending the roundtable discussion on facilities.

The Superintendent clarified some of the misinformation that is circulating in the community, and walked Members through the FY2005-2006 Proposed Budget:

- Education at the Heart
- Staffing
- FY2005-06 Budget Overview
- Summary of Proposed Budget
- Major Cost Increases & Decreases
- Multi-Year Budget Comparisons/Percentage Increases
- Elementary School Classrooms for FY05-06
- Number of Multi-graded Classrooms
- Other District Comparisons
- Non-salary Budget Allocations to Schools
- Administrators FY04-05

Mr. Harding in the Chair.

- Per Pupil Costs - DOE FY2003-04

- Items in Cambridge Budget not in Brookline Budget (FY04-05 Revised)
- Professional Development
- Enrollment Summary
- 5-Year Projected Revenues
- Data from DOE October 1 Staffing Reports
- Adjusting Priorities Within the Base Budget
- Restructuring/Reductions (looking at restoring three clerical positions)
- Program Initiatives & Improvements
- Cambridge Science Initiative

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

The Chair opened the floor for public comment on the presentation.

The following individual was heard:

- Bruce Silverman, Larch Rd, re: Budget by Accountable Unit - where is the \$3.376 million variance

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to close public comment.

Late Orders

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted that the School Committee Executive Secretary prepare a Resolution on the retirement of Physical Education Teacher David Villandry.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted that the Superintendent contact Alberto Vasallo of El Mundo Television and Newspaper to investigate renewed School Department participation in Latino Recognition Day in conjunction with the Boston Red Sox. Further, that the Superintendent update the Committee.

On a motion by His Honor Mayor Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted that the School Committee send a letter to Dr. Joseph Petner, Principal, Haggerty School, congratulating him on receiving a Community Partnership Award from the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to refer the following to the Budget Sub-Committee: Motion by Mr. Fantini that the Superintendent delay any terminations of clerical staff until December 31, 2005; further, that the Superintendent reinstate up to five clerical positions if efforts to create available opportunity for provisional clerks are not successful; further, that the Superintendent be provided flexibility in finding resources to do the above and be encouraged to look at the following sources of funding: administrative positions, outage accounts, reserve funds, and other salary fund accounts.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to adjourn (8:45 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee