

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

**Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, May 3, 2005**

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Mr. Lummis, 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 6:00 p.m.

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

On a motion by Mr. Lummis, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted that the Minutes of the following meetings be accepted as presented:

- Regular Meeting - March 15, 2005
- Special Informal Meeting - March 29, 2005
- Regular Meeting - April 5, 2005

At the request of the Superintendent, Recommendation **#05-046, 2005-2006 State School Choice Program** - Recommendation for Non-Participation, is withdrawn.

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

There being no one signed up, on a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to close public comment.

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

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

### **Unfinished Business**

Members passed over Unfinished Business.

### **New Business**

Mr. Lummis moved, seconded by Mr. Grassi, for adoption of items #05-057 through #05-070.  
Mr. Lummis removed #05-068 and #05-069. Mr. Grassi removed #05-066. Mayor Sullivan removed #05-063 and #05-067. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

**#05-057, Approval to go into Executive Session:** that the School Committee go into executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy for litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the School Committee and to consider the purchase, exchange or lease of real property as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the School Committee.

**#05-058, City Council Order #7:** that the Superintendent of Schools provide to the City Council the Fiscal Year 2006 Budget presentation as made to the School Committee.

**#05-059, 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	SHORE Collaborative, 99 Fourth St., Chelsea, MA	\$ 16,322.78
1 student	COMPASS, Inc., 26 Sunnyside St., Jamaica Plain, MA	10,141.25
1 student	Farr Academy, 71 Pearl St., Cambridge, MA	15,217.28
2 students	Bay Cove Human Services, Inc., 66 Canal St., Boston, MA	33,446.50
1 student	Devereux Foundation, PO Box 219, 60 Miles Rd., Rutland, MA	14,151.20
<u>1 student</u>	<u>Germaine Lawrence, 18 Claremont Ave., Arlington, MA</u>	<u>12,889.50</u>
7 students		\$102,168.51

**#05-060, 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.

**#05-061, FY04-05 General Fund Budget Statutory Transfers:** that the School Committee approve the following statutory transfers of appropriation within the General Fund budget for FY2004-05:

	<u>Statutory Coding</u>	<u>Increase Amount</u>	<u>Decrease Amount</u>
51000	Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$	(\$ 31,406.75)
52000/55000	Other Ordinary Maintenance	0	(171,173.24)
57000	Travel & Training	160,192.27	0
58000/59000	Extraordinary Expenditures	<u>42,387.72</u>	<u>0</u>
	Total	\$202,579.99	(\$202,579.99)

**#05-062, Student Transportation Services, Regular Bus:** that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Student Transportation Services, Regular Bus; funds to be provided from the General Fund budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with: Eastern Bus Company, 14 Chestnut Street, Somerville, MA, for the period September 1, 2005 to August 31, 2008 (with option for 2 one-year extensions), in the amount of \$4,413,060 (3-year amount). Eastern Bus Company was the low bidder of two bidders.

**#05-064, Report of the March 24, 2005, Meeting** of the Sub-Committee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole:

Called for the purpose of a Public Hearing on the Proposed FY2005-2006 Budget and any other matters related to the FY2005-2006 Budget.

Members Present: Mr. Grassi, Mr. McGovern, Co-Chairs, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Harding, Mr. Lummis, Ms. Waiser, Mayor Sullivan

Mr. Grassi in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. and turned the meeting over to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent gave a brief presentation on FY2005-06 Supplemental Budget Information, including "Total Position Reductions FY03-04 thru FY05-06", and a "List of Central Administrative Positions".

The Chair opened the floor for public comment.

The following individuals were heard regarding the budget:

- Paul Toner, President, CTA
- Janet Snedeker, Clifton St
- Patty Nolan, Huron Ave.

The Chair closed public comment.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to bring forward Order **#C05-058, 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. Mr. Fantini moved an amendment to strike the first paragraph of the motion. On the following roll call, the amendment was adopted: Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA. The Superintendent responded to some of the questions, comments and concerns raised by the Members. On a motion by Mr. Harding, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#C05-058, Motion by Mr. Fantini** 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: Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Lummis NAY, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser NAY, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to bring forward **#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.

Mr. McGovern was heard in support of his motion. The Superintendent responded to some of the questions, comments and concerns raised by Members. On the following roll call, the foregoing motion **failed of adoption**: Mr. Fantini NAY, Mr. Grassi NAY, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Lummis NAY, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser NAY, Mayor Sullivan NAY.

The Chair announced that on April 5 there will be a Regular School Committee meeting followed by a Budget Sub-Committee meeting.

On a motion by Mayor Sullivan, it was voted to adjourn (7:53 p.m.).

Respectfully submitted,  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

**#05-065, Report of the April 5, 2005, Meeting** of the Sub-Committee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole):

Called for the purpose of acting on the Proposed FY2005-2006 Budget and any other matters related thereto.

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

Mr. McGovern in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order and recognized the Superintendent.

The Superintendent presented his recommendation for the FY2005-06 Budget in the total of \$124,044,400 in the following statutory categories:

Salaries, Wages & Fringe Benefits	\$ 89,952,060
Other Ordinary Maintenance	25,912,125
Travel & Training	1,766,450
Extraordinary Expenditures	6,413,765
Total	<u>\$124,044,400</u>

Ms. Walser raised a question on whether the above amounts are the same as originally presented. The Superintendent said the bottom line is the same.

Mr. Harding raised a question on what process will be used to select the two Principal Administrative Internship positions. The Superintendent was heard.

On a motion by Mayor Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to refer the proposed FY2005-2006 budget to the full School Committee with all recommendations from the Sub-Committee.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to adjourn (6:58 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

**#05-070, Motion by Ms. Walser** that the School Committee and the Superintendent work together on a policy for establishing a strategic communication plan for communicating progress being made by our schools and building community support for system-wide goals.

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

Mr. Grassi asked for and received unanimous consent to return to Unfinished Business to take from the Calendar, "Report on report cards and progress reports", and refer it to the Superintendent for a response at the next meeting.

The Superintendent was asked to have the report relative to Title IX posted on our website when it is finished. The Superintendent was heard in the affirmative.

Ms. Walser moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini, for suspension of the Rules for the purpose of moving reconsideration of the previous vote. The Rules having been suspended, a motion to reconsider the foregoing vote, hoping the same would not prevail, **failed of adoption.**

### Non-Consent Business

**#05-066, Motion by Mr. Harding** that the CRLS Chapter of the Boston Area Youth Organizing Project be allowed to make a brief presentation to the School Committee on their proposal for an advisor for students of color. Mr. Harding spoke to the motion and introduced students from the CRLS Chapter of the BYOP. Mr. Grassi deferred to the presentation. BYOP students presented their proposal for committed staff time for a student of color advisor so that the school can accomplish the following work:

“Goals:

We have asked for committed staff time for a student of color advisor so that the school can accomplish the work below. We are concerned that without it being someone’s job to deal with the exact problems of Black and Hispanic students it will not be addressed:

**1. Meetings with Black & Hispanic Students:** Since they are under-represented in AP classes, *all* Black and Hispanic students should meet with an advisor in their freshman and sophomore year to talk about what Advanced Placement and Honors courses are and what it takes to get into them and do well. The school should not assume that students know why they are important. We, the students, would like to work with staff members to plan what should be said.

Also, we believe that guidance counselors should be required to meet with all Black and Hispanic students *at least twice* a year.

**2. Calls to Parents:** Every parent of a Black and Hispanic freshman and sophomore should be called to be told about what Advanced Placement and Honors courses are and what it takes to get into them and do well. We have found that parents do not always know anything about these courses and sometimes cannot come to meetings. Letters home are not enough.

**3. Public Meetings & Assemblies:** Should be held for Black and Hispanic students and for their parents. The meetings should not just be announced in writing, but each should be called to encourage them to attend. We, the students, would like to help put these together, but we cannot do it alone and need a regular staff person to work with us on it.

**4. Task Force:** We believe along with staff people whose job it is work on this exact issue, a committee should also be created to come up with new ideas. It should include students, parents, student-of-color-advisors, guidance counselors, teachers, and administrators. They could *help* share some of the work and should help solve this problem, but not to be used *in place* of staff people.”

The Superintendent and BYOP students responded to some of the questions and concerns raised by the Members.

The Members commended the students on their presentation and committed their support and follow-up on this issue. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to refer the proposal to the Superintendent for a report back to the School Committee with a plan.

**#05-067, Letter from Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC)**, dated March 25, 2005, regarding election of an Official Delegate and Alternate, and other items for its Annual Meeting on October 26, 2005. On a motion by Mayor Sullivan, it was voted that Nancy Walser be designated as the Official Delegate and that Ben Lummis be the Alternate.

**#05-068, Joint motion by Mr. Lummis and Mr. Grassi** that the Superintendent provide a report on the status and implementation of the new teacher and principal evaluation systems and how these new systems are helping to improve instruction. Mayor Sullivan moved a friendly amendment to include guidance counselors in the report. Mr. Lummis accepted the Mayor’s amendment. Mr. Harding asked that these evaluation systems be an agenda item for a Roundtable discussion. On a motion by Mr. Lummis, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to adopt the motion as amended, as follows: that the Superintendent provide a report on the status and implementation of the new teacher, principal, and

guidance counselor evaluation systems and how these new systems are helping to improve instruction. Further, that these evaluation systems be a topic for a Roundtable discussion.

Mr. Lummis asked the makers of the following motion to explain it. Ms. Walser was heard. On a voice vote, the following was adopted: **#05-069, Joint motion by Ms. Walser and Mr. Fantini** that the School Committee investigate how and whether the School Committee office can take advantage of new "paperless" school board software to make its work more accessible to the public while decreasing time and costs of the existing program.

Since there were no Student School Committee Members present, the following is placed on the Calendar: **#05-063, Joint motion by Student School Committee Members Conway, House and Skates**: that the Cambridge School Committee direct the Superintendent, after consulting with the Principal of Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, to develop a policy to allow all students to have the opportunity to understand the context of their grades.

*Further*, that this policy shall allow all CRLS students to request access to and receive information from their teachers regarding how that student's grade was calculated for a particular course.

*Further*, this policy will establish a system for maintaining records of grades, allowing students the right to access their grades at appropriate times, and the right of students to have access to a course syllabus outlining their grading policy for each course at the start of each course.

*Further*, this policy will ensure that a grading policy for each course will be available to students upon request.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent teachers from setting their own grading policies in the syllabi provided they are consistent with the policies of the Cambridge Public Schools and that they are available to students and that they are maintained during the course.

On a motion by Mayor Sullivan, seconded by Ms. Walser, on the following roll call, it was voted to suspend the Rules to bring forward **#05-057**: that the School Committee go into executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy for collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee, for the purpose of discussing strategy for litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the School Committee, and for the purpose of considering the purchase, exchange or lease of real property as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee: Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA. The Chair announced that no votes will be taken during the Executive Session and the Committee will reconvene in Open Session:

### **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 sale of property, strategies for collective bargaining and strategy for litigation with Legal Counsel.

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

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 7:45 and announced that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

### **Late Orders**

On a motion by Mr. Lummis, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to adopt the following "Timeline on Decision for Facilities Use":

#### **May 17, 2005**

Report due from the Superintendent on information requested by the School Committee. This report should include but need not be limited to:

- space requirements for all Central Administration Offices and departments including Facilities, the Credit Union, Family Resource Center, etc.
- currently anticipated facility needs within the next 3 years
- recommendations for a permanent home for the Challenge Prep Program and the High School Extension Program
- space in buildings that are or will be available

School Committee vote on need for relocation of Central Administration Offices  
(If the Committee votes in the affirmative, the remainder of the timeline will be followed.)

**June 7, 2005** - Recommendation submitted for relocation of Central Administration

**June 14, 2005** - Public hearing on recommendation for relocation of Central Administration

**June 21, 2005** - Vote on recommendation for relocation of Central Administration no earlier than June 21, 2005.

Ms. Walser congratulated Deputy Superintendent Turk on an excellent Science Camp over April vacation week. The Superintendent was heard regarding possibly expanding the camp.

The Superintendent was asked to include the leadership for the Jumpstart summer program in *The Weekly Report*.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to adjourn (7:55 p.m.).

Adjourned  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee