

## **SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**(Official Report)**

**Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, May 4, 2004**

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Lummis, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Walser, Mayor Sullivan  
Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Also Present: Student Representatives: James Conway, Adrienne Leslie

### **Presentation of the Records**

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

- Special Meeting - April 13, 2004

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

The following individual was heard:

- Paul Toner, CTA President, thanking members of Units A, B, and C

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**

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

### **Unfinished Business**

Members passed over all Unfinished Business.

### **New Business**

Mr. Grassi moved, seconded by Mr. Lummis, for adoption of items #04-055 through #04-065. Mr. Grassi removed #04-061 and placed #04-065 on the Calendar. Mr. McGovern removed #04-059. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted as follows:

**#04-055, Approval of Safety Specialist Contract**, July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2006: that the School Committee approve the Memorandum of Agreement for a collective bargaining agreement between the Cambridge Professional Safety Specialists Association and the Cambridge School Committee for the period July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2006, such agreement having been previously ratified by the members of the bargaining unit.

The agreement was reached by the negotiating teams and has been ratified by the union membership. The agreement includes the following:

- Three-year agreement: - 7/1/03 - 6/30/06
- Salary schedule increases (not to other economic items):

- Year 1 (FY2003-04) - 3% increase effective April 1, 2004
- Year 2 (FY2004-05) - 3% increase effective October 1, 2004
- Year 3 (FY2005-06) - 4 ¼ % increase effective July 1, 2005
- Elimination of additional week of vacation after five years of service, for all new hires on or after 7/1/04
- Pilot program to allow up to 2 days of vacation while school is in session, subject to the approval of the Manager of Security to assure proper and adequate coverage
- Leave of absence without pay - change years of service requirement from three years to five years
- Elimination of vehicle stipend for one unit member for residency checks
- Other changes to effective dates and clarification of language.

The financial costs of this settlement are as follows:

<u>Salary Increases:</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u>
FY03-04 - 3% salary increase effective 4/1/04	\$ 4,447
FY04-05 - Carryover cost of full 12 months of 4/1/04 3% salary increase	13,341
- 3% salary increase effective 10/1/04	<u>13,741</u>
Total	\$27,082
FY05-06 - Carryover cost of full 12 months of 10/1/04 3% salary increase	\$ 4,580
- 4 ¼ % salary increase effective 7/1/05	<u>26,733</u>
Total	\$31,313

**#04-056, General Fund Budget Statutory Transfers:** that the School Committee approve the statutory transfers of appropriation within the general Fund budget for FY 2003-04:

	<u>Statutory Coding</u>	<u>Increase Amount</u>	<u>Decrease Amount</u>
51000	Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$ 898,181.80	
52000/55000	Other Ordinary Maintenance (Supplies, Services, Materials)		(\$898,555.47)
57000	Travel & Training	8,101.99	
58000/59000	Extraordinary Expenditures (Debt Services, Equipment)		(7,728.32)
	Total	<u>\$ 906,283.79</u>	<u>(\$906,283.79)</u>

**#04-057, Grant Awards:** that the School Committee accept and approve the grant awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. FY03-04 School Support Program, project/grant SC04781, for the period March 31, 2004 to August 31, 2004, in the amount of \$51,331.00. Funds from this School Support Grant will be used to support school improvement planning. District personnel will attend the three day training session conducted by the Department of Education. In addition, a team comprised of the principal and teachers from the Fletcher-Maynard School will enroll in the

PIMS Retreat. Funds will be used to stipend teachers for out of school hours, hotel stays, mileage and substitute coverage. Funds will also be used to provide school improvement planning support (using the PIMS protocol) to the schools serving students that attended in FY 2003, Title I schools identified for improvement that have since closed or merged with other schools (King Open and Peabody). At the district level, the district improvement plan will be reviewed and, if necessary, the school improvement/school wide template will also be revised to keep plans interconnected.

2. FY03-04 Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research, Inc., project/grant SC04782, for the period April 12, 2004 to June 30, 2004, in the amount of \$5,500.00. Schools that participated in the Novartis "Redesign the NECCO Tower Competition" will receive \$500 each for art supplies.

**#04-058, Special Needs Contracts for Day Program Services** not available from the Cambridge School Department: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions below in the 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:

3 contracts	Arlington School (McLean), 115 Mill St., Belmont, MA 02478	\$118,962.64
1 contract	Boston Higashi School, 800 North Main St., Randolph, MA 02368	31,148.64
2 contracts	Lighthouse School, 25 Wellman Ave., N. Chelmsford, MA 01863	44,497.04
1 contract	The Kolburne School, 343 NM Southfield Rd., New Marlborough, MA 02130	21,683.40
1 contract	Lake Grove at Maple Valley, 6 Farley Rd., Wendell, MA 01379	28,004.10
1 contract	Beacon High School, 74 Green St., Brookline, MA 02446	22,791.78
<u>1 contract</u> 10 contracts	EDCO Collaborative, 20 Kent St., Brookline, MA 02445	<u>14,388.56</u> \$281,476.16

**#04-060, Motion by Mr. Harding** that Nancy Walser be designated as the Official Delegate to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees Annual Meeting on October 27, 2004.

**#04-062, Report of the April 13, 2004, Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Budget** (Committee of the Whole):

Called for the purpose of acting on the FY2004-2005 School Department budget and all other matters related thereto.

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

Ms. Walser in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

The Chair gave an overview of the process for the meeting and asked the Superintendent to read his budget recommendation. The Superintendent was heard regarding the Court Liaison position remaining in the budget and read the following: that the Budget Sub-Committee of the School

Committee receive and approve the Superintendent's Recommended Fiscal Year 2004-2005 General Fund Budget in the amount of \$122,053,195, for the period beginning July 1, 2004 and ending June 30, 2005, in the following statutory categories:

Salaries, Wages & Fringe Benefits	\$ 84,756,675
Other Ordinary Maintenance	28,914,540
Travel & Training	1,123,135
Extraordinary Expenditures	<u>7,258,845</u>
Total	\$ 122,053,195

The Chair asked the pleasure of the Committee. Mr. Harding was heard and respectfully moved that \$903,113 allocated for an alternative high school be divided from the main motion. Mr. Harding's motion was seconded by Mr. Fantini and Mr. Grassi. On a voice vote, the motion to divide was accepted.

The following issues/comments/concerns were raised and discussed:

- Raises for non-union employees vs. merit-based pay
- What is the vision for multi-grading, etc. in terms of teacher cuts and stability
- Will schools return to regular grading if enrollment increases
- Would like to see an explanation when money is moved between line items

In response to money being moved between line items, Ms. Walser said the Co-Chairs will bring in a motion next month on monitoring moves between line items.

Mr. Fantini gave an update on the following maintenance issues:

- The City Manager will work with the Superintendent to establish a comprehensive plan to make all schools safe and up to date
- ISP model will be driven by enrollment
- Budget format will be made clear and thoughtful in the near future
- Few non-tenured teachers will be leaving the schools
- There are six teaching positions in reserve to support schools where support is needed

Ms. Walser thanked her Co-Chair and the Superintendent for a very strong budget.

On a motion by Mayor Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted that the Superintendent's recommended budget, as amended, be referred favorably to the full committee.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Lummis, it was voted to adjourn (7:05 p.m.)

Respectfully Submitted  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

**#04-063, Joint Motion by Mr. Grassi and Mr. Harding** that the Superintendent investigate the need and feasibility of a graduation night party for all CRLS graduates and report back to the School Committee with his findings. This program is in place in Belmont, Arlington and Burlington. The intent of the program is to provide graduates a safe place to celebrate.

**#04-064, Motion by Mr. Grassi** that the School Committee asks the City Council to have the word "School" stenciled on Cambridge streets on all approaches to public, parochial and private schools in

Cambridge. This request was made on September 2, 2003, and the stenciling was not done for the 2003-2004 school year. Further, that the City Council ensure that stenciling takes place every year before the opening of school.

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

### **Non-Consent Business**

**#04-059, Motion by Mr. McGovern** that the Superintendent inquire as to the feasibility of placing heart defibrillators in each elementary school and each small learning community at the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, either by purchasing or donation from area hospitals. Mr. McGovern shared an experience he had in February when a parent died and may have been saved if there were a defibrillator on site. The Superintendent was heard. Mr. Fantini raised a question on having health care training for all employees. On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to refer the foregoing motion to the Superintendent for a report back to the Committee.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Lummis, it was voted to refer the following motion to the Superintendent to evaluate and to bring back a recommendation on the program: **#04-061, Motion by Mayor Sullivan** that the Superintendent be and hereby is requested to coordinate with the City Manager and investigate the Ridgewood, New Jersey initiative entitled "Ready, Set, Relax," which seeks to promote the concept of family time by establishing a day each year that is uninterrupted by extracurricular activities, homework, and parent and community meetings and events and report back to the School Committee on the feasibility of instituting such an annual observance in Cambridge.

Mr. Grassi moved that the following be placed on the Calendar: **#04-065, Motion by Ms. Walser** that the Cambridge School Committee request that the Massachusetts House of Representatives approve H. 4570, an Act Relating to the Eligibility of Certain Persons to Qualify as Residents of this State for the Purposes of Higher Education Tuition.

At this time, the Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent for a presentation on Benchmarks.

The Superintendent gave a summary of the presentation and shared that the benchmark report will become the new Student Data Report. Dr. Fowler-Finn introduced Maryann Macdonald, Executive Director of Student Achievement and Accountability and Jeff LaPlante, Chief Technology Officer. Mr. LaPlante spoke to the data warehouse and the source of the data. Ms. MacDonald walked Members through the following presentation:

#### **Process of Developing Benchmarks**

Principals worked in sub-groups - October 03-January 04  
Reviewed and revised Fort Wayne Community Schools models at elementary, middle and high school  
Principals shared with staff and site councils and gave feedback  
Curriculum coordinators reviewed benchmarks and gave feedback  
Revisions made  
On going meetings with SAA office, Kathi Ivins and Jeff LaPlante to develop data warehouse

#### **What is the content?**

##### **Academic Achievement Data**

- MCAS (3-10) including alternate MCAS assessments for special education students
- Early Literacy Assessment in reading and writing (K-2)
- Developmental Reading Assessment (3-5) 2004-2005
- Report card grades (6-12)

- Course failure rates (6-12)
- SAT
- PSAT
- AP (course enrollment and exam pass rates)
- Eighth grade portfolio presentations 2004-2005

#### **School Climate Information**

- Discipline report
- Attendance
- Effective School Battery results (teachers K-12, students 6-12)
- Parent participation in Student Conferences (K-8)
- Student participation in school sponsored extra curricula activities (9-12)
- Staff participation as advisors, sponsors, coaches in extra curricula activities (9-12)

#### **Assessments for English Language Learners**

- MELA-O (English Proficiency testing for English Language Learners)
- LAS R/W (English testing in reading and writing for ELL students)
- MEPA R/W (Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment in Reading and Writing for ELL students)

#### **RSTA Indicators**

- COP - Certificate of Occupational Proficiency (RSTA seniors)
- RSTA field placement

#### **Graduation Indicators CRLS**

- MCAS Competency Determination
- Graduation rate
- Dropout rate
- Career certification (RSTA)

#### **How will this document address closing the achievement gap?**

Sub-groups are those defined by NCLB

- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Lunch
- Special Education
- LEP

Gap between groups is measured if there are more than 20 students in a group (Mass DOE guidelines)

Similar to the analysis of Effective School Battery results

Look at scores of sub-groups in comparison to white students

#### **How/when will benchmark information be reported?**

Information will be stored in data warehouse

Most will be reported in June - end of school year data

Effective School Battery - Fall - alternate years CRLS/elementary schools

MCAS information - Fall

Dropout information - from DOE

#### **How will information be used in planning?**

Benchmark reports issued for the district and each school in July- updated in early fall

Superintendent and administrators will use data in district planning

Principals will use the information in School Improvement Planning  
Data will be updated annually to see how the district and schools are progressing

The Chair recognized and welcomed Student Representatives Conway and Leslie.

The Superintendent, Ms. MacDonald and Mr. LaPlante responded to Members questions/comments/concerns that were raised and discussed:

- How often are benchmarks used
- Public needs to know how we are stepping out in different directions
- Why isn't Honors course enrollment included
- Will Honors course be included as an indicator
- What is Early Literacy Assessment
- How do we know how individual grades are doing
- Would it be helpful to have white students in gap indicators and what percentages they're performing at
- Don't lose sight of small groups of students
- This is a monumental task and is crucial to our moving in a different direction
- Were there any comparisons of benchmarks to other districts
- Will there be comparisons to other school systems when the data comes back to the Committee
- We need a report card on ourselves - when we compare ourselves to other districts we do very well
- Are there gaps within subgroups
- How do we raise the bar for all children

In response to a question, The Superintendent introduced Joe Ciccolo, Acting Executive Director of RSTA, who was heard regarding RSTA Indicators: COP - Certificate of Occupational Proficiency (RSTA seniors) and RSTA Field Placement.

- This is cutting edge and courageous
- School councils and parents need to be made aware of what we are doing
- Looking forward to getting information in the fall
- How are gaps identified and what do they mean
- What is the difference between primary indicators and secondary indicators
- Challenge is going to be durability and effecting long-term change
- What kind of movement will be seen over what kind of time period
- Where is portfolio measurement in the document
- Would like to see measurement of parent satisfaction with schools
- This will change our system dramatically for the better
- Legislators should take this document and use it as an example for MCAS - this State has test scores, not an assessment system

The Chair welcomed Mayor Sullivan who requested and received unanimous consent to be recorded in the affirmative on all votes taken this evening.

The Chair recognized Adrienne Leslie who introduced her mother. Ms. Leslie raised a question on benchmarks. Ms. MacDonald was heard.

- Will benchmarks measure a different group of students each year
- How is longitudinal progress shown
- Will report cards be redesigned to show longitudinal progress

- Will somebody be watching “little Johnny”
- Will there be a correlation between benchmarks and individual success
- What information will be sent to parents
- Could these assessments stifle creativity with so many benchmarks to meet
- What are “authentic assessments”
- What language is being used in our data base
- Some difficulties have been failure to pay attention - benchmarks are checks and balances
- Don't lose sight of every student's being important to us
- Encourage Principals to get results out in the fall
- Include more benchmarks on parent participation

The Members thanked the Superintendent and staff for their hard work and for the presentation.

### Late Orders

Mr. McGovern moved that the Superintendent look into and work with the appropriate unions on the feasibility of having staff trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Mr. Grassi moved a friendly amendment that the Superintendent investigate the possibility of having a required class at CRLS as has been done in other communities such as Seattle, Washington. Mr. McGovern accepted Mr. Grassi's amendment. On a voice vote Mr. McGovern's motion was accepted as amended.

Mayor Sullivan raised a question on items on Awaiting Report and asked the Secretary to poll Members on which requests should be removed.

The Members wished the Superintendent a happy birthday.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, it was voted that the School Committee send a letter to Bridget Rodriguez, Morse School Principal, thanking her for her tremendous service to the Cambridge Public Schools and extending best wishes on her being accepted to a doctoral program at Harvard.

Mr. Lummis urged his colleagues as well as the public to attend a celebration and presentation of technology enhanced curriculum development on May 20 from 4-7 at CRLS. Mr. Lummis also urged community members to participate in portfolio presentations.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, it was voted that the Mayor and the Superintendent will schedule a follow-up retreat with Paul McGowan.

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to send letters of congratulations to the following winners of the National Fair Housing Awards:

**Essay Contest Award Winners:** 1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Alex Cherenfant, Jr., 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Morse School; 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: Kendall Allen, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Morse School; 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: Soosun You, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Morse School.

**Poster Contest Award Winners:** 1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Elizabeth Amado, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Amigos School; 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: Julia Feld, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Graham & Parks School; 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: Julia Kantor, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, Graham & Parks School; 4<sup>th</sup> Prize: Paula Nistal, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Graham & Parks School; 5<sup>th</sup> Prize: Jared Spencer, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Graham & Parks School.

The Superintendent was heard regarding the terrific science exposition hosted by MIT last Tuesday and thanked students, volunteers, police, fire, conservation et al for their participation.

The Chair also thanked Biogen for its participation.

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

Adjourned  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee