

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Mr. Price, Ms. Turkel, 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.

Presentation of the Records

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Ms. Turkel, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the following meeting:

- Regular Meeting - April 15, 2003

Public Comment on School Committee Agenda

The following individuals were heard:

- Leslie Brunetta, Roberts Road, King Open parent re bus policy
- Cheryl Kennedy, Lopez St., Parent re public information agenda; sign-up sheet; grant awards
- Tina Alu, Pleasant St., Assoc. Director, CEOC re Walser motion on transportation

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to close Public Comment.

Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members: None

Superintendent's Consent Agenda

Ms. Walser moved, seconded by Mr. Grassi, for adoption of Superintendent's Recommendations #03-105 through #03-110. Mayor Sullivan removed #03-105 to be taken up in Executive Session. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#03-106, Contract for Legal Services Seyfarth Shaw LLP, Attorneys: that the School Committee approve a contract extension for fiscal year 2003-2004, to the following firm: Seyfarth Shaw, World Trade Ctr. East, Two Seaport Lane, Suite 300, Boston, MA 02210. For the Period of August 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004, in the amounts of Principals/Partners \$290.00; Associates not to exceed \$250.00; Paralegals not to exceed \$125.00; Total not to Exceed \$63,715.00, for providing legal services as needed by the Cambridge Public Schools at the hourly rates and for the period indicated. This Contract is for Legal services provided by outside legal counsel, primarily for labor negotiations (including impact bargaining), and other labor matters.

#03-107, Special Needs Contracts for Educational Services not available in the Cambridge Public Schools: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions named below in amounts not to

exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the State Rate Setting Commission, funds to be provided from the general fund budget.

6 contracts	LABB Collaborative, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington;	\$235,002.00
3 contracts	Holden School, 8 Pearl Street, Charlestown;	106,791.24
3 contracts	Gifford School, 177 Boston Post Road, Weston;	112,176.75
1 contract	Judge Baker Children's Center, 3 Blackfan Circle, Boston;	44,532.25
4 contracts	Learning Center for Deaf Children, 848 Central Street, Framingham;	204,747.95
5 contracts	Cotting School, 453 Concord Avenue, Lexington;	228,025.68
1 contract	Latham School, P.O. Box 1879, 1646 Route 6A, Brewster;	64,046.10
3 contracts	Farr Academy, 71 Pearl Street, Cambridge;	152,992.17
3 contracts	Italian Home for Children, 1125 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain;	121,792.99
4 contracts	Landmark School, P.O. Box 227, Prides Crossing;	130,225.88
<u>7 contracts</u>	Learning Prep School, P.O. Box 650205, West Newton.	<u>157,608.43</u>
40 contracts		\$1,557,941.44

#03-108, Approval of Home Schooling Applications for School Year 2003/2004: that the School Committee approve the home school applications for the 2003-2004 school year. The report includes information pertaining to the students whose families are seeking approval to educate their children at home.

#03-109, Consultant Agreements: that the School Committee approve consultant agreements with the companies or individuals in the amounts set forth, funds to be provided as shown:

1. Lillian Cho, Brookline, in the amount of \$15,082.20, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 820132, prog. 132;
2. Lesley University, Cambridge, in the amount of \$50,000.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 852335, prog. 335.

#03-110, Grant Awards FY03-04: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant awards named below in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. SPED Early Childhood Allocation, project/grant SC04607, in the amount of \$59,250.00 (Entitlement), for the period of September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004. The purpose of these funds is to support the placement of the majority of young children with special needs in quality integrated programs following the federal and state requirements of least restrictive environment.
2. Kindergarten Enhancement Program, project/grant SC04663, in the amount of \$328,000.00 (Entitlement), for the period of July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004. Cambridge continues, through the Kindergarten Grant, to provide support for kindergarten and first grade teachers in the areas of literacy and inclusion. The importance of continuity of curriculum across the grades to support transitions is significant. The workshops provided teachers with an opportunity to enhance their skills in specific areas. Guided Reading by Kindergarten and Writer's Workshop for Kindergarten

were offered as 20 hour workshops attended by kindergarten teachers as well as kindergarten support staff, including Early Childhood Resource Specialists. These workshops were designed to enhance classroom practice and support the implementation of a balanced literacy model in primary classroom.

3. SPED Program Improvement, project/grant SC04674, in the amount of \$52,506.00 (Entitlement), for the period of September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004. This grant supports professional development and training activities to improve the understanding of educators in teaching and learning reading. Also, the grant supports training activities for parents and educators in using the DOE IEP form and process.
4. 21st Century Community Learning, project/grant SC04743, in the amount of \$50,000.00 (Competitive), for the period of September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004. The Out-of-School Time Initiative has as its goal that all Cambridge children and youth will have equal access to safe, stimulating, nurturing and healthful out-of-school time activities in order to ensure optimal academic performance and overall healthy development.
5. Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, project/grant SC04763, in the amount of \$15,180.00 (Competitive), for the period of July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004. These funds will support two high school science teachers who will redesign the school's 9th grade physics curriculum with a new focus on wind turbine engineering while teaching electromagnetism and energy conservation. The teachers are also collaborating with staff from MIT's Edgerton Center and will build wind turbine systems that can be operated from the school to make the materials visible to students.

Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Price YEA, Ms. Turkel YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business

The Members passed over Unfinished Business.

School Committee Consent Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Price, it was voted to adopt items #1 through #5, as follows:

- 1, **Motion by Mayor Sullivan** that the School Committee send a letter to Barbara Black, Director of Development and Assessment, congratulating her on her retirement.
- 2, **Motion by Ms. Walser** that: Whereas, transportation by bus to school is statistically safer than walking; and whereas, Cambridge has become a more dangerous place to walk as traffic has increased, it is requested that the administration investigate the cost and feasibility of offering transportation to any kindergartner and/or any primary grade student who needs it. Further, that the administration also consider decreasing the walk-zone from one mile to 1/2 or 1/4 mile, which would increase the number of young children eligible for the bus. Further, that the administration strongly considers changing the current bus policy to allow children to ride to after-school programs, even if the after-school location is within a walk zone.
- 3, **Report of the April 24, 2003 Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Superintendency** (Committee of the Whole).

Called by Mayor Michael A. Sullivan, acting in Accordance with Chapter I, Section 3 of the Rules of the School Committee for 4:00 p.m. at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 136 Irving Street, Cambridge, for the Purpose of considering and interviewing applicants as part of its preliminary screening.

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

Also present: Barbara Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

A quorum of the school committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

On the following roll call, it was voted to convene in Executive Session for the purpose stated: Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Price YEA, Ms. Turkel YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Executive Session

The Chair gave an overview of the process for the evening. The Members interviewed two candidates for the position of Superintendent of Schools.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Price, it was voted to adjourn (9:20 p.m.)

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

4, Report of the April 25, 2003 Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Superintendency (Committee of the Whole).

Called by Mayor Michael A. Sullivan, acting in Accordance with Chapter I, Section 3 of the Rules of the School Committee for 4:00 p.m. at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 136 Irving Street, Cambridge, for the purpose of considering and interviewing applicants as part of its preliminary screening.

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

Also present: Barbara Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

A quorum of the school committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

On the following roll call, it was voted to convene in Executive Session for the purpose stated: Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Price YEA, Ms. Turkel YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Executive Session

The Chair gave an overview of the process for the evening. The Members interviewed three candidates for the position of Superintendent of Schools.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to adjourn (10:55 p.m.)

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

5, Report of the April 29, 2003 Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Superintendency
(Committee of the Whole).

Called by Mayor Michael A. Sullivan, acting in Accordance with Chapter I, Section 3 of the Rules of the School Committee for 6:00 p.m. in the Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge & Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of considering applicants as part of its preliminary screening.

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Mr. Price, Ms. Turkel, 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 6:30 p.m.

On the following roll call, it was voted to convene in Executive Session for the purpose stated:
Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Price YEA, Ms. Turkel YEA, Ms. Walser YEA,
Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Executive Session

Also present: Barbara Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources.

The Chair gave an overview of the process for hiring the Superintendent of Schools. The Members discussed candidates, reviewed credentials and identified finalist candidates for the Superintendent of Schools.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to adjourn (6:35 p.m.)

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

Late Orders

On a motion by Mayor Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Fantini, on a voice vote, the following was adopted:
That copies of the School Committee agendas be delivered to each of the schools and a copy be left on a table to be set up at the School Committee meeting.

On a motion by Mayor Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Fantini, on a voice vote, the following was adopted:
That a sign-up table be set up during the School Committee meetings for those who wish to sign up to speak.

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent. The Superintendent introduced Maryann MacDonald, Director of Student Achievement and Accountability who walked Members through a presentation on Follow-Up Data Regarding CRLS SAT Results 2003.

Ms. Turkel in the Chair.

Members raised some questions and comments including the following:

- What happened that we are just getting back to where we were in 1999
- What kind of score is synonymous with a good high school
- What is meant by the bottom 2/5ths of the class
- What is the goal for 100% participation of seniors taking the SAT
- Are meetings with parents individual or group meetings

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair

- Does the advising program have any role
- How will this data be used to improve teaching
- Be wary where certain populations get grouped
- De facto segregation starts with unequal distribution of students
- Are college prep classes available to seniors
- What are some examples of dead end courses
- Do not teach to the PSAT or the SAT
- Provide test prep courses during the school day
- What stemmed the decline in scores over the past year
- Scores could be significantly higher
- What is the status of the advising program
- What needs to be done to achieve high goals referred to by the Superintendent
- How does CRLS compare to surrounding towns
- Guidance Department should come up with a position statement on scores
- There is a lot of good news that needs to be publicized
- School Committee needs to be in the loop regarding major changes
- It's disappointing that communication isn't happening
- What will happen to the Man-to-Man program
- Advising needs to be replaced with some other activity, e.g. drama
- What can be expected in the place of Advising
- CRLS redesign looks very different from what was voted
- CRLS needs to be put on front burner, need to regroup and assess where we are and where we are going
- Need to insure curriculum and courses are in place
- A workshop is needed to discuss the vision for the high school

The Superintendent; Dr. Knight, CRLS Principal; Ms. Hunter, CRLS Assistant Principal; Ms. Wamness, former Lead Guidance Counselor and Dean of Curriculum and Program, School 5, responded to the questions and comments raised by Members.

The Members congratulated the Superintendent and his team on the increase in scores and thanked them for the presentation.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Price, on the following roll call, it was voted to convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy for collective bargaining, discussing litigation strategy and for contract negotiation with non-union personnel. The Chair announced that no votes will

be taken and the Committee will reconvene in open session: Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Price YEA, Ms. Turkel YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini ABSENT, Mr. Grassi ABSENT, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Executive Session

Members present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Mr. Price, Ms. Turkel, 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 matters pertaining to contract negotiation with non-union personnel, strategy for collective bargaining, and litigation strategy with Legal Counsel. No votes were taken.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to reconvene in open session.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

The Chair announced no votes were taken in Executive Session. On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Mr. Price, on a voice vote, the following item was adopted: **#03-105, Response to Cambridge Teachers Association Level III Grievances**: that the School Committee approve the Superintendent's Recommendation relative to the Level III Grievance responses to the Cambridge Teachers Association in accordance with WR03-05(E).

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Turkel, it was voted to adjourn (9:55 p.m.)

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee