

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, October 7, 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 Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Price, it was voted to accept as presented, the Minutes of the following meetings:

- Special Meeting - September 22, 2003
- Regular Meeting - September 16, 2003
- Regular Meeting - September 2, 2003
- Special Meeting - May 2, 2003
- Special Meeting - April 15, 2003

Public Comment on School Committee Agenda

The following individual was heard:

- Bruce Silverman, re PASTE Budget follow-up

On a motion by Mr. Price, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend Mr. Silverman's time to speak.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Price, 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 Ms. Turkel, for adoption of Superintendent's Recommendations #03-111 through #03-118. Mayor Sullivan removed #03-118 to be taken up in Executive Session. Mr. Grassi removed #03-117. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#03-111, That the School Committee approve the recommendation to cancel the School Committee Meeting on November 4, 2003 because it is Election Day.

#03-112, Request for Travel: that the School Committee approve the request for travel for Doug McGlathery, Teacher, in the amount of \$571.00; and Jaye Alper, Teacher, in the amount of \$571.00, total not to exceed \$1,142.00 to attend the NECC Conference, in Seattle, Washington, June 29 - July 2, 2003.

#03-113, 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.

#03-114, Special Needs Contracts for Educational Services not available from the Cambridge School Department: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions named 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.

1 contract	Landmark School, PO Box 227, Prides Crossing;	\$32,556.47
7 contracts	Judge Baker Children's Center, 3 Blackfan Circle, Boston;	299,298.58
1 contract	Castle School, 298 Harvard Street, Cambridge;	26,132.48
1 contract	Clearway School, Inc., 61 Chestnut Street, West Newton;	26,749.54
6 contracts	Schools for Children, Inc., 20 Academy Street, Arlington;	257,013.25
1 contract	Compass, 26 Sunnyside Street, Jamaica Plain;	34,766.97
6 contracts	May Institute, PO Box 847240, Boston;	413,764.66
1 contract	Italian Home for Children, 1125 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain;	49,099.05
1 contract	Lakeside School, 629 Lowell Street, Peabody;	21,466.42
7 contracts	Bay Cove Human Services, Inc., 66 Canal Street, Boston;	330,239.63
1 contract	May Center Arlington, 10 Acton Street, Arlington;	52,145.88
1 contract	Farr Academy, 71 Pearl Street, Cambridge;	52,353.92
1 contract	Project Spoke, PO Box Z, Norton;	47,153.00
2 contracts	Carroll School, 25 Baker Bridge Road, Lincoln;	42,996.18
<u>9 contracts</u>	<u>Lighthouse School, 25 Wellman Avenue, North Chelmsford.</u>	<u>408,856.08</u>
46 contracts		\$2,094,592.11

#03-115, 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. Center for Collaborative Education, Boston, in the amount of \$45,000.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 820148, prog.148, project/grant SC03740;
2. Michelle Dorman, Cambridge, in the amount of \$9,500.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 824148, prog. 148, project/grant SC04701;
3. Education Inc., Plymouth, in the amount of \$13,175.00, account 53201, fund 15000, org. 830250, prog. 250; and in the amount of \$10,000.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 852310, prog. 310;
4. Suzanne Hoag, Somerville, in the amount of \$5,776.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 849901, prog. 901;

5. Stephanie Julien, Cambridge, in the amount of \$8,000.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 824147, prog. 147;
6. Nefretiri Lopez, Cambridge, in the amount of \$7,155.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 815148, prog. 148, SC03702;
7. Arthur Martins, Somerville, in the amount of \$7,500.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org 854631, prog. 631;
8. Ucal Mckenzie, Dorchester, in the amount of \$5,776.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 849901, prog. 901;
9. Jean Monaghan, Cambridge, in the amount of \$9,500.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 824148, prog. 148, project/grant SC04701;
10. New England Conservatory, Boston, in the amount of \$10,000.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 846130, prog. 130, project/grant SC04695; and in the amount of \$16,263.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 846625, prog. 625, project/grant SC03755;
11. Joseph Pagliaro, Cambridge, in the amount of \$5,776.00, account 53101; fund 15000, org. 849901, prog. 901;
12. Evangeline Stefanakis, Cambridge, in the amount of \$9,500.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 815155, prog. 155;
13. Gail Stein, Brookline, in the amount of \$10,000.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 830255, prog. 255;
14. Ayesha Wilson, Cambridge, in the amount of \$9,500.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 824147, prog. 147;
15. Rob Winograd, Brookline, in the amount \$5,776.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 849901, prog. 901.

#03-116, Service Agreements: that the School Committee approve agreements with the following individuals as indicated in the amount set forth, funds to be provided as shown:

1. Alison Barr, Boston, in the amount of \$12,000.00, account 51201, fund 15000, org. 824147, prog. 147;
2. Dorothy Brown, Cambridge, in the amount of \$7,000.00, account 51201, fund 15000, org. 824147, prog. 147
3. Charlotte Clements, Woburn, in the amount of \$11,500.00, account 51112, fund 25000, org. 824148, prog. 148, project/grant SC04701;
4. Scott Cody, Cambridge, in the amount of \$5,776.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 849901, prog. 901;
5. Kwame Dixon, Cranston, RI, in the amount of \$8,657.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 849901, prog. 901;
6. Irv Dotten, Malden, in the amount of \$6,500.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 824148, prog. 148, project/grant SC04701;

7. Leslie Feeley-Brooks, Newton, in the amount of \$9,000.00, account 51201, fund 15000, org. 824147, prog. 147;
8. Nicole Hinostro, Cambridge, in the amount of \$5,776.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 849901, prog. 901;
9. Edward James, Cambridge, in the amount of \$9,000.00 account 53101, fund 25000, org. 824148, prog. 148; project/grant SC04701;
10. Brigida Jimenez, Cambridge, in the amount of \$5,654.00, account 57105, fund 15000, org. 815155, prog. 155;
11. Robert Maguire, Arlington, in the amount of \$5,776.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 849901, prog. 901
12. Carmen Mendes, Boston, in the amount of \$6,000.00, account 51201, fund 15000, org. 824147, prog.147;
13. Sherrienne Riley, Cambridge, in the amount of \$8,600.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 824148, prog. 148, project/grant SC04701;
14. Theron West, Chelsea, in the amount of \$6,600.00, account 51201, fund 15000, org. 824147, prog. 147.

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

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business

Mr. Harding asked the Superintendent if he is familiar with Awaiting Report #1, "...what steps, if any, she (sic) has taken on our Affirmative Action Plan in light of ed reform". The Superintendent was heard in the affirmative.

School Committee Consent Agenda

Ms. Walser moved, seconded by Mr. Grassi, for adoption of items #1 through #7. Ms. Walser removed #3, 4 and 7. Mr. Grassi removed #5. Mr. Harding removed #1. On a voice vote the remaining items were adopted:

#2, Motion by Ms. Turkel that the Superintendent review the policy on eligibility for riding school buses with particular attention to walking barriers. Further, that the Superintendent advise the School Committee as to whether heavily trafficked streets such as Hampshire Street, River Street and Western Avenue should be added to the list of walking barriers.

#6, Report of the April 29, 2003 Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole).

Called for the purpose of a workshop on the proposed FY2003-2004 School Department Budget.

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

Ms. Turkel in the Chair

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Acting Superintendent. The Superintendent made an opening statement and turned the meeting over to Mr. Conry who walked Members through two versions of the "Superintendent's Proposed Fiscal Year 2003-2004 Budget" - one with a consolidation plan and one without.

Members raised questions and comments as follows:

- What process is being used in discussions with Principals
- Will guidelines be established to receive contingency funding
- Is there an estimate on grant money expected and how will it be distributed by school
- Need a list of grants with breakdown by school
- Which schools will be Title I
- Communications person is vital - funds need to be reallocated in the budget
- What is the thinking re charging pre-school tuition and will this change the dynamics and culture of the school
- Is tuition below private pre-school tuition
- What is projected number of professional staff that will be kept
- How many non-professional status teachers are on staff
- The concept of an alternative high school is needed
- Out-of-district special education placements are very high - benchmark with other districts
- Confirm with Community Development Department that enrollment is still high according to the Census 10 years ago
- Has there been a ruling on Educational Collaborative
- Does it make sense to let teachers go when we hire 50-60 teachers every year
- What is the average number of teachers hired
- Adjust budget to place young teachers in schools to retain them to protect our investment
- Not in favor of charging Special Start tuition
- What are Principals allowed to do re site-based management funds
- What is the status of physical education funding
- Will special education children opt out of Special Start program if tuition is charged
- What is Central office and what defines it
- Need a pie chart that compares 01-02 to 02-03
- When can a report be expected that shows non-teaching positions
- Need a better understanding of why increase in special education tuition is so high
- Director of Communications needs to be put in budget
- How will the needs of those children suspended out of school be addressed in the budget
- Need a program to address at-risk children in the district
- Where is plan in budget to address the issue of the 110 students not meeting requirements
- How are individuals evaluated who teach remediation on a part-time basis
- The best teachers in the system are needed to teach remediation - structure needs to be in the budget - process and fill in the blanks later
- If teachers are not teaching, what are they doing
- What is the status of funding for summer school program to support students failing two or more courses
- How much flexibility does new Superintendent have to make changes and re-deploy funds

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting to 10:30.

It was agreed that the matter of scheduling be referred to the Superintendent, the Chair and Vice Chair.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to adjourn (10:05 p.m.).

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

At this time the Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent. The Superintendent introduced Maryann MacDonald, Acting Executive Director of Student Achievement and Accountability. Ms. Mac Donald was joined by Barbara Van Sickle, Acting Director of Student Achievement and Accountability; Fletcher/Maynard Principal and Assistant Principal Robin Harris and Margaret Silverio; King School Assistant Principal Marlon Davis; CRLS Principal Sybil Knight; Curriculum Coordinators Melanie Barron, Sue Watt and Maurice Page, who will be available to answer any questions or comments Members may have after the presentation. Ms. MacDonald walked Members through the "Spring 2003 MCAS Summary of Results":

- District results - ELA, Math, Science
- Comparison of sub-groups of students
- Three year trends
- Competency determination - Class of 2004 and 2005
- Appendix

Competency determination was described as the term the State uses to determine whether or not a student passed the MCAS graduation requirement. Ms. MacDonald pointed out that our scores have increased considerably in the past three years. King, King Open and Fletcher/Maynard Academy were invited to the Commissioner of Education's press release because of the significant increase in their math scores. Principals Harris, Davis and Groves were invited to tonight's meeting by the Superintendent to be congratulated for their schools' improvement. Cambridgeport, Morse and Peabody showed a significant increase in their science scores and also need to be congratulated.

Ms. Turkel asked the Principals and representatives of Fletcher/Maynard Academy, King and King Open Schools to speak to what they feel was significant in increasing their results. Marlon Davis, Robin Harris and Margaret Silverio were heard.

The Members thanked Ms. MacDonald for the timely presentation and applauded the Principals for their commitment, hard work and dedication and asked that they go back to their schools and extend the Committee's appreciation to teachers, students and everyone involved.

Some of the following questions and comments were raised by Members:

- Look at why some children are moving in the wrong direction.
- Declines should be highlighted as well as improvements
- If our subgroups are better than the State, why is our overall average so low compared to the State and district
- Need to talk to the Commissioner regarding appeals
- Is there a rule of thumb in what can realistically be expected in percentage increases
- Look at trends to see how shortfalls will be addressed
- Look at trends for free and reduced lunch, special education, English-as-a-second language
- Identify areas that have glowing shortfalls
- Have budget cuts been supplemented by our own funding
- Remove obstacles to provide funding for academic classes
- Appreciate continuing support for students who are out of school

- Need final report on students who did not graduate last year - how many and where are they
- Turn around time for scores is too long for results to be used as a diagnostic tool
- Use reports to work with Central office and classroom teachers
- Alignment with the State curriculum frameworks is key
- Are there best practices at some schools that should be replicated
- Do some schools use home-grown curriculum
- Need to see some longitudinal data
- Communicate data to parents and put it on report cards
- Focus on professional development
- We cannot win the confidence battle without good test scores
- When is it appropriate to report an exam score and how is it reported
- Need to have a school system where standards are high for everybody
- When should the School Committee reconvene to look at progress of graduating class

The Superintendent and staff responded to some of the Members questions and comments.

Mr. Harding raised a question on the use of the "Other Black" category. Ms. MacDonald said that a prior School Committee requested the use of "Other Black" to distinguish students of African descent who may not speak English from African American students. Mr. Price asked Kathy Reddick, Cambridge NAACP President, to speak to the history of the separation of "black" and "other black" categories. Ms. Reddick said that the "Other Black" category originated with a former Superintendent and School Committee. Ms. Reddick further stated that the NAACP does not use "other Black" because it is not used on Federal forms. The Superintendent was heard in support of using the categories used on the Census and other Federal forms.

Superintendent Non Consent Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, on the following roll call, **#03-117, Grant Awards, FY03-04**, was adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant awards named below in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Even Start, Project/Grant SC04610, in the amount of \$81,100.00, for the period of September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004. This is a continuation grant that integrates and coordinates home-based early childhood education and parenting education services for 20 high-risk Cambridge families. The project is a partnership between the Community Learning Center and CPS.
2. McKinney Homeless, Project/Grant SC04707, in the amount of \$55,808.00, for the period of September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004. This grant provides support for approximately 240 homeless families living in Cambridge with children attending our schools. This includes assistance with medical and mental health support agencies, and bus and train passes, clothing and school supplies.
3. MIT/CPS Education For The Environment Program, Project/Grant SC04732, in the amount of \$10,000.00, for the period of July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004. This continuation grant will support a science teacher involved in the Environmental Project between CPS and MIT for this academic school year.
4. Enhanced Education Through Technology, Project/Grant SC04741, in the amount of \$72,320.00, for the period of September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004. This grant will be used to expand a K-12 professional development model using Collaborative Design Teams designed to effectively use technology to promote teaching for understanding.
5. 21st Century Comm. Learning, Project/Grant SC04743, in the amount of \$225,000.00, for the period of September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004. This grant supports Math, Language Arts and

Science enrichment activities at eight Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) providing after-school and vacation period services to Cambridge students. CBOs are “partners” with 3 elementary schools (King Open, Fletcher-Maynard, King) to coordinate academic needs and services. The grant will fund training and professional development for CBO staff and participating CPS administrators on-site curriculum and materials support from Academic Enrichment Partners (Children’s Museum, Children’s Literacy Initiative, Young Peoples’ Project), as well as instructional materials and software.

6. Reading First Program, Project/Grant, SC04764, in the amount of \$190,000.00, for the period of September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004. The purpose of the Reading First grant is to provide assistance to the Haggerty School in establishing K-3 reading programs, based on scientific reading research. Teachers and Paraprofessionals will receive intensive training, and reading materials will be purchased from the grant.

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

School Committee Non Consent Agenda

- #1, Letter from Ms. Rachel Finkel**, Lesley College student, regarding disproportionate number of African American teachers at Cambridge Rindge and Latin. Mr. Harding pointed out that the subject of Ms. Finkel’s letter is an example of why we need to look at the Affirmative Action report to see where we are with teacher hiring. On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to refer Ms. Finkel’s letter to the Superintendent.
- #3, Motion by Mr. Harding** that the Superintendent provide an update on the hiring of a Principal for the King School. Further, that the update include the process and timeline for hiring. Ms. Walser thanked Mr. Harding for bringing in this motion and moved a friendly amendment that the update include the Principal of the Graham & Parks School. On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Harding, the foregoing motion was adopted as amended.
- #4, Motion by Ms. Walser** that the School Committee send a letter congratulating Councilor E. Denise Simmons for being nominated to receive the Massachusetts Association of School Committees’ Life Membership Award for her many contributions to the Association and to the children of the Commonwealth. Ms. Walser congratulated Councilor Simmons and asked Mr. Price to bring the MASC Resolutions to the next meeting. On a voice vote, the foregoing motion was adopted.
- #5, Motion by Mr. Grassi** that, since the Advising program has been discontinued, the School Committee ask the Superintendent of Schools to confer with the high school Principal requiring all students to participate in one extra-curricular activity during each school year. The School Committee recognizes the importance of connecting students to adults as well as building student relationships with each other; further, CRLS already has in place a structure for extra-curricular activities that are offered to all students free of charge. Mr. Grassi moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini, an amendment that the Superintendent bring back his recommendation on the foregoing motion. Members discussed the pros and cons of an extracurricular activity being required. It was pointed out that the motion is just for a recommendation. On a voice vote, the foregoing motion was adopted as amended.
- #7, Report of the May 1, 2003 Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Budget** (Committee of the Whole). On a motion by Ms. Walser, it was voted to refer the above report back to the Secretary for correction.

Late Orders

Mr. Price requested an update on the progress of getting new microphones.

On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted that the Superintendent provide the School Committee with an update on the hiring of an Executive Director for RSTA.

The Chair entertained a motion to extend the meeting for the purpose of convening in Executive Session. On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting past 10:00.

#03-118, Request for Executive Session: that the School Committee go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations. On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Mr. Price, on the following roll call, it was voted to convene in Executive Session for the purpose stated. The Chair announced that no votes will be taken and the Committee will not reconvene in Open Session: Mr. Price YEA, Ms. Turkel YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Executive Session

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

Ms. Turkel in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 8:15.

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 Goals Statements 2003-2004 with the Superintendent.

At this time, Mayor Sullivan joined the meeting.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

Members discussed strategy for contract negotiation with Legal Counsel. No votes were taken.

On a motion by Mr. Price, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adjourn (10:05 p.m.)

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee