

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, October 19, 2004

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

Student Representatives: Littane Bien-Aimie, James Conway, Krishana House, Spenser Skates

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategies for collective bargaining and litigation strategy. On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Harding, on the following roll call, it was voted to convene in Executive Session for the purpose stated: Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi ~~ABSENT~~ YEA, Mr. Harding ~~ABSENT~~ YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA. The Chair announced that no votes will be taken in Executive Session and the Committee will reconvene in Open Session.

Executive Session

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

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

Also Present: Thomas Fowler-Finn, Superintendent
Carolyn Turk, Deputy Superintendent
James Conry, Chief Financial Officer
Maureen MacFarlane, Legal Counsel
James Maloney, Chief Operating Officer

Members discussed litigation strategy and strategies for collective bargaining with Legal Counsel; and discussed a draft of goals with the Superintendent. No votes were taken.

It was voted to reconvene in Open Session.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

A quorum being present, the Chair reconvened the meeting and announced that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Mr. Grassi, requested, and received, unanimous consent to be recorded in the affirmative on the earlier roll call vote.

Presentation of the Records

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

- Special Informal Meeting - September 21, 2004

Public Comment on School Committee Agenda

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

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to remove Calendar item #04-134, Eighth Grade Graduation Policy, and substitute it with #04-144. On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Grassi, on the following roll call, **#04-144, Eighth Grade Graduation Policy**, was adopted as follows: The Cambridge School Committee and the Cambridge Public Schools are committed to having the elementary school within its school district operate for 180 days as required by the state and to ensure that all elementary school students are scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours of structured learning time per school year as required by the Massachusetts Department of Education regulations. Accordingly, consistent with these commitments, it is the policy of the Cambridge School Committee and Cambridge Public School Department that all eighth grade students be required to attend school for 180 days and be scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours of structured learning time per school. Consistent with this policy eighth grade graduation exercises that are scheduled by an elementary school, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools and the Office of the School Committee, must be scheduled no earlier than the 178th day of school and be scheduled in such a manner to ensure that eighth grade students return to school on the 179th and 180th days of their eighth grade year.

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

Mr. Harding requested, and received, unanimous consent to be recorded in the affirmative on the earlier roll call vote.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to remove Calendar item #04-135, Policy on Participation in MCAS, and substitute it with #04-149. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Grassi, on the following roll call, **#04-149, Policy on Participation in MCAS**, was adopted as follows: The Cambridge School Committee and the Cambridge Public Schools recognize that Massachusetts state law requires the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) to be administered to public school students. Furthermore, federal law as well as state regulations require student participation in statewide assessments as one of the criteria for determining adequate yearly progress for both individual schools and the school district as a whole. The Cambridge School Committee and the Cambridge Public Schools further recognize the requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation and state law and regulations make it necessary, unless an express statutory exemption applies, for all students in grades in which the examination is administered to participate in the MCAS.

This policy of the Cambridge School Committee supercedes all prior orders and policies of the Cambridge School Committee with respect to the administration of the MCAS and the participation of students in the MCAS.

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

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

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

New Business

Mr. Grassi moved, seconded by Ms. Walser, for adoption of items #04-145 through #04-152. Ms. Walser removed #04-152. Mr. Lummis removed #04-150. On the following roll call, excluding #04-151, Approval of School Improvement Plans 2004/2006, the remaining items were adopted as follows:

#04-145, 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.

#04-146, Approval of Settlement of Petition Pending Before American Arbitration Association: that the School Committee approve the Superintendent's recommendation relative to the settlement of a pending matter before the American Arbitration Association in accordance with WR04-55.

#04-147, Grant Awards: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Title I Distribution, Project/Grant SC05604, in the amount of \$945,791.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. These funds will provide academic instructional and support services for eligible students, professional development activities for staff, support for parent involvement activities, and also includes the purchase of supplies and materials. This award is 44% of the entitlement amount of \$2,149,526.00, in accordance with the letter from the State DOE. The remaining amount is expected to be awarded in late October.
2. Title V, Project/Grant SC05608, in the amount of \$46,443.00, for the period September 30, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This is a federal entitlement grant that will fund professional development for New Teacher Induction Program summer training, stipends for the Cambridge Licensure In-district Program (CLIP) for mentors/coaches for new administrators, Research for Better Teaching workshops for supervision/evaluation training, and related activities.
3. Even Start, Project/Grant SC05610, in the amount of \$101,800.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. 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.
4. Drug Free Schools-Distribution, Project/Grant SC05611, in the amount of \$57,050.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. These funds will support programs that prevent violence, illegal use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs in and around schools. Training consultants, funds for substitute teachers to release teachers for training, and instructional materials are funded by this grant.
5. Elementary Foster Care, Project/Grant SC05654, in the amount of \$78,344.00, for the period July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005. This is a continuing grant providing training for teachers regarding behavioral strategies for specific foster and kinship care children based on individual needs. This grant also provides training for families where children are placed.
6. McKinney Homeless, SC05707, in the amount of \$40,000.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. 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.

7. Teacher Quality, SC05731, in the amount of \$486,324.00, for the period September 27, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This grant program is to increase student achievement through a comprehensive district initiative that focuses on the preparation, training, recruitment, and retention of highly qualified educators, to help meet NCLB goals. 2.5 FTE professional positions, consultant services for training, and mandated private school allotment are funded in this grant.
8. LEP Support, Project/Grant SC05737, in the amount of \$133,925.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This grant will provide funds to improve the educational performance of limited English proficient students in grades K-12 by assisting these students to learn English and meet State academic content standards.
9. Enhanced Education Through Technology, SC05741, in the amount of \$51,290.00, for the period September 27, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This grant is a continuation grant that 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.
10. 21st Century Community Learning, SC05743, in the amount of 275,000.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This grant, 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program, is to establish and expand community learning centers that operate during out-of-school hours and will provide students with academic enrichment opportunities along with other activities designed to complement the students' regular academic program.
11. Technology Enhancement Options, SC05770, in the amount of \$127,096.00, for the period September 20, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This grant will develop technology-enhanced curriculum in consultation with the Teaching for Understanding curriculum development framework and the state content standards for English Language Arts, History and Social Science, Science, the Arts and Instructional Technology. Through the grant, Project Zero of the Harvard Graduate School of Education will provide rigorous courses from its online professional development program entitlement WIDE (Wide-scale Interactive Development for Educators). Workshops and instructional materials are also funded by the grant.

#04-148, Grant Awards: that the School Committee accept and approve the following grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

1. Carol M. White Physical Education Program, SC05767, in the amount of \$499,899.00, for the period October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2005. This grant will support the Health Physical Education and Athletics department expand and improve physical education programs including extended day programs for students K-12. The project aims to progress toward meeting and exceeding the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and learning standards. The grant funds a project manager, physical education equipment for school-based data collection, training consultants for obesity prevention programs, and training and materials for staff development and curriculum development.

Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA. Mr. Grassi requested, and received, unanimous consent to be recorded as Present, not voting on #04-147.

Non-Consent Business

Mr. Lummis raised a question on whether the following agreement is to provide services that we cannot provide. Ms. MacFarlane and Mr. Conry were heard. On a motion by Mr. Lummis, on the following roll call, **#04-150, Consultant Agreement**, was adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve the consultant agreement with the company or individual on the list, in the amount set forth, funds to be provided as shown:

1. Cambridge Economic Opportunity Community Partnerships for Children/Early Childhood Connections (CCPC/ECC), Cambridge, in the amount of \$812,841.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 841148, prog. 148.

Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini ~~ABSENT~~ YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA. Mr. Fantini requested, and received, unanimous consent to be recorded in the affirmative on the foregoing roll call vote.

#04-152, Motion by Ms. Walser that the Cambridge School Committee consider the Resolutions to be voted at the Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees on Wednesday, October 27, 2004. On a motion by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to adopt the foregoing motion with instructions to Ms. Walser.

At this time, the Chair moved to **#04-151, Approval of School Improvement Plans 2004/2006**. Maryann MacDonald, Executive Director of Student Achievement & Accountability, and Barbara Van Sickle, Director of Student Achievement & Accountability, gave an overview of the School Improvement Plans. The Superintendent, Ms. MacDonald and Principals responded to Members' questions, comments, and concerns.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment. Hearing none, on a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Lummis, it was voted to close public comment. The Members thanked the Superintendent, Principals and School Councils for the School Improvement Plans. On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Harding, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#04-151, Approval of School Improvement Plans 2004/2006**: Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to suspend the Rules for the purpose of moving reconsideration of the foregoing vote. The Rules having been suspended, a motion to reconsider the foregoing vote, hoping the same would not prevail, **failed of adoption**.

Late Orders

Mr. Harding announced that Mr. McGovern and Mr. Grassi are named 2005-2006 Co-Chairs of the Subcommittee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole).

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to adjourn (8:50 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee