

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, November 1, 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 6:05 p.m.

Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings

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

- Regular Meeting - October 18, 2005
- Special Meeting - October 11, 2005
- Regular Meeting - September 20, 2005 (Corrected)

Public Comment on School Committee Agenda

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

Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members

James Conway was heard regarding feedback on block scheduling and requesting that a survey be done at the high school; also asking that funding for visual arts be increased. The Superintendent was heard.

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business

Calendar

On a motion by Mayor Sullivan, it was voted that Mr. Harding's motion regarding military recruitment be moved to New Business.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, it was voted to remove the Minutes of September 20, 2005 since they have been corrected.

Awaiting Reports

On a motion by Mr. Lummis, it was voted that #C05-136, "Report on current out-of-district placement of students...", be referred to the Superintendent for a public presentation.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Lummis, it was voted to remove #C05-119, "Report on plans for creating a capital needs analysis and recommended steps for upgrading elementary school buildings", since a Request for Proposal on the elementary schools capital needs analysis has been issued.

New Business

Mr. Grassi moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini, for the adoption of items #05-150 through #05-155. Mr. Harding's motion regarding military recruitment is being held until his arrival. Mr. Lummis removed #05-150. Mr. McGovern removed #05-155. Ms. Walser removed #05-154. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#05-151, Approval of Home School Applications for School Year 2005-2006: that the School Committee approve the home school application for the 2005-2006 school year as detailed in the document.

#05-152, Grant Award: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated. (Note: This grant was inadvertently left off the recommendation summary at the October 18, 2005 meeting, although it was in the detail. This is to correctly receive the grant.)

1. Early Learning Opportunities Act (ELOA), for the period September 30, 2005 to February 28, 2007, in the amount of \$999,483.00. These funds will provide support to parents' knowledge and children's learning by providing parent education and support, adult literacy education, parent/child learning activities, and educational resources.

Professional Development: we will enhance the quality of early education and care by giving home and center-based providers training to enhance their own literacy; support for literacy curriculum development through on-site mentoring; training to use a bilingual early language assessment, and support on engaging families in early childhood programs.

Collaborative and Systems Building: we will develop and implement a community engagement plan to connect hard-to-reach and isolated families with services through culturally competent practices, and collect and use data to track participation, assess outcomes for children, and improve programming.

#05-153, Grant Awards: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated.

1. Academic Support Services, for the period October 7, 2005 to June 30, 2006, in the amount of \$61,420.00. This program is to enhance Academic Support Services for students in grades 10, 11 and 12 (Classes of '06, '07 and '08) and students in the Class of 2005 who have taken and not yet passed the English language arts and/or mathematics MCAS needed to complete the competency determination required for high school graduation. These services are to supplement currently funded local, state, and federal programs.
2. Massachusetts Cultural Council, for the period July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006, in the amount of \$18,000.00. This grant will continue to support the development of a strategic plan and curriculum for the Visual and Performing Arts department.

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

Non-Consent Business

Mr. Lummis raised a question on the Foundation Reserve Award. The Superintendent and Mr. Conry were heard. On a motion by Mr. Lummis, seconded by Ms. Walser, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#05-150, Foundation Reserve Award of \$250,000.00 - Request to Appropriate to Debt Stabilization Fund:** that the School Committee request the City Manager to submit a request to the City Council for the appropriation of \$250,000.00 to the School Debt Stabilization Fund, revenues for such appropriation to be provided from the recently received \$250,000.00 Foundation Reserve Award from the

Massachusetts Department of Education. Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding ~~ABSENT~~ YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

Ms. Walser raised a question on the "Know Your Body" program. The Superintendent was heard. On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Lummis, it was voted to adopt **#05-154, Motion by Ms. Walser** that the Superintendent provide the School Committee with a report on the state of health education K-12 and the impacts of the loss of grant funding in recent years on the "Know Your Body" and other health programs. Further, that the report include a recommendation on addressing any gaps in providing a cutting-edge health curriculum for our students in collaboration with the City.

Mr. McGovern spoke to the following motion and Members thanked Mayor Sullivan for arranging the joint meeting with the City Council. On a voice vote, the following was adopted: **#05-155, Joint Motion by Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, and Mr. McGovern** that the School Committee requests the Superintendent to work in collaboration with the Cambridge Health Alliance to create a parent information booklet detailing the protective factors and warning signs of childhood depression and substance abuse. Further, said booklet should include a listing of support programs/resources that parents can access if desired. When complete, this booklet should be distributed to Cambridge Public School parents and placed on the School Department's website.

Mr. Harding moved a friendly amendment that Mr. McGovern and Mayor Sullivan be co-sponsors of the following motion. On a motion by Mr. Harding, it was voted to Table the motion, as amended:

Motion by Mr. Harding, Mr. McGovern and Mayor Sullivan that, WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee is charged with the stewardship of the Cambridge Public Schools system and its delivery of quality education that reaches the highest standards; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee recognizes that young people in Cambridge have the right to information that helps them plan, prepare and make decisions about their vocational and educational futures; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee recognizes that military service is honorable, that a career in the military is an opportunity for students, and that military service is an option students have the right to consider; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge School Committee is committed to providing students with bias-free, non-pressure- driven, and accurate information about career and educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS: The No Child Left Behind Act mandates that student information be made available to military recruiters unless the student or parent designates that such information should not be forwarded; and

WHEREAS: The school department and/or high school requires the current "opt-out" be completed in the first three months of the year in order to deliver such information to military recruiters; and

WHEREAS: It is clear that military recruiters are actively using incomplete and inaccurate information, are using pressure tactics in their delivery of information to students, and are contacting students at home, school and in the community; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools has responsibility for the well-being of its students, shares in the guidance and direction of its students and is charged also with protecting the safety of students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee directs the Superintendent and the high school Principal, and their designees, to work with the required legal entities to explore and craft a viable "opt-in" policy that meets the guidelines of the No Child Left Behind Act; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent and the high school Principal, and their designees, report on such a policy within the current school year; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: That the high school Principal report on the use and/or viability of the use at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School of the following strategies to address the issue of military recruitment:

- Prominently display the "opt-out" on the required Student Emergency Cards (Santa Cruz City High School District, CA)
- Allow students to "opt-out" themselves (San Francisco Unified School District and Santa Cruz)
- Limit all institutional (including military) recruiter access to a few times a year (limited to 3 days a year by the Madison Metropolitan School District, WI)
- Do not mix "opt-out" information to military recruiters with any other institution
- Make military recruiter visit information public (Santa Cruz)
- Allow students and parents to "opt-out" at any time (Santa Cruz)
- Have one "opt-out" cover the rest of a student's time at the high school
- Provide contacts for alternatives to military service on the "opt-out" forms
- Charge all institutional recruiters for access to student directory information to make up for administrative costs (Los Angeles Unified School District)
- Make all institutional recruiters sign an affidavit declaring compliance with local, state, and national discrimination laws (LAUSD)

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent who walked Members through a presentation of the "Spring 2005 District MCAS Results".

Late Orders

Mayor Sullivan moved, seconded by Mr. Grassi, in establishing Mr. Conway's request, that the Superintendent conduct a survey at the high school on block scheduling.

Mr. Harding requested and received unanimous consent to be recorded in the affirmative on all roll call votes taken earlier in the meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to adjourn (8:05 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee