

## **SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

### **(Official Report)**

#### **Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, December 14, 2004**

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

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Lummis, on the following roll call, it was voted to convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy for litigation and collective bargaining and hearing Level III grievances. Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini ~~ABSENT~~ YEA, Mr. Grassi ~~ABSENT~~ YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern ~~ABSENT~~ YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

The Chair announced that no votes will be taken in Executive Session and that the Committee will reconvene in Open Session.

#### **Executive Session**

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

Also Present: Thomas Fowler-Finn, Superintendent  
James Conry, Chief Financial Officer  
Maureen MacFarlane, In House Counsel  
James Maloney, Chief Operating Officer  
Carolyn Turk, Deputy Superintendent  
Steve Edmonds, President, Local 1611  
Robert Smith, Vice President, Local 1611

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Edmonds presented their member's grievance and exited the meeting. Attorney MacFarlane presented three more grievances to the Members. The Members discussed strategies for litigation and strategy for collective bargaining with Legal Counsel.

It was voted to reconvene in Open Session.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

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

Student Representatives: James Conway, Krishana House, Spenser Skates

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

On a motion by Mr. Lummis, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted that the Minutes of the November 16, 2004 meeting be adopted as presented.

### Public Comment on School Committee Agenda

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

**Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members:** None at this time.

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

### Unfinished Business

The Members passed over all Unfinished Business.

### New Business

Ms. Walser moved for adoption of items #04-166 through #04-182. Ms. Walser removed # 04-167, #04-173, #04-178, and #04-179. Mr. McGovern removed #04-175. Mr. Lummis removed #04-168 and #04-169. Mr. Harding removed #04-180 and #04-181. On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Mr. Grassi, on the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted as follows:

**#04-166, Approval to go into Executive Session:** that the School Committee go into executive session for the following purposes: (i) to conduct Level III grievance hearings as part of collective bargaining; (ii) to discuss strategy for collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee; and (iii) to discuss litigation strategy as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining and litigation positions of the School Committee.

**#04-170, FY04/05 General Fund Budget Statutory Transfer:** that the School Committee approve the following statutory transfers of appropriation within the General Fund budget for FY2004-05:

	<u>Statutory Coding</u>	<u>Increase Amount</u>	<u>Decrease Amount</u>
51000	Salaries, Wages & Benefits (S&W)	0	0
52000/55000	Other Ordinary Maintenance (OOM)	0	(\$94,285.00)
57000	Travel & Training (T&T)	\$94,285.00	0
58000/59000	Extraordinary Expenditures (EE)	0	0
	Total	\$94,285.00	(\$94,285.00)

**#04-171, National School Boards Association (NSBA):** that all School Committee members seek additional information and understanding of the ramifications and impact upon schools and school districts regarding the NCLB Act.

**#04-172, Settlement of Pending Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination Action:** that the School Committee approve the Superintendent's recommendation relative to the settlement of a pending Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination Action.

**#04-174, Approval of CTA Unit D - Substitute Teachers Contract:** that the School Committee approve the Memorandum of Agreement for a collective bargaining agreement between the Cambridge Teachers Association Unit D - Substitute Teachers Unit and the Cambridge School Committee for the period September 1, 2004 through August 31, 2006. The agreement includes the following:

- Two-year agreement: 9/1/04 - 8/31/06
- Salary schedule increases:
  - Year 1 (FY2004-05) - 3% increase effective April 1, 2005
  - Year 2 (FY2005-06) - 4.25% increase effective November 15, 2005
- Recognition clause: change from 60 days to 45 days for membership in unit.
- Grievances: at Level One, change the number of days for filing of grievance and response from 10 days to 15 days; at Level Two, change the number of days for hearing and response from 15 days to 25 days.
- Revised evaluation instrument to provide more effective evaluation.
- T-pass Reimbursement: reimburse members up to 65%, not to exceed \$40 per month for purchase of T-pass.
- Other changes to effective dates and contract clean-up.

The financial costs of this settlement are as follows:

<u>Salary Increases</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u>
FY04-05 - 3% salary increase effective 4/1/05	\$ 7,522
FY05-06 - Carryover cost of full 10 months of 4/1/05 3% increase	17,522
- 4.25% salary increase effective 11/15/05	<u>27,440</u>
Total	\$44,962
FY06-07 - Carryover cost of full 10 months of 11/15/05 4.25% increase	\$ 9,147

**#04-176, 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 \$796,265.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This award is the remaining 56% of the entitlement amount of \$2,149,526.00 from the State DOE.
2. Sped 94-142 Allocation, Project/Grant SC05605, in the amount of \$1,276,706.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This award is the remaining 55% of the entitlement amount of \$2,315,830.00 from the State DOE.
3. Occ. Ed.-Vocational Skills, Project/Grant SC05606, in the amount of \$73,002.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This award is the remaining 66% of the entitlement amount of \$110,609.00 from the State DOE.
4. Sped Program Improvement, Project/Grant SC05674 in the amount of \$18,835.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This award is the remaining 55% of the entitlement amount of \$34,245.00 from the State DOE.
5. Reading First Program, Project Grant SC05764, in the amount of \$53,733.00, for the period September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This award is the remaining 20% of the entitlement amount of \$177,917.00 and an amended amount of \$18,150.00 for the total amount of \$196,067.00 from the State DOE.
6. Refugee Children-Impact, Project Grant SC05795, in the amount of \$40,000.00, for the period October 27, 2004 to August 31, 2005. This grant will support the development and implementation of English language instruction and academic content instruction in mathematics in an after school setting to further support refugee students in grades 6-12. Funding will provide mentoring and counseling support systems, training and educational programming designed to assist parents and families become active in the education of their children. Funds will also provide supplies and materials.

7. Cambridgeport Observation Project Grants, Project Grant SC05796, in the amount of \$10,000.00, for the period October 25, 2004 to June 30, 2005. Various small private grants will support the Observation Project at the Cambridgeport School.

**#04-177, Motion by Ms. Walser** that the School Committee receive an update on the Tools for Schools program for maintaining healthy facilities, as well as a copy of the information pertaining to several school buildings provided by the city's Director of Environmental Health at a recent city-wide asthma meeting. Further, that the Superintendent consider the need to maintain environmentally healthy facilities while working with the city on plans for meeting future capital needs of the schools.

**#04-182, Memorandum from D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk**, enclosing two orders adopted by the City Council on November 15, 2004.

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

Mr. Grassi, Mr. McGovern, and Mr. Fantini requested and received unanimous consent to be recorded in the affirmative on the previous roll call vote with regard to going into Executive Session.

The Chair announced that the Paraprofessionals voted 68 to 7 to approve their contract.

#### **Non-Consent Business**

**#04-167, City Council Orders:** Pursuant to the School Committee Rules, the Orders are being placed on the Agenda. Ms. Walser raised a question on whether any of the Council Orders have been resolved. The Superintendent said that many of the Orders are being handled by School Committee members and staff. Peabody tree plantings are still pending. Dr. Fowler-Finn will do further analysis on transporting students to sports practices and will provide the Committee with information regarding the current status. On a voice vote, **#04-167, City Council Orders**, was adopted and placed on file.

Mr. Lummis raised a question on what it would take to provide some special education services in-house. The Superintendent was heard regarding the cost of providing such programs for a few students. On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Lummis, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#04-168, Special Needs Contract for Residential Program Services** not available from the Cambridge School Department: that the School Committee award a contract to the institution on the list in 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 student	Hillcrest Educational Centers, Inc., PO Box 4699, Pittsfield MA	\$71,070.59
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Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mr. Lummis YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Mayor Sullivan YEA.

On a motion by Mr. Lummis, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#04-169, Special Needs Contracts for Day Program Services** not available from the Cambridge School Department: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions on the list in 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 student	Landmark School, PO Box 227, Prides Crossing, MA	\$39,906.47
1 student	Tufts Educational Day Care Center, 165 Holland St., Somerville, MA	45,087.46
4 students	The Home for Little Wanderers, 271 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA	262,928.47

1 student	St. Ann's Home, 100A Haverhill St., Methuen, MA	32,685.75
<u>2</u> students	The League School, 300 Boston-Providence Tpke., Walpole, MA	<u>104,118.92</u>
9		\$484,727.07

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

At this time, the Chair recognized James Conway. Mr. Conway was heard regarding keeping photography as an option and instituting a standard grading procedure at CRLS. The Superintendent was heard.

Ms. Walser pointed out that the District Improvement Plan will be approved tonight and asked the Superintendent to have it put on the web. The Superintendent was heard. On a voice vote, **#04-173, Approval of District Improvement Plan for SY2004-05 through SY2005-06**, was adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve the District Improvement Plan for the Cambridge Public Schools for School Year 2004-05 through School Year 2005-06.

Mr. McGovern publicly thanked the Cambridge School Volunteers for the work they do. On a motion by Mr. McGovern, on the following roll call, **#04-175, Consultant Agreements**, was adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve consultant agreements with the companies or individuals on the list, in the amounts set forth, funds to be provided as shown:

1. Cambridge Family & Children's Services, Cambridge, in the amount of \$46,000.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 852360, prog. 360, proj./grant SC05654.
2. Cambridge School Volunteers, Cambridge, in the amount of \$78,843.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 893640, prog. 640.
3. Center for Collaborative Education, Boston, in the amount of \$45,000.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 820148, prog. 148, proj./grant SC05645.
4. Community Learning Center, Cambridge, in the amount of \$44,309.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 859651, prog. 651, proj./grant SC05610.

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

Ms. Walser asked if the information requested in Mr. Fantini's motion has already been received. Mr. Fantini was heard in support of his motion. On a motion by Mr. Lummis, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to adopt the following: **#04-178, Motion by Mr. Fantini** that the Superintendent provide a report to the School Committee on steps being taken to support the hard work of teachers at the Tobin School to ensure they satisfactorily overcome their Corrective Action status under the No Child Left Behind Act. Further, that the report include a listing of the individuals involved (the team) and what their roles are; how many children have taken advantage of the tutoring services being made under Title I; and how many children have taken advantage of the transfer out option.

Ms. Walser raised a question on what issues Mr. Fantini referred to. Mr. Fantini was heard. Mr. Grassi moved a friendly amendment that the report come back on the Agenda. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr., Fantini, it was voted to adopt the following, as amended: **#04-179, Motion by Mr. Fantini** that, given the recent issues taking place at the High School Extension Program (HSEP), the Superintendent provide a report that articulates, reinstates, or adjusts, the goals, plans, and purpose of the HSEP. Further, that an interim report be provided from the Principal of the High School Extension Program including initial successes, setbacks, future plans, and estimates of future enrollment.

**#04-180, Motion by Mr. Fantini** that the Principal of the High School and the Executive Director of the RSTA program provide to the Committee an estimate of all high school seniors who may not graduate simply because they have not taken enough courses to obtain the appropriate amount of credits necessary for graduation. Mr. Grassi moved a friendly amendment to strike “and the Executive Director of the RSTA program”. Ms. Walser pointed out that a member may have only two Awaiting Reports. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to change the mover of the motion to Mr. Grassi. On a voice vote, the following was adopted, as amended: **#04-180, Motion by Mr. Grassi** that the Principal of the High School provide to the Committee an estimate of all high school seniors who may not graduate simply because they have not taken enough courses to obtain the appropriate amount of credits necessary for graduation.

**#04-181, Motion by Mr. Fantini** that the Superintendent provide to the School Committee a plan on how the school system will meet its responsibilities under Title IX in the funding of girls sports teams. Further, that this report indicate the budget for both boys and girls teams, identifying the funding shortfall existing in girls sports. Ms. Walser moved a substitute motion that “the Superintendent report back to the School Committee relative to the Cambridge Public Schools meeting the standards of Title IX, including funding of said programs”. Mr. Grassi asked the Superintendent to look at a report on Title IX written about eight years ago by Bill Bates. On a voice vote, the substitution was adopted as follows: **Motion by Ms. Walser** that the Superintendent report back to the School Committee relative to the Cambridge Public Schools meeting the standards of Title IX, including funding of girls and boys programs.

At the request of Mr. McGovern, the Chair returned to Unfinished Business. Mr. McGovern raised a question on CPS’ commitment to seat belts on buses. The Superintendent was heard. On a voice vote, it was voted to place the following on file: Report from the Superintendent on the status and knowledge relative to seat belts and school buses.

Mr. Harding in the Chair.

At this time, Mr. Maloney presented a summary of the responses of the 312 students to the Leaver’s Survey.

The Superintendent and Mr. Maloney responded to some of the following Members’ questions, comments and concerns:

- Have survey done by an outside company
- Include 8<sup>th</sup> graders and CRLS leavers
- Include question on consolidation
- Are “did not contact” and “unable to contact” the same group
- Use caution in saying “now we know why people left”
- Is the plan to do this every year
- Present leaver’s survey when transcripts are requested
- How do we know people are leaving
- Some conclusions may be subjective
- Keep focused on goals
- Mail survey instead of calling
- Have survey returned to a third party
- Who left the Kennedy and who left the Longfellow
- Think about recruitment strategies

The Members thanked the Superintendent and his staff for the presentation.

The Chair recognized Maryann MacDonald, Executive Director of Student Assessment and Accountability. Ms. MacDonald presented the first Cambridge Public Schools Benchmarks report for Student Achievement.

The Superintendent and Ms. MacDonald responded to some of the following Members' questions, comments and concerns:

- Do we know why the gap widens as special education students get older
- Need to see passing rates increase
- Concerned over discipline of special education students
- How do we know how small cohort of students are doing
- How can Benchmarks help close the achievement gap
- What are the proposals to close the achievement gap
- Tools are in place now to look at closing the achievement gap
- Best practices need to be the new standard
- Do individual report cards play a role in benchmarks
- When will next round of benchmarks be in
- Insure schools are getting what they need
- Document brings schools together as a system
- You can't improve what you can't measure
- How will benchmarks document effect change in each school

The Members thanked the Superintendent and Ms. MacDonald for the presentation.

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

The Superintendent presented the Budget Process and Schedule and announced that the City has agreed to a 1.6 percent increase in the budget representing the lowest increase in a decade. Mr. Grassi moved that the meeting scheduled for February 10 be changed to February 9 and that the Superintendent meet in retreat format rather than individually with all Members. On a voice vote, the FY Budget Process & Schedule was adopted as amended.

At this time, it was voted to adopt Supplemental Recommendation **#04-183, RSTA Individual Chapter 74 Program Advisory Committee and the General Advisory Committee, as follows:** that the School Committee approve the list of people to be appointed to the eight (8) Chapter 74 Program Advisory Committees and the General Advisory Committee for RSTA.

#### **Late Orders**

Motion by Mayor Sullivan, seconded by Ms. Walser, that the School Committee send a letter to Spaulding, Slye & Collier thanking them for their donation of weights and cardiovascular equipment to the Friends of Cambridge Athletics. On a voice vote, the motion was adopted.

Motion by Mr. Lummis, seconded by Ms. Walser, that the Superintendent provide a revised report on honors and advanced placement courses correlated in the suggested format. On a voice vote, the motion was adopted.

Student School Committee Member Skates raised a question on whether there is a difference between honors and college prep course. The Superintendent responded that the decision is left up to curriculum coordinators and teachers in individual schools.

Mr. Lummis raised a question on what the elementary school enrollments are by class and if teachers in reserve were used and where they were used. The Superintendent was heard.

Motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Mr. Harding, that the School Committee request Mr. Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager, and Mr. Alan Burne, Project Manager for the Library Extension Project, to present their construction mitigation plan and current library design, at the School Committee meeting on January 18, 2005. On a voice vote, the motion was adopted.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to adjourn (9:45 p.m.).

Adjourned  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee