

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Special Informal Meeting

Tuesday, April 26, 2005

Called by Mayor Michael A. Sullivan in accordance with Chapter I, Section 3, of the Rules of the School Committee for the purpose of a roundtable discussion on Facilities, and Advanced Placement Courses at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School.

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

Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

The Superintendent gave a brief summary regarding Advanced Placement courses and introduced CRLS Principal Dr. Sybil Knight, AP Coordinator Jermaine Myrie, and Guidance Coordinator Lynn Williams who discussed CRLS' advanced placement courses and the BYOP Student Proposal for an Advisor for Students of Color.

The Superintendent and staff responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns raised by the Members:

- Call the program something other than advising
- How is guidance set up to support students who do not feel welcomed
- At what point are parents involved
- How many students are enrolled in the AVID program
- How is Princeton Review progressing
- How many advanced placement courses are needed to get into a good college
- What is preventing middle schools from offering AP courses
- When can a culture shift be expected
- Is there a free and reduced breakdown by AP courses
- Do the ISP students attend AP courses more than other students
- Do not revert to "houses" that separate the haves from the have nots
- How many AP courses do we offer
- How do we compare to other districts
- Fletcher/Maynard provides a great opportunity to get a head start in getting students in AP courses
- It would make a difference if parents knew what a difference is between a 79 and 80
- How many times does a Guidance Counselor meet with parents
- There should be a set number of times Counselors meet with a student
- Outreach should be a part of the entire school
- Look at going into homes after hours
- Is there a cap on the number of students in AVID
- What is the percentage of students who take the AP test who take AP courses
- Are we following up on what schools our graduates are going to
- Should our guidance model be restructured
- If resources were not an issue what would be done differently
- Does the Multicultural Coordinator have a role in getting students to take AP courses
- Do we know the profile of the student enrolled in AVID

- There is a huge disparity in Learning Communities around discipline – there needs to be some consistency

The Superintendent and the Members thanked and complimented Dr. Knight and her staff for being prepared, confident and caring as professionals in their roles.

The Chair recognized Paul McGowan who asked the Members if the spirit of the roundtable is working. It was agreed that the length of the presentation at first seemed misplaced but in general the format worked well.

The Mayor and Mr. Maloney reported that the City Manager wants a joint process in siting the Police station and Central Administration. Members asked the Superintendent for a clear picture of the School Department's needs before a process is determined. Members discussed at length the number of families who did not get their first choice and why certain schools are being under-chosen. The Superintendent was asked to come back with a plan for under-subscribed schools, and that kindergarten registration be a topic for the next roundtable. In order to get to a decision on a process for use of facilities free and reduced, Mr. Harding, Mr. Lummis and Mayor Sullivan will develop a schedule and timeline by the second meeting in May.

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Mr. Lummis, it was voted to adjourn (9:50 p.m.).