

## **SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

### **(Official Report)**

**Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, October 3, 2006**

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Schuster, Ms. Walser,  
Mayor Reeves

Mayor Reeves in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

Also Present: Student Representatives: Tsion Girum, Daneiris Heredia-Perez and Marilyn Paschal.

#### **Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings**

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

- Regular Meeting – September 19, 2006
- Regular Meeting – September 5, 2006
- Regular Meeting – March 21, 2006

#### **Public Testimony on School Committee Agenda**

The following individual was heard:

- Mark Gardner, Walden Street, re Special Education Strategic Plan

The Chair closed public testimony.

#### **Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members:**

The Chair introduced and welcomed student School Committee Members Tsion Girum, Daneiris Heredia-Perez and Marilyn Paschal. The Members congratulated the students and asked that they provide feedback on what is working and what is not.

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

#### **Unfinished Business**

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to pass over all unfinished business.

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent who introduced Mr. Maloney and Ernie Paicopolos, Principal, Opinion Dynamics Corporation (ODC). Mr. Paicopolos gave an update on the leavers' survey. Focus groups have been scheduled and the information from those will be used to inform the second phase (telephone survey).

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

- How are questions being asked in focus groups different from those being asked on the telephone
- How many people will be interviewed in the telephone survey

- What are the expectations from the focus groups
- Will ODC come back with recommendations
- Is it understood that the entire school department is the client
- How are we insuring that people of different socioeconomics are in groups where they feel comfortable
- Insure that there will be a linguistic group
- Is there something the School Committee could do to help with recruitment
- A big enough sample is needed to get results – are there 400 in each group
- Add the question “what do you hope to get from teachers in the system”
- How many other systems has ODC worked with
- Is there some place in the survey to make provision to capture groups who might choose charter schools
- What are the parameters for how we should discipline ourselves moving forward
- Clarify how the people were selected for the focus groups
- What is the charge for the survey and when is estimated completion
- What other surveys has ODC done for the City
- Do single parents and students get a chance
- Will non-profit leaders be included
- Include issues regarding housing safety, etc.
- How are topics being chosen
- Will they be taped and can the Members see the tapes
- What is the incentive for people to participate
- Frame issues to eliminate drama
- Insure input from the business community
- What would it take to get CRLS on the top 100 list in the country
- Talk to Principals – current and past
- Rethink not talking to students – they have a lot of interesting information
- How diverse is the outreach staff at ODC
- Will information be able to spot trends
- How will we know what is normal
- Include group of parents whose children graduated from CPS
- Participants should be told if they are being filmed
- How do you find out if people have any familiarity with CPS
- Include community leaders who did not send their children to CPS
- If Student School Committee Representatives could set up a group, how would they go about doing it

The Members thanked Mr. Maloney and Mr. Paicopolos for the presentation.

The Chair moved to the Special Education Annual Report. Ed McCormack, Executive Director of Special Education who gave the Members an overview of the Special Education Annual Report and responded to Members' questions, comments and concerns:

- Do these numbers include out-of-district placements
- How many out-of-district placements are there
- If a student had a lisp and went to a speech therapist, would that number be included here
- What does grade B mean
- Out of the cohort of 2s, how many teachers are involved
- Is the purpose of the presentation to update us on what the issues are or where we are going
- How do we proceed with parents who do not agree with the IEP
- Let the School Committee know the number of IEPs that are rejected
- Does our staff have the appropriate level of training to deliver level 1, 2 or 3 service
- Parents need to be satisfied that their child is getting the best services
- Have we evaluated the programs that we have
- Are there a lot of students who get pulled out for reading at CRLS
- Our last coordinated review showed that we were out of compliance

- We are back to some of the frustrations with the Office of Special Education

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

- Rethink title of self-contained classroom
- We are over-identifying children especially minority children
- How do we plan to work with regular education to work more with response to intervention
- Some parents feel our training is not up to date
- Why does a parent get a letter from our attorney (the Superintendent clarified that our attorney does not send a letter it is sent from the DOE)
- How often do services on IEPs happen
- What can be done to improve programs
- What are some of the successes and failures of the Strategic Plan
- Are there any obstacles to prevent the team from accomplishing plans
- Identify some benchmarks being used for success
- How are we defining success in Special Education
- Are benchmarks for Special Education being woven into the CPS benchmarks
- How do we insure that teachers, principals and deans are following IEPs
- Who is the point person for delivery of services
- Is there a plan to reorganize delivery of Special Education services at CRLS
- Will the CRLS plan be implemented before the DOE mid-term coordinated review is finished
- Could the high school plan change as a result of the DOE review
- What is the ad-hoc advisory committee and how does it relate to the parent advisory committee
- Insure that parents are supported in their work
- What was the in-service for Special Ed staff this summer
- Will the new strategic plan address the issue of identifying students and providing services early on so they will not need an IEP
- Why are people saying that our district is not state-of-the-art and what districts are
- Start process of having Special Ed parents interact with other Special Ed parents
- Encourage the Parent Advisory Committee to address the School Committee anytime
- Mechanisms are needed to deal with high levels of frustration among parents in a more timely way
- We need to have a system of accountability that shows respect for our special needs population
- IEPs not written in a timely manner is unacceptable
- Make one of our benchmarks having lower referrals for behavioral issues
- Are we thinking of adding a program to bring back tuitioned-out students
- Philosophical thinking is towards more inclusion vs. parents' thinking is towards more specialized classrooms
- Appoint an ombudsman to help people through the process of how to receive services

Mayor Reeves in the Chair

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting to 10:15.

The Chair thanked the Superintendent and Mr. McCormack for the presentation and returned to the Agenda.

### **New Business**

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to move to Action Items and return to Presentations later.

Mr. Harding moved, seconded by Ms. Walser, for adoption of items #06-150 through #06-163.

Mr. Fantini removed #06-150. Ms. Nolan removed #06-160. Ms. Walser removed #06-159. Mr. Schuster removed #06-154. Mr. Harding removed #06-163. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

**#06-151, 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	Bay Cove Human Services, 66 Canal St., Boston	\$51,701.27
1 student	Brandon Residential Treatment Center, 27 Winter St., Natick	42,980.89
1 student	Hillcrest Educational Centers, Inc., PO Box 4699, Pittsfield	75,406.26
1 student	Judge Baker Children's Center, 53 Parker Hill Ave., Roxbury Crossing	64,786.66
1 student	Justice Resources Institute, 545 Boylston St., Boston	74,846.90
6 students	Kennedy Day School, 30 Warren St., Brighton	266,595.96
7 students	LABB Collaborative, 281 Winter St., Waltham	329,351.00
1 student	Learning Prep School, PO Box 650205, West Newton	26,116.65
1 student	MAB Community Services, 200 Ivy St., Brookline	81,369.45
1 student	New England Center for Children, 33 Turnpike Rd., Southboro	68,457.55
1 student	SHORE Collaborative, 100 Revere Beach Pkwy., Owen Center, Chelsea	38,651.40
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22 students		\$1,120,263.99

**#06-152, Special Needs Contract for Residential Program Services not available from the Cambridge School Department:** that the School Committee award a contract to the following institution in amount not to exceed the shown rate, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget:

<u>1</u> student	MAB Community Services, 200 Ivy St., Brookline	<u>\$168,190.10</u>
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**#06-153, 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 the settlement agreement set forth at WR06-146-(CN)(A).

**#06-155, Consultant Agreements:** 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. Jayne Bamford Lynch, Melrose, in the amount of \$17,000.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 862845, prog. 845, proj./grant SC07804; and in the amount of \$24,000.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 862660, prog. 660; and in the amount of \$3,000.00, account 53101, fund 25000; org. 893660, prog. 660, proj./grant SC07731.

2. Cambridge Housing Authority, Cambridge, in the amount of \$26,825.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 869665, prog. 665.
3. TERC, Cambridge, in the amount of \$25,000.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 893660, prog. 660; proj./grant SC06736.

**#06-156, Grant Awards:** that the School Committee accept and approve the Grant Awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Reading First Program, for the period September 1, 2006 to August 31, 2007, in the amount of \$102,118.00, project/grant SC07764. This is the fourth year of the Reading First grant at the Haggerty School. The grant will continue to provide training for professional and paraprofessional staff in implementing the research-based reading program for grades K-3. Of this award, \$12,448.00 will be allocated to St. Peter School.  
**CPS Target Population:** Haggerty students in grades K-3.  
**Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness:** Haggerty students in grades K-3 will continue to improve their achievement in literacy as measured by results on the MCAS and the Assessment Protocol for Reading First.
2. Community Partnership Transition, for the period July 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006, in the amount of \$37,702.00, project/grant SC07830. The Community Partnership for Children grant program provides comprehensive, high-quality programs for preschool-aged children and their families with the planning and oversight of a Community Partnerships for Children Council. Working together, agencies and families in a community build a network of programs and services that increases the availability, affordability, and quality of programs that are responsive to the needs of working parents and that enhance children's healthy learning development.  
**CPS Target Population:** Cambridge residents 3 and 4 year olds in day care centers in the city.  
**Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness:** Cambridge child care centers will receive professional development and accreditation support which will increase the number of NAEYC accredited centers in the city.

**#06-157, Grant Award:** that the School Committee accept and approve the Grant Award in the amount and for the period indicated:

1. McKinney Homeless, for the period September 1, 2006, to August 31, 2007 in the amount of \$16,500.00, project/grant SC07707. This grant will provide support for families living in Cambridge with children attending our schools. This includes assistance with medical and mental health support agencies and support for enrollment in after-school programs.  
**CPS Target Population:** Approximately 285 homeless children and their families.  
**Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness:** Homeless families will continue to receive assistance in accessing social services and after-school programs.

**#06-158, Report of the March 21, 2006 Meeting** of the Sub-Committee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole).

Called for the purpose of a Public Hearing on the proposed FY2006-2007 Budget and any other matters related to the FY2006-2007 budget.

Members Present: Ms. Nolan, Ms. Walser, Co-Chairs, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Mr. Schuster, Mayor Reeves

Ms. Walser in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

Ms. Walser introduced Budget Co-Chair Patricia Nolan and read some of the following highlights from the Superintendent's recommended FY06-07 budget that:

- Recommends a decrease in class size in grades 1-3
- Expands the Literacy Collaborative
- Invests in the newest edition of the TERC math curriculum with teacher training
- Begins new teacher training initiative for all middle schools
- Adds Intensive Studies Program (ISP) in the western part of the City at the Peabody School
- Begins pilot co-curricular program for middle schoolers after school in conjunction with the City
- Earmarks money to start a Montessori program at the Tobin School if a separate proposal passes later this year
- Increases per pupil discretionary funding under the Principals' control
- Continues investments in high school training for Teaching in the Block, for AVID, for RSTA technical education, and for our debt stabilization.

Ms. Walser stated that this budget represents a 1.1% increase - the smallest increase in the School Department budget in a decade. Ms. Walser encouraged members of the public to access the budget on the web, particularly the Executive Summary, and announced that adoption of the budget is scheduled for Tuesday, April 4 at 6:00 p.m.

The Chair thanked the Superintendent and his staff and entertained Public Testimony.

The following individuals were heard regarding the budget:

- Seth Lee, Brookline Street, Project 10E, re thanks for increased funding for GLBT position
- Judy Housman, Saint Paul Street, re Gold Star renovations/air conditioning
- John Gintell, West Street, re Project 10E
- Maureen Manning, Arlington Street, re support for Nolan motion
- Elizabeth McCann, Clarendon Street, re support for Nolan motion and ISP at Peabody
- Tim Plenk, Berkeley Street, re support for Nolan motion
- David Quigley, Walden Street, re support for Nolan motion
- Michele Sprengnether, Chilton Street, re support for Nolan motion
- Mark Jaquith, Hurley Street, re support for Nolan motion
- Jan Brown, Buena Vista Park, re support for Nolan motion and ISP at Peabody
- Kathy Reddick, Broadway, re process for attracting candidates for CRLS; policy for raises across the board
- Catherine Sullivan, Notre Dame Avenue, re extracurricular activities at the high school

Ms. Walser pointed out that funding for Ms. Nolan's motion is not in the budget.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adjourn and return to the Regular Meeting (7:22 p.m.).

Adjourned  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

**#06-161, Motion by Mr. Grassi** that the Superintendent update the Alumni Directory for Rindge Technical School, Cambridge High and Latin and Cambridge Rindge and Latin Schools.

**#06-162, Motion by Mr. Grassi** that the Superintendent provide the School Committee with an update on the status of discussions with Edline and other progress on creating school web pages to improve communication between schools, teachers, students and families.

Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Reeves YEA.

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

**#06-150, Cambridge Public Schools Wellness Policy.** On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted that the School Committee approve the formation of a Wellness Council to evaluate this policy, and come back to the Committee with a recommendation.

Mr. Schuster raised a question on the relationship between CPS and early child care providers. Dr. Turk was heard. On a motion by Mr. Schuster, seconded by Mr. Fantini, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#06-154, Contract Award, Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee (CEOC):** that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for support services under the Community Partnerships for Children Grant FY07; funds to be provided from the State of Massachusetts Department of Education Early Learning Services Division Budget. This is a continuing contract under the grant:

CEOC, 11 Inman St., Cambridge, for the period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007, in the amount of \$775,542.00.

Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Reeves YEA.

Ms. Walser moved to table **#06-159, Joint motion by Mr. Harding and Ms. Nolan** that the Superintendent report to the School Committee on the provision of Special Education-related services to all students, by school. Further, that the report include a breakdown of total number of hours required to meet the provisions of services needed in all IEPs, for both individual and group work and by type of personnel required; and, further, that the report provide the number of staff hours available to provide Special Education services, and the amount of staff time required to do team meetings, assessments (for potential and current SPED students), and reviews; and, further, that the report include a chart demonstrating the timeliness of delivery of assessments, reviews, and team meetings.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to refer the following to the Superintendent: **#06-160, September 28, 2006 E-mail** from Judith Contrucci, Coordinator of Visual and Performing Arts, recommending that the School Committee nominate the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center for an Outstanding School Partner Award, be referred to the Superintendent.

**Mr. Harding moved to table #06-163, Motion by Ms. Walser** that the School Committee schedule a short roundtable discussion on new sub-committees following the Special Meeting on October 10.

#### **Late Orders**

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted that the Vice Chair meet with the Superintendent to develop a template for presentations to the School Committee to include benchmarks, goals, objectives, and next steps.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted that the School Committee send a letter congratulating Adams Scholarship winners.

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting five minutes.

Ms. MacFarlane was asked to clarify the School Committee Rules regarding sub-committees.  
Ms. MacFarlane was heard. Discussion took place regarding sub-committees.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to adjourn (10:17 p.m.).

Adjourned  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee