

## **SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**(Official Report)**

**Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, October 17, 2006**

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

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:18 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 Ms. Nolan, it was voted that the Minutes of the following meetings be accepted as presented:

- Special Meeting - March 28, 2006
- Joint Meeting -March 27, 2006

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

There being no one signed in, on a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to close public testimony.

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

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

### **Unfinished Business**

On a motion by Ms. Walser, it was voted to remove Calendar item #06-148 and place it on file.

### **New Business**

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent for the presentation of the Discipline Detail/Expulsion Status Report. The Superintendent introduced Mr. Maloney who was joined by Christopher Saheed, CRLS Principal, John Silva, Director of Safety and Security, and Joseph Dolan HSEP Principal. Mr. Maloney walked Members through a slide presentation "CPS Discipline Detail/Expulsion Report (Two Year Comparison) School Years: 04-05, 05-06", including:

- Issues
- High School Trends
- Goals
- Action Plan

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

- What is the plan to deal with class cuts

- What are some of the consequences for cutting a class and are they consistent
- Is the student handbook an essential part of rule clarity
- Are there any trends or obstacles
- See this report as a definitive measure of school climate
- Concerned that some schools are not reporting infractions
- There needs to be clarity and consistency of reporting infractions across schools
- Congratulations to staff for being pro-active re lunch time crossing
- Consequences need to be developmentally appropriate
- Climate at the high school is a good one for learning
- Insure that students who are caught using drugs are given appropriate referrals
- There is still a high amount of minority students being expelled
- Is it the same number of students repeating offenses
- Is detention different now from in the past
- If nothing is found in a search, is there a consequence
- What is being done to insure that students are safe
- What is being done about high school students being suspended out of school
- How are out of school suspensions being handled at the elementary level
- Is the difference between schools because they are not all reporting or because of programs like Responsive Classroom
- Who do we look to for state-of-the-art programs that help to deal with discipline issues
- Would like to get to a discipline-free school system – cost of discipline takes away from education
- It's hard to believe that high-achieving schools have these discipline issues
- What are some of the things being done to build school culture
- Are there any ideas to have freshman come to a summer session to meet mentors
- Are bullying issues under control
- Is there anything we can do to keep students in the building and is it worth the effort
- Include an executive summary in the report
- How is the Conflict Mediator being used
- What is the genesis of the Woman to Woman program and what is its goal

The Members thanked the Superintendent and Staff for the presentation.

Mayor Reeves in the Chair.

The Chair turned to Mr. Conry who presented the “FY05-06 End of Year Pupil and Financial Report to Department of Education”. Members discussed the report and raised questions on when the audited State report will be ready, when is the point past when a surplus can be determined, and in what fiscal year will we be in a deficit. The Superintendent and Mr. Conry were heard.

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

Ms. Walser removed from the Table and placed on file **#06-163, Motion by Ms. Walser** that the School Committee schedule a short roundtable discussion on new sub-committees following the meeting on October 10.

Mr. Grassi moved the adoption of items #06-164 through #06-171. Mr. Grassi removed #06-169. Mr. Harding removed #06-171. On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to return to Unfinished Business to bring forward **#06-159, Joint motion by Mr. Harding and Ms. Nolan**. Ms. Walser removed #06-167, #06-168 and #06-170. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

**#06-164, Approval to go into Executive Session:** that the School Committee go into Executive Session for the purpose of conducting Level III grievance hearings as part of collective bargaining as an open

meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining and litigation positions of the School Committee and that the School Committee go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy regarding collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee.

**#06-165, Contract Award:** 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:

1. CEOC, 11 Inman St., Cambridge, for the period July 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006, in the amount of \$37,702.00.

**#06-166, 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	Berkshire Hills Music Academy, 48 Woodbridge St., S. Hadley	\$39,500.00
1 student	Germaine Lawrence, Inc., 18 Claremont Ave., Arlington	63,994.17
1 student	Kennedy Day School, 30 Warren St., Brighton	41,432.66
1 student	Latham School, PO Box 1879, 1646 Route 6A, Brewster	77,441.28
1 student	Merrimack Educational Collaborative, 101 Mill Rd., Chelmsford	33,496.10
<u>2</u> students	Perkins School for the Blind, 175 N. Beacon St., Watertown	<u>186,107.20</u>
7 students		\$441,971.41

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

#### Non-Consent Business

**#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. Ms. Nolan was heard in support of the motion. Ms. Walser offered the following substitute motion: That the Superintendent review caseloads of Special Education personnel to assure that adequate levels of staff exist to meet the current needs of Special Education students. Furthermore, following the upcoming mid-cycle coordinated review of Special Education in the district by the Massachusetts DOE, that the Superintendent report to the School Committee on the process by which OSE coordinates with the schools to assure that staffing remains adequate as student needs change. Furthermore, that the Superintendent report to the School Committee the process and timeline for creating a new strategic plan for Special Education to improve outcomes for students and address issues raised by constituents including, but not limited to, a) increasing technology; b) enhancing researched-based interventions for language-based disabilities, dyslexia, and autism; c) minimizing whenever possible the use of compensatory services; d) eliminating

over-identification, especially of minority students; e) addressing summer "regression"; and f) fostering a district culture where "kids get what they need" vs. parents having to advocate for services (in addition to plans to create a parent "ombudsman"). Discussion took place around both motions and the impending mid-cycle coordinated review. The Superintendent was heard and he will provide information prior to the next School Committee meeting. Ms. Nolan moved to Calendar **#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. Ms. Walser moved to Calendar her substitute motion: That the Superintendent review caseloads of Special Education personnel to assure that adequate levels of staff exist to meet the current needs of Special Education students. Furthermore, following the upcoming mid-cycle coordinated review of Special Education in the district by the Massachusetts DOE, that the Superintendent report to the School Committee on the process by which OSE coordinates with the schools to assure that staffing remains adequate as student needs change. Furthermore, that the Superintendent report to the School Committee the process and timeline for creating a new strategic plan for Special Education to improve outcomes for students and address issues raised by constituents including, but not limited to, a) increasing technology; b) enhancing researched-based interventions for language-based disabilities, dyslexia, and autism; c) minimizing whenever possible the use of compensatory services; d) eliminating over-identification, especially of minority students; e) addressing summer "regression"; and f) fostering a district culture where "kids get what they need" vs. parents having to advocate for services (in addition to plans to create a parent "ombudsman").

**#06-167, Grant Awards.** Ms. Walser asked the Superintendent to speak to the LEA Grant for Mandarin instruction and what it will mean at CRLS. The Superintendent was heard. On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Harding, on the following roll call, **#06-167, Grant Awards**, was adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the Grant Awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Massachusetts Cultural Council, for the period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007, in the amount of \$20,800.00, Project/Grant SC07789. This grant will provide for the first year of a two-year "Page-to-Stage" project in which students in grades 4-6 at two schools will learn the craft of playwriting through intensive workshops. Professional development in this model of enhancing literacy through drama will be available to teachers district-wide. **CPS Target Population:** Approximately 200 students in grades 4-6 at the Baldwin and Haggerty Schools; teachers district-wide will have the opportunity for professional development. **Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness:** Participating students will improve their reading and writing skills and meet the state standards in drama in the ELA Frameworks.
2. LEA Grant, for the period September 15, 2006 to September 14, 2007, in the amount of \$280,764.00, Project/Grant SC07831. This award is for the first year of a three-year Foreign Language grant. The Cambridge Peng Yo Project will deliver Mandarin foreign language instruction to students at the ML King, Jr. and Amigos Schools, and will enable Mandarin to be added as a new course offering at CRLS. This grant will also support curriculum development for K-12 Mandarin, especially in the content area of health, and professional development in effective practices for teaching Mandarin. **CPS Target Population: In year 1**, up to 540 students in grades K-12 (ML King, Amigos, and CRLS). **Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness:** All students in the program (in grades K-12) will show increase in their acquisition of Mandarin at all language domains as demonstrated by pre/post and mid-year assessments.

3. After-School and Out-of-School Time Quality Program, for the period October 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007, in the amount of \$26,358.00, Project/Grant SC07832. The Agenda for Children and the Cambridge Public Schools & After-School Partnership have received funding from the MA DOE's After-School and Out-of-School Time Quality Grant Program to promote innovative partnerships between schools and after-school settings. This grant will support joint projects between school teachers and after-school providers to promote academic support and learning and inclusion of children with special needs. Experiential, project-based curriculum that spans both school and after-school settings will be developed.  
**CPS Target Population:** Approximately 100-160 students enrolled in after-school programs in the City.  
**Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness:** Students who participate in the new projects will benefit academically and socially from the increased communication and collaboration between their school day and after-school teachers. A formative evaluation will be conducted and best practices will be reported to the MA DOE.

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

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted that the following items be combined and referred to the Superintendent for a response at the next Regular School Committee meeting: **#06-168, Motion by Mr. Fantini** that the Superintendent provide the School Committee with an educational plan to support those schools not meeting their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals; **#06-169, Motion by Ms. Nolan** that, in recognition of the hard work on the part of all staff in all schools as reflected in generally positive achievement gains, the School Committee directs the Superintendent to provide additional resources to Principals by increasing School Improvement Funds for each elementary school for this year by \$75,000 and for CRLS by \$150,000; and **#06-170, Motion by Ms. Nolan** that the Superintendent come forward at the next meeting with a recommendation for new or expanded initiatives and/or programs, in light of some additional budget flexibility due to State reimbursements, after soliciting input from the School Committee, the cabinet, and the Principals.

Members discussed options for parking. On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to adopt **#06-171, Motion by Mr. Harding:** that the Superintendent discuss with the City Manager the possibility of finding appropriate parking for the Fletcher-Maynard Academy staff.

#### **Late Orders**

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to bring forward a motion by Mr. Fantini to create sub-committees. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Nolan, on the following roll call, it was voted that the Rules of the Cambridge School Committee be amended to include the following sections (first reading):

**Section 7 - Subcommittees:** Subcommittees, except the Subcommittee on the Budget, which shall be a Committee of the Whole, shall be comprised of three Members. The Vice Chair shall appoint the subcommittees and designate the Chair of each subcommittee. The current subcommittees of the School Committee are as follows:

1. Budget – Committee of the Whole
2. Policy and Procedures
3. Governance
4. Community Relations
5. Building and Grounds and Long Range Planning
6. Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment

A quorum for subcommittees, in order to conduct business, shall be two, but no binding action shall be taken, only recommendations made to the full School Committee.

Subcommittees may take up all business that may properly come before it and matters that get referred by the entire School Committee. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be assigned to each subcommittee established. The Superintendent's ability to communicate to the School Committee about educational or curriculum issues through the Superintendent's Agenda remains.

The School Committee, by a vote of a majority of the total membership of the School Committee, shall reserve the right to recall any matter from subcommittee. A matter so recalled shall not again be eligible for referral to subcommittee without a vote by a majority of the total membership of the School Committee.

**Section 8 – Special Subcommittees and Ad Hoc Subcommittees:** Special subcommittees and ad hoc subcommittees may be established as proposed by the Vice Chair and confirmed by vote of the School Committee with such membership and duties and for such duration as the School Committee deems fit. The Vice Chair shall appoint members of any such special subcommittee and/or ad hoc subcommittee.

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

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted that the School Committee utilize the November 14 Roundtable to hear from the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Office of Achievement and Accountability, as well as ELA, Math and Science Curriculum Coordinators, and any appropriate individuals from the High School, regarding a district-wide perspective on elementary academic performance.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting to 10:15.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted that the Mayor, Vice Chair and Superintendent schedule roundtables on the Literacy Collaborative and elementary school Principals.

On a motion by Mayor Reeves, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted that the School Committee send a letter of condolence to Rev. Iona Smith Nze on the death of her son, Ike.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted that the Executive Secretary to the School Committee prepare Resolutions on CPS employees' retirement for the party on November 3.

Discussion took place around the Superintendent's response to an article in Boston Magazine. The Superintendent was heard.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting to finish the discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to adjourn (10:20 p.m.).

Adjourned  
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

