

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

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

Mayor Reeves in the Chair.

Also present: Student Representative Marilyn Paschal

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings

Ms. Walser moved to Table the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 1, 2007.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to suspend the Rules to take out of order item **#07-99, Motion by Mr. Schuster** to discuss the search process for hiring Principals.

Public Testimony

The following individuals were heard:

- Rachel Wyon; Vice Mayor, School Teachers, and community leaders from Sister City in El Salvador
- Blake Newman, Fairmount St., Parent, re Haggerty Principal hiring process

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to suspend the Rules to allow Mr. Newman additional time to speak. On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to bring forward **#07-99**. Members discussed the search process, screening, hiring and interviewing committees used in selecting the Haggerty School Principal. The Superintendent said the process is the same as it was for 10 other schools.

- Akshata Kadagathur, Prentiss Street, Student Government President re Student School Committee Members and opinion voting

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to suspend the Rules to speak to Ms. Kadagathur who responded to Members questions on whether the Student Government voted to have a vote on the School Committee and whether it pertained only to the high school.

- Anthony Galluccio, City Councilor, re Principal hiring and RSTA

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Schuster, 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

Members passed over all unfinished business.

A. New Business

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent who introduced Dr. Ananis for the presentation on RSTA. Dr. Ananis introduced Diane Paradis, Vocational Coordinator and Sue Walsh, Director of the Cambridge Office for Workforce Development and Chair of the RSTA Advisory Board.

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

Dr. Ananis and Ms. Walsh provided responses to the following School Committee Orders:

C07-063: that the Superintendent provide a market data analysis of current programs at RSTA to see what the job prospects are in the programs we currently have. Further, that the same be done for heating, ventilation, air conditioning, plumbing, electrical and/or any other emerging vocational fields; and further, that a framework be developed that takes into consideration implementation of programs, cost assessment, and review of demand;

C07-067: City Council Order #O-18, that the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Assistant City Manager for Human Services and the Superintendent of Schools with the view of Workforce Development and Rindge School of Technical Arts conducting a building trades apprenticeship awareness program; and

C07-075: that the Superintendent provide the School Committee with annual reports from the Guidance and Vocational Education Departments.

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

- What is the increase in exploratory enrollment attributed to
- What is the budget for RSTA and is it the same for regular education students
- Where does the State reimbursement go
- How do we compare to other districts in terms of what we offer
- What will our biotech offerings prepare students to do
- Think about running an evening program for adults in biotech
- What is the Apprenticeship Fair
- What are some of the interests of students in programs re green initiatives
- How many students are at Minuteman and in what disciplines
- If we are offering quality programs, why are our students enrolling in Minuteman
- Do we provide transportation
- Are we required to offer internships for Level 3 students
- How many students are doing cooperative education programs
- Does the majority of employers come from our Advisory group
- Where does apprentice information get distributed
- Does the expansion of RSTA mean we will get more students
- Where does expansion stop and high quality training begin
- Look at where we can link students to other programs beyond high school
- RSTA staff has done a great job staying on top of cutting edge trends
- Administer occupational survey in middle grades
- Use School Committee as resources – we want to be partners
- Are Advisory Committee Minutes published on the web
- Send School Committee reports from Advisory Committee meetings
- Is it possible to open a bake shop
- Would like to see a report from teachers re their vision for programs
- Let the Superintendent know if there is a burning desire to expand a program
- We need to be open to letting our students attend outside programs
- Do not hide the fact that there are other programs available even though it will cost us money

- We need to review our policy of paying trades people with five years experience the same as professional teachers
- Why don't we train students to take the Police exam, for example
- Our challenge is to get Level III enrollment up – RSTA needs to be the talk of the City

On behalf of the Members, the Chair thanked the Superintendent and staff for the presentation and turned the meeting over to the Superintendent and Dr. Saheed for the Guidance Department report. Dr. Saheed introduced Ms. Lynn Williams and made a brief statement regarding the mission of the Guidance Department. Ms. Williams was heard regarding the NAVIANCE program.

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

- How have some of the new measures that have been put in place helped
- What are we preaching to our Guidance Counselors re career choices
- What are the expectations around Guidance Counselors turning a student around

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting past 10:00 to the end.

- Send message to students that it is never too late to plan for college
- How does the trial period work at CRLS
- How does the Guidance Department work with coaches
- Where does the Guidance Department come in notifying coaches that a student is failing
- It's a good thing that we hold our athletes to a high standard
- Have students make freshman tapes available to scouts
- What languages are available to parents
- Are all languages represented on the Guidance staff
- Is there an alternative to programs prior to going to college
- Do we know how many students do City Year, etc.
- Do parents and student have access to year-long schedules
- How do you build relationships into the structure
- Is there a formal structure for professional development in conjunction with the Guidance Department
- Are coaches in constant contact with the Guidance Department
- Guidance staff should meet with coaches around concerns
- Has anything been designed to plant success for middle schools
- How do we get proactive to help students connect to jobs who do not know what they will be doing after graduation
- How many families have come through the TERI program
- Are there any suggestions for peer support programs transferring into our school system
- There's a backlash brewing over a ranking system – it's more important for students to find a college that meets their interests
- Focus on students finding the right match
- What do we do with 7th and 8th graders to let them know what they need to do when they get to high school
- The 8th grade transition program is impressive
- If parents knew more of what is required they could help their child get started
- HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) have the ability to help deficient students get up to speed
- Work to cut 2-year enrollment and increase 4-year enrollment
- Host a gathering of alumni to speak to students
- How many students leave here and go to a college that is wrong for them
- What is the vision for the Guidance Department
- Is there a Guidance curriculum

- Consider doing a monthly program in the Media Arts Center
- Talented Guidance Counselors should not be doing clerical work
- Look at a K-12 Guidance program
- Are Guidance Counselors involved in professional development
- How does a guidance department evaluate itself
- Can colleges come here to accept students

The Chair thanked the Superintendent, Dr. Saheed and Ms. Williams for the presentation.

B. Action Items

Ms. Walser moved to Table all items except #07-90, #07-92, #07-95, #07-96. Ms. Walser moved an amendment, seconded by Mr. Grassi, to also bring forward items #07-97 and #07-98. Ms. Nolan removed #07-96 and #07-98. Mayor Reeves removed #07-90. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#07-92, 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	Willow Hill School, 98 Haynes Rd., Sudbury	\$ 43,954.31
3 students	Schools for Children, 20 Academy St., Arlington	102,768.96
1 student	Schools for Children (Seaport Campus) 20 Academy St., Arlington	27,234.96
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5 students		\$173,958.23

#07-95, FY06/07 General Fund Budget Statutory Transfers: that the School Committee approve the following statutory transfers of appropriation within the General Fund Budget for FY2006-07:

	<u>Statutory Coding</u>	<u>Increase Amount</u>	<u>Decrease Amount</u>
51000	Salaries, Wages & Benefits		(\$227,269)
52000/55000	Other Ordinary Maintenance	\$171,533	
57000	Travel & Training	35,024	0
58000/59000	Extraordinary Expenditures	<u>20,712</u>	<u>0</u>
	Total	\$227,269	(\$227,269)

#07-97, Grant Awards: that the School Committee accept and approve the Grant Awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Comprehensive School Reform, for the period September 1, 2006 to August 31, 2007, in the amount of \$15,000.00, project/grant SC07804. These additional funds will provide for a 4 day math content institute for K-5 teachers in the 3 CSR schools (Amigos, King, and Tobin).

CPS Target Population: approximately 20 K-5 teachers in the 3 CSR schools (Amigos, King, and Tobin).

Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: Improved instruction and mathematics in K-5 classrooms in the 3 schools.

2. Citizenship in Action Tobin School, for the period April 3, 2007 to June 30, 2007, in the amount of \$2,460.00, project/grant SC07837. The Grant will fund an after-school group "citizenship in action" to be run by the School Counselor for male middle school students at the Tobin who are facing difficult issues in their lives.

CPS Target Population: 6-8 7th and 8th grade boys at the Tobin.

Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: the participants will be better informed and will have the opportunity to develop social/emotional skills in a structured and supportive setting.

3. Partnership for Online Professional Development, for the period April 24, 2007 to August 31, 2007, in the amount of \$11,300.00, project/grant SC07838. This Grant will be the first step in a two-part on-line professional development project developed in partnership with the Newton Public Schools and Educational Development Center (EDC). In phase one, over the summer of 2007, EDC will work with the DOE to adapt their course in "Using Real Data in the Math Classroom" and put it on the DOE's Mass One website. Phase two will commence in the fall, with a second Grant, during which Cambridge, Newton, and teachers from other districts will participate in the on-line course.

CPS Target Population: approximately 13-15 CPS middle and high school math teachers, including 3 who will be learning to facilitate on-line instruction and 10-12 teachers (probably mostly math) who will take the course for professional development.

Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: a core team of 3 Cambridge and 3 Newton math teachers will become trained in on-line course facilitation. Approximately 10-12 additional Cambridge teachers will participate in the on-line course in "Using Real Data in the classroom" and become more effective at teaching the statistics and data strand of the MA Frameworks.

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

Non-Consent Business

#07-90, Special Education Transportation. Discussion took place around the unresponsiveness of the current vendor and the need to change companies. Mr. Maloney was heard and thanked Christine Fisher and Richard Whitehead. On the following roll call, **#07-90, Special Education Transportation** was adopted as follows: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Special Education transportation services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. SP& R Transportation, 210 Donahue Road, Dracut, for the period August 1, 2007 to July 31, 2010 (with two one-year options to renew), in the amount of \$6,087,391 (3- year estimated cost).

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

#07-96, Statutory Transfer of Funds to Debt Stabilization Fund. Ms. Nolan raised a question on whether the Superintendent had given any thought to funding programs that were unable to be funded during the year because of lack of funds. The Superintendent said that prior year funds cannot be used for new programs. Mr. Maloney and Mr. Conry were heard. On the following roll call it was voted to adopt **#07-96, Statutory Transfer of Funds to Debt Stabilization Fund**, as follows: that the School Committee approve a transfer of funds in the amount of \$1,700,000 from the General Fund Budget to the Debt Stabilization Fund in the Statutory Categories specified. This amount represents the projected FY06-07 end-of-year balance in the School Department General Fund Budget, after accounting for necessary statutory transfers to balance individual accounts. This transfer to the Debt Stabilization Fund will help fund future capital projects and help offset future un-reimbursed debt service costs:

A. <u>General Fund</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Salaries & Fringe Benefits		(\$1,130,000)
Other Ordinary Expenditures		(570,000)
Total		(\$1,700,000)
B. <u>Debt Stabilization Fund</u>		
Extraordinary Expenditures	\$1,700,000	

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

Ms. Nolan raised a question on whether the amounts in the following agreements are in addition to the amount shown on an earlier report. Dr. Turk was heard in the affirmative. On the following roll call, **#07-98, 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. Lesley University, Cambridge, in the amount of \$31,200.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 840148, prog. 148, and in the amount of \$30,000.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 849622, prog. 622, proj./grant SC07767.

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

Mayor Reeves reminded Members that the Superintendent's annual evaluation must be completed by June 30 and asked the Secretary to schedule two meetings regarding the evaluation – one in late May and one in June.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to adjourn (11:22 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee