

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

Called for 6:00 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall, 759 Massachusetts Avenue.

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Schuster, Ms. Tauber, Mayor Simmons

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and congratulated the Executive Secretary on the birth of her first grandchild.

Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings:

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the following meetings:

- Regular Meeting – July 28, 2009
- Special Informal Meeting – July 28, 2009

Public Testimony

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

Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members:

The Chair welcomed and introduced the new Student School Committee Members, Ariane Berelowitch and Josiah Bonsey. The students thanked the Chair and gave a brief statement.

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business from Previous Meetings

A. Calendar

#09-37, Motion by Ms. Nolan that whereas both environmental and economic reasons demand greater attention to energy efficiency and sustainable practices and policies; and whereas the City recently established a program of energy champions in every department; and whereas the district has established a laudatory policy on environmentally responsible, sustainable operations; and whereas the school department now has information on energy use which was previously unavailable; therefore that the School Committee establish a policy of encouraging all schools to save energy by emulating energy-improvement financing models providing economic incentives to save energy. Further, that such a policy include sharing the financial benefits of energy savings by allowing individual school communities and administrative departments to decide on the use of up to 50% of the funds saved for up to five years. Further, that the School Committee host a public forum on recycling and energy efficiency district-wide to announce the new policy, disseminate information, and gather ideas for further improvements.

(2/3/09)

Mr. Grassi moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini, an amendment to **#09-120**, Recommendation: Approval of Revision to the Student Transportation Policy (first reading), to add "Land Boulevard" after Alewife Brook Parkway in paragraph 6. (5/19/09)

#09-210, Recommendation: Approval of Revision to the Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (first reading) (6/2/09)

#09-220, Recommendation: Approval of Revision to the Patriotic Exercises Instruction Policy (first reading)

#09-221, Recommendation: Approval of Revision to the School Ceremonies and Observances Policy (first reading)

#09-228, Recommendation: Approval of Revision to the Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco and Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol And Tobacco/Family Life/Sex Education Policies (first reading)

#09-255, Recommendation: Approval of Revision to the Substance Abuse And Drug use by Students Policy (second reading) (6/2/09)

#09-256, Recommendation: Approval of Revision to the Alcohol Use by Students Policy (second reading)

#09-257, Recommendation: Approval of Revision to the Student Conduct Policy (second reading)

#09-285, Approval of Revisions to the Administration Goals Policy and the Administrative Goals and Objectives Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Administration Goals Policy and the Administrative Goals and Objectives Policy as detailed in the document (second reading).

B. Tabled Matters

C. Awaiting Report

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to remove and adopt **#07-335, Motion by Mr. Grassi** that the Superintendent provide the School Committee by the end of February with an update on the CPS Security Study, including a description of timeline for hardware upgrades for the CRLS renovation as well as future hardware upgrades to elementary schools.

New Business

A. Presentation

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent. Dr. Young introduced Barbara Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources and Dr. Kahris McLaughlin, Affirmative Action Officer. Ms. Allen explained to the viewing audience that the Sullivan Chamber is not equipped for power point presentations. The presentation will be posted on the CPS web site tomorrow. The Affirmative Action: 2009 Annual Report was presented, including:

- Teacher Diversity & Student Achievement
- Progress Towards Increased Diversity
- SY 09/10 New Hire Data
- SY 09/10 Minority Teacher Hires By Category
- Staff Diversity: Three-Year Trend
- Three-Year Trend Chart
- Factors Contributing to Gains in Staff Diversity

- Initiatives to Support Diverse Staff Recruitment and Retention
- AAO Collaboration and Outreach
- Current Affirmative Actions Issues
- Next Steps: Renewed Focus for the Affirmative Action Office in Supporting Staff Diversity and Student Achievement Goals
- Summary: Cambridge's commitment to diversity continues to yield positive results

Members thanked Ms. Allen and Dr. McLaughlin for the presentation. The following questions, comments and concerns were addressed:

- Need to turn kids on to learning if they are to become interested in teaching
- What is the gap between aspiring teachers of color and aspiring white teachers passing the State certification exams
- Is there a procedure for hiring teachers with a contingency in the contract for obtaining certification
- How often do we send job openings back to the principals and hiring committees with charge to re-post because the pool is not diverse enough
- Did Human Resources expect some teachers to retire who didn't
- Have administrators participated in job fairs in the past or is this a new consideration
- What will it entail to have principals involved in hiring
- Have we ever had training in cultural competency for administrators
- Is training a new concept and how will it trickle down to teachers
- Can we offer assistance in passing the MTEL exam to potential teachers in exchange for a commitment for teaching in Cambridge for a specified time
- What about recruiting outside our resource pool
- Does the Affirmative Action Officer attend job fairs alone
- Would it be helpful to have another person attend
- Are we seeing a difference in retention for different types of groups
- Are we losing teachers faster than we are hiring them
- Are we on track with other districts as we slowly increase the number of teachers and staff of color
- Why is the number of teachers from Teach for America so low
- What resources do we have for hiring Latinos and Asians
- Are people with disabilities included in the report
- What is the plan for flat lined categories
- Recruiting strategies have to be aggressive
- Don't overlook private sector
- Examine collaboration with Wheelock College
- What other opportunities can we utilize
- How do we get a diverse hiring committee
- Consider having some committee meetings at night to accommodate working members
- Use contacts at local schools instead of going outside the area
- Do we need to revisit the best utilization of the Affirmative Action Officer's time
- May need to re-evaluate numbers resulting from site visits
- Consider different methods to bring different results
- What is the follow-up for job fairs
- If current recruiting process isn't working consider alternatives
- Recruiting is not the job of one person or department; everyone needs to be involved
- Should there be a monetary incentive for members of the hiring committee
- Is our presence necessary at job fairs
- We are not losing because we are not gaining
- Are we looking at paralegals as potential teachers
- School Committee is committed to a diverse work force
- Diversity should be an action not a reaction
- What matters in the end is the outcome for children

B. Action Items

Mr. Grassi moved, seconded by Ms. Nolan, for adoption of #09-408 through #09-428. Mr. Grassi removed #09-411, #09-423, #09-425, and #09-426. Mr. McGovern removed #09-409 and #09-415. On a motion by Mr. Schuster, seconded by Mr. McGovern, on the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted and/or referred to a second reading:

#09-408, Equipment for Food Service under ARRA Grant AR10862: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Equipment for Food Service, funds to be provided from the ARRA National School Lunch: Equipment Assistance grant, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. Kittredge Equipment Company, 100 Bowles Road, Agawam, for the period July 1, 2009 to September 30, 2009, in the amount of \$35,470.00.

#09-410, Contract Award: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Produce for Food Service, funds to be provided from the Food Service Revolving Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. Lowell Brothers & Bailey, Inc., 50 Eastern Ave., Chelsea, for the period September 1, 2009 to January 31, 2010, in the amount of \$74,973.85.

#09-412, Approval of Revisions to the Agenda Format Policy (File: BEDB): that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Agenda Format Policy as detailed in the document (first reading).

#09-413, Approval of Deletion of School Committee Sub-Committees Policy (File: BCE): that the School Committee approve the deletion of School Committee Sub-Committees Policy as detailed in the document (first reading)

#09-414, Approval of Revisions to the School Year/School Calendar and the School Year Policies: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the School Year/School Calendar and the School Year Policies as detailed in the documents (second reading).

#09-416, Approval of Revisions to the Programs for Disadvantaged Students Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Programs for Disadvantaged Students Policy as detailed in the document (second reading).

#09-417, Approval of Revisions to the Student Policies Goals Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Student Policies Goals Policy as detailed in the document (second reading).

#09-418, Approval of the Uniform Grievance Procedures Policy: that the School Committee approve the Uniform Grievance Procedures Policy as detailed in the document (second reading).

#09-419, Approval of Revisions to the School Committee Member Oath of Office Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the School Committee Member Oath of Office Policy as detailed in the document (third reading).

#09-420, Approval of Change in Designation of School Officials that Process Petitions for Approval of Attendance by Non-immigrant Students: that the School Committee approve the change in designation of school officials that process petitions for approval of attendance by non-immigrant students by adding the Director of Student Registration and Enrollment as a designated official.

#09-421, Grant Awards: that the School Committee accept and approve the Grant Awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Nellie Mae Education Foundation, Supplemental, for the period June 1, 2009 to August 31, 2010, in the amount of \$470.00, project/grant SC10849.

Description: This is a supplemental to the original June 16, 2009 School Committee meeting that was approved. Order #C09-411, amount of this grant is \$30,470.00

2. ARRA McKinney-Vento, for the period August 15, 2009 to August 31, 2010, in the amount of \$20,702.00, project/grant AR10866.

Description: This is the first part of a two-year ARRA grant to support the district's efforts to connect homeless families with the resources available to them in the schools and community. The grant will provide training by community partner agencies for the Family Liaisons at each school so they will better understand the issues facing homeless children and families and be able to contribute to their success at accessing services.

CPS Target Population: There are approximately 86 homeless students and 200 doubling-up students in the CPS; this grant will improve outreach to all these students and their families.

Outcomes & Measurers of Effectiveness: Homeless students and their families will have a better understanding of the services available and be better able to access them. Progress in improvements will be monitored at the quarterly Homeless Education Program Service Coordination Committee.

#09-422, Consultant Agreements: that the School Committee approve the Consultant Agreement with the company or individual on the list, in the amount set forth, funds to be provided as shown:

1. Family Lives, Westborough, in the amount of \$39,000.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 852355, prog 355.

#09-424, Motion by the Ad-Hoc Committee on the School Committee Office that Job Openings and Personnel Transaction Reports no longer be sent to the School Committee Members.

#09-427, Invoice for \$4,250.00 from National School Boards Association for National Affiliate fees.

#09-428, Invoice for \$5,970.00 from Massachusetts Association of School Committees for annual dues.

Ms. Tauber YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Mayor Simmons YEA.

Non-Consent Agenda

Mr. McGovern raised a concern of being locked into a three year contract for the rental of the administration building. Mr. Maloney was heard. On the following roll call it was voted to adopt **#09-409, Rental of 159 Thorndike Street building:** that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for rental of 159 Thorndike Street, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, 49 Sixth Street, Cambridge, for the period October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2012, in the amount of \$435,099.60.

Ms. Tauber YEA, Mr. Fantini, YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Mayor Simmons YEA.

Mr. Grassi asked for clarification of the time for submitting motions to the School Committee Office. Mayor Simmons and Dr. Young advised the Members that the issue is under advisement and it will be on the agenda for the upcoming retreat. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted to refer to a second reading: **#09-411, Approval of Revisions to Agenda Format Policy (File: BEDB):** that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Agenda Format Policy as detailed in the document (first reading).

Mr. McGovern raised the question whether the PE program encompasses the whole child. Dr. Young and Dr. Turk were heard. On the following roll call it was voted to adopt **#09-415, Approval of Revisions to**

the Physical Education Policy (second reading): Ms. Tauber YEA, Mr. Fantini, YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Mayor Simmons YEA.

Ms. Tauber thanked the members of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle School Youth for its collaborative effort and moved the following be amended: "that the School Committee go on record in support of the Strategic Plan developed by the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission of Middle School Youth." On the following roll call it was voted to adopt as amended: **#09-423 Motion by Mayor Simmons and Ms. Tauber** that the School Committee go on record in support of the work by the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle School Youth entitled, "**Shared Youth, Shared Strategies: What City Agencies, Schools and Community Partners Can do Together to Improve Cambridge Middle School Youth Participation in Quality Out-of- School-Time Programs**"; and, further, that the School Committee go on record supporting the plan's citywide goal "*To ensure broad participation of Cambridge middle school youth in quality out-of-school-time experiences that fosters both their present and future learning and life success*"; and request the Superintendent meet with the appropriate City officials to figure out next steps and an action plan to be reported back by December: Ms. Tauber YEA, Mr. Fantini, YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. McGovern YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Mayor Simmons YEA.

Mr. Grassi moved, seconded by Ms. Nolan, to take up together **#09-425, Report of the July 27, 2009, meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Office of the School Committee** and **#09-426, report of the August 20 2009, meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Office of the School Committee**. Mr. Grassi gave Members an overview of the purpose and work being done by the Committee and placed **#09-425** on the Calendar. Mr. Grassi requested that the time of the School Committee office lunch period be included in the posting of the office hours. **#09-426** was amended and placed on the Calendar.

Late orders: None

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to suspend the Rules to bring forward the following issues and concerns:

- City of Cambridge has begun cable license renegotiations. Negotiations will take place over the next 18 months
- Mr. Fantini thanked the Administration, particularly Dr. Turk, for the summer programs.
- Dr. Young reported that President Obama's first day of school speech to students was aired in classrooms, and that the *Boston Globe* and WBZTV sent journalists to the Peabody and the Morse Schools.
- Dr. Young informed the Members that the CRLS Renovation web site has been updated. Twitter is now being used to provide instant updates to teachers and students.
- Ms. Tauber raised the question about buildings built in the 1960's and 1970's involving caulking as reported in the *Boston Globe*. Mr. Maloney was heard.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to adjourn (9:43 P.M.).

Adjourned
Patricia A. Berry
Confidential Secretary