

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, September 18, 2007

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 6:15 p.m.

Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to adopt the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 4, 2007.

Public Testimony

The Chair entertained public testimony and allowed speakers three minutes to present their testimony.

The following individuals were heard:

- Elaine Schear, Amory Street, re ISP Restructuring at Kennedy/Longfellow School

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend Ms. Schear's time to speak.

- Leslie DiTrani, Reed Street, re SPED

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend Ms. DiTrani's time to speak.

Dennis Friedler, Cpl. McTernan, re SPED. In Mr. Friedler's absence, Ms. McCarter read a letter on his behalf.

- Cheyenne McCarter, Elm Street, re SPED

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend Ms. McCarter's time to speak.

On a motion by Mr. Schuster, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the time for all speakers.

- Nancy Brickhouse, Walden Street, re SPED
- Karen Dobek, Allston Street, re SPED

The Superintendent was heard and said that the chart referenced by Ms. Dobek is inaccurate and was not produced by the Administration.

- Jin Chen Cooper, Washington Ave., re Controlled Choice Placement
- Shireen Jyawook, Walden Street, re SPED
- Maureen Manning, PAC Co-chair re brief overview of the PAC

- Marlene Orellana, PAC Co-chair re thanks to School Committee and Superintendent for listening
- Jim Recht September 8, 2007, email re changes to the Controlled Choice Program read for the record
- Jennifer Nahaus, Waterman Rd., re SPED
- Gloria Pascual, Franklin Street, re SPED

The Chair closed public testimony.

Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members

The Chair introduced and welcomed Student School Committee Members Praise Agu, LC "C" and Emma Schreefter, LC "S", both seniors. Ms. Agu was heard in support of the change from Club Weeks to Club Days. Ms. Schreefter raised a question on why Special Education students clean gutters and cafeterias.

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

On a motion by Mr. Schuster, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to take the Special Education presentation out of order.

The Chair turned the meeting over to Dr. Fowler-Finn who introduced Dr. Aida Ramos, Special Education Executive Director. Dr. Ramos walked Members through a presentation: "Special Education Annual Report Information", including:

- Special Education Gender Stats
- Male Special Education Stats by Ethnicity
- Female Special Education Stats by Ethnicity
- SE Certification Information (August 20th 2007)
- Total School Enrollment v. Special Education Enrollment
- Out of district Placement Data School Year 2007-2008
- SPED Programs Locations – Integrated-Special Start
- Pervasive Developmental Disorders – PDD
- Basic Academics (DD)
- Functional Academics (DD)
- Academics (Learning Disabilities)
- Structured Academics – Behavior

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

- What is language-based disability and what causes it
- Are there plans in the overview that we can start implementing
- There are a lot of people looking forward to what Dr. Ramos will do
- What are the plans to change dynamics of Team meetings
- Why is there a perception that we do not have staff who are certified
- Need to insure that staff who are certified are at the Team meeting
- Are students being over-identified, i.e., over-representation of African American females
- Are # of hours in the IEP v. specialist hours available
- Communication across the district is an issue - it is not big enough to justify communication problems
- Disappointed that the ombudsperson is not here tonight to answer questions
- Appreciated detailed frank statements on where we can improve
- Can we explore in the next budget cycle hiring people to bring students back in district
- What ideas are being used to address over/under-referral of some students
- Is there data that supports why there are many more students of color in behavior classes
- If we offer services we should be able to deliver them

- We need a rich system of accountability
- Happy to see budgetary positions stated in the report
- Concerned about over-representation of Hispanic females
- The summary report was very useful
- Can data be segregated by socioeconomic status
- Percentage of out placement is double – have we looked at bringing students back in
- Can we look at doing more for a child who does not need an IEP
- What are some of the obstacles to addressing concerns and making them a success
- How are transitions done from building to building
- What does clinician mean
- What is the educational rationale for keeping programs in the same school
- Put educational rationale first then figure out location
- Concerned that educational program is revolving around choice instead of vice-versa
- Are there any performance benchmarks that will be focused on and what will they be
- How can out-of-school-time programs be made seamless
- Interested in communication that takes place between schools and after-school programs
- Are there plans to develop a strategic plan
- Is the over-identification of African-American girls unusual over the past three years
- Is the school psychologist responsible for all students
- Look at special education students to see how many have special family circumstances, e.g., parental status
- Are we connected to the dyslexia lab at MIT
- Is there an evaluation of how many students return to regular education classes
- Retention from June to September is hard for everybody – look at the issue for all students

At Mr. Fantini's request, Dr. Ramos introduced the OSE Team.

The Members thanked the Superintendent and Dr. Ramos for the presentation. The Chair returned to the Agenda.

Unfinished Business from Previous Meetings

On a motion by Ms. Walser, it was voted to remove from the Calendar and accept, as amended, the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 24, 2007 **(C07-187)**.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, it was voted to remove Awaiting Report **(C07-050)**, Presentation by the vendor awarded the contract to convert to a paperless web-based system pending the presentation this evening.

New Business

Mr. Fantini moved, seconded by Ms. Nolan, for adoption of items #07-175 through #07-199. Ms. Nolan removed #07-191. Mayor Reeves removed #07-198. Ms. Walser removed #07-199. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#07-175, Child Care Resource Center (CCRC): that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for support services under the Community Partnerships for Children Grant FY08, funds to be provided from the State of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care Budget. This is a continuing contract under the grant:

CCRC, 130 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, for the period July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008, in the amount of \$801,081.07.

#07-176, 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:

8 students	Bay Cove Human Services, 66 Canal St., Boston	\$491,836.16
1 student	Beacon High School, 74 Green St., Brookline	43,554.00
1 student	Berkshire Hills Music Academy, 48 Woodbridge St., S. Hadley	39,500.00
1 student	Bi-County Collaborative (BICO), 397 E. Central St., Franklin	33,022.00
1 student	Cardinal Cushing Centers, Inc., 405 Washington St., Hanover	57,568.05
3 students	The Carroll School, 25 Baker Bridge Rd., Lincoln	95,875.05
1 student	Community Therapeutic Day School, 187 Spring St., Lexington	67,657.32
1 student	Crossroads School for Children, 11 Huron Dr., Natick	75,248.05
1 student	Educational Consultants of New England, 460 Totten Pond Rd., Waltham	73,886.24
1 student	Farr Academy, 71 Pearl St., Cambridge	64,410.77
6 students	Gifford School, 177 Boston Post Rd., Weston	302,016.42
1 student	Granite Academy, 6A Columbian St., Braintree	50,164.26
6 students	Judge Baker Children's Center, 53 Parker Hill Ave., Roxbury Crossing	398,196.97
1 student	McLean Hospital (CNS Pathways Academy), 115 Mill St., Belmont	86,740.68
1 student	MAB Community Services, 200 Ivy St., Brookline	86,914.02
4 students	New England Center for Children, 33 Turnpike Rd., Southboro	322,829.20
1 student	New England Pediatric Care, 78 Boston Rd., N. Billerica	51,425.50
1 student	Penikese Island School, PO Box 161, Woods Hole	60,371.70
16 students	Schools for Children (Dearborn Academy), 20 Academy St., Arlington	817,867.20
3 students	Schools for Children (Seaport Campus), 20 Academy St., Arlington	150,221.01
1 student	Schools for Children (STEP Program), 20 Academy St., Arlington	108,000.00
1 student	Tufts Educational Day Care Center, 165 Holland St., Somerville	58,624.46
<u>1 student</u>	<u>Willow Hill School, 98 Haynes Rd., Sudbury</u>	<u>45,303.71</u>
62 students		\$3,581,232.77

#07-177, Special Needs Contracts for Residential 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	Amego, Inc., 115 Plymouth St., Mansfield	\$198,990.34
1 student	Camphill Special Hill, 1784 Fairview Rd., Glenmoore, PA	68,930.00
1 student	Cardinal Cushing Centers, Inc., 405 Washington St., Hanover	158,434.57
1 student	Castle School, 298 Harvard St., Cambridge	69,683.82
1 student	Evergreen Center, 345 Fortune Blvd., Milford	146,356.68
2 students	Justice Resource Institute, 54 Boylston St., Boston	309,425.98
1 student	MAB Community Services, 200 Ivy St., Brookline	173,828.48
2 students	New England Center for Children, 33 Turnpike Rd., Southboro	273,184.09
1 student	Melmark New England, 461 River Rd., Andover	203,872.12
1 student	The Pathway School, 162 Egypt Rd., Norristown, PA	132,580.00
<u>1 student</u>	<u>The Walker Home, 1968 Central Ave., Needham</u>	<u>186,356.88</u>
13 students		\$1,921,642.96

#07-178, Approval of Revisions to Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-179, Approval of Revisions to Subcommittees of the School Committee Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Subcommittees of the School Committee Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-180, Approval of Revisions to Conduct of School Council Business Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Conduct of School Council Business Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-181, Approval of Revisions to School Improvement Plan Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the School Improvement Plan Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-182, Approval of Revisions to Cancellation of Meetings Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Cancellation of Meetings Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-183, Approval of Revisions to School Committee Meetings Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the School Committee Meetings Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-184, Approval of Revisions to Employee Negotiations Organizations Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Employee Negotiations Organizations as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-185, Approval of Revisions to Approval of Handbooks and Directives Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Approval of Handbooks and Directives Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-186, Approval of Revisions to School Committee Memberships and Rules of School Committee Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the School Committee Memberships and Rules of School Committee Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-187, Approval of Revisions to New School Committee Member Orientation Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the New School Committee Member Orientation Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-188, Approval of Revisions to School Committee Review of Procedures Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the School Committee Review of Procedures Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-189, Approval of Revisions to Policy Adoption Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Policy Adoption Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-190, Approval of Revisions to Special Procedures for Conducting Hearings Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Special Procedures for Conducting Hearings Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-192, Approval of Revisions to Agenda Format Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Agenda Format Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-193, Approval of Revisions to Notification of School Committee Meetings Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Notification of School Committee Meetings Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-194, Approval of Revisions to Executive Sessions Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Executive Sessions Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-195, Approval of Revisions to School Committee Office Facilities and Services Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the School Committee Office Facilities and Services Policy as detailed in the document (Second Reading).

#07-196, Approval of Uniformity Revisions to the School Committee Policy Manual: that the School Committee approve the following revisions be made throughout the Policy Manual for the sake of uniformity before the Policy Manual is posted on the internet as part of the School Committee's efforts to post its entire Policy Manual (Second Reading):

1. References to "committee," "Committee" and "school committee" are changed to "School Committee"
2. References to "superintendent" are changed to "Superintendent"
3. References to "Cambridge schools," "the schools," "City's schools," "Cambridge School System" and "school department" are changed to "Cambridge Public Schools"
4. References to "city council" or "council" are changed to "City Council"
5. References to "Secretary" or "Secretary of the School Committee" are changed to "Executive Secretary to the School Committee"
6. References to "Chairman" and "Chairperson" are changed to "Chair"

7. References to "system" and "school system" are changed to "school district" or "data system", as appropriate
8. References to "City" are changed to "City of Cambridge"
9. References to "Executive Director of Management Services" are changed to "Chief Financial Officer" or "Chief Operating Officer," as appropriate
10. References to "staff development" are changed to "professional development"
11. References to "Personnel Office" or "Personnel Department" are changed to "Office of Human Resources"
12. References to "personnel folders" or "personnel files" are changed to "personnel records"
13. Correct legal citations in the legal reference section of the policies, as appropriate

#07-197, Grant Awards: that the School Committee accept and approve the Grant Awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Occ. Ed. Vocational Skills, for the period September 1, 2007 to August 31, 2008, in the amount of \$139,289.00, Project/Grant SC08606. Perkins funds will be used to provide direct Career & Technical Educational instruction and supportive services to CRLS students who are enrolled both in Chapter 74-approved programs and non-Chapter 74 programs at RSTA, to purchase necessary industry-specific technology and equipment, and to provide professional development for RSTA staff.
CPS Target Population: Approximately 800 students in grades 9 through 12 enrolled in Chapter 74 and Non-Chapter 74 programs.
Outcomes and Measurers of Effectiveness: Students successfully complete RSTA programs and attain competency certificate.
2. C.A.S.IT., Inc., for the period September 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008, in the amount of \$20,000.00, Project/Grant SC08727. This grant will enhance the instruction of Italian at the Haggerty, Kennedy-Longfellow, and CRLS through provision of instructional materials (all schools) and additional teaching time (Haggerty School).
CPS Target Population: Kennedy-Longfellow students in K-2, Haggerty students in grades K-6, CRLS students enrolled in Italian classes.
Outcomes and Measurers of Effectiveness: Elementary students will gain a knowledge of basic Italian and an understanding of the cultural contributions made by Italians, as well as preparation for taking Italian in high school. Outcome measures will include continued increase in the number of students who pursue Italian classes at the high school and continued expansion of the number of classes available.
3. Expanded Learning Time Fletcher-Maynard and King Schools, for the period September 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008, in the amount of \$611,000.00, Project/Grant SC08829. This grant is for the Expanded Learning Time program at the Fletcher-Maynard and King Schools. It will provide additional compensation for teachers working additional hours as well as coordination of programs and additional electives provided by educational partners.
CPS Target Population: Approximately 470 students at the Fletcher-Maynard Academy and the Martin Luther King School.
Outcomes and Measurers of Effectiveness: It is expected that the additional learning time will lead to improved academic achievement as measured by the MCAS results and other criteria being used by the DOE Evaluation Team.
4. LEA Grant, for the period September 15, 2007 to September 14, 2008, in the amount of \$280,764.00, Project/Grant SC08831. This award is for the second year of a three year Foreign Language grant. The Cambridge Peng Yo Project will deliver Mandarin foreign language instruction to students at the Martin Luther King, Jr. and Amigos Schools, and will provide for courses in two levels of Mandarin 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 2 up to 540 students in grades K-12 (ML King, Amigos, and CRLS).

Outcomes & Measurers 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.

5. Partnership for Online Professional Development, for the period September 1, 2007 to August 31, 2008, in the amount of \$50,700.00, Project/Grant SC08838. This grant will be the second 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, EDC worked with the DOE to adapt their course in "Using Real Data in the Math Classroom" for the DOE's Mass One Website. In this grant, which is Phase Two, Cambridge, Newton, and teachers from other districts will participate in the on-line course and Cambridge and Newton teachers will receive training in providing on-line courses.

CPS Target Population: Approximately 13-15 CPS middle and high school math teachers, including three who will be learning to facilitate on-line instruction professional development.

Outcomes & Measurers 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" skilled at teaching the statistics and data strands of the MA Frameworks in an on-line environment.

6. Century Community Learning Centers Program/Continuation Grant, for the period September 1, 2007 to August 31, 2008, in the amount of \$50,000.00, Project/Grant SC08843. This 21st Century Community Learning Center Continuation grant will enable the Cambridge 21st Century Community Partnership to continue to work with several out-of-school-time programs to support enrichment opportunities and other activities designed to complement students' regular academic program.

CPS Target Population: With this continuation grant, the 21st CCLC Partnership directly supports enrichment programs at six "Core Partnership" OST programs serving in total approximately 300 CPS K-8 students. Sites include After Works at St. Peter's Church, Community Art Center, Cambridge Community Center, Frisoli Youth Center, King After-School Program and Windsor Street Boys & Girls Club.

Outcomes & Measurers of Effectiveness: Improved communication between after-school staff and school day teachers, improved academic and social skills as measured by the State's SAYO tool which surveys teachers and staff.

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

Non-Consent Business

Ms. Nolan moved an amendment to p. 45 that after "be taken", insert "except when invited by a majority of School Committee Members". Mr. Fantini moved to Calendar **Superintendent's Recommendation #07-191, Approval of Revisions to Public Participation at School Committee Meetings Policy** (Second Reading).

Mayor Reeves was heard in support of his motion, setting a tentative date of October 23 when Professor Willie is available and also inviting Dr. Recht. On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to adopt **#07-198, Motion by Mayor Reeves** that the School Committee hold a special meeting in October on the Controlled Choice Policy, inviting experts in Controlled Choice including Professor Willie, and community groups including the Cambridge NAACP. Further, that the schools' Public Information Office will disseminate information about the meeting to the wider community inviting participation, suggestions, and ideas.

Ms. Walser raised a point of information on binding another Committee to a report. Mr. Fantini moved to Calendar and refer to Legal Counsel **#07-199, Motion by Ms. Nolan** that the Superintendent report by the first meeting in March on the number and status of all computer equipment disposed of in the last year and no longer in use by the district. Further, that in light of the need to bridge the digital divide, the report should include progress towards donating computers to a non-profit for distribution in the community. Further, that in light of the toxic nature of E-waste, that the report include the policy and practice of current means of disposal to ensure responsible handling.

Mr. Grassi requested and received unanimous consent to return to **Superintendent's Recommendation #07-197, item 2**. C.A.S.IT., Inc. Mr. Grassi raised a question on why the grant only goes through second grade. The Superintendent was heard and will get back to the Members with a response. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted that the School Committee send a thank you letter to C.A.S.IT for its donation.

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

The Chair turned the meeting over to Superintendent Fowler-Finn who introduced Steve Smith, the new Technology Director, James Maloney, Chief Operating Officer and Tricia Keenan, MIS Administrator who walked members through "Electronic School Board – Paperless Meeting Solution for the Cambridge School Committee", including:

- The ESB Continuum
- Private and Public Access
- Communications
- Meeting Tools
- How "Paperless"?
- Implementing ESB: Proposed Timeline

Mr. Maloney and Ms. Keenan responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns raised by Members:

- Will there be public display in the meeting room
- Can the meeting be cablecast
- Can the roll still be called

Mayor Reeves in the Chair

- Can information be accessed from individual desks
- People do not read things that are not on paper
- Is this in compliance with security and legal requirements

Members thanked the Superintendent and staff for the presentation.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting 10 minutes.

Late Orders

On a motion by Ms. Walser, it was voted that the School Committee send thank you notes to all the Achievement Gap presenters, including Charlie Applestein.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted that the Superintendent prepare an explanation to the School Committee on pay policies for the City of Cambridge and School Department

employees that are deployed to active duty. The response should include any proposed changes or the status of those changes.

Mr. Fantini asked the Superintendent to get back to the Members on why the CRLS library is not open after 4:00 p.m. The Superintendent was heard.

The Superintendent was asked to meet with the Principal and parents to resolve issues at the Kennedy-Longfellow regarding the ISP. The Superintendent was heard.

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting 2 minutes. The Superintendent was heard.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting 3 minutes to allow the Superintendent to finish speaking. The Superintendent was heard.

Vice-Chair Fantini named Mr. Grassi and Dr. Fowler-Finn Co-Chairs of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle Schools, charged with bringing back the best thinking on middle schools in Cambridge and the lack of diversity.

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

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee