

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, December 4, 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 School Committee Representatives Praise Agu and Emma Shreefter

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

Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted that the Minutes of the November 20, 2007, meeting be accepted as presented. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to suspend the Rules to amend the November 20 Minutes by deleting from page 7 "pending receipt of a technology strategic plan". Discussion took place around the amendment. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the November 20, 2007 Regular Meeting, as amended.

Public Comment

There being no one signed up, the Chair closed Public Comment.

Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members

None at this time.

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business from Previous Meetings

A. Calendar

Mr. Grassi removed #07-233. Ms. Nolan removed #07-207, #07-208 and #07-220.

B. Tabled Matters

C. Awaiting Reports

New Business

A. Presentation

The Chair turned the meeting over to Superintendent Fowler-Finn who gave a summary of the FY08-09 Five-Year Financial Estimates. Mr. Conry walked Members through the presentation "FY08-09 Budget – Five-Year Financial Estimates", including:

- FY2008-09 Financial Summary
- FY08-09 Revenue Estimates

- FY08-09 Expenditure Estimates
- Estimated FY2008-09 Cost Increases and Decreases
- Revenue Estimates Through FY12-13
- 5-Year Estimated Revenues Impacting the Budget
- Expenditure Estimates Through FY2012-13 – Major Changes
- Estimated Expenditure Increases & Decreases – Selected Items Impacting the Budget
- 5-Year Projected Revenues vs. Projected Expenditures – General Fund Budget
- What Flexibility do we have?

It was pointed out that if the \$3.1 million shortfall is solved, it will reduce the \$4.1 million by that amount.

The Superintendent and Mr. Conry responded to the following questions, comments and concerns raised by Members:

- Is there any sense of how much grant funds will be
- At the end of three years what will be left in the debt stabilization fund
- Does the City have a strategy or plans to pool employee benefits
- Ask the State to review its funding formula re charter schools
- Send a letter to legislators re charter schools impacting public schools in a negative way
- What is included in transportation costs
- Is there an estimate of how many teachers will be retiring

The Chair thanked the Superintendent and staff for the presentation and returned to Unfinished Business.

A. Calendar

#07-207, Motion by Ms. Nolan that the Superintendent report to the School Committee on programs and curriculum enhancements in support of academically advanced students in elementary school. Further, that the report include support provided to teachers in meeting the needs of students capable of above-grade-level work. Further, that whereas the No Child Left Behind performance measures effectively exclude advanced students from calculation of AYP, that the report include the district's goals for advanced students to ensure their educational needs are met. Discussion took place around communicating to parents what is available for gifted and talented and academically advanced students at the elementary level. The Superintendent was asked how he describes academically advanced students. The Superintendent was heard. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to adopt **#07-207**.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to adopt **#07-208, Joint motion by Mayor Reeves and Ms. Nolan** that Peabody Music Teacher Wendy Silverberg be invited to present the workshop she is giving at the NSBA meeting, "Music Instruction that Tips the Scales in Favor of Student Achievement" to the community of Cambridge, at a forum open to the public, sponsored by the Cambridge School Committee anytime after the NSBA conference. This program of targeted instruction in music appears to have led to improvements in achievement for all students, and especially for low income and minority students.

#07-220, Motion by Ms. Nolan that whereas healthy children learn better and whereas the Cambridge Public School District has taken laudatory steps to increase the healthiness of its students, and whereas many cities look to replicate Cambridge's success in the area of promoting healthy eating and good school nutrition, that the School Committee go on record as endorsing H.4199, An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition, which would apply to all public schools in the state. The Superintendent was heard and announced that CPSD received the only national school "National Prevention Summit Award" in Washington, DC from the Surgeon General. It was pointed out that the Robert Johnson Foundation has a \$5 million pot of money that we may be able to tap into. On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adopt **#07-220**.

#07-233, Grade Quick Software to integrate with existing Edline System. Mr. Grassi deferred to the Superintendent. The Superintendent, Jim Maloney, Dr. Turk and Steve Smith responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns from Members:

- What security measures are in place
- Insure that information is secure
- Is this an add-on for grades alone
- If this is not done, can homework, etc. still be accessed
- Concerned that without a technology plan this will be an on-going expense
- Does this include anything but grades
- Will teachers be required to use this system
- Describe the process by which this recommendation came to us
- Insure that we are gathering information that is useful
- Concerned that we are expecting more work from teachers
- What happens to schools that do portfolios and skills checklists
- Views this as a tool to enhance parent communication and data warehousing
- Insure that we will not require all teachers to post their grade book every Friday
- Is this an additional option for teachers or is this part of a movement requiring more reporting
- This is in the best interests of students and parents – we should not be sheltering teachers

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Grassi, on the following roll call **#07-233, Grade Quick Software** to integrate with existing Edline System, was adopted: Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster NAY, Ms. Walser, YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding, YEA, Mayor Reeves YEA.

B. Action Items

Mr. Harding moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini, for adoption of items #07-246 through #07-274. The Chair removed **#07-246, Recommendation for Potential Modifications to the Controlled Choice Program**. The Superintendent was heard regarding the formula for controlled choice and introduced noted civil rights attorney Maree Sneed, Jim Maloney and Family Resource Director Christine Fisher. Ms. Fisher walked Members through the presentation "CPS Controlled Choice", including:

- Current Policy: 45% F/R – 55% Paid +/- 15%
- Option 1 (3 Year K Enrollment): 44% F/R – 56% Paid +/- 10%
- Option 2 (3 Year K Applicants): - 40% F/R – 60% Paid +/- 10%

The Superintendent, Attorney Sneed and staff responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns from Members:

- A short-term decision needs to be made and a consultant needs to be hired to help with a long-term plan
- Any plan needs to incorporate an independent monitor – need a list of who independent should be
- Under what auspices has Maree joined us
- Mr. Alves is not the right person

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

- Is the breakdown for September SES available
- Kindergarten actual enrollment figure is not that much different from K-8 +/- 15%
- Concerned with continuing to use +/- 15%

Mr. Schuster moved, seconded by Ms. Nolan, for adoption of Option 1. Ms. Walser moved an amendment to Option 1 that it be changed from +/- 10% to +/- 15%. Discussion continued.

- Telling a parent we do not have a seat goes against the definition of public education
- If Option 1 is adopted, will it allow flexibility
- We have never been in a position to tell a parent we do not have a seat
- What kinds of issues are impacting the algorithm
- Is there something that supports that SES is close to race even though race cannot be used
- How do we know what SES is indicative of in Cambridge
- It is important to keep up with changing demographics in order to come up with a balance plan
- There is not enough information on the pool we are discussing
- Some schools are not diverse – challenge is how do we look at and value what diversity looks like
- When did Fletcher-Maynard's special status end
- When low-income is added to siblings and proximity, low-income chooses proximity
- Kick out proximity and run another simulation
- Look at how we divide school system that meets academic needs and desegregation needs
- Community needs to know that this is not just an educational issue – there are some schools that will never be chosen
- Need to figure out how 100% of parents get one of their first three choices
- How many seats are available
- If +/- percentage goes up, will it provide more flexibility
- Wouldn't it be a better time to come to School Committee when we get down to 25 seats
- When the formula changed, did it make our schools more imbalanced
- We do not know why families withdraw
- When mandatories reach over 50, there is a major political problem – need to pay attention to mandatories
- +/- 10% should be the School Committee's goal
- If algorithm changes, there will be pressure on both sides
- There needs to be more of an effort by Principals to recognize the value of balanced schools

#07-246, Potential Modifications to the Controlled Choice Program (Second Reading):

Superintendent's Recommendation #07-255, Potential Modifications to the Controlled Choice Program, that the School Committee amend the Controlled Choice policy for kindergarten assignments for the 2008-2009 school year to use the average of the last three years of kindergarten enrollment +/- 10 percentage points. On the following roll call, Ms. Walser's amendment of Option 1, to change +/- 10% to +/- 15% **failed of adoption**: Ms. Nolan NAY, Mr. Schuster PRESENT, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi NAY, Mr. Harding NAY, Mayor Reeves NAY. On the following roll call, it was voted to adopt Option 1 (3-year K enrollment) 44% F/R, 56% Paid +/-10%: Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster NAY, Ms. Walser NAY, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Reeves YEA.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to suspend the Rules to extend the meeting to 10:30.

Mr. Harding removed #07-249 and #07-271. Ms. Walser removed #07-273. Mr. Grassi removed #07-250 through #07-267. Ms. Nolan removed #07-268. Mayor Reeves removed #07-259. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#07-247, 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	Shore Collaborative, 100 Revere Beach Pkwy, Chelsea	\$38,651.40
<u>1</u> student	Project Spoke, 64 W. Main St., PO Box Z, Norton	<u>53,420.00</u>
2 students		\$92,071.40

#07-248, FY08-09 Budget Schedule: that the School Committee receive and approve the FY08-09 Budget Schedule and Process.

#07-269, Approval of Home School Applications for School Year 2007-2008: that the School Committee approve the home school application for the 2007-2008 school year as detailed in the documents.

#07-270, Motion by Mr. Grassi that the School Committee schedule meetings for January 8 and January 22, 2008.

#07-272, 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.

#07-274, Report of the November 27, 2007 Meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Inauguration:

Called for 5:00 p.m. in the School Committee Meeting Room for the purpose of planning for the Inauguration of the 2008-2009 School Committee (January 7, 2008).

Members present: Mr. Grassi, Chair, Mr. Fantini; Members-Elect Mr. McGovern and Ms. Tauber
Mr. Grassi in the Chair.

A quorum of the Committee being present, Mr. Grassi called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The Committee discussed plans and ideas for the School Committee Inauguration as follows:

1. That the time for the Organization/Inauguration be 5:30 p.m., Monday, January 7, 2008, in the Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway.
2. That former Superintendent Dr. Robert S. Peterkin, Director of the Urban Superintendents Program, Harvard Graduate School of Education, be invited to emcee and former School Committee Member Frances Cooper and former State Representative Sandra Graham be considered as back-up.
3. That Mr. McGovern recommend a photographer and ask his grandmother to recommend a priest. Ms. Tauber will recommend a Rabbi (preferably female) to participate. Mr. Grassi suggested Rev. Foxx as backup.
4. That Ms. Bradshaw meet with Ms. Koury, K-12 Visual & Performing Arts Coordinator, to plan music before, during and after the ceremony.
5. That a collation (fruit and cheese, carving station, pasta station, dessert, assorted beverages) for guests be served in the Main Cafeteria at C.R.L.S. immediately following the ceremony, and that Ms. Bradshaw identify a caterer to provide the collation.
6. That the Executive Secretary be authorized to proceed with the arrangements (including remembrances for outgoing Members, invitations, program, music, flowers, collation, etc.).

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. McGovern, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

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

Non-Consent Agenda

Mr. Harding raised a question on the necessity of a letter to School Partners. The Superintendent was heard. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to refer back to the Superintendent **#07-249, Draft Letter to Cambridge Public School Partners.**

Mr. Grassi noted that the School Committee is reviewing its policies to correct typographical errors and to clean up language prior to putting them on the web. Mayor Reeves raised a question on **#07-259, Approval of Revision to the Authorized Signatures Policy.** Ms. MacFarlane was heard. Ms. Nolan raised a question on **#07-260, Approval of Revision to the Fiscal Accounting and Reporting Policy.** Ms. MacFarlane was heard. Ms. Nolan raised a question on **#07-263, Approval of Revision to the Service Agreement Policy.** Ms. MacFarlane was heard. On the following roll call, it was voted to refer to a second reading **#07-250 through #07-267**, with the exception of **#07-263, Approval of Revision to the Service Agreement Policy**, which is referred back to the Superintendent:

#07-250, Approval of Revision to Annual General Fund Operating Budget Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Annual General Fund Operating Budget Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-251, Approval of Revision to Fiscal Management Goals Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Fiscal management Goals Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-252, Approval of Revision to the Budgeting System Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Budgeting System Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-253, Approval of Revision to the Fiscal Year Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Fiscal year Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-254, Approval of Revision to the Budget Planning Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Budget Planning Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-255, Approval of Revision to the Communication of Budget Information Policy, as amended: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Communication of Budget Information Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-256, Approval of Revision to the Budget Hearings and Reviews Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Budget Hearings and Reviews Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-257, Approval of revision to the Budget Adoption Procedures Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Budget Adoption Procedures policy as detailed in the document.

#07-258, Approval of revision to the Funding proposals and Applications Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Funding Proposals and Applications Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-259, Approval of Revision to the Authorized Signatures Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Authorized Signatures policy as detailed in the document.

#07-260, Approval to Revision to the Fiscal Accounting and Reporting Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Fiscal Accounting and Reporting Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-261, Approval of Revision to the Inventories Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Inventories Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-262, Approval of Revision to the Audits Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Audits Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-263, Approval of Revision to the Service Agreement Policy, be referred back to the Superintendent: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Service Agreement Policy as detailed in the document (first reading).

#07-264, Approval of Revision to the Purchasing, Purchasing Authority and Bidding Requirements Policies: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Purchasing, purchasing Authority and Bidding Requirements policies as detailed in the documents.

#07-265, Approval of Revision to the Payment Procedures Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Payment Procedures Policy as detailed in the document.

#07-266, Approval of Revision to the Payroll Regulation and Salary Deductions Policy: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Payroll Regulation and Salary Deductions Policies as detailed in the documents.

#07-267, Approval of Revision to the Business Travel and Conference/Training Attendance and Expense Reimbursements Policies: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Business Travel and Conference/Training Attendance and Expense Reimbursements Policies as detailed in the documents.

Ms. Nolan raised a question on the number of classes provided by Lesley University. Dr. Turk was heard. On a motion by Ms. Nolan, **#07-268, 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, is placed on the Calendar:

1. Cambridge Public Health Department, Cambridge, in the amount of \$55,740.00, Account 53101, Fund 15000, Org. 852355, Program 355.
2. Lesley University, Cambridge, in the amount of \$35,100.00, Account 53101, Fund 25000, Org. 859138, Program 138, Project/Grant SC08632; and in the amount of \$21,300.00, Account 53101, Fund 24000, Org. 859651, Program 651; Project/Grant SC00416.

Mr. Harding raised a question on when the Board of Education is expected announce graduation requirements. The Superintendent was heard. On a motion by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adopt **#07-271, Motion by Mr. Grassi** that the Superintendent provide the School Committee with a report comparing current CRLS graduation requirements to the MassCore Curriculum being discussed by the Board of Education.

Ms. Walser was heard and will not be supporting this motion. Ms. Nolan was heard in support of her motion. The Superintendent was heard. On a motion by Mr. Harding, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#07-273, Motion by Ms. Nolan** that the Superintendent report to the School Committee, by elementary school, on the performance of students in high school, including the percentage proficient on 10th grade MCAS, as well as graduation rates, for students in the aggregate and for racial and income subgroups: Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster NAY, Ms. Walser, NAY, Mr. Fantini NAY, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding, YEA, Mayor Reeves ~~NAY~~ YEA. On a motion by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to allow Mayor Reeves to change his vote to YEA.

Late Orders

Mr. Grassi asked the Superintendent to speak to the freedom of information request received from the Chronicle asking for a list of all the students currently enrolled in the Cambridge schools, including their

address, telephone number and date of birth. The Superintendent was heard and said he will not be making the information available.

On a motion by Mayor Reeves, it was voted that the School Committee prepare a Resolution to be sent to a special person.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to adjourn (10:25 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee