

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, December 15, 2009

Called for 6:00 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue.

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

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

Also Present: Student Representative Josiah Bonsey

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings:

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

- Regular Meeting – December 1, 2009

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted to suspend the Rules to bring forward the Executive Session Minutes of November 17, 2009 and December 1, 2009. The Rules having been suspended, it was voted to adopt the foregoing Minutes, as follows:

School Committee –Regular Meeting

November 17, 2009

Executive Session

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

Mayor Simmons in the Chair:

Also present: Barbara Allen, Human Services Executive Director
Maureen MacFarlane, Attorney Legal Counsel Office
Lenora Jennings, Educational Advisor, Office of E. Denise Simmons

Ms. Bradshaw briefly discussed her salary increase history. She was asked what she was looking for in terms of an increase. Ms. Bradshaw was then excused from the meeting and Ms Jennings was asked to take minutes.

The committee discussed the proposed salary increase for the School Committee Secretary, Marilyn Bradshaw and for her assistant Patricia Berry.

A recommendation was made that School Committee Sub-Committee come back with a salary increase for 2009-2010 to include at a minimum the amount requested and with a process for future salary adjustments that includes regular evaluations by School Committee.

The recommendation was altered to include the full School Committee membership in the discussion of a salary increase and an evaluation process.

Ms. Allen offered to review salary increase request, the review work already done by the sub-committee, as well as comparable administrative salaries and come back with several salary increase scenarios.

The Committee accepted the offer and asked that Ms. Allen include Patricia Berry's salary and include an evaluation tool. Ms Allen said she would do her best.

On a motion by Ms. Tauber, seconded by Mr. McGovern on the following roll call, it was voted to reconvene in Open Session: Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Mc Govern YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Tauber YEA, Mayor Simmons YEA

Executive Session minutes submitted by Lenora Jennings.

School Committee –Regular Meeting

December 1, 2009

Executive Session

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Nolan (first half), Mr. Schuster. Ms. Tauber, Mayor Simmons

Mayor Simmons in the Chair:

Also present: Barbara Allen, Human Services Executive Director
Lenora Jennings, Educational Advisor, Office of E. Denise Simmons

Barbara Allen presented a draft “evaluation tool” that could be used by the Committee to evaluate the Executive Secretary. In the plan the Mayor serves as the Chair of the process and the Executive Director of Human Resources serves as administrative support. The Committee praised the work of Ms. Allen and recommended one change: that *The Vice-Chair of the School Committee serves as Chair of the evaluation process. This was agreed by all.*

The Committee discussed having an on-going supervisor for the Executive Secretary. The Committee agreed rather than have one named supervisor they would have the Vice Chair of the School Committee serve as an on-going liaison to the Executive Secretary.

Ms. Allen shared several salary increase projections with the School Committee. The Committee discussed salary increase options and agreed to recommend a 2.5 % salary increase for the Executive Secretary beginning January 1, 2010.

The Committee agreed not to alter the salary of the confidential secretary since it could have an impact on salaries of other confidential secretaries in the school department.

The agreement of the School Committee is to give 2.5% salary increase to the Executive Secretary to the School Committee. In addition, it is the desire of the School Committee to give a \$2000 annual stipend (for sub-committee work) to the Executive Secretary and the Confidential Secretary providing that the stipend to the Executive Secretary and Confidential Secretary hasn't previously been rolled into the base salary. The agreement was voted: Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Mc Govern YEA, Ms. Nolan ABSENT, Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Tauber YEA, Mayor Simmons YEA

The motion to adjourn by Mr. Schuster, seconded by Mr. Fantini: Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Mc Govern YEA, Ms. Nolan ABSENT, Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Tauber YEA, Mayor Simmons YEA

Executive Session minutes submitted by Lenora Jennings.

Ms. Nolan is recorded as voting NAY.

Public Comment

The following individuals were heard:

- Hichem Hadjeres, Magnolia Avenue re Eid Holiday
- Marla Erlien, Greenough Ave. Human Rights Commission, re Muslim Holiday

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to suspend the Rules to allow Ms. Erlien an additional minute to speak.

- Samuel Gebru, Memorial Dr. re Muslim Holiday

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted to close public comment.

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

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business from Previous Meetings

Members passed over Unfinished Business.

New Business

A. Presentation

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent and Dr. Turk.

Mr. Grassi in the Chair.

Dr. Turk walked Members through a presentation (copy on file in the School Committee office) on "Middle School", including:

- Current Research on Best Practices for Educating Children in the Middle Grades Locally, Nationally, Internationally
- The Middle School Debate
- What is Middle School
- Definition of Best Practice
- Keys to Educating Young Adolescents
- Best Practices that Support Successful Implementation
- The New York Research Study
- New York Study Overview
- New York Study Demographics
- New York Study Findings
- New York Study Framework
 - District Practices
 - School Practices
 - Classroom Practices
- The Ten Higher Performing New York Middle Schools Studied
 - J. Taylor Finley MS, Huntington
 - Holland MS, Holland
 - J.F. Kennedy MS, Utica
 - Albert Leonard MS, New Rochelle
 - Niagara MS, Niagara Falls
 - Port Chester MS, Port Chester-Rye
 - Queensbury MS, Queensbury
 - Vernon-Verona-Sherrill MS, Sherrill
 - West MS, Binghamton
 - Westbury MS, Westbury
- Closing Statement
 - NMSA Culture matters

- Collaboration
- Shared vision
- Safe environment
- High expectations for all
- Adult advocate for every student

Dr. Turk pointed out that there is a wealth of information available and that “small” in Cambridge is very different from “small” in other districts (600-1000 students).

The Chair acknowledged and welcomed School Committee Members-elect Alice Turkel and Richard Harding.

The Superintendent and Dr. Turk responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns:

Q: How will this information be used to inform the decision in April and is there anything in this presentation that can be used to evaluate what we are doing

A: This information should show how we can build middle school experience for our students and attributes in this research need to be incorporated in our schools. This will serve as criteria by which we measure options.

Q: What are the next steps in this process

A: Middle school survey ends Friday and the analysis team will look at the data. In January, there will be two forums for the CTA and teachers to say what they need to make middle grades education meaningful and a public hearing on what middle grade education should be. In February, the Superintendent will bring in a recommendation. In March the School Committee will review the recommendation in anticipation of a vote in April.

Q: Will meetings with teachers just be middle grade teachers

A: High school teachers will also be invited

Q: Did we learn anything from INSMA

A: We operate differently from INSMA – i.e., who goes to school and who doesn't; who wears a uniform and who doesn't; who takes an exam and who doesn't; when the Chinese look at our schools they are amazed at how humane our schools are

Q: How are we defining school climate – does the research indicate that school size whether it's a school of 20 or 1500 defines the culture

A: Size of school matters only where it enhances or inhibits a school's ability to deliver services

Q: Are there plans to include students in the middle grades discussion

A: Yes

Q: Is there a plan to follow up if there is not a good sample from the survey

A: Yes

Q: How did we choose the survey questions

A: Cabinet spent two or three weeks shaping questions

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

Q: Is the survey broken down by individual schools and grade level

A: Yes

Q: Were there any middle grades evaluated as part of a K-8 district

A: There are very few K-8 districts even though some districts are starting to look at moving to K-8

- Relevance of curriculum, class and school size inhibit schools from offering extracurricular activity and prevent teachers from collaborating
- Need to use this data to help us evaluate what grades are working
- Small class size in some of our middle schools is adversely affecting the quality of education – need to find a proper scale to make education work in classrooms of 20-25 students
- Need to engage families in order to do this well

The Chair thanked the Superintendent, Dr. Turk and administration for the work done for this presentation.

B. Action Items

Mr. McGovern moved, seconded by Mr. Schuster, for adoption of items #09-487 through #09-500. Mr. McGovern removed #09-489, #09-497 and #09-499. Mr. Grassi removed #09-494. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#09-487, FY09-10 General Fund Budget Statutory Transfers: that the School Committee approve the following statutory transfers of appropriation within the General Fund Budget for FY2009-10:

	<u>Statutory Coding</u>	<u>Increase/Decrease</u>
51000	Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$176,317.08
52000/55000	Other Ordinary Maintenance	(156,176.97)
57000	Travel & Training	(51,225.10)
58000/59000	Extraordinary Expenditures	<u>31,084.99</u>
		\$ 0

#09-488, General Fund Budget Statutory Transfers - Special Education: that the School Committee approve the following statutory transfers of appropriation within the General Fund Budget for FY2009-10:

	<u>Statutory Coding</u>	<u>Increase/Decrease</u>
51000	Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$(1,000,000.00)
52000/55000	Other Ordinary Maintenance	1,000,000.00
57000	Travel & Training	
58000/59000	Extraordinary Expenditures	<u> </u>
		\$ 0

#09-490, Contract Award: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Special Education Programming, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. The May Institute, 41 Pacella Park Drive, for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 in the amount of \$60,000.00.

#09-491, Contract Award: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Literacy Training, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. Lesley University, 1815 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, in the amount of \$28,200.00.

#09-492, Contracts for Day Program Services not Available from the Cambridge Public Schools: 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	Bay Cove Human Services, 66 Canal St., Boston	\$ 48,965.85
6 students	Compass, 290-294 Bowdoin St., Dorchester	322,428.42
1 student	Cotting School, 453 Concord Ave., Lexington	74,057.10
1 student	Judge Baker Children's Center, 53 Parker Hill Ave., Roxbury Crossing	71,491.72
<u>1</u> student	Schools for Children, 20 Academy St., Arlington	<u>40,158.00</u>
10 students		\$557,101.09

#09-493, Grant Awards: that the School Committee accept and approve the Grant Awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Green in the Middle: Enhancing STEM Instruction in the Middle Grades, for the period December 1, 2009 through August 31, 2010, in the amount of \$25,000.00, SC10869.
Description: In this grant, which is expected to be renewed for 2 additional years, 7th and 8th grade science students at Kennedy/Longfellow will engage in an environmental community service learning project to augment their science curriculum. In collaboration with several community partners, the 7th grade science teacher and her students will undertake a native plant project, and graduated 8th graders will work on an energy conservation project during the Rise Up summer program.
CPS Target Population: Middle grade science teachers and their students at the Kennedy-Longfellow School, including rising 9th graders over the summer.
Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: Through authentic hands-on science explorations, students will come to a deeper knowledge of science concepts in life sciences (7th grade) and energy (8th grade); it is hoped this experience will lead them to exploring more STEM subjects during high school.
2. ARRA Title II Technology Competitive, for the period November 24, 2009 through August 31, 2010, in the amount of \$185,470.00, AR10870.
Description: In this two year project, CPS middle school math teachers will receive professional development in the use of RM software as a supplemental resource in their math classrooms. Math teachers from 6 schools/year will receive PD and site visits from RM specialists, and will form professional learning teams to share expertise during the school year and during a 2-day summer institute.
CPS Target Population: All CPS middle school math teachers and their students.
Outcomes & Measures of Effectiveness: As a result of technology infused and effectively differentiated instruction, it is expected that middle grade student achievement in mathematics will improve significantly as measured by district and state assessments.

#09-495, Motion by Mr. Grassi that for SY 2010/2011 the Superintendent develop written procedures and/or policy for application and administration of entrance to the Special Start program.

#09-496, Joint motion by Mr. Schuster and Ms. Tauber that the Cambridge Public Schools switch to the Seat Swap student placement algorithm for the 2011/2012 application cycle. Further, that the Superintendent work with MIT Professor Parag Pathak during the intervening year to plan for this change and to educate the public.

#09-498, Report of the December 1, 2009 meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Inauguration:

Called for 5:00 p.m. in the Ackermann Meeting Room for the purpose of planning for the Inauguration of the 2010-2011 School Committee (January 4, 2010).

Members present: Mr. Fantini, Chair; Members-Elect Mr. Harding and Ms. Turkel

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

A quorum of the Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:27 p.m.

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

1. That the time for the Organization/Inauguration be 6:00 p.m., Monday, January 4, 2010, in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall. Ms. Turkel moved that, given the economy, the School Committee:
 - Have a joint ceremony with the City Council
 - Have ceremony at a time that does not require an elaborate meal
 - Have high tea, dessert and coffee
 - Eliminate invitations and bios
 - Separation of church and state and that there be no prayer nor religious reference during the ceremony

Ms. Turkel's motion did not receive a second.

2. That Linda Nathan, Principal, Boston Arts Academy, be invited to emcee and Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust, and former School Committee Member Larry Weinstein be considered as back-up.
3. That Rev. Marcellus Norris, Pastor of St. Paul A.M.E. Church be invited to give the Invocation.
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 bios be included in the program but not read.
6. That, immediately following the ceremony, refreshments be served outside Sullivan Chamber consisting of hot hors d'oeuvres, fruit, cheese, pastry, and beverages and that Ms. Bradshaw identify a caterer.
7. That the Executive Secretary be authorized to proceed with the arrangements (including remembrances for outgoing Members, invitations, program, music, flowers, etc.).

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Turkel, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

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

#09-500, December 1, 2009 meeting of the Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole):

Called for the purpose of discussing Guiding Principles for the FY2010/2011 Budget.

Members Present: Mr. McGovern, Ms. Nolan, Co-Chairs, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Ms. Tauber,
Mayor Simmons

Mr. McGovern in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Nolan gave a brief introduction to the 2010/2011 budget process. For discussion, Mr. McGovern read the following categories that reflect a joint effort by the Superintendent and School Committee. The Co-Chairs asked Members to look at the broad categories and add to or eliminate them as they see fit and then discuss what should fall under each:

- I. Student Achievement
- II. Special Education
- III. Middle Grades
- IV. School Climate
- V. Program Evaluation
- VI. Technologies
- VII. Operations

The Superintendent said the budget represents more opportunities for Administration and School Committee to collaborate in a meaningful way with the School Committee's setting overall parameters for the District.

The following questions, comments and concerns were raised:

- Need to address equity in schools, i.e., controlled choice, socioeconomic status, etc.
- Performance on state tests is a part of the broader equity questions - social justice, achievement of sub-groups, racial and social isolation
- Need additional bullets under student achievement
- Identify how we move forward
- Add date for middle grades vote
- Is every program in the district going to be evaluated in this budget
- Be clear what and when programs will be evaluated
- Need to talk about technology functions
- Include funds for more data
- Combine program evaluation and technology as information management
- Principals feel there are other districts that are more technologically advanced than we are
- Name specific on-going CRLS renovations and work the Buildings & Grounds subcommittee has done on prioritizing elementary school renovations
- The entire committee should be involved in the process to talk about what goes into the guidelines
- This document gives valuable information to share with Principals
- Is this year's document preferable over another
- Need to look at critical thinking, problem-solving, etc. under student achievement

- Look at the full day experience for our children – include all partnerships in the City
- Do not dilute school climate category by putting everything in it
- Look at issue of energy efficiency
- Happy that middle grades category was edited
- Why was professional development taken out of first draft
- There are some things money will be spent on that are not listed in this document
- Frame Guidelines as a mission/vision statement
- It's time to declare war on the achievement gap – need Administration and the Union to partner to make interventions to get us to the next level
- List all of our programs with potential cost then decide which ones to evaluate
- Need to engage every adult in every school to help resolve the achievement gap
- Insure that everybody who is hired is a right fit for that school – increase standards for hiring
- Entire budget should revolve around student achievement
- Cambridge community wants Cambridge students to do better
- Measureable performance goals need to be identified asap
- How is this budget going to reflect how the achievement gap will be closed
- What is the goal of the special education audit and what services require one
- Do we have internal capacity to review programs within special ed
- How do we evaluate and measure the effectiveness of our programs
- Discipline detail report needs to be summarized by trends
- There needs to be training for both parents and staff to improve the use of technology
- Technology is not serving our neediest students and families
- Budget guidelines need to be consistent with our goals
- Budget process is one opportunity to tell the CPS story of what we do and how we do it
- Decisions should be data driven
- There should be another category for collaboration with outside sources
- Look at ways we can collaborate with entities outside the school department as a cost-saving
- Looking forward to seeing a data reporting system
- Look at Budget Guidelines that work from year to year – refine, not recreate
- Fold collaboration into program evaluation
- What is the intent of school climate in connection with the budget
- Insure that school climate is looked at through the lens of equity, race, class, bullying, mental health services, gender bias, etc.
- Include family involvement under school climate
- Need to exercise fiscal discipline going forward

The Co-chairs asked members of the School Committee and the public to send their input to the Executive Secretary for inclusion in a revised draft next Friday.

On a motion by Mr. Schuster, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to suspend the Rules to change the vote from adjourn to recess the Regular Meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Schuster, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to reconvene in the Regular Meeting (8:05 p.m.).

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

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

Mr. Grassi requested and received unanimous consent to be recorded as VOTING YEA on the previous roll call.

Non-Consent Agenda

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to bring forward together **#09-489, Academic School Calendar and School Committee Calendar SY2010/2011**: that the School Committee approve the recommendation of the Superintendent for the School Committee Calendars for SY2010/2011 and the Academic and School Committee Calendars for SY2010/2011, and **#09-497, Joint motion by Mr. Grassi and Mr. McGovern** be referred to the Superintendent: that, given that other large world religions are recognized by the Cambridge Public Schools by closing school on specific holidays, the School Committee asks the Superintendent to add the Muslim holidays of either Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha to the school calendar depending on which holiday falls during a given school year. If both holidays fall during a school year then Eid al-Fitr will be recognized with the closing of school. This change should begin during the 2010-2011 school calendar. Further, that the Superintendent work with the administration to develop a policy regarding any future requests and to bring that recommendation before the School Committee for discussion and ratification. Discussion took place around policy, procedure and language around adding holidays to the school calendar and coordinating with City agencies. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to refer **#09-489** and **#09-497** back to the Superintendent for a recommendation on how we move forward with these issues and report to the School Committee at the January 5, 2010 meeting.

Mr. Grassi asked for clarification of policy on supervision of students, visitors signing in at schools, and procedures for students who do not show up for school. Mr. Maloney was heard. The Chair acknowledged receipt of a letter from Mr. & Mrs. Ciampa on this subject and made it part of the record. On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted to adopt **#09-494, Joint motion by Ms. Nolan and Ms. Tauber** that whereas the district policy is that each student below grade 3 requires an adult or older sibling to meet them at the bus stop in the afternoon, and whereas the responsibility for ensuring the safety and supervision of all such students in the morning between bus drop off and school start time rests with each elementary school's Principal, and whereas that responsibility is not always understood, the School Committee directs the Superintendent to ensure that a policy clarification on this issue be clearly communicated to all school staff and families.

Mr. McGovern thanked all those who worked on the development of a new Student Data Report and said that it will be provided to schools and put on the website within a week. On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to adopt **#09-499, Report of the December 1, 2009 meeting of the Data Sub-Committee**:

Called for the purpose of discussing the Student Data Report.

Members Present: Mr. McGovern, Chair

The meeting was not convened for lack of a quorum.

Also Present: Deputy Superintendent Carolyn Turk, Executive Director of Student Achievement and Curriculum Maryann MacDonald, Director of Student Achievement & Curriculum Barbara Van Sickle, Education Liaison Lenora Jennings, Assessment Specialist Kathleen Ivins, School Committee Member-Elect Alice Turkel.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia A. Berry
Confidential Secretary

Late Orders

Mr. McGovern moved to affirm the December 1, 2009 vote taken in Executive Session: that the School Committee give a 2.5% salary increase to the Executive Secretary to the School Committee, effective January 1, 2010. Further, that the School Committee give a \$2000 annual stipend (for sub-committee work) to the Confidential Secretary. Ms. Nolan moved to Calendar the motion

Joint motion by Mr. McGovern and Mayor Simmons, that the School Committee consider raising its policy goal for the composition of minority teachers and administrators from 25% to 30%. The Superintendent was heard in support of the motion. On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to refer the foregoing motion to a second reading.

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to recess to the Budget Subcommittee meeting (7:55 p.m.)

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

The time for recess having expired, the Chair reconvened the meeting (8:08).

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted that the School Committee affirm the recommendation of the Budget Subcommittee and adopt the Budget Guidelines for FY2010/2011.

On behalf of the School Committee, Mayor Simmons presented a chair, similar to hers, to Mr. Grassi and Mr. Schuster. Members thanked their outgoing colleagues for their years of service on the Committee.

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Mr. Schuster, it was voted to adjourn (8:48 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee