

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Special Meeting

Tuesday, February 27, 2007

Called by order of his Honor, Mayor Kenneth E. Reeves, acting in accordance with Chapter I, Section 3 of the Rules of the School Committee, to discuss Kindergarten Enrollment.

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

Also Present: Student Representatives Tsion Girum and Marilyn Paschal.

Mayor Reeves in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. and turned it over to Superintendent Fowler-Finn. The Superintendent explained that the results of the preliminary kindergarten lottery has 73 paid lunch students who need seats with only 53 paid lunch seats available, and the administration needs a decision from the School Committee to move forward. The Superintendent stated that this is the highest (69%) paid lunch applicant pool since the inception of the Controlled Choice Plan.

James Maloney, Chief Operating Officer and Christine Fisher, Family Resource Center Director, gave a summary presentation on "Kindergarten Enrollment/Assignments, SY 2007-08", including:

- Current Controlled Choice Assignment Policy
- Current Diversity and Assignment Factors
- 5 Year History of First Cycle Kindergarten Applicants
- Mandatory Assignments (6 Year Summary)
- Simulation – No Capacity Change with exception of Amigos
- Mandatories – No Capacity Change with exception of Amigos
- Simulations – Capacity Change at Amigos, Haggerty and Tobin
- Mandatories – Capacity Change at Amigos, Haggerty and Tobin
- Kindergarten Applicants – Cycles 1-6

Dr. Petner, Haggerty Principal, was heard in support of the proposal to add a fourth kindergarten at the Haggerty.

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

Discussion took place around what options are available to insure that there are enough seats to accommodate all students.

Mayor Reeves in the Chair.

Mr. Fantini moved, seconded by Ms. Walser, that the Controlled Choice Plan for SY07-08 reflect a change in our current policy from 45% free/reduced to 34% free/reduced and from 55% Paid to 66% Paid plus or minus 10%. Also that it include additional kindergartens at the Haggerty, Tobin Montessori and an increase in the English language speaking students at Amigos Kindergarten. The Superintendent was asked to provide the Members with a summary of the pros and cons of the change. The Superintendent and Mr. Maloney were heard.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Fantini, on the following roll call, it was voted to refer the following motion to a second reading:

That the School Committee amend the Controlled Choice Plan that currently assigns elementary applicants using the K-8 district-wide socioeconomic (SES) percentage (+/- 10%) to assigning the elementary applicants using the average of the current 1st cycle Kindergarten applicant pool and the previous year's 1st cycle Kindergarten applicant pool which, for school year 07-08, is 34% free/reduced, 66% paid (+/- 10%). Further, that for school year 07-08 it includes a 4th Kindergarten at the Haggerty, a 4th Kindergarten at the Tobin Montessori program, and a 10% increase in the English Language speaking students at the Amigos Kindergarten. Ms. Nolan ABSENT, Mr. Schuster ABSENT, Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Mayor Reeves YEA.

Since the motion has budget implications, Mayor Reeves asked if the new kindergartens will be included in the new budget. The Superintendent was heard.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adjourn (8:37 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee