

QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS - January 3, 2007

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, January 3, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. Present were Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Mr. Kevin Mulvey, Mr. Dave McCarthy, Ms. Linda Stice, Mr. Jim Timmins, Mayor Phelan and Mrs. Elaine Dwyer, Vice Chairman.

Regular Meeting

Vice Chairman Presiding

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The Superintendent called the roll and all members were present. Also present were: Dr. Richard DeCristofaro, Secretary, and Mrs. Tefta Burrelli, Clerk; Drs. Mariano and Pattavina. Messrs. O'Brien, Ryan, Canavan, Walsh, McPhee, Keith and Kevin Segalla, and Mr. Mullaney; Ms. Powell, Todd, Lebo, and Hughes. Mr. Paul Phillips, QEA President, Mr. Henry Brawley represented Citywide, There were no associate members present.

The Committee observed a moment of silence for Mr. Robert Troup, a Social Studies teacher at North Quincy High School who passed away suddenly.

Staff Recognition

On a motion by Ms. Stice, seconded by Mr. Mulvey, the Committee approved the regular session minutes for December 13, 2006. The ayes have it.

Reg.Mins.
Approved 12/13/06

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Elementary principals, Susan Troy and Jennifer Fay-Beers, have returned to work. The Superintendent thanked Renee Lalumiere and Steve Sylvia for serving as acting principals in their absence.

Staff Return

Ms. Stice has called a Policy Subcommittee meeting for Monday, January 8, 2007 at 4:30 p.m. to discuss the District Improvement Plan.

The Committee received brochures for the *Winter Institute*, Saturday morning programs for students in Grade K-5, and *Literacy Matters*, a six week Saturday morning program to remediate targeted students for reading. This program is funded by Mayor Phelan's annual golf tournament. Elementary band students will begin their city-wide program on January 20th.

Supts. Report

The members received the final report from the EQA along with the summary. It reflects the findings of a six-member team from the Massachusetts Office of Educational Quality and Accountability who visited the school system.

EQA Report

The report includes an MCAS proficiency index and a Management quality index. The MCAS index was marked as a *moderate* and the Management Quality index was defined to be *strong*. Also received was a letter from Joseph Raffa informing us that the MEQA council met to compose a management letter. They see Quincy as a potential lighthouse system for the state.

Quincy needs to address a few issues. We are focusing on EQA indicators that need improvement by drafting an action plan to see growth in that area. The teams will come back in a Policy Subcommittee to summarize areas of strength, areas of improvements, and ratings of performance indicators that fell below and to offer a response that shows facts and details. We would like to share with you again which teams will take responsibility for examining these unsatisfactory ratings and then predict some action steps to remediate and strengthen any areas we need to. The Superintendent said that 70% of this report is very good, but we will work towards getting 100%.

EQA Report

Mayor Phelan thought the report was very encouraging. One of the remarks was that Quincy's benefits remain very attractive and one of the highest of any school districts in the state.

Mr. Timmins agreed with the Superintendent. The issues that relate mostly to performance, curriculum, and instruction were very good. Assessment and program evaluation was very well. Access participation and student academic support which focuses on students were all at 92% or higher. The only issue is with evaluations of administration and teaching staff. We do have to improve on how we evaluate. He found the whole thing very encouraging.

The Superintendent wished every one a happy New Year and said as we face serious issues like negotiations in 2007 let's try to remember for the past five to six years, this School Committee and this Mayor and former members have worked diligently and proudly on the most important element in our school system, our students. Our budgets have reflected the esteem and value that the School Committee and Mayor place on our children as well as our professional staff. An ambitious capital plan has been developed, staff salaries have increased over 17% making us very a very competitive community. Our City is so fortunate to have this Committee and Mayor who have always shown a deep respect and appreciation of our professional staff. Our full-day kindergarten is an example of their visionary leadership. The collaborative work of our School Committee, Mayor and City Council has culminated in the reality of a new Quincy High School. As they work with the MSBA, their vision and leadership are evident as they work on the building needs of Sterling and Central. The Mayor and School Committee continually recognize the invaluable contributions of our educators. They have acknowledged publicly

the deep respect they have for every professional staff in the Quincy Public Schools.

As professionals we should appreciation the support that has been reflected in our increased school budget that keeps our class size low and our increased salaries. These increases are a result of the respect this Mayor and School Committee holds for our teachers. This School Committee and Mayor, through their public and private actions, have always shown a genuine and sincere love for our kids.

The Superintendent asked that this respect be acknowledged and taken into serious consideration prior to creating situations that may involve the families of the Mayor and the School Committee.

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As no one wished to be heard at the open forum, the Committee went on with the business at hand.

Open Forum

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Mr. Canavan reported that over the holiday break the Maintenance Department painted the kindergarten area and several bathrooms at the Early Childhood Center, installed new floor tiles at North Quincy High School and at Snug Harbor, ceiling repairs and painting at Central Middle School, installed new classroom doorway in the GOALS building and the boiler/Burner service company cleaned the boilers at Quincy High. The Maintenance Department continues to replaced drain pipes at the Lincoln Hancock pool's mechanical room. A new intercom system for Snug Harbor has been ordered. Work will be done in-house.

Bldg. Update

The Mayor inquired about the boys' locker room at North Quincy. After dropping in there, he noticed that the ceiling tiles were still missing. He reported this a year ago. Also, he asked if this was something for the Maintenance Department. Mr. Canavan said there was very extensive damage in the locker room. The ceiling grid and speakers were damaged. He was planning to do this work during the break. The Mayor asked if he could just put in ceiling tiles, which would be an immediate improvement.

The Mayor also discussed the cleanliness of the locker room. He understood that it takes a lot of use, but he would like to see custodians and maintenance staff concentrate on it--paint the floors.

Mr. Timmins inquired about the intercom systems at Merrymount, Parker, and Bernazzani. Mr. Canavan answered that those intercom systems are functioning.

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Mrs. Dwyer reported that over the break the Building Committee voted and accepted the schematic designs drawings for the new Quincy High. The members of the Building Committee, Tishman, and SMMA met with MSBA to review the design drawings and received positive feedback. Tishman, SMMA and school administrators have been meeting to develop a plan to accommodate classrooms that are scheduled to be displaced during Phase 1. SMMA will provide a classroom layout in the next 10 days. The Inspector General has approved our application to use the Construction Management at Risk alternative delivery method.

New QHS

Mrs. Mahoney inquired about the Statement of Interest forms for Sterling and Center. When checking the MSBA website she found they were not listed as received. She called and they said they had not received it. Mrs. Dwyer will check on that.

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At this time, Colleen Roberts, Edie Hughes, and Diane O'Keefe gave a presentation on the Full Day Kindergarten. This program began in 2006. Mayor Phelan appropriated \$1.8 million to fund the full day kindergarten program. Mrs. Roberts spoke to the implementation of the program. Furniture, curriculum and learning materials were purchased. Renovations were done at six elementary schools. There are now 37 kindergarten teachers and 37 paraprofessionals. Eleven of the new teachers all have either a Master's degree, previous teaching experience, or both. Mrs. Hughes spoke to the instructional design of the program. There is a minimum of a 90 minute block for literacy. Math is hands-on activities through the use of manipulative. There are social/emotional developmental activities and play/rest time, lunch and music, physical education and media. The Harcourt Trophies kindergarten reading program aligns with Grade 1 by assuring all needed skills and strategies will be covered. There is also early reading intervention. Student support services are available. Kindergarten students are assessed. There are fifteen professional development sessions for teachers. Ms. O'Keefe gave a principal's perspective. She said the principals were very happy that there is a paraprofessional in all classes. Last year's full day kindergarten class produced first graders who are much more advanced. She cited amazing creativity from the teachers. After the presentation, the Committee saw a series of pictures of Kindergarteners and their thoughts caught on camera by Brian Smith.

All-Day Kindergarten
Presentation

Ms. Stice thanked Brian and commented that Brian is a genius. He does such a great job on this and so many other videos. The School Committee has now accomplished what they put on the agenda five years ago. Thanks went to Mrs. Bragg and prior members who worked on this.

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On a motion by Ms. Stice, seconded by Mr. Mulvey, the Committee accepted the following gifts:

Gifts to QHS

1. A fully loaded 1992 Dodge Ram Conversion Van donated by Ms. Filardi and Ms. Rubin valued at \$5,700.
2. A 1999 Dodge Stratus automobile donated by Mr. McCauley valued at \$2,970.
3. A 1996 Ford Windstar Minivan donated by Jerry Bennett valued at \$1,500.

The ayes have it.

Mr. Timmins asked how the cars will be used. Ms. Lebo answered that the Ford Wind Star will be used as a teaching station in the school. The Dodge Stratus will be given away to a Quincy High student for perfect attendance. The Conversion van will be put on eBay and the money will go toward the Student Activity Account.

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Mr. Mulvey inquired with regard to the issue of health care benefits for individuals the School Committee makes decision for. What is the progress in moving the Quincy Public Schools employees from the City insurance program to the state insurance program.

Additional Business

Mrs. Dwyer said she spoke to Senator Morrissey and asked his office to give us an update where it is in the legislation. With the new governor, they will take this issue up very quickly in the legislature.

Health Insurance

The Mayor said the new governor is in favor of it. There are some limitations. It is a local option. There has to be a vote of the legislative body as well as all the collective bargaining units to go into it. When you look at the cost of employee benefits since he's been in office it was \$18 million in 07 we are up to \$40 million. There seems to be a misconception out there. People are not being given accurate information. The report that was provided by the state today is consistent with what the Mayor has been saying. The benefits that the City of Quincy employees enjoy are better than or as good as any other city. The fringe benefits remain the highest in the region. There is a misconception out there regarding what other public employees receive as compared to what QPS receive. Because the City pays such a high percentage of the benefits, there is less incentive for the bargaining units to opt into the state plan. The reason why the legislation is being enacted is to help the cities and towns. We have the least chance of taking advantage of the law because the employees have less to gain by changing. We are in a situation where we provide the most generous employee benefits and as a result

could be penalized because of that.

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With regard to the traffic/drop off at North Quincy High School, Mrs. Mahoney thanked the Mayor and Steve O'Donnell because all the initiatives have been accomplished. We were also able to communicate to parents and letters went home. It was posted on the website and the educational channel. The most critical thing we want to remember is that it is a work in progress.

NQHS Traffic

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Ms. Stice made a motion, seconded by Mr. Timmins, that the Superintendent be evaluated annually between March and June and that the evaluation consist of a review of the development and implementation of the District Improvement Plan as well as other factors suggested by the MASC. The Vice Chairman will appoint an ad-hoc committee to evaluate the Superintendent annually. As is School Committee policy, this item was tabled. Ms. Stice made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, to take the motion off the table. The ayes have it. On a motion by Ms. Stice, seconded by Mr. Timmins. The ayes have it.

Policy Change
Motion to Evaluate
Superintendent

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The Committee noted the following retirements:

Retirements

Corinne Mitchell

Teacher

The Committee noted the following resignations:

Resignations

Kathleen Cibotti
Catherine Jordan
Sarah Ryan

Eric Ventura

Teachers
Literacy Specialist
Speech/Language
Pathologist

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On a motion by Ms. Stice, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, the Committee moved to go into executive session at 8:20 p.m. for the purpose of negotiations. The Committee did not return to open session. On a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously 7-0.

Adjourn to
Executive Session