

QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS - February 7, 2007

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, February 7, 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, Walsh, McPhee, Keith and Kevin Segalla, and Mullaney; Ms. Powell, Roberts, Todd, Lebo, and Hughes. Mr. Henry Brawley represented Citywide and Quincy High Associate Member Paige Neumann was present.

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The Superintendent attended the Winter Institute at Beechwood Elementary School for Parent Open House and Celebration. One hundred five students showcased what they been working on.

Supt. Report

This Saturday, the Superintendent and Mr. Keith Segalla will visit all six elementary sites that are hosting the Literacy Matters Saturday Program for children in Grades 2,3,4. This program is sponsored in full by the Mayor's Golf Tournament and also the Winter Initiative and the Summer Literacy program.

The MDOE has scheduled the MCAS long composition for Tuesday, March 29 for grades 4, 7 and 10. This date is a release day for elementary schools. In order for all fourth graders to have sufficient time to complete this section of the test, Tuesday, March 20 will be a full day. Parents will receive a communication from their principals.

Calendar
Full Day 3/29/07

The Committee received the Grant Administration Booklet for FY06-07. The Superintendent thanked Mr. Mullaney, his office staff, Team Leaders, SLT and Principals who take so much of their time to write and administer grants. A special thank you went to Ms. Cindy Lally for her communication and system coordination

Grant Booklet
FY-06-07

The SPED Department is preparing for a Special Olympics event on Friday, March 9. Ms. Todd gave details on the event. The Lt. Governor will visit the Marshall School on February 9 to see the Full Day Kindergarten Program. Committee members are invited.

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On a motion by Mr. McCarthy, seconded by Ms. Stice, the Committee approved the regular session minutes for January 17, 2007. The ayes have it. At the request of Mr. Timmins, the Committee will review the approved executive session minutes of January 3, 2007 in executive session.

Reg. Mins.
Approved 1/17/2007
Exec.Session Mins.
Review

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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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The Superintendent welcomed the principals who were present to show support for the School Committee and the Mayor. The Mayor thanked them for coming. The Mayor told them he appreciated their added understanding with regard to the QEA negotiations. Eventually, he expects the issue to be resolved.

Principals Recognized

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At this time Ms. Janet Powell and Ms. Colleen Roberts gave a presentation on Standard 5 - Access, Participation and Student Academic Success. Administration and staff help all students make effective transitions from one school, grade level, or program to another. This assistance is focused on maintaining or improving levels of student performance. Activities are planned for students moving from grade 5 to 6 and from Grade 8 to 9. Counselors, teachers and principals visit schools to speak to students in small and large groups about their new school. Policies and programs address the needs of transient and homeless students and provide them with timely and equitable access to quality programs.

Student Support
Services

Transitioning

Another function of the Student Support Services is Central Registration. New students register at their home school or at Central Registration. To date, 660 new students have enrolled. Of these 218 students, the primary language was not English. As of today, 148 families with students in temporary living situations/homeless, have been served. Ten percent of the student population is move ins and move outs. Extra curricular clubs and activities are encouraged to assist the new students. At Atlantic, ELL students come in early and meet. They get to talk and know each other.

From Elementary to Middle School, students have a “fly up day,” parent orientation, and Middle School Counselors visit elementary classrooms. In the Fall of Grade 6 counselors input at Academic Team meetings, student issues are discussed at Team meetings, attendance concerns of incoming 6th graders are monitored. Department heads meet with middle school Counselors, freshman/parent night, parenting seminars, monitoring attendance of incoming 9th graders.

At middle and high school, schools communicate with parents by School Messenger, school newsletters, brochures, fliers for parents, QPS website and Channel 22 are some of the avenues available. The Naviance Family Connections at the high schools is now made aware to parents. A link on our website is being developed. This is a college and career planning website which allows students to map out their college or career path.

Mr. Mulvey inquired as to the procedure for obtaining student records. Mrs. Powell answered that it can be frustrating to get records. They work very hard at obtaining records from other school districts. Records from other states can be difficult. Immigrants come with accurate records, they only need to be assessed. Mrs. Mahoney suggested the transfer of school records be done by email. Some of our schools have begun an email listing for their parents. With regard to the SPED students, they are on an IEP so their transition is individualized. Parents meet principals, teachers, see what classrooms look like. Parents are made aware of their options.

Mr. Timmins suggested more work done to assist students on transitioning out of the system into college. He suggested identifying high achievers in sports or the arts and trying to help them to go to college.

Mr. Santoro explained how student attendance is monitored. Parents are notified by School Messenger. Mr. Metzler found School Messenger extremely helpful. All middle and high schools are utilizing the School Messenger.

One of the major concerns raised at the School Improvement Plan meetings was the difficulty dealing with the move ins and move outs. The Mayor asked that this be analyzed, not just how many move in and move out but how long do they stay, what percentage have IEPs. The more information we have the better. Having 10% of the school population moving in and out is huge and has an impact on the entire school. This is an area where we really have to key on. When do we assess the new students that come in. How much do we want to rely on and what extent should we. Dealing with this population is the biggest issue heard from the principals. Mrs. Powell answered that everyone is addressing this issue.

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Mr. Mike Ryan reported that the Maintenance Dept. has been responding to heating issues. They replaced carpets and tile at North Quincy High School and at the Snug Harbor Community School. They are painting at the Early Childhood Center and Snug Harbor. They relocated the Inspection Services Department, the Constituent Services office, the Treasurer's and the Assessor's offices. Elevators are being recertified. Two additional boilers have been brought on line at Atlantic and Broad Meadows.

Bldgs. & Grounds

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The Building Committee met today and are planning to present something to the Committee in March. The Building Committee will review the design development drawings and then they will be presented to the Committee. A Committee was formed to choose the Construction Manager at Risk. The proposals are due this Friday. Woodward Ave. will be closed right after school gets out. We are close to meeting the State requirements for the Mass CHPS Program. The Schematic designs have been submitted to the MSBA and Tishman and SMMA are working with them. As of this day, we are current.

New QHS

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Mr. Mullaney reported that the Budget Subcommittee met to review the Quarterly Budget ending in December 2006.

Quarterly Budget Report

Academic Classroom Teachers - There was an anticipated breakage of \$1.8 million. However, the actual breakage was less due to less teachers retiring and staff hired at higher levels. As of June 30 there will be a deficit of \$147,000 in these lines. Salaries and savings will be used to offset these lines.

Academic Programs - there is a small deficit in this line of \$14,438 As of June 30, there will be a surplus of \$21,000. This will be used to offset other lines.

Academic Support: Several staffing positions and changes have been put on hold. It is anticipated as of June 30 there will be a surplus of \$30,000. This will be used to offset deficits in other salary lines.

Non Academic Areas: Some positions were not filled. Overtime is being closely monitored. As of June 30 there will be a surplus of \$200,000 in this line. It will be used in to offset other salary lines.

We have reduced spending in other areas to make up shortfalls. As of June 30, there should be a surplus of \$106,000. We will monitor all lines.

Academic Expense Areas. - SPED Tuitions has surpassed its budgeted amount by \$328,848. There should be a savings in supplies, textbooks, and equipment line of \$74,945. In order to address this, all expense lines have been frozen. Even with this freeze, more has been spent on educational supplies this year than in the past three years.

We will be working with budget subcommittee to work on savings and budget transfers. We have notified the MDOE that Quincy will be apply for the circuit breaker extraordinary relief program.

Non Academic Expenses. Transportation has caused much concern with a deficit of \$102,382. The addition of two mini buses has allowed us to take back some routes. We have also combined routes. Transportation, SPED and Business have been working to fix this. Also, all non academic expenses are being closed monitored. Supplies, textbooks and learning materials previously had a large increase. Requisitions that come in are closely reviewed and need Superintendent approval. Most supplies are in place at the beginning of the school year.

Mr. McCarthy concluded that the Budget Subcommittee took a hard look at the budget and has come up with a pro-active plan. He made a motion, seconded by Mr. Timmins, that the Committee accept the quarterly budget. The ayes have it.

Quarterly Budget
Accepted by S.C.

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On a motion by Mr. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Mulvey, the Committee accepted the Quincy Public Schools Calendar for 2007-2008. The ayes have it.

2007-08 QPS
Calendar Approved

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On a motion by Mr. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Mulvey, the Committee approved a change offered by Mrs. Dwyer to the School Committee Calendar. Mrs. Dwyer added a second meeting in February 27 and moved the March meetings to March 12 and 26, 2008. The ayes have it. On a motion by Ms. Stice, seconded by Mr. Mulvey, the Committee approved the revised School Committee Calendar for 2007-2008. The ayes have it.

2007-08 S.C.
Calendar Approved

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On a motion by Ms. Stice, seconded by Mr. Timmins, the Committee approved a trip for Sterling students to travel to Montreal, Canada from May 4 to May 6, 2007. The ayes have it.

Sterling to Canada

On a motion by Ms. Stice, seconded by Mrs. Mahoney, the Committee

Robotics to Florida

approved a trip for students to travel to the Robotics competition in Orlando, Florida from March 7, to March 11, 2007. The ayes have it.

On a motion by Ms. Stice, seconded by Mr. Mulvey, the Committee approved a trip to Sunapee Ski Resort, N.H. for Quincy High School students on March 7, 2007. The ayes have it.

QHS to NH

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On a motion by Mrs. Mahoney, seconded by Mr. Mulvey, the Committee accepted a gift of \$500.00 from the Quincy Point Congregational Church to "Project Access: Educational Services to Homeless Children." The ayes have it.

Gift - to Homeless
from Point Congregational

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Ms. Stice mentioned an article in the Globe on the graduation rate. It has dropped about .5%. The state is looking at how many students graduate in four years. Ms. Stice and the Superintendent reviewed that. There are a very high percentage of students who do not speak English. The article states that students may need a fifth year of high school to graduate. This is a totally different way of looking at the graduation rate. The Superintendent said this would be a good discussion for our next meeting. The article, he said, was misleading.

Additional Business

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Ms. Stice reported that the Policy Subcommittee met and continues to discuss items they think might be ways to improve their school district. They are looking at two or three projects they want to understand in depth for next year. They will meet again next Monday.

Policy Subcommittee
Report

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The Committee noted the following resignations:

Resignations

- Eleicea Brandolini
- Joanne Casey
- Michael Lonergan

- Paraprofessional
- Lunch Attendant
- Jr. Custodian

The Committee noted the following appointments:

Appointments

- Lisa Berry
- Eleicea Brandolini
- Melissa Reynolds
- Carly Sell
- Nicoleta Bleskan
- Marina Rozenberg

- Teachers
- Lunch Attendant
- Paraprofessional

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On a motion by Ms. Mahoney, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, the Committee voted to go into Executive Session at 9:21 p.m. for the purpose of negotiations. They Committee did not return to Open Session. On a roll call vote, the motion to go into Executive Session passed unanimously 7-0.

Adjournment