

Quincy, MASSACHUSETTS – January 20, 2010

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, January 20, 2010 in the City Council Chambers. Present were: Mrs. Elaine Dwyer, Mrs. Jo-Ann Bragg, Mr. Dave McCarthy, Mrs. Emily Lebo, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mayor Thomas P. Koch and Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Vice Chairman.

Regular

Vice Chairman
Presiding

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The Superintendent called the roll and all members were present. Also present were: Dr. Richard DeCristofaro, Secretary; Mrs. Tefta Burrelli, Clerk; Messrs. Mullaney, O'Brien, Draicchio, Keith Segalla, Ms. Roberts, Tenaglia, Todd, and Hughes. Ms. Tracey Christello, Citywide and Paul Phillips, QEA. Donna Niosi and Lawrence Liuzzo, high school Student Representatives.

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On a motion by Mrs. Dwyer, seconded by Mrs. Lebo, the Committee approved the Organizational Meeting minutes for January 4, 2010. The ayes have it.

Organizational Min.
Approved 1/4/2010

On a motion by Mrs. Bragg, seconded by Mrs. Lebo, the Committee approved the Regular and Executive Session minutes for January 6, 2010 with a change on page 6. The ayes have it.

Reg. & Exec. Session
Mins. Approved
1/6/2010

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Winter Institute begins January 30 for grades K-5. Parents can contact the Office of Extension & Continuing Education for further information. All programs are listed on Channel 22.

Supts. Report

Congratulations to Tracey O'Sullivan and those students who participated in the Eastern District Music Festival held at Boston Latin High School. Those chosen from Quincy High School are Zach Dwyer, Gerald McCarthy, Steven Chung; from North Quincy High--Andy Pham, William Lunny, Samantha Tan, and Briana Miller.

Student Recognition

All middle school and high school students and staff who wished to be vaccinated have been vaccinated for the Seasonal flu and the H1N1. A total of 1,300 seasonal flu shots and 1,000 H1N1 shots were given. Eighteen nurses worked with the Drew Sheele and the Health Department staff to give out flu shots. All students that were vaccinated filled out consent forms.

H1N1

Mrs. Roberts spoke to the mid winter assessments now going on in the schools. Grade tests are given to grades two and three; a mid year test for grade one, and math testing in grade 3. We will be assessing the Title I schools, and at middle schools in February we have Q Math 6 and Q Math 8. High schools have their mid term exams the end of January. MCAS retest is scheduled for February.

Assessments

We have begun a partnership with Boston University. Dr. Dan Davis, Social Studies Chair at Boston University, has been very pleased with the experience BU students have had in Quincy. We have formed a partnership for practicum. On January 29, 29 college juniors will start in our classrooms. They will arrive by bus and be dropped off at their locations. North Quincy, Atlantic, Central Middle School and Quincy High School will host these students from January 22, through May. Nine math teachers, 16 Social Studies, and 5 English. It is our hope that these students will return as student teachers.

Partnership with BU

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At the Open Forum, Ms. Eileen Lawlor Debonis, spoke to the RTTT grant money that Massachusetts applied for. Quincy could receive up to \$1 million. However, Quincy is not eligible to receive any of the RTTT money because the President of the QEA refused to sign the MOU. Two-thirds of the districts in Massachusetts have signed it. Other funding will be forfeited as well. The QEA's fear of change was put before our children's opportunities. She urged the Quincy teachers, parents, citizens and Quincy officials not to let this opportunity pass.

Open Forum
Mrs. Debonis speaks

Mr. Karl Roos said he was surprised when Quincy did not sign on to the RTTT. There are parents that would like to know why that \$1 million was not taken.

Mr. Roos speaks

Mr. Paul Phillips, QEA President, said he was instructed by the Executive Board of the QEA not to sign. It was an overwhelming vote after great discussion. We received an advisory from the MTA speaking of a trusting relationship with the local authority. We had a long discussion about an untrusting relationship with the DESE and the Federal Department of Education. The reason for the teachers not liking DESE goes back a long time, having to do with licensure, having to do with constantly changing the way we try to operate and of course for their tendency to blame teachers to the problems of schools, the political future of the city, state and federal government. It is possible there could be a new governor next fall. Signing onto a four year deal is a problem. The grant required teachers to have discussion and negotiations on various topics. The tying of test scores to teacher evaluation, licensure, teacher pay, promotional opportunities, and additional requirements to testing. The final bill took away collective bargaining in the toughest schools that teachers work in.

Mr. Phillips Responds

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Mike Draicchio introduced Quincy Police Chief, Paul Keenan and his staff. Chief Keenan spoke to the many services provided by the Quincy Police for the staff and students in the Quincy Public Schools.

Quincy Police Dept.
Chief Keenan Presents

In 2005 at a meeting with Mr. Ken McPhee, he saw that the School Department has a very comprehensive and outstanding safety plan, but the Police didn't. So, they put together a plan with a collaborative effort between the Fire Department, EMS, and the Police Department for a school response team. It consists of a 60-member officer unit. They have had extensive training in shooter response, hostage negotiations, police dogs, they got maps of each school and did a physical check. They took photos of every school and made evacuation plans. We have educational resource offices and a police presence in each high school. They now have a vehicle outfitted with communications equipment so they can talk to anyone in the Commonwealth. If there is an incident, the Quincy Police are very capable of handling it.

The Police re-evaluated traffic around the schools and added one officer at Marshall and one at North Quincy. They have monthly truancy checks, and lockdown drills ongoing throughout the school year.

There are now 50 crossing guards and they added one at Atlantic and one at North Quincy High School. Community officers assist with the traffic in the first week of school in September. The Police follow school buses around to make sure everyone is following the rules.

The Police Department provides many educational programs for students. Officer Grazioso and Officer John Sauter run the DARE Program, Stranger/Danger, Water/Hike Safety and Halloween Safety. They sponsor a two-week summer camp at Pageant Field which employs 16 senior high school students. They work as Peer leaders for 5th graders. Dan Minton does an Internet Safety Program for the fourth and fifth grade students. That program will be overseen by Police officers volunteering their time for comp time to continue that program. There is an Anti-bullying Program for the sixth graders.

At Broad Meadows, Central and Atlantic, there is early bird basketball before school from February – June, the Police Academy for high school students, Ride Along on Friday nights, and RAD Program for seniors. The Quincy Police Department is very active.

Mrs. Lebo inquired about the student early bird basketball for Sterling and Point Webster. Chief Keenan said he would like to see it in all of our middle schools.

Mr. Murphy asked for a copy of the Emergency Response Plan. He would like to match it up with the School Improvement Plans.

All the members expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Chief for all the services the Police provide. The police show compassion for the children of Quincy. They thanked the Chief for the crossing guards and for the resource officers in the schools. Ms. Isola said their services are invaluable, and you can't underestimate the presence of police officers in the schools.

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Maura Tenaglia, Director of Student Support Services, and Paula McGeady, Helena Skinner, Ryan Herlihy, and Mike Lorenzano gave a presentation on the role of the high school guidance counselor and health educator.

Guidance Counselors
Health Educators

The high school guidance counselors are trained professionals prepared to deal with a wide range of issues that high school students face. Their role is to help students succeed academically, socially and emotionally. They create a positive interpersonal climate with opportunities for relationships to develop between students and staff, provide help for serious personal problems, intervene early with students academic and behavior problems. Guidance counselors build relationships with students and families to ensure student s success. They participate in group interventions and individual interventions.

Ms. Tanaglia Reports

The Committee added two new positions (High School Health Educators) to the budget. They provide school-wide interventions that compliment the work of the guidance staff. They provide classroom lessons for all students on topics such as substance abuse prevention, healthy choices, positive peer relationships and leadership opportunities. The goal of the Health Educator at the high school level is to improve students' well being.

The Committee was very pleased with the work of the Guidance staff and especially with the new Health Educators role.

The Committee asked to see a copy of the six-year plan given to grade 10 students.

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Maintenance is working on heating issues at various schools, tile work at Parker and Atherton Hough. A new water heater was installed at the GOALS building, and new storage for Broad Meadows and Wollaston.

Bldg. & Grounds

Mrs. Isola said parents have told her that their students have issues with the bathroom facilities. She asked Mr. Murphy for a survey of the all the bathrooms in each of our schools to get a picture on what we offer our students. Mr. Murphy replied that they took action along with parents at Lincoln Hancock Community School. The other school bathrooms are being evaluated.

At 8:30 p.m. Mayor Koch leaves.

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The Quincy High School Building Committee will meet next Friday. The school is progressing. There was a great article in the *Patriot Ledger* about the new high school. She is still working to get rid of the old fire extinguishers.

QHS Bldg. Committee
Mrs. Dwyer Reports

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The Central Building Committee met on January 14. City Councilor Doug Gutro was present and he will be submitting a resolution to the City Council requesting two neighborhood meetings. He asked the Building Committee to let him hold his neighborhood meetings before any action is taken on what to do with the existing Central Middle School site. One meeting will be held in February to listen to concerns and ideas from those who live close to the existing Central site and another after the architect is hired with the abutters of the new Central Middle School site. He also asked for a letter to the Zoning Board which the City Solicitor will draft to state we have no initial problem with a resident who owns a home behind the site on Newton for personal family use.

Central Bldg. Committee
Mrs. Bragg Reports

The Superintendent shared his report requested by the MSBA on past, present, and future enrollment of Quincy Public Schools. The report states the need for a 600 pupil school, School Committee class size policy, the impact of full day Kindergarten, increase in the populations of the feeder schools and enrollment trends.

On February 12 the City receives RFS responses and Tishman will review the applications, verify qualifications and check references. On February 25 the Central Building Committee will review the applications and prioritize the list. In late February and early March, we will follow up on the reviews and begin scheduling site visits. On March 19, Tishman submits the qualified applications to the state's Design and Selection Panel. In April, Design and Selection Panel will review and rank applications. On April 20 they will vote the top three ranked firms.

Two subcommittees have been set up. The City Selection Subcommittee will consist of the Superintendent, Principal Jen Fay-Beers and City Solicitor, Jim Timmins. They will be voting members on the MSBA Design and Selection Panel. The other is the Community Outreach Subcommittee, consisting of Anne Mahoney, Chris Walker, Terry Scuzzerella and Jo-Ann Bragg.

The City has also put out requests for appraisals on the real estate. The businesses/buildings/property that the school will be built on are: The Egg and I, The Winfield House and the Car Wash.

Mrs. Dwyer stressed the importance of visiting other newly built schools. Mrs.

Bragg invited anyone who wants to come.

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Mr. McCarthy reported that the Health, Safety and Security Subcommittee met and discussed the status of cafeteria tables in four elementary schools that are wall mounted. They discussed new mechanism and how to keep the tables from falling. They decided to reinforce with a stronger chain and locks. Replacement tables are needed for four schools -- Beechwood Knoll, Squantum, the Early Childhood Ctr. and Wollaston. They are in poor condition. We will spend \$20,000 to start purchasing the new tables. Safety was the first priority.

Health, Safety &
Security Subcommittee

Mr. McCarthy would like to change the name of the Subcommittee to Health, Safety, Security and Transportation Subcommittee.

Mrs. Bragg said if we are taking money that has been allotted for other line items, it needs to go through the Budget Subcommittee. As for changing the name of the subcommittee, that authority belongs to the Vice Chairman Mr. McCarthy needs to work with Mrs. Mahoney, it is her prerogative.

Mr. McCarthy said he will discuss money before tables are purchased. He will speak to Mrs. Mahoney about the title of the committee to plug transportation into that subcommittee.

On a motion by Mrs. Isola, seconded by Mrs. Dwyer, the Committee accepted the Health Safety and Security Subcommittee minutes. The ayes have it.

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Mrs. Lebo reported that the Special Education Subcommittee met on January 13, 2010. There are two major issues – communications and transportation. QPAC requested that all Special Education parents be notified of events and meetings. It was agreed that information from various sources to inform parents could be added to the Special Education Alert List by sending in a name and phone number to Ms. Todd. Mr. McCarthy stated that the issues at the beginning of the year seemed to be resolved and that the rotation of drivers on SPED routes was still happening. Parents asked for a written notice or a phone call when a change is made. Ms. Todd will consider this. Parent were reminded to call Ms. Todd with any concerns about transportation and that Mr. McCarthy would be happy to take calls also.

Special Ed. Subcommittee
Mrs. Lebo Reports

Dr DeCristofaro reported on the change in the Transportation Office and that Ms. Sue Gropp was the newly appointed Administrative Assistant with Mr. Draicchio assuming Director. QPAC asked that Mr. Draicchio and Ms.

Appointments
Ms. Sue Gropp, Admin.
Asst.

Gropp attend the next meeting. The Opportunities and Challenges initiative has been halted because there are two other issues that will impact any discussion and these need to be resolved first --the first is the Central issue and the work being done with the MSBA on enrollment, etc. The second is the status of the old Quincy High School and Coddington Hall. The Mayor's office is reviewing this. Dr. DeCristofaro also reported that he is continuing his directive to close Open Enrollment to North Quincy only.

Mr. Mike Draichio
Director of Security &
Transportation

The next Special Education Subcommittee meeting will be on March 10, 2010.

On a motion by Mrs. Lebo, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, the Committee accepted the Special Education Subcommittee minutes. The ayes have it.

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Mrs. Dryer reported that she has called School Facilities Subcommittee Meeting for Tuesday, February 26 at 4:00 p.m. to discuss the Snug Harbor Garden Plan, the Community use of Buildings, the ADA Report, QPS Security Checklist and any other items in subcommittee.

Facilities Subcommittee
Scheduled

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Mrs. Mahoney reported that the Budget Subcommittee met at 6:30 p.m. this evening just prior to the regular meeting. Mr. Jim Mullaney presented the Quarterly Budget Report and reviewed it for the Committee. The only area of real concern is Special Ed Tuition line. There are three issues --out-placement of special ed. students. We had a cut in Circuit Breaker money. We were expecting 75%. In recent years, close to \$1 million was transferred. This deficit money has to be addressed in this year's budget.

Budget Subcommittee
Mrs. Mahoney reports

Non Academic expenses: We should have a surplus in the Natural Gas line unless it becomes very cold. Rentals/Transportation: This line is down because we have added additional routes. The Employee Costs line is for unemployment. This line will be closely monitored because we could go into deficit \$300,000 if this continues. Acquisition of Plant Equipment. We were looking at cafeteria tables. It would cost \$40,000 to update tables in all of the schools. We are working on a plan to use \$10,000 and buy approximately half of the tables to go forward.

Mrs. Bragg said that this line is marked for desks. There were principals that expressed a need for desks. She suggested taking the money from Food Services. Mr. Mullaney answered that he took \$96,000 out of the Food Services budget for custodians, and Mrs. Morrissey has a serious need for computers in the middle schools cafeterias. Mr. Mullaney has not received any requests for furniture. Mrs. Bragg said that the Parker Elementary School and Atlantic Middle School expressed a need for desks in their School Improvement Plan.

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The Committee noted the following appointments:

Lester Borden

Appointments

Instructor

The Committee noted the following retirements:

Lois Constantino

Retirements

Transportation
Coordinator

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On a motion by Mrs. Lebo, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, the Committee adjourned for the evening at 9:12 p.m. There was no executive session. On a roll call vote, the motion passed 6-0. Mayor Koch was absent.

Adjournment