

Quincy, MASSACHUSETTS – October 14, 2015

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, October 14, 2015 at the Coddington Building. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mr. Noel DiBona, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Mr. David McCarthy, and Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Vice Chair.

Regular Meeting

Vice-Chair Presiding

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The Superintendent called the roll and Mayor Koch was absent. Also present were: Dr. Richard DeCristofaro, Secretary; Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk; Mr. Robert Cavallo, Mr. Michael Draicchio, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Mr. James Hennessy, Mrs. Mary McDonald, Mr. James Mullaney, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Ms. Judy Todd; former School Committee member Emily Lebo; Citywide Parent Council Co-Presidents Scott Alessandro and Paula Reynolds; Quincy Parent Advisory Council to Special Education President Debby Nabstedt; Quincy Education Association President Allison Cox; and Student Representatives to School Committee Caroline Bowes and Lucy Zheng (Quincy High School) and Annie Shtino (North Quincy High School).

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There was a moment of silence for Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

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Ms. Isola made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, to approve the Regular Meeting minutes for September 30, 2015. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Regular Meeting
Minutes Approved
9/30/15

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Citywide Parent Council Co-President Paula Reynolds spoke about increasing opportunities for Foreign Language instruction at all levels of the Quincy Public Schools, particularly at the middle school level.

Open Forum

Citywide Parent Council Co-President Scott Alessandro announced a School Committee Candidates Night on Monday, October 19 at 7:00 pm at Quincy High School. Parents and community members are invited to submit questions to pto.citywide@gmail.com Mr. Alessandro also noted at the Monday, October 13

Citywide Parent Council meeting, three areas of focus were agreed upon for the 2015-2016 school year: Foreign Language instruction, Special Education equity, and standardized testing.

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Dr. DeCristofaro opened the Superintendent’s Report by reviewing that All-City Band began this week, 75 Grades 4 and 5 students from all elementary schools, including Grade 5 students at Point Webster and Sterling Middle Schools. Tuesday’s Instrumental Music department Instrument drive brought in eleven donated instruments which will be refurbished for Quincy Public Schools students.

Superintendent's Report

The High School Open House Nights for Grade 8 students and families will be held on October 27 at Quincy High School and October 29 at North Quincy High School, both from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Dr. DeCristofaro is appreciative of the principals, assistant principals, deans, guidance staff, and department heads planning presentations and tours to showcase the high schools.

Upcoming School~ Community Partnership events include the November 12 Mini-Grants Reception at the North Quincy High School Atrium of Honor at 3:00 pm. 150 grant applications were submitted and \$30,000 will be awarded. The 15th Annual Fall Gathering will be held at the Tirrell Room on November 19 from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. ‘Tis the Season will be held on December 3 in the Lloyd Hill Auditorium at Quincy High School. A new event for 2015-2016 will be the Health Symposium scheduled for October 19 at 3:00 pm at the Tirrell Room, in partnership with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Thanks to Rita Bailey, Joanne Morrissey, Maura Papile, Keith Segalla, and John Fagerlund for organizing this event. Principals, Assistant Principals, School Nurses, Health Educators, and Physical Education teachers will all attend and collaborate on creating Health & Wellness Goals and Action Steps.

The Career and Technical Education Advisory Board Meeting will be held at Quincy High School on October 22. Over 25 members of the local business community will come together with our CTE staff members from both high schools to collaborate on enhancements and opportunities for our CTE students.

Dr. DeCristofaro thanked the Quincy Lodge of Elks for once again donating over 700 dictionaries to Grade 3 students. The donations are scheduled for Monday, October 19.

Dr. DeCristofaro updated on the Sterling Middle School project: Architects Scott Dunlap and James Jordan from Ai3 presented conceptual layout to the Sterling Middle School staff on October 13 and then, along with Tom Kerwin from OPM Joslin Lesser Associates, facilitated discussions with staff groups divided into functional areas. On October 19, Ai3 will make a presentation to the Quincy City

Council. On October 28, a presentation will be made to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee and in the evening at School Committee, followed by a November 17 presentation at the full MSBA Board Meeting. At this MSBA Board Meeting, there will be a vote to move the project into the Schematic Design phase.

On Thursday, October 15, the Professional Educator Status Reception will be held for forty-four Quincy Public Schools staff members meeting the criteria to be awarded this status; eighteen Academic Classroom Teachers, twenty Academic Program Teachers, and six Academic Support Staff members.

Home-School Connections for the Atherton Hough and Montclair Elementary School and Quincy High School were shared with the School Committee.

Dr. DeCristofaro reviewed the October 1 Enrollment data: there are 9,339 students in Quincy Public Schools, down 56 students from October 1 last year. Looking at transitions, the majority of the last ten years show increases in enrollment between K-1, 5-6, and 8-9. For Grades 4-5 moving from Lincoln Hancock to Sterling and Clifford Marshall to Point Webster, enrollment is consistent. At the elementary level, 4,056 students are enrolled in Grades K-5. Elementary class sizes are excellent, an average of 20 students at Grades K, 4, 5 and 19 at Grades 1-3. Open Enrollment for Elementary grades, 194 requests were made for the 2015-2016 school year and 54 were granted, including siblings and requests to remain in school when moving outside of district. Middle School Enrollment is 2,164, up 20 students from last year. Class sizes at the middle school have 94% of students in classes of 24 or fewer students; 53% have 20 or fewer students. For Middle School Open Enrollment, 74 requests were received, 23 were granted. At the high school level, 2,642 students are enrolled, with 87% of class sections having 25 or fewer students. For Open Enrollment, 100% of the 102 requests were granted.

Mrs. Mahoney asked for additional Open Enrollment information that details the home schools for elementary and middle school requests.

Mrs. Mahoney asked for information about Atlantic and Central's classes with 26 and 27 students; also for high school, which classes have 27 and 28 students.

Ms. Isola asked about 29 students in the Spanish 1 class at Quincy High School, will there be enough spots in the language labs for a class of this size. Would like to see this class size be adjusted, if possible. (Additional computers can be added to language lab or class can work as small groups to accommodate the larger class.)

Ms. Isola made a motion to move the October 1, 2015 Enrollment data into Teaching & Learning for further discussion. Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mr. Bregoli asked at the high school level, whether there are regulations for

Science class sizes for labs and are we in compliance with those levels. (All science class sections at both high schools are at 26 students or fewer; 74% have 22 or fewer.)

Mr. DiBona asked about Kindergarten at Squantum, there are two classrooms with enrollments of 23 and 24 students and whether we would consider adding a third classroom. Dr. DeCristofaro said that those classrooms will be monitored as the year progresses, although they are on the higher end of the class size guidelines, each Kindergarten class has a full-time paraprofessional.

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Wollaston Elementary School Principal James Hennessy and Senior Director Madeline Roy presented on the Mentoring Program. Each August, the new staff members are welcomed at the New Professional Staff Orientation and introduced to the Mentoring Program. Collaboration with Human Resources, the Superintendent’s Leadership and Principal Team feeds into the Mentoring Team mission to ensure that staff have a long and successful Quincy Public Schools career. QPS Induction Programs are modeled on the Massachusetts Standards that require an orientation, a trained mentor assigned to each new staff member, a support team, and release time for the mentor and beginning teacher to engage in regular classroom observations. A key component to moving from Initial to Professional License, the QPS Mentoring Program helps new teachers to improve practice, learn professional responsibility , and ultimately, positively affect student learning.

New Business
Mentoring Program

Following the Orientation, all new staff received a mentor within two weeks. The mentoring team consists of educators, administrators, retired teachers and administrators and meets four times each year. The role of the mentor is to serve as a resource, assist with solving problems, and facilitate introductions and collaboration. An effective mentor maintains a positive outlook no matter what, accepts the new educator, shares experience, but also respects the proteges’ experiences from their backgrounds and learn from them as well.

Ms. Roy said that it is a pleasure to work with both the new hires and the veteran teachers. At each mentor meeting, there may be guest speakers, opportunities to connect with Principals and Program Directors, question and answer periods, small group discussions, and mentor-protégé collaboration. The Mentoring Program is supported by NAGE (\$10,000 annually for stipends and materials) and Quincy Credit Union (\$500 for *The First Year Matters* books for all proteges and mentors and the accompanying planning materials). Within the program text, there are many topics that educators may use as a reference throughout their career. In an effort to continue to refresh the program, educators fill out an exit ticket highlighting parts of the program that are positive, requesting information or topics to explore at later meetings.

Mr. Bregoli asked about the meetings, 4 times per year, 90 minutes per meeting. Ms.

Isola asked if the mentors are volunteers. Mr. Hennessy said most are, sometimes principals recruit and encourage. Ms. Isola asked if there were ever pairings that don't work out. Ms. Roy said that the building administrator would assist if necessary. Dr. DeCristofaro thanked Mr. Hennessy, Ms. Roy, and all of the team members for their planning, extensive work goes into welcoming the proteges, giving each the opportunity to be extraordinary educators.

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Executive Director Keith Segalla, IT Systems Administrator Robert Cavallo, and Human Resources Administrator Mary McDonald presented on the new Aesop Substitute Placement System. Aesop supports site administrators in finding substitute staff for daily and longer-term absences. To begin the process, three software products were demonstrated for representative principals, administrators, and IT staff and Aesop was selected based on multiple factors, including ease of use, reporting ability, and local recommendations. Training of system administrators and principals, assistant principals, and school secretaries took place in late September. Substitute teachers submit applications and supporting documentation to Human Resources, including CORI and National Background Check fingerprinting. Once the screening process is completed, qualified substitute teachers are provided with a login and PIN and supported by the IT department in setting up their profiles and creating a calendar of their available dates. School administrators create lists of preferred substitutes for grade levels or content areas. School administrators create substitute requests which are made available to their preferred substitute list first and then on to other substitutes after a pre-set length of time. Throughout 2015-2016, IT and Human Resources will continue to monitor the effectiveness.

Aesop Substitute
Teacher Placement
System

Mr. Bregoli asked about the cost of the system, \$15,000. Mr. Bregoli asked about matching licensure to specific requests, Dr. DeCristofaro said that particularly at the high school level, there is a shortage of licensed substitutes for Science and Math.

Mr. Bregoli asked about the substitute rate (\$75 for daily, \$85 for long-term assignment). Mr. Bregoli requested a survey of rates for surrounding towns; Business Director Mr. Mullaney will follow up.

Mrs. Mahoney asked if an analysis was created for cost savings. Mr. Mullaney said that prior to budget cuts in FY2010, there was a substitute caller line item in the budget for \$20,000. Dr. DeCristofaro said cost savings are hard to quantify, there is tremendous pressure on the administrators and secretaries to fill open positions, so there will be a savings of time. Mr. Mullaney said that Aesop was paid out of the FY2016 software budget; the annual fee will be around \$10,000.

Mrs. Mahoney asked about the qualifications of substitute teachers, CORIs are checked every three years and the NBC fingerprinting is lifetime. CORI expiration dates are tracked in Aspen. Mrs. Mahoney asked if teachers are logging onto Aesop system directly, but as part of this year's implementation, teachers call into their

principal. Moving forward, Quincy Public Schools may transition to having teachers log in directly and principals would approve their request before the assignment is available for substitute teachers.

Ms. Isola said that we have a pool of highly qualified substitute teachers and does not believe this has been impacted by Quincy Public Schools rate of substitute pay.

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Deputy Superintendent Mulvey, Senior Director Maura Papile, and QEA President Alison Cox presented the annual Educator Evaluation update. 900 educators are evaluated through this process, mandated under Massachusetts 603 CMR 35.00. In collaboration with the Quincy Education Association, DESE’s model language was adapted successfully and Quincy Public Schools is beginning Year 3. The QEA/QPS Educator Evaluation workgroup collaboration continues with bargaining the DDM and Staff and Student Feedback language scheduled for this year.

Educator Evaluation Update

The Educator Evaluation process is designed to promote growth and development of leaders and teachers, placing student learning at the center, using multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement. The process recognizes excellence in teaching and leading, sets a high bar for professional teaching status, and shortens timelines for improvement. At this time, summative ratings are the culmination of the educator evaluation process. In October 2018, the student impact rating is scheduled to be implemented.

Educator Evaluation is based on a five-step cycle of Self-Assessment; Analysis, Goal Setting & Plan Development; Implementation of the Plan; Formative Assessment/Evaluation; and Summative Evaluation. Self-Assessment is done in site-based team meetings, by content area or program, and grade level. Every educator also uses rubrics to assess their own professional practices. In the Goal Setting & Plan Development phase, each educator sets a Professional Practice and a Student Learning Goal. The Plan also outlines the actions the educator must take to attain the goals established in the Plan and benchmarks to assess progress. Educator goals and action steps feed into school and program goals. During Implementation, educators collect evidence and assess progress towards Performance Standards and Goals: multiple measures of student learning, judgements based on observations and artifacts of practice; evidence relevant to one or more performance standards.

Quincy Public Schools uses Baseline Edge as the tool for educator evaluation, have observed others available, confident in the usability of the tool. Mrs. Papile noted that the ability to provide feedback on goals, plans, and evidence is crucial to professional development. Staff are on one-year plans or on two-year plans. Educators will receive a formative assessment at the mid-point of the cycle and a summative assessment at the conclusion of their cycle. A Summative rating (Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement, and Unsatisfactory) is based on the

four standards of practice and the educator goals.

Ms. Cox said that the QEA appreciates the collaboration on the Educator Evaluation implementation. For ratings, the summative rating is about professional practice, while the student impact rating focuses theoretically on student learning. The challenge is in how to determine the measures of student learning. Full implementation of DDMs will be in 2016-2017, two DDMs per teacher, each given twice per year – four data points per teacher. Scoring parameters for Low, Moderate, and High impact are to be determined. DDMs are common assessments, developed by teachers to show student growth from a pre-test to post-test.

There are four types of Educator Evaluation Plans: (1) Developing Educator Plan for educators without professional status, administrators in the first three years in a district, or at the discretion of an evaluator for an educator in a new assignment. (One year) (2) Self-Directed Growth Plan for experienced educators rated Proficient or Exemplary; these can be one or two years in length (will be ultimately determined by Student Impact Rating) (3) Directed Growth Plan for educators rated Needs Improvement, up to one year in length (4) Improvement Plan: for educators rated Unsatisfactory, 30-day plan, educators can be terminated for non-improvement.

Mr. Mulvey noted that the over 900 evaluations are allocated as evenly as possible over Primary Evaluators: Principals and Directors, plus Contributing Evaluators: Assistant Principals, Coordinators, and Department Heads. Quincy Public Schools provides resources including module trainings, the QPS Educator Evaluation Handbook, the Baseline Edge website, the MA Educator Performance Standards at a glance, and the QPS/QEA Work Group. Timelines have been adjusted by common agreement between the QEA and QPS, for example Proficient and Exemplary rated educator Formative Assessments were due in September rather than June, allowing Primary Evaluators the summer to complete the work.

Ms. Isola thanked the presenters, noting that this daunting task is mandated by state and federal laws. While professional staff want and need to be evaluated, the complexity and demands must impact the educators greatly, taking time away from the classroom. Ms. Isola said that the measure of student learning is still not determined, with the decision on whether MCAS or PARCC will be the testing system for Massachusetts still to come in November. Ms. Isola appreciates the effort put into the implementation, feels frustrated at the demands of this system.

Mr. Bregoli said that the evaluation process is like being on a hamster wheel, going around and around without end. The state has given us such a complicated means of evaluation, Mr. Bregoli feels that local districts can take care of the evaluation process, we have many talented administrators. Mr. Bregoli asked for details on Improvement and Directed Growth Plans. Mr. Mulvey said that no teachers have been placed on Improvement Plans. Mr. Mulvey said no more than 10 staff members are on Directed Growth Plans.

Mr. Bregoli asked how the state could simplify this plan. Mrs. Papile said we are trying to focus on teachers capturing the work they are already doing and framing the process as supportive and collaborative. Evaluators can upload evidence to assist in supporting educators and encourage staff to focus on their professional practice.

Mr. Bregoli said that the Student Impact Rating seems subjective. The student learning goal should be how student growth is evaluated. The Federal Department of Education has linked compliance to grant funding, leaving school systems with no choice.

Mr. Bregoli asked if staff object to the amount of time evidence collection takes. Ms. Cox said that since evaluators vary in their process, the quantity and variety of evidence they are looking for can vary. Ms. Cox said that veteran staff with a veteran principal should be required to submit less evidence than a newer staff member. Mr. Mulvey said the regulations allow this to be at the discretion of the evaluator. We want naturally occurring evidence, there is no set number of items needed. Mr. Bregoli asked if the Massachusetts Teachers Association has contacted state legislators about this unwieldy system. Ms. Cox said that since the MTA signed on to Race to the Top, they have technically agreed with this evaluation system and have not taken an official position on this issue, Ms. Cox has submitted a business item to the MTA Board for this weekend's meeting. Ms. Cox also suggested that MASC can be important here, School Committees can collaborate to voice concerns.

Mr. McCarthy thanked the team of presenters, Ms. Isola and Mr. Bregoli covered his concerns. The QEA/QPS collaboration is tremendous, much work has been done to implement this evaluation system. Our educators are human and this constant pressure must be difficult to manage and keep the focus on teaching as they always have. Mr. McCarthy agreed that we are getting to the point where we have to ask if this is going to hurt our students and staff more than it will assist them. Seems possible on paper, but impossible in reality.

Dr. DeCristofaro thanked the presenters and agreed that the QEA/QPS Educator Evaluation work group has put in a lot of time and effort. This Educator Evaluation system is a complex task that takes away from other great things that could be happening for students. The most positive piece is how the educator evaluation ties to the District Improvement Plan and the School and Program Improvement Plans with goals aligning vertically within schools and horizontally across grade levels.

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Mr. McCarthy made a motion to refer the Faxon Field Equalization Pipe to Facilities & Security Subcommittee. Mr. Bregoli seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Faxon Field
Equalization Pipe

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Ms. Isola made a motion to appoint Mrs. Hubley as the Quincy School Committee Voting Delegate for the Massachusetts Association of School Committees Convention, November 4 through 8. Mr. Bregoli seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it. **Review resolutions at October 28 meeting.**

MASC Voting Delegate Appointment

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Mr. Bregoli made a motion to appoint Meredith Johnson as School Nurse for Atlantic Middle School. Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion and on a roll call vote, the ayes have it 6-0. Mayor Koch was absent.

School Nurse Appointment

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Ms. Isola made a motion to approve the out of state travel of Atlantic Middle School Grade 8 students to New York, New York on June 9-10, 2016. Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Out of State Travel

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Ms. Isola reported that at the Quincy Community Action Partnership “Best Chefs Competition,” ten Quincy High School Culinary Arts students, under the direction of teacher Patick Noe assisted the chefs from local restaurants, giving them a unique opportunity to interact with local business owners and make professional connections.

Additional Business

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Mr. McCarthy requested the opportunity to discuss High School Athletics and MIAA divisional placement with the Athletic Directors. Quincy Public Schools teams are currently in either Division 1 or Division 2, based on participation rates. Our plan for 2016-2017 must be submitted by December 31.

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Upcoming meetings were announced: Regular Meetings on October 28, 2015; Subcommittee Meetings for Teaching & Learning on Tuesday, October 27; Budget & Finance on October 27; and Special Education on October 21.

Communications

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Mrs. Hubley noted that all Subcommittee meeting minutes are posted online at www.quincypublicschools.com.

Reports of Subcommittees

Ms. Isola reviewed the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee Meeting held on

October 5, 2015. Mrs. Perkins presented the Early Childhood, Literacy, and Title I Program Improvement Plans, reflecting on the 2014-2015 goals and reviewing the goals, action steps, and supporting Professional Development for 2015-2016.

Mr. DiBona reviewed the Health, Transportation, and Safety Subcommittee Meeting held on October 7, 2015. Program Improvement Plans for Food Services (Director Joanne Morrissey), Transportation (Director Michael Draicchio), Student Support Services (Senior Director Maura Papile), and Health Services (Coordinator Rita Bailey) were presented, with each presenter reflecting on their 2014-2015 goals and reviewing the goals, action steps, and supporting Professional Development for 2015-2016.

As there were no corrections to the meeting minutes for the October 5, 2015 Teaching & Learning Subcommittee Meeting and the October 7, 2015 Health, Transportation, and Safety Subcommittee minutes, the minutes were approved as presented.

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Mr. McCarthy made a motion to adjourn for the evening at 9:10 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bregoli and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Adjournment