

Quincy, MASSACHUSETTS – May 18, 2016

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at Central Middle School. The Superintendent called the roll and present were Mr. James DeAmicis, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Emily Lebo, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, and Mr. Paul Bregoli, Vice Chair.

Regular Meeting

Vice-Chair Presiding

Also present were: Dr. Richard DeCristofaro, Secretary; Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk; Mr. Chris Cassani, Mr. Michael Draicchio, Ms. Mollie Good, Ms. Beth Hallett, Mr. James Mullaney, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Ms. Cara Pekarcik, Mrs. Erin Perkins, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Mr. Robert Shaw, Mr. Lawrence Taglieri, Ms. Judy Todd; Quincy Education Association Allison Cox; North Quincy High School Student Representative Nassim Touile; and Mr. Scott Alessandro, Citywide Parent Council Co-President.

Mayor Thomas Koch was absent.

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There was a moment of silence for the armed service members serving at home and abroad. Dr. DeCristofaro also remembered former Library Department Chair Kathy Roeder, a 38-year veteran of Quincy Public Schools.

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Mrs. Lebo made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hubley, to approve the Regular Meeting minutes for May 4, 2016. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Regular Meeting
Minutes Approved
5.4.16

Mrs. Hubley made a motion, seconded by Ms. Isola, to approve the Executive Session minutes for May 4, 2016. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Executive Session
Minutes Approved
5.4.16

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Mr. Scott Alessandro, Citywide Parent Council Co-President spoke about the FY2017 Budget process. In striving for excellence and supporting the unique talents of each student, would like to see additional funding and more opportunity for parent input into new initiatives.

Open Forum

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Dr. DeCristofaro opened the Superintendent's Report with the National Honor Society recognitions. North Quincy High School National Honor Society advisor Cara Pekarick and Quincy High School National Honor Society advisor Mollie Good introduced students to speak about the four pillars of National Honor Society: Service, Leadership, Scholarship, and Character.

Superintendent's
Report

North Quincy High School: *Wai Yin (Debbie) Chan; Lily Chapman; Alan Chen; Jacqueline Coleman; Stephen Condon; Alexander DeJesus; Molly Donahue; Zachary Erickson; Gary Hu; Emily Huang; Janice Lau; Justin Lee; Jiajia Liang; Kevin Liang; Nelson Mei; Michael Nguyen; Aditya Raj; Dalia Sadaka; Katherine Sautter; Lincy Shen; Annie Shtino; Miller Tan; Tiffany Tang; Regina Tham; Han Truong; Leona Tu; Kathy Wong; Lanny Xie; Nadine Zahreddine; Yuying Zhang; Ken Zou*

Quincy High School: *Laqueen Arias; Grace Baker; Daisy Ban; Mahmoud Berikaa; Kalima Bukenya; Stephen Carinci; Parawat Changthong; Karen Chen; Katherine Choi; Sarah Clancy; Theresa Cronin; Victoria Deery; Julia Doyle; Michael Fernald; Megan Fox; Corrina Hartford; Tiffany He Lam; Anxhela Hoti; Jia Min Huang; Elizabeth Huynh; Julianna Kane; Ridha Khawar; Genderson Lai Ng; Samantha Le; Tien Le; Yan Li; Jia Li Liu; Christopher Llaga; Lauren Lo; Stephanie Lopez; Megi Maci; Emma Mahn; Stiv Mucollari; Julie Nguyen; Christine Norton; Ariana Paulo; Matthew Pham; My Pham; Tiffany Pham; Thomas Qafko; Samantha Reardon; Aaron Rodriguez; Brian Rooney; Scarlett Stanhope; Katherine Stevenson; Sylvene Tran; Vivian-Hien Tran-Vo; Jason Truong; Selina Tsang; Ryan Tucker; Jackson Vo; Kyle Vo; Alicia Walker; Jia Xin Wang; Yunting Wong; Jack Wu; Xing Yi Wu; Stephanie Zeng; Joyce Zhang; Jessie Zhu; Vivian Zou*

Ms. Isola congratulated the students for their work and perseverance and parents, teachers, and administrators for their support of the students. Ms. Isola feels this is one of the most special nights of the School Committee year.

Dr. DeCristofaro said that we are all so proud of these students' accomplishments and while we are sad to see them go, we know they are going on to great things. The students have added much to the academic and school culture at their high schools and it is always an honor to recognize these National Honor Society students.

After a brief recess, the Superintendent resumed his report with updates on upcoming events, including Spring Concerts throughout May and June, the ELC Celebration on May 24 at Point Webster, the Health & Wellness Reflection on May 25, where school administrators and staff will review this year's successes and challenges and set goals for next year. The Welcome to Kindergarten Parent Academy event on will be held on May 26 at Central Middle School, Special Olympics on May 27 at Pageant Field. Leslie Bridson will be receiving an "Extra Mile" Community Award from QCAP on Thursday, May 19 at their annual dinner. North Quincy High School's SADD chapter, under the leadership of Kristen Houlihan, was awarded 2nd place in the National Chapter of the Year.

Information for Quincy Public School’s Summer Scene will be posted on the QPS website this week. Dr. DeCristofaro reminded School Committee that Quincy High School’s Commencement will be held on Monday, June 13 and North Quincy High School’s Commencement will be held on Tuesday, June 14. Both ceremonies begin at 6:00 pm and will be held at Veterans Stadium.

The 19th Annual Community Service Learning Breakfast was held on Tuesday, May 24 at the Tirrell Room and students from the elementary, middle, and high school levels were recognized for their service to school and community.

Dr. DeCristofaro concluded the Superintendent’s Report by recognizing Quincy School~Community Partnership Coordinator John Fagerlund, who will be moving to work with the Quincy Chamber of Commerce.

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Director of Parks & Forestry Chris Cassani presented his annual school grounds update. The Teel Field project is underway with anticipated completion for Fall 2016, on schedule for September playability. The completion of this field will have a cascading benefit throughout the parks system, an additional venue for scheduling for practices and games.

New Business
Parks Department Update

The Quincy High School greenspace project is reaching completion and this beautiful landscape enhances the look of Quincy High School. The memorial plaza should be completed in June and a dedication scheduled.

The Parker School playground expansion project is underway, through the support of a Community Preservation grant of \$75,000. The Parks Department is working in collaboration with Principal Maryanne Palmer and the Parker School PTO. The project is scheduled to be completed in Summer 2016.

Through Cleaner Greener and donated labor from Nichols Landscaping, Central Middle School has had some landscaping enhancements. The Coddington Building and Quincy High School also have outside contractors assisting with maintenance.

Other spring projects included repainting the tennis courts at Montclair/Bishop Field and Russell Park. Athletics fields were ready for spring sports season, and the Parks Department enjoys the close collaboration with the high school Athletic Directors. Under the Parks Department maintenance of all school playgrounds, additional safety fiber will be installed shortly at the Della Chiesa Early Childhood Center, Clifford Marshall, Atherton Hough, and Merrymount. Additional safety fiber will be installed at several other locations to be determined over the summer. The Parks Department staff maintain all school grounds throughout the growing season, mowing lawns, trimming shrubs and trees, and weed whacking.

Mr. Cassani thanked the principals, staff, and families for Cleaner Greener, this is a tremendous effort by the school community each year.

Mrs. Lebo asked about the playground at Lincoln Hancock, parents are interested in looking at refreshing the playground equipment. Mr. Cassani said some safety upgrades were made last spring. He invited to the parent group to contact him about applying for Community Preservation grant to assist with further upgrades.

Mrs. Mahoney asked for a schedule of safety fiber upgrades, which schools have been done and which will be scheduled next. Mrs. Mahoney asked about the costs and the original timeline for the Quincy High School project. Mr. Cassani said the project was substantially completed in October 2015. The memorial plaza is the last item and will be completed within the next few weeks.

Mrs. Mahoney noted that there is some confusion about the Teel Field project. The money was appropriated through City Council and though the project will benefit the North Quincy High School community, it is not specifically a school project. Mrs. Mahoney asked for clarification on the safety fiber issue. Mr. Cassani said it is a constantly changing situation due to heavy usage of the facilities. Four playgrounds had additional safety fiber installed last fall, four more this spring. This is an item that can never be considered completed.

Ms. Isola asked about playground safety and Mr. Cassani noted that all city playgrounds undergo through an annual evaluation. Mr. Cassani agreed that the safety fiber is currently at safe levels, but maintenance to ensure even distribution is a constant issue. The Parks Department has a good relationship with supplier, and they are able to quickly respond to any needs.

Mr. Bregoli complimented Perkins Field near Merrymount, which has had some recent upgrades. Mr. Bregoli asked about the front of North Quincy High School, the shrubs have been removed. Mr. Cassani said that annuals will be planted there within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. DeAmicis asked about poison ivy and poison oak on school properties. Mr. Cassani said that the Parks Department does not use pesticides on school property, currently using a natural product called Avenger. Principals will be notified when an area is treated and they can share the information with parents. Mr. Bregoli said that Mr. Cassani also worked with the state to eradicate the poison ivy along Furnace Brook Parkway.

Mrs. Lebo asked Dr. DeCristofaro how school grounds issues get reported to the Parks Department. Dr. DeCristofaro said that school administrative staff, usually principals and custodians notify Parks Department of issues. Mrs. Lebo suggested reminding principals to report any concerns.

Dr. DeCristofaro and Mr. Mullaney presented the FY2017 Quincy Public Schools budget. In the last five years, incremental yearly increases in the budget have allowed for rebuilding and growth in all areas of the budget: Academic Classroom Teachers, Academic Program, and Academic Support Staff; Non-Academic Support Staff; Academic Expenses; and Non-Academic Expenses. With staffing the largest part of the budget, the City of Quincy’s appropriation for FY2017 allows Quincy Public Schools to meet all contractual obligations for the 2016-2017 school year, including percentage raises and step and level increases. Once these obligations are met, there is \$342,000 in additional funding to address class size and other areas of the budget. With this budget, all class sizes are expected to be well within the School Committee guidelines. The total budget is \$102,598,022, representing a \$3,338,300 increase over FY2016 (3.3%).

New Business
 FY2017 QPS Budget

Budget recommendations for FY2017 include increasing elementary and high school teachers by 1.0 positions each, increasing ELL and Literacy teachers by 0.5 positions each, Career & Technical Education by 1.0, and Special Education by 2.8 positions. Under Academic Expenses, increasing funding for Special Education tuitions (to match the level of additional Circuit Breaker funding), CTE supplies, teacher professional discretionary expenses (contractual), and software. In addition, there are shifts and reconciliations between accounts moving positions between line items or to grant-funded positions.

For Subsidized Services, the Food Services revolving account is in a very good position to meet the cash reserve requirement from the USDA School Lunch Program. For Building Rentals, rents received are used to pay the custodians working during the rentals and the associated utility costs. For Transportation, revenues are from user fees and rentals; expenditures are for driver salaries for rentals and fleet maintenance. For Athletics, revenues are from user fees and gate receipts. Expenditures have been high in recent years due to the need to replace equipment and uniforms. Additional information requested at the most recent Budget & Finance subcommittee was shared about revolving account detail for Transportation and Athletics and the number of students eligible for free & reduced price meals, who also have transportation and athletics fees waived.

Mrs. Hubley asked about the field trip breakdown, there is a range of expenditures, are there discrepancies in the number of field trips between schools. Dr. DeCristofaro agreed that there are differences between the schools.

Ms. Isola said PTOs are independent within each school and as a School Committee, it is not within our job description to tell parents what they can fundraise for. We can address inequities through our budget, but not otherwise.

Mrs. Lebo requested an overview of field trips and whether these enhance curriculum. Mrs. Mahoney asked whether PTOs are paying for the field trip fee and not just the transportation, are all students getting equal opportunities.

Mrs. Mahoney asked about the total for middle school athletics fees, this year's total is lower than last year's. Mr. Mullaney said the money continues to come in throughout June. He is confident that the total will be in the \$24,000 to \$25,000 range for the year, as it has been in the last few years. This year, tennis and wrestling were new sports, so there was some increased participation.

Mrs. Lebo asked if the cost of running the middle school Athletics program is covered by fees. Mr. Mullaney said 40% of the cost is covered, the remainder is funded through the Athletics Budget.

Dr. DeCristofaro thanked Mrs. Lebo for her leadership on the FY2017 budget development process and noted that it will be presented to City Council next Wednesday, May 25.

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Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey presented on the Quincy Public Schools hiring process. The foundation of the procedures are the 1993 Education Reform Act and the Quincy School Committee Policy, Section 7.13. Procedure and Structure: Notice of professional openings are posted on teacher bulletin boards and shared via email. At the Superintendent's discretion, the position may advertise the position outside the school system on SchoolSpring, allowing sufficient time for a candidate's response to the posting. Individuals respond in writing to the Deputy Superintendent.

New Business

Hiring Process Overview

Several Quincy Public Schools positions require School Committee appointment: Superintendent of Schools, Director of Special Education, School Business Administrator, and School Nurses. The Deputy/Assistant Superintendent position is approved by the School Committee based upon the Superintendent's recommendation. Interview/Screening committees for these positions are set up according to School Committee Policy.

During the interview process, the committee is afforded the opportunity to review the resume and supporting documentation of each candidate. The committee is briefed on procedures and may decide to modify procedures as needed. All candidates are allowed time to make opening statement that speak to their strengths as a candidate, the committee may develop and vet questions as a group and then each candidate is asked identical questions. Closing statements may be made if time allows. The committee then meets to recommend up to three candidates to the Hiring Authority. Voting to move candidates forward is conducted under documented procedures. The committee may decide to recommend only one candidate for consideration and may include comments

Mr. Mulvey reviewed recent appointments made under the interview process and supporting interview documentation for Superintendent of Schools, Superintendent's Leaders members, and elementary, middle, and high school

principals and assistant principals. Positions below the level of department chair may or may not require an interview committee; decisions regarding the creation of an interview committee for these positions rests with the Superintendent.

Mrs. Lebo asked about the interview process to replace the Director of Career & Technical Education when she left in 2007. Mr. Mulvey said that the list presented is a sampling, not comprehensive for all of the positions filled.

Mrs. Mahoney thanked Mr. Mulvey for the thorough presentation. Mrs. Mahoney said it is important to address the community perception that things are not always transparent. In the Quincy Public Schools, the Superintendent has discretion about posting open positions outside the school system. From her research, other school systems post open positions on their school system website and so QPS may be missing out on highly qualified candidates. Mrs. Mahoney said the Special Education Director post on SchoolSpring was closed on March 25, even though the requisition said open until posted. Mrs. Mahoney asked about the NQHS Soccer position, how would community members know that it is posted. Mrs. Mahoney said she has sat on interview committees and knows that Quincy Public Schools follow the interview procedures.

Mr. Mulvey said that there is a fee associated with each SchoolSpring posting, three months is standard and so the Special Education posting was closed after the 90 days had passed.

Mrs. Lebo asked how many staff members in QPS and Mr. Mulvey said close to 1,900 total, of which 850 are licensed employees. Mrs. Lebo said that Quincy Public Schools and the City of Quincy is a generous employer, and without online postings, these opportunities are not available to all residents.

Mr. Mulvey said that often when a position opens, there are multiple applications on file. We have a significant substitute teacher list and that is often the source of new professional staff hires. Substitutes are utilized to fill paraprofessionals, school secretary, and positions.

Mrs. Lebo said that there may be other candidates who are currently employed in full-time positions and since they cannot be on-call substitutes, they do not have the opportunity to transfer into Quincy Public Schools positions.

Mrs. Mahoney acknowledged the value of the substitute pool, but without public posting, there is not transparency. If Quincy Public Schools wants to hire the absolute best candidates, public posting can only guarantee that experienced educators are in the mix. It is our responsibility to taxpayers to ensure the best candidates are hired.

Mrs. Mahoney suggested that there be a limit of resume retention, stating publicly that resumes are held for a year and then must be resubmitted. Mrs. Mahoney

asked if there are situations where SchoolSpring postings are extended beyond three months. Bus drivers and bus monitors are almost constantly posted because of the need. Mrs. Mahoney said that other school systems allow for online submission of applications and resumes, which would save staff time over the current paper application submission.

Mr. DeAmicis made a motion to refer this issue to Policy Subcommittee. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Lebo and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

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Ms. Isola made a motion to defer the Special Education Director appointment to follow the Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubley and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

New Business
Special Education
Director Appointment
(Deferred)

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Upcoming meetings were announced: the last Regular Meeting of the school year on June 15, 2016 at the Coddington Building, both at 7:00 pm; the FY2017 Budget Public Hearing on Wednesday, June 1, 2016 at 6:00 pm; and Special Education Subcommittee on Monday, May 23, 2016 at 6:00 pm.

Communications

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Mr. Bregoli noted that all Subcommittee meeting minutes are posted online at www.quincypublicschools.com.

Reports of
Subcommittees

Mrs. Lebo waived reviewing the Budget & Finance Subcommittee meeting minutes from May 11, 2016 and May 17, 2016 as this information had been reviewed during New Business. Mrs. Lebo announced that the May 25, 2016 Budget & Finance Subcommittee will be cancelled.

Budget & Finance
Subcommittee

As there were no corrections to the meeting minutes for the May 11, 2016 and May 17, 2016 Budget & Finance Subcommittee, the minutes were approved as presented.

Subcommittee Meeting
Minutes Approved

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Ms. Isola made a motion for School Committee to go to Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations and appointment of the Special Education Director at 9:30 p.m. Mr. DeAmicis seconded the motion and on a roll call vote, the ayes have it, 6-0. Mayor Koch was absent. Mr. Bregoli noted that School Committee would be reconvening after Executive Session.

Executive Session

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School Committee returned to regular session at 9:45 pm.

Mrs. Lebo made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Quincy School Committee and the Quincy Public Schools Custodial Unit. Mr. DeAmicis seconded the motion and on a roll call vote, the ayes have it, 6-0. Mayor Koch was absent.

MOA with QPS
Custodial Unit (Vote)

Ms. Isola reviewed the actions of the Interview Committee that met on Monday, May 16. Ms. Isola made a motion to appoint Mrs. Erin Perkins as Special Education Director. Mr. DeAmicis seconded the motion and on a roll call vote, the ayes have it 6-0. Mayor Koch was absent.

Special Education
Director Appointment
(Vote)

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Ms. Isola made a motion to adjourn for the evening at 9:50 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. DeAmicis and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Adjournment