

Quincy, MASSACHUSETTS – October 19, 2016

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, October 19, 2016 at the Coddington Building. The Superintendent called the roll and present were Mr. James DeAmicis, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mayor Thomas Koch, 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; Ms. Sarah Anderson, Ms. Roberta DiTullio, Mr. Michael Draicchio, Mr. James Mullaney, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Erin Perkins, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla; Quincy Education Association President Allison Cox; North Quincy High School Student Representative Nicole Flora; Quincy High School Student Representative Owen Doherty; Citywide Parent Council Co-President Scott Alessandro; and QPAC Board members Debby Nadbstedt and Cassandra Beck.

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There was a moment of silence for Susan Lahive Columbus, North Quincy High School graduate and Quincy Public Schools bus driver for over 30 years.

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Mayor Koch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Isola, to approve the Regular Meeting minutes for October 5, 2016. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Regular Meeting Minutes Approved 10.5.16

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Ed Grogan, spoke about diversity and respect, noting the national conversation on school mascots, requested that School Committee look at both sides of the North Quincy High School mascot issue and be more transparent about the effect on students.

Open Forum

Scott Alessandro spoke on behalf of the positive benefits of the diversity & respect initiative presented at the last meeting. Spoke in favor of discussing the appropriateness of the North Quincy High School mascot image and name.

Ms. Cassandra Beck spoke about traffic flow issues at Snug Harbor Community School, would like to meet and work through the issue.

Ms. Sherry Noble asked to be heard at Open Forum; Mr. Bregoli objected on the grounds that Ms. Noble is not a Quincy resident.

Ms. Isola made a motion to allow Ms. Noble to speak at Open Forum. The motion was seconded by Mr. DeAmicis. On a roll call vote, the ayes have it 5-2, Mayor Koch and Mr. Bregoli voted NO.

Ms. Noble requested a dialogue about the North Quincy High School mascot; as a Weymouth resident, she is concerned about visiting students being exposed to the image.

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Dr. DeCristofaro opened the Superintendent's Report by recognizing State Representative Bruce Ayers for his support of Quincy Public Schools through the Read to Ride program. Representative Ayers has long been a Quincy School~Community Partner, presenting students at the elementary level new bikes in recognition of summer reading accomplishments. Representative Ayers said that he enjoys the opportunity to give students positive recognition and has noticed the effect of modeling the benefits of reading for younger students. Mayor Koch thanked Representative Ayers and the entire Quincy delegation for their support of Quincy Public Schools through Chapter 70 funding and support of the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Superintendent's
Report

The Professional Educator Status Reception was held last week and over 40 Quincy Public Schools staff members achieved this status. On November 3, 90 recipients of Educator Mini-Grants will be recognized at a reception at the Neighborhood Club.

Dr. DeCristofaro reminded School Committee that there will be no school on Election Day, November 8 and that school will also be closed on Friday, November 11 in observation of Veterans Day.

On November 19 at noon, the former Teel Field will be dedicated in memory of the Creedon Family. Mayor Koch noted that there will be other dedications within the field and that invitations will be forthcoming.

Grade 8 Open House events are being held at both high schools: Quincy High School on October 25 and North Quincy High School on October 27. The High School College Fair was held on October 13 at Quincy High School, with over 80 colleges and universities represented. Thanks to both guidance departments, the Quincy High School culinary department and the high school principals, assistant principals, and deans for organizing this event.

Once again, over 700 Grade 3 students will receive dictionaries courtesy of a donation from the Quincy Lodge of Elks.

On Wednesday, October 19 Nobel Laureate Dr. Sheldon Glashow, 1979 Laureate in Physics, will speak to 100 invited students from both high schools. There will be a second visit from a different Nobel Laureate in the winter before the Science Fair. Thanks to Eric Mason from the Mayor’s Office and Dr. Ed Shapiro of the Nobel Laureates School Visits program.

Parent Academy events are underway; this week is the Dual Enrollment nights at both high schools: North Quincy High School on October 18 and Quincy High School on October 20.

Sterling Middle School’s annual Veterans Day assembly will be held on Thursday, November 10 at 1:00 pm in the DePaulo Auditorium.

In response to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s request for a decision about MCAS testing for Grades 4 and 8, Quincy Public Schools has opted for computer-based testing.

Water analysis at all schools is underway. Final results for all schools will be posted as soon as they are available, along with any action items to be addressed.

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Superintendent DeCristofaro presented his Summative Review/Reflection on goals approved in December 2014 for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. Dr. DeCristofaro said these goals were focused on two standards: Instructional Leadership and Family & Community Engagement, but all overlap with the other two standards of Management & Operation and Professional Culture.

New Business

Superintendent’s Summative Self-Evaluation

Superintendent’s Goal 1: Quincy Public Schools Administrative Evaluation.

Superintendent’s Leadership and Principal Team members follow the same cycle of Self-Evaluation, Goal Setting, Self-Evaluation, and Summative Evaluations. For professional staff and Superintendent’s Leadership Team members, the cycle follows the school year, from September to June. For Principals, since data is available in August, their Summative Evaluations follow in October.

Superintendent’s Goal 2: Improvement of Performance, Effectiveness, and Learning.

This goal focused on raising the Average Percent Correct by 1% for all tested grades for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science.

For ELA, All Students, the goal was met for Grades 3, 4, 6, and 7. For Students with Disabilities, the goal was met for Grades 3, 4, 6, and 7; for English Language

Learners, the goal was met for Grades 3, 6, 7, and 8; for Economically Disadvantaged, the goal was met for Grades 3, 4, 6, and 7.

For Mathematics, the goal was met for All Students in Grades 4, 5, 6, and 8. For Students with Disabilities, the goal was met for Grades 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10; for English Language Learners, the goal was met for Grades, 4, 6, and 8. There was a significant drop for Grade 7, which will be closely analyzed and targeted instruction as needed. For Economically Disadvantaged Students, the goal was met for Grades 4, 5, 6, and 8.

For Science, the goal was met for All Students in Grade 10; for Students with Disabilities, in Grade 5; for English Language Learners, in Grades 8 and 10; and Economically Disadvantaged, in Grade 5.

DESE Accountability level analysis showed the change since 2010, when there were seven Level 3 schools to 2016, there are two Level 3 schools in the Quincy Public Schools. The overall school district level is 3.

Superintendent/School Committee Goal 1: Quincy Public Schools District Improvement Plan. Dr. DeCristofaro reviewed the Improvement Cycle for each school year, the District Improvement Plan components: Curriculum & Assessment Plan; School & Program Improvement Plans; Professional Development Plan; Technology Plan; Annual Budget Book; Annual System Progress Report; System Team Organization; and Educator Evaluation.

The structure of Quincy Public Schools is based on distributive and contributory leadership and the team structure allows for development of educator leaders. Participation at all levels of the school district ensures that all staff are invested in the initiatives and direction of the school district. For 2014-2015, significant team initiatives were undertaken by the Cabinet Council team to work together on curriculum alignment and differentiation; the Quincy Education Association & Quincy Public Schools Educator Evaluation Work Group; and the Digital Learning team. For 2015-2016, Dr. DeCristofaro highlighted the Personnel Team, the High Needs ELL Team, Advanced Pathways, and the School Committee Connections to the District Improvement Plan.

For Initiatives, Dr. DeCristofaro highlighted that for 2014-2015 initiatives included the District-Determined Measures; Aspen implementation; the Alliance for a Healthier Generation; Special Education Math Reteach; Substance Abuse Awareness; new Sterling Middle School project with the MSBA; Beyond the Bell; Summer Curriculum Development & Professional Development; and MSBA window and door replacement projects. In 2015-2016, significant new initiatives include Aesop online substitute system, piloting Next Generation Assessments, Rapid Reset for Sterling, Bernazzani, and Snug Harbor; Pre-Kindergarten Models of Instruction; Understanding Dyslexia; and a review of School Enrollment & District Boundaries. In the arts, expansion of opportunities for instrumental and

choral music and art continued. School~Community Partnership activities have continued to expand with the Elementary & Middle School Robotics Challenge and the Grade 5 Student Council Leadership Summit.

For Superintendent/School Committee Goal 2: Home-School Connections, in addition to the Parent Academy Events on Internet Safety, Elementary Report Cards, the new SAT, Welcome to Kindergarten, Middle School Organization Skills, and Brain Boosters for Breaks, QPS has the annual Fall Gathering where staff members bring food items for local food banks. Examples of family newsletters and online communication through Facebook and Twitter, the Farm to School family event were shared.

For Superintendent/School Committee Goal 3: Common Core Standards Implementation, Dr. DeCristofaro reviewed the achievements from 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 to work towards this implementation, including (add information from Maddy’s slides)

Next steps are for School Committee to complete their Summative Evaluation by November 2 and for Superintendent DeCristofaro to draft goals for 2016-2017 to share at the November 9 School Committee meeting.

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Senior Curriculum Director Madeline Roy, Special Education Director Erin Perkins, and Coordinator of Middle & High School Special Education Sarah Anderson presented the Curriculum & Assessment Management Team goals for 2016-2017. In September and October, DESE releases an enormous amount of data which is disaggregated and analyzed by principals, directors, and coordinators. Education is in a constant state of change and alignment; since 2010, there are new standards for ELA, Mathematics, and now Science. Our staff has been phenomenal in creating meaningful instruction to meet the needs of all learners in light of all of these changes. In terms of Assessments, there have been more changes with the PARCC field tests in 2014, the option of choosing PARCC or MCAS for 2015 and 2016, and the decision to implement MCAS 2.0 for 2017.

New Business

Curriculum & Assessment Team Goals for 2016-2017

School Committee’s support has been critical, especially in terms of funding for curriculum materials to support the Common Core standard implementation. Over \$1,000,000 has been allocated over three fiscal years. Digital tools that enhance student learning have become more important each year.

Mrs. Perkins and Ms. Roy reviewed the QPS performance on 2016 MCAS Assessments for All Students and High Needs Students for ELA and Mathematics. In looking at the three years, 2014, 2015, and 2016, the data is comparing scores on three different tests and different sets of standards. For all ELA, all grades, gains were made for all students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, but not High Needs Students as a group. For Mathematics, all grades, no

groups met the 1% increase in Average Percent Correct goal. For Science, all students and English Language Learners met the goal.

In terms of proficiency, the percentage of Non-High Needs students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the ELA MCAS stayed constant at 100%; all subgroups dropped. For Mathematics and Grade 10 Biology, both Non-High Needs students and all subgroups showed an increase in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced.

Ms. Anderson shared her work with the Middle School teachers on Math and Science, helping them to make sense of the data and reports available to inform their instruction. Reports by standard show where students have mastered concepts and may need more support. Detail about every test item is available to allow teachers to adjust their pacing, determine grouping by skill and enrichment needs. Sample questions are available to help teachers model solving different types of problems and define academic vocabulary. Crosswalk documents assist with defining for teachers the skills that have moved between grade levels and in defining the standards.

Ms. Roy reviewed next steps as we continue to adjust to more changes ahead. Schools and Programs are creating their Improvement Plans for presentation this month and next. The Curriculum & Assessment Management Team meets monthly; at tomorrow's meeting the focus will be a forum on Next Generation Assessments and the likely look of MCAS 2.0. Preparations for computer-based testing for Grades 4 and 8 students are underway and collaboration on creating a plan for parent engagement through Parent Academies.

Mrs. Lebo thanked the presenters for the comprehensive and informative presentation. Mrs. Lebo said since DESE has not determined how accountability will be computed in 2017, it is difficult to set goals for the CAMT, Superintendent, or individual schools. Mrs. Lebo said there is so much data, appreciates all the work the team does to assist the schools.

Mrs. Mahoney pointed out that by looking at grade level data, these are different students each year. If you follow the grade level cohort year by year, the performance is pretty consistent, not large gains or losses. Mrs. Mahoney said the drilling down into the question types to inform instruction is a good practice. It is difficult for parents to look beyond individual scores and see that the district as a whole is doing well. Mrs. Perkins said a few years ago, there was a Parent Academy on reading test reports, maybe this is worth repeating. Mrs. Mahoney said parents are most often concerned when the student does well in school, but not on MCAS. Mrs. Perkins said this could be a presentation done at Citywide and school-based PTOs.

Mrs. Mahoney asked for clarification that teachers' use of Aspen for curriculum mapping is as a document sharing tool, so parents cannot access this. Ms. Roy said

at the high school level, the course syllabi represent these curriculum maps. Mrs. Mahoney wanted to emphasize that the Accountability levels do not accurately represent the quality of our schools.

Ms. Isola thanked the presenters, the complex data is analyzed and shared in so many ways. While standardized tests are important on one level, there are many ways of assessing students, communication between students, parents, and teachers is so important. This is just one snapshot of student achievement.

Mr. Bregoli thanked the presenters and reiterated that the grade level comparisons are different student cohorts. Would like to see more analysis of student cohorts, feels this is a better way to look at achievement. Ms. Roy said the principals agree and the color coding in the Superintendent’s presentation shows that cohort information. Mr. Bregoli echoed the general frustration with MCAS and the impact on student learning time.

Mrs. Lebo would like to focus on Student Growth Percentile as an indicator of student progress.

Mrs. Mahoney requested a presentation on Curriculum mapping on Aspen, so School Committee can better understand the teachers’ process.

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Ms. Isola made a motion to approve the Out of the Country travel of Quincy High School to the Netherlands and France from April 14 to 23, 2017. The motion was seconded by Mayor Koch and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

New Business
Out of the Country
Travel

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Upcoming meetings were announced: School Committee on November 9, 2016, at 6:30 pm at the Coddington Building. On December 7, 2016, the School Committee meeting will be held at Central Middle School at 6:00 pm.

Communications

Upcoming Subcommittee meetings were announced: Policy on October 24, 2016, following the Teaching & Learning SIP & PIP presentations. Teaching & Learning will hear Middle School SIPs November 2, 2016 and Elementary School SIPs on November 15, 2016 and November 16, 2016. Special Education will meet on October 26, 2016 at 6:00 pm. Budget & Finance Subcommittee will meet on November 14, 2016 at 5:00 pm, followed by the Facilities & Security Subcommittee at 5:30 pm.

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Ms. Isola noted that on October 6, the QCAP Best Chefs competition was held. Once again, Quincy High School Culinary students assisted and were phenomenal.

Additional Business

The students had the opportunity to interact with professional chefs and in previous years, this has led to positions.

Mrs. Mahoney requested the following items be added to upcoming School Committee agendas for referral to Subcommittee: Snug Harbor Traffic for Health, Safety, Transportation; MCAS 2.0 Computer-Based Testing for Teaching & Learning; and North Quincy High School Mascot for Policy.

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Mrs. Hubley made a motion to adjourn for the evening at 8:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Isola and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Adjournment