

Quincy, MASSACHUSETTS – March 15, 2017

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at the Coddington Building. The Superintendent called the roll and present were School Committee Chairman Mayor Thomas Koch, Mr. James DeAmicis, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Emily Lebo, and Mrs. Anne Mahoney.

Regular Meeting

Chairman Presiding

Also present were: Dr. Richard DeCristofaro, Secretary; Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk; Mr. Nicholas Ahearn, Mrs. Diane Babcock, Mrs. Susan Shea Connor, Mr. Richard DeCristofaro, Jr., Mr. Michael Draicchio, Mr. Daniel Gilbert, Ms. Beth Hallett, Mr. James Hennessy, Mrs. Robin Moreira, Mr. James Mullaney, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Diane O’Keeffe, Mr. Kenneth Panaro,, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Erin Perkins, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Mr. Robert Shaw, Mr. Edward Smith, Mr. Steve Sylvia, Mr. Lawrence Taglieri, Mrs. Ruth Witmer; Quincy Education Association President Allison Cox; Citywide Parent Council Co-President Courtney Perdios; and Quincy High School Student Representative Owen Doherty.

Mr. Bregoli was absent.

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There was a moment of silence in memory of Ms. Carol Wong, Kindergarten Paraprofessional at the Squantum Elementary School for over 30 years.

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Ms. Isola made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hubley to approve the Regular Meeting minutes for March 1, 2017. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Regular Meeting  
Minutes Approved  
3.1.2017

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Ms. Lisa Johnson spoke in support of adding an additional staff member at the high school level. A full-time choral/vocal/general music teacher for each school would provide options and aid in retention of students and potentially revive the program as the additional staff position enhanced the Band program.

Open Forum

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Dr. DeCristofaro opened the Superintendent's Report by introducing the High School Science Fair winners. Quincy High School Science Department Chair Edward Smith reviewed that at the 10<sup>th</sup> annual QHS Science Fair, 120 students submitted 105 projects (individual or teams). 14 students qualified for the Regional Science Fair earning one second prize, two third prizes, and two honorable mentions. Four of those students are moving on to the State Competition. Mr. Smith introduced Alexander Ireland (3<sup>rd</sup> prize), Dash Chin and Klei Hamzallari (2<sup>nd</sup> prize) and Rachel Shen (1<sup>st</sup> prize). North Quincy High School Science Department Chair Kenneth Panaro reviewed the 59<sup>th</sup> annual science fair, where 78 students submitted projects. 12 students qualified for the Regional Science Fair, earning three third prizes and two honorable mentions; five students will move on to the state science fair. Mr. Panaro then introduced Tamara Liang (1<sup>st</sup> prize), Grace Kelliher (2<sup>nd</sup> prize), and Luke Molloy (3<sup>rd</sup> prize).

Dr. DeCristofaro announced that the Middle School Citywide Swimming Championship will be held on Saturday, April 1 at 9:00 am. Over 100 swimmers from all five middle schools will compete.

At the recent Student Council Leadership summit, over 80 Grade 5 students participated in activities with the high school class officers and the YMCA. The Credit for Life Fair is scheduled for March 23; over 100 high school seniors will be invited to participate.

The HYPER Robotics team, sponsored by BlueFin Robotics, competed in Worcester, 20 students qualified for the semi-finals. Thanks to Robotics Advisor Michael Gendron. The Elementary & Middle School Robotics Challenge will be held on May 20 at Quincy High School.

High School Course Selection Night was held at North Quincy High School on Monday, March 13; Quincy High School was rescheduled to Monday, March 20 due to snow.

The MSBA Accelerated Repair Program projects appropriation for new boilers at Atherton Hough, Beechwood Knoll, Merrymount, and Wollaston Elementary Schools was approved by City Council at their meeting on March 6. At the April 11 Facilities & Security Subcommittee meeting, the Summer 2017 projects to replace the windows, doors, and roof at Beechwood Knoll will be reviewed.

Upcoming Quincy Public Schools events includes a visit to Boston University for Physics students from both high schools on March 30 as part of the Nobel Laureates program. A Choral Music Camp for Grades 3-5 will be held during the April vacation week. Parent Academy, Learning to Read 2 will be March 23 at 6:30 pm at Central Middle School. Quincy High School Drama will present *Hello, Dolly!* March 17-19.

Dr. DeCristofaro recognized Quincy High School Student Representative to School Committee Owen Doherty for earning the rank of Eagle Scout.

Dr. DeCristofaro concluded his report by noting that the newsletters for Quincy High School and Food Services were shared with the School Committee.

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As there was no Old Business on the agenda, School Committee moved on to the next item on the agenda.

Old Business

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Dr. DeCristofaro introduced a review of the Reset Renewal (Bernazzani, Snug Harbor, Sterling), Collaborative Connections (Beechwood Knoll, Broad Meadows, Clifford Marshall, Lincoln Hancock), and Principal’s Path (Squantum, Wollaston, Central) Initiatives. These initiatives are based on the principles of distributive and relational leadership, participatory and contributory decision-making, building capacity by nurturing learners and developing leaders.

New Business

Reset Renewal, Collaborative Connections & Principals’ Path Initiatives

Rapid Reset began in December 2015 with Bernazzani, Snug Harbor, and Sterling and all three demonstrated gains on the Spring 2016 MCAS Assessments, with Snug Harbor moving up a level. In September 2016, Collaborative Connections was initiated with Beechwood Knoll, Broad Meadows, Lincoln Hancock, and Clifford Marshall. Principal’s Path began in January for Squantum, Wollaston, and Central. The initiative will continue in the next school year with the remaining elementary, middle, and high schools beginning their process.

Key elements of the initiative include an initial design team, where a voluntary group of school staff decide on areas of focus. Vertical and grade-level team meetings and integrated learning team meetings focus on student work and link the entire team of specialists. Site-based professional development support the areas of curriculum focus. Academic after-school offerings and family engagement events complete the outreach of the initiative into the community.

Senior Director of Curriculum Madeline Roy reviewed how the alignment of Goals and Action Steps begins with the District Improvement Plan Curriculum Goals, which are based upon the analysis of school data and the creation of site-based goals and aligned action steps. Special Education Director Erin Perkins reviewed the three Assessment Days: The school year begins with Assessment Day 1, where school data is reviewed and analyzed to look for root causes of students’ learning difficulties. On Assessment Day 2, student work and benchmark assessments are analyzed. Action steps are reviewed and reset based on current data. On Assessment Day 3, site-based teams review and reflect on goals and action steps and begin planning for the next school year.

Clifford Marshall Principal Nicholas Ahearn reviewed that the Collaborative Connections Design team has 19 staff members, representing all grade levels, English Learners, Guidance, and administrators. Literacy Night was hosted by Clifford Marshall Literacy staff, one book for all levels with companion texts, cross-curriculum connections and attended by over 250 students and family members. Beechwood Knoll Principal Diane O’Keeffe shared how grade level and vertical teams are re-assessing their own practices and the instruction provided to students, developing a more rigorous and personalized curriculum. Lincoln Hancock Principal Ruth Witmer spoke of how vertical teams for ELA and Mathematics have long existed, but have been re-energized under Collaborative Connections. Teams have been able to move forward on independent reinforcement and common assessments. Working in smaller groups allows for honing in on topics particular to grade levels. Family engagement will feature some new events, including parent mini-lessons, short topical meetings before general PTO meetings. Broad Meadows Middle School Principal Dan Gilbert reviewed how Collaborative Connections has put structure in place to focus on student learning. The Design team looked for Professional Development to support differentiation and every student’s ability to learn; Building capacity to quantify and qualify where each student is on the continuum so that instruction can be personalized. The MAP Assessment tool was purchased for Broad Meadows, depth of data allowed for interventions far beyond previous years.

Central Middle School Principal Rick DeCristofaro reviewed how opportunities for curriculum sharing are part of the Principal’s Path. In Vertical team meetings, student data is reviewed, alignment for MCAS 2.0, parent resource guide for MCAS were created. Beyond the Bell, RaMCAS program was created, for all grades in the curriculum areas of ELA, Mathematics, and Science. Additional collaboration between staff members translates to additional benefit for students. Quantum Elementary School Principal Steve Sylvia shared that the Principal’s Path has been an opportunity to connect with staff on a different level, and to formalize and focus for grade level and vertical teams. The initiative strengthens the academic culture of the school, raises awareness of the activity going on in different grade levels or curriculum areas, and facilitates a connection between the system and site-based professional development. Integrated Learning Teams generally meet three-times annually; mini-ILTs were conducted during the site-based grade level team meetings so that interventions could be adjusted or added as needed at the mid-term point. Wollaston Elementary School Principal Jim Hennessy reviewed how Design Team meetings focused on grade and vertical teams, creating an academic calendar, an after-school family event tied to Read Across America, and after-school programs that meet student needs and interests. Vertical team meetings focused on strengths and weaknesses and sharing resources, very good conversations. For Grades 3-5 Science, work done on analyzing the Next Generation Science Standards. The ELA team created a common writing rubric and focused on consistency among grade-level teams.

Ms. Roy reviewed that Communication is the one of the keys to sustaining the initiative, the principal’s weekly newsletters to staff share reminders and areas of focus with curriculum; family newsletters are focused on topics; and events and lessons are shared through photos.

Dr. DeCristofaro summarized that this is an ongoing initiative, the school year will conclude with assessment of the Design Teams’ work at each school. In the fall, all sites will begin again and additional schools will begin the process. The hundreds of staff members put the words into action and are valued for their input in how we can continue to improve at the school and system level.

Mrs. Mahoney thanked all the presenters, many schools represented and each highlighted the unique challenges for their site. It is impressive to see the variation embedded in this initiative, but focus on student achievement really comes through. Mrs. Mahoney asked about the MAP tool being used at Broad Meadows, it is being piloted at the middle school level at Broad Meadows. Mrs. Mahoney said that managing the staff, students, and parent expectations is a big job, passion is evident from all principals.

Ms. Isola said that in 2015, conversations began about concerning performance data. This was a difficult conversation to have, but as is emblematic for Quincy Public Schools, the creativity of the Superintendent, Principals, and Leadership Team found answers. The principals’ enthusiasm for the initiative and the staff’s embrace of change is wonderful to see. Ms. Isola mentioned a recent *New York Times* article about the importance of principals in schools, agrees they don’t often get enough accolades for individual student achievement.

Mrs. Lebo said presentation was amazing and would like to highlight that this would never happen if there wasn’t trust. School staff trust the Principals that this is based on the best of intentions; Principals and Leadership Team trust the Superintendent in the same way. Mrs. Lebo is very interested in the MAP Assessment at Broad Meadows pilot and how will this data inform student success.

Mayor Koch echoed his appreciation of the great leaders in the Quincy Public Schools. Our teachers always go the extra mile, so proud of the school system, putting it on the line every day for the benefit of our students.

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Ms. Isola made a motion to review the Choral Music Program, K-12 Curriculum in the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

New Business

Choral Music Program Curriculum Review to Teaching & Learning Subcommittee

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Mrs. Hubley made a motion to approve the Out of State Travel of Bernazzani Elementary School Grade 5 to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, New Hampshire on June 15, 2017. The motion was seconded by Mr. DeAmicis and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

New Business  
Out of State Travel  
(One Day)

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There was no Additional Business.

Additional Business

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Upcoming meetings were announced: School Committee on April 12, 2017 at the Coddington Building at 6:30 pm.

Communications

Upcoming Subcommittee meetings were announced: Special Education will meet on March 22, 2017 at 6:00 pm. Teaching & Learning will meet on April 3, 2017 at 5:00 pm. The Quarterly Budget & Finance Subcommittee will meet on April 11, 2017 at 5:00 pm, followed by Facilities & Security.

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Mr. Bregoli noted that all School Committee and Subcommittee meeting minutes are posted online at [www.quincypublicschools.com](http://www.quincypublicschools.com).

Reports of  
Subcommittees

Ms. Isola reported on the March 6, 2017 Teaching & Learning Subcommittee meeting, which featured presentations on Guided Math and Close Reading, an update on the new Kindergarten Report Card, and a review of the Homework Policy for vacation weeks.

Teaching & Learning

As there were no corrections, the minutes for the March 6, 2017 Teaching & Learning Subcommittee meeting, the minutes were approved as presented.

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There was no Executive Session.

Executive Session

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Ms. Isola made a motion to adjourn for the evening at 8:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubley and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Adjournment