

Quincy, MASSACHUSETTS – June 14, 2017

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, June 14, 2017 at the Coddington Building at 6:30 p.m. 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, 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. Michael Draicchio, Mr. Paul Franz, Ms. Beth Hallett, Mr. Paul Hines, 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; and Citywide Parents Council Co-President Courtney Perdios.

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There was a moment of silence in memory of Jerry Gaudiano, Quincy Public Schools bus mechanic for 12 years and Roseann Ford, paraprofessional at Parker and GOALS for 32 years.

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Ms. Isola made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hubley to approve the Regular Meeting minutes for May 17, 2017. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Regular Meeting
Minutes Approved
5.17.2017

Mrs. Hubley made a motion, seconded by Mr. DeAmicis to approve the Executive Session minutes for May 17, 2017. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Executive Session
Minutes Approved
5.17.2017

Ms. Isola made a motion, seconded by Mr. DeAmicis to approve the FY2018 Budget Public Hearing minutes for May 31, 2017. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Budget Public Hearing
Minutes Approved
5.31.2017

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Mr. Ed Grogran, spoke in favor of dropping the word “Red” from the North Quincy High School Red Raiders and alter the way the mascot is dressed. Mr. Grogran asked School Committee to consider working with Visions Inc. on mascot issue.

Open Forum

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Dr. DeCristofaro opened the Superintendent's Report with the Inspire Quincy video, featuring interviews with Mentor program participants. This year's Mentor program consisted of 44 mentor teachers and proteges. Dr. DeCristofaro thanked Principal James Hennessy and Senior Curriculum Director Madeline Roy for their direction of the Mentor Team and noted the annual support of the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE), which has donated \$10,000 per year for the last five years to support the mentoring program.

Superintendent's
Report

The High School Commencements were held on Monday, June 12 and Tuesday, June 13; over 660 students were recognized and will go on to two- and four-year colleges, post-graduate training, the military, and the world of work. Thanks to the many city departments who collaborate on these celebrations: Public Buildings, Parks, Public Works, and Quincy Police Department.

Dr. DeCristofaro announced that a memorial bench will be placed at Central Middle School in memory of Emily Zarnoch on Monday, June 19.

At the recent Middle & High School Choral Festival, over 300 students participated under the direction of Tim Carew, Louise Becam, Christopher Boel, and Joanna Martell. The Spring Concerts for elementary, middle, and high schools were all wonderful, thanks to Music and Band Instructors throughout Quincy Public Schools.

Recent Quincy School~Community Partnership events included: the Grades 5-8 Robotics competition, the 20th annual Community Service Learning Celebration, the Student Athlete Summit, and the QPS Staff Retirement Luncheon. The last event of the school year is Flag Day celebration at Lincoln Hancock on Friday, June 16 at 9:00 am.

The North Quincy High School LEAP Program Luncheon was held today at the Common Market, and opportunity to thank the many local businesses for providing opportunities for students transitioning to the world of work. Special Olympics was held Friday, June 9, for students from elementary and middle schools Special Education programs, assisted by high school Community Service volunteers.

Recent Parent Academies included Between a Rock & a Hard Place with speaker Jessica Minihan, over 60 parents learning about helping students with anxiety and Welcome to Kindergarten where over 120 parents attended, learning about curriculum and daily routines, meet Kindergarten teachers, received transitional resources and activities. Thanks to the members of the Superintendent's Leadership Team for bringing these opportunities to parents.

The Healthy Schools Symposium, was held on June 7, thanks to leadership of Maura Papile and Rita Bailey. All Principals, School Nurses, Physical Education Teachers, Middle School Health Teachers, High School Health Interventionists, Cafeteria Managers met together to review and assess the Wellness initiatives for 2016-2017. A speaker presented on the Community Impact on the Legalization of Marijuana, schools shared highlights from their healthy initiatives.

On June 15, 2017, 2018 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Cara Pekarcik will be honored by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at the State House, along with Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching of Mathematics & Science for Merrymount Elementary School teacher Lori Hammerstrom, a QPS veteran of almost 30 years.

Summer Professional Development Opportunities for staff and Summer Reading lists for students were shared with School Committee.

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Mrs. Lebo made a motion to accept FY2018 Quincy Public School budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubley and on a roll call vote, the ayes have 7-0.

Old Business

FY2018 Quincy Public Schools Budget (Vote)

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Commissioner of Public Buildings Paul Hines reported on progress towards the repair and replacement of fixtures affected by last fall's testing for lead and copper in drinking water citywide. As of this date, Quincy Public Schools is in full compliance with federal regulations, now working towards goal of 5 ppb for all drinking fountains. The project is out for bid, Bernazzani and Lincoln Hancock are well underway. Main service valve issues have caused delays at several schools, but those are being replaced as needed.

New Business

Public Buildings Update

Mrs. Mahoney thanked Mr. Hines for leadership on addressing parent concerns on the drinking water and being proactive in providing alternative water sources in schools where bubblers have been taken out of service. She asked for further updates to be provided before the start of school in September.

Dr. DeCristofaro thanked Mr. Hines for his leadership, many projects in motion as he assumed this role in Public Buildings, and has been open to collaboration with principals and the QPS leadership team. Many summer tasks to be completed, MSBA projects and many others, making sure our facilities are in the best possible condition for students and staff.

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Director of Park & Forestry Paul Franz reviewed completed projects over the last year, especially Creedon Field at North Quincy High School. Through collaboration on scheduling, having two turf fields made spring sports possible this year, as delays of 2-4 weeks due to rain affected softball and baseball. Lacrosse was able to stay on schedule and varsity soccer to begin summer practices without waiting for the field to be re-sodded. Youth groups outside the schools also had access to turf fields for lacrosse. Over \$6 million in parks projects just approved through the Mayor's Capital Improvement Plan that will directly affect Quincy Public Schools:

New Business

Park Department Update

- Broad Meadows: 2 new tennis & basketball courts;
- Faxon Field track will have soil amendments, underground electric installation, restriping track, construction of track storage and rest rooms;
- Russell Park, upgrade tennis courts repairs; Bishop Field: upgrade tennis courts. Lights will be installed at both sets of tennis courts.
- Wollaston School: reconstruct basketball court
- Beechwood Knoll: new basketball court will be installed
- Coletta Field: new backstop, fences, lighting improvement
- Cavanaugh Field: repainting basketball court
- Veterans Stadium: turf will be replaced (11 years old)

Park improvements will be funded through the city's hotel/motel tax. The Park Department is continuing to replace playgrounds through Community Preservation funding, 1-2 playgrounds per year, with a goal of completing all playgrounds within three years.

The Quincy Arts Festival will be held September 17-18, with new initiatives to engage student artists through Ms. Hallett and Dr. DeCristofaro, looking for ways to involve younger members of the community.

Mrs. Lebo said that this spring she has visited many parts of the city with grandchildren, sees the many opportunities for students and families. One concern is about weeding being done consistently, wouldn't want to see more added than the staff can manage to maintain.

Mrs. Mahoney said the staff is doing well considering the volume of areas to maintain. Asked if there are community meetings for feedback from parents as they may want to see different features in different parts of the city. Mrs. Mahoney asked about schedule for trimming bushes and grass cutting. Mr. Franz said that seasonal employees will supplement regular staff beginning July 1, grass grows more slowly in the summer, so that is when bushes and trees are pruned.

Mrs. Hubley asked for a list of playgrounds and the ages of the equipment in each.

Dr. DeCristofaro thanked Mr. Franz for the Parks Department responsiveness, collaboration with the principals.

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Director of Business James Mullaney presented the FY2017 QPS Budget Transfers between line items to address deficits in Special Education tuitions and transportation. The final reconciliation also allowed for \$28,000 to be allocated to purchase the MAP assessment for additional grades.

New Business
FY2017 Quincy Public Schools Budget Transfers

Mrs. Lebo made a motion to approve the FY2017 Quincy Public Schools Budget transfers as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubley and on a roll call, the ayes have it 7-0.

Mrs. Mahoney asked for updates on Solar City and electrical cost savings as they become available.

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Senior Curriculum Director Madeline Roy and Special Education Director Erin Perkins presented the final update on the MCAS 2.0 implemented this year. Next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core, transition to online testing, eventually will provide short-term results to allow for assessment of readiness for the next grade or college/career readiness. This year, Grades 4 and 8 participated in Computer-Based Testing. Next year, Grades 5 and 7 will be added and in 2019, all grades will be tested online. New question types were introduced and writing was embedded in all grade levels for ELA. For Mathematics, there were new item types and updated calculator restrictions and reference sheets. All students were allowed to use scratch paper, test sessions were untimed, and test administrators were allowed to assist students struggling with computer-based testing.

New Business
MCAS 2.0 Update

In order to prepare students for the computer-based test taking, students practiced navigation skills, graph skills, math skills, and writing skills. Library Media staff at the elementary and middle school levels worked with students on this, along with classroom teachers. Mrs. Perkins concluded with sharing the MCAS 2.0 Resource Guide posted on the QPS website; this living document will be updated for next year's changes.

Ms. Isola thanked Ms. Roy and Mrs. Perkins for their presentations, the added bonus of hearing directly from the students in the videos shows their self-assurance and confidence from their preparation by our teachers. Adults were anxious for the students, but they view the online test-taking as easier. Mr. DeAmicis thanked the presenters, change is not always easy, this was a state mandate and the work done by the SLT and teachers prepared the students, who are very digital focused. Mr. DeAmicis asked if the implementation of the new

format was handled for students with physical difficulties. Mrs. Perkins said there is dictation software and students also have the option to do the Alternative MCAS (Portfolio).

Mrs. Mahoney said that seeing the videos provides the perspective to the classroom and insight into the students' thoughts. Mrs. Mahoney said that while many of our students are confident, there are anxious test-takers and the pressure is sometimes internal, so it is on the adults to de-emphasize the importance of the results. Mrs. Mahoney asked if the sample tests are prompted and timed and they are tutorial in nature. Mrs. Mahoney asked about test times, Ms. Roy said ELA is split over three days, daily sessions are untimed. Students can go have a lunch break and then go back to testing after lunch. Mrs. Mahoney said that several students mentioned typing essays and would like to see keyboarding taught as early as possible. Ms. Roy said the digital literacy skills have been released by DESE and over the summer, there will be work to analyze the guidelines and develop age-appropriate rollout of necessary skills.

Mrs. Lebo thanked the presenters, the students' confidence very interesting. Mrs. Lebo said that one flaw in the test is the size of the text box, students can only see 8-9 lines at a time, not the whole document. Mrs. Lebo asked how many elementary schools had to have computers imported to supplement the online testing. About half of the schools brought in carts, there was time to practice before the testing window. Mrs. Lebo said that it is a major shift for proctors to be allowed to prompt students to pay attention; in the past, this could invalidate a test.

Mrs. Hubley thanked the presenters, loved hearing from the students. Mrs. Hubley asked about timing, several students mentioned not having covered all the math. Ms. Roy said it is close to impossible to cover the whole grade level of standards in the seven months prior to the testing window. Ms. Roy said the pacing and alignment guides try as much as possible to cover the necessary skills.

Mr. Bregoli asked if students can pre-write or draft. Mrs. Perkins said this is done on scrap paper, teachers worked with students on the idea of creating an outline to assist with writing the response. Mr. Bregoli agreed with Mrs. Lebo, there are flaws in the design, curious to see the MCAS results.

Ms. Isola thanked Mrs. Lebo for bringing up the text box issue, is there a way to express concerns to DESE or is there a forum for expressing concerns. Ms. Isola would like to draft a letter to DESE and express concerns.

Mrs. Lebo asked for expert advice from writing teachers, how does this affect students' ability to write/create. Mrs. Lebo suggested bringing this to the Massachusetts Association of School Committee's (MASC) attention as well. Dr. DeCristofaro suggested the Commissioner is the appropriate recipient of the

letter. Mrs. Lebo said that she doesn't think there is a high level of awareness about this issue in other communities.

Mr. DeAmicis agrees that getting input from a writing specialist, what have they observed with students.

Mrs. Mahoney agreed with involving MASC in this would be helpful. This would need to be addressed over the summer, they set their agenda for the November meeting over the summer.

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Mrs. Hubley made a motion to approve the Overnight Travel of North Quincy High School AFJROTC from September 27 to October 1, 2017. The motion was seconded by Mr. DeAmicis and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

New Business

Overnight Travel

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Mr. Bregoli asked for High School Mid-Terms to be referred to the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee.

Additional Business

Mr. DeAmicis asked for the Student Dress Code to be referred to Policy Subcommittee. As the complete Policy Book is in Subcommittee for review, this request will be incorporated into that item.

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Upcoming meetings were announced: Special Organizational Meeting on Wednesday, September 6, 2017 at 5:00 pm at the Coddington Building. Fall Subcommittee meeting dates will be set at this meeting.

Communications

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

Reports of Subcommittees

Mrs. Mahoney reported on the May 24, 2017 Special Education Subcommittee, where the North Quincy High School LEAP program update was presented, along with Special Education Program location changes for 2017-2018.

Special Education

As there were no corrections, the minutes for the May 24, 2017 Special Education Subcommittee meeting, the minutes were approved as presented.

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Athletics

Mayor Koch reported on the May 30, 2017 Athletics Subcommittee, where details about participation rates for high school athletics were shared, along with middle school athletic opportunities. Mayor Koch also proposed expansion of the Athletic Director positions to full time at each high school.

Mrs. Mahoney requested a full School Committee discussion about expanding the Athletic Director positions, thanked the Mayor for offering the funding. Mayor Koch agreed that this is a topic for further discussion, but stated that additional funding would be offered for these positions only.

As there were no corrections, the minutes for the May 30, 2017 Athletics Subcommittee meeting, the minutes were approved as presented.

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There was no Executive Session.

Executive Session

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Mayor Koch said that as the school year ends, he would like to extend thanks to the Superintendent for leadership, the Deputy Superintendent for successful negotiations, the Leadership Team and Principals, the teachers, and support staff, all of whom come together to create the learning environment. He also thanked City department heads, we have made so much progress collaborating as a city and have accomplished so much with the support of the City Council and the MSBA.

Adjournment

Mayor Koch made a motion to adjourn for the evening at 8:40 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Isola and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.