

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

### Regular Meeting

May 16, 2017

Called for 6:00 PM in the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of discussing any and all business that may properly come before the Committee.

Members Present: Ms. Bowman (~~ABSENT~~), Ms. Dexter, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Harding (~~ABSENT~~), Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan (ABSENT), and Mayor Simmons

Also present: Student School Committee Members Mari Gashaw and Paul Sullivan

Sheila Keady Rawson, Director, City of Cambridge Personnel Department, for the City Manager

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Mayor Simmons announced that Ms. Bowman is in attendance and currently watching the meeting from the side room. She will be present in the Attles room for the voting. She also added that Ms. Nolan is attending an out of state conference.

On a motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to suspend the Rules to bring forward a late order submitted by Ms. Kelly. The Rules were suspended for the reason stated. Ms. Kelly's late order was brought forward for discussion.

Motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Fantini, that the Superintendent and the School Committee confirm their commitment to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Department's understanding of the critical role the District's C-PAC has in ensuring the success of Special Education and Student Supports.

"In addition to parents participating in the special education process on behalf of their child, they may also participate in their local Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The PAC helps to guide the special education services provided to all eligible students in a school system. In Massachusetts, each school system is required by state law to have a PAC. The purpose of the PAC is to allow parents of students with disabilities the opportunity to talk about common areas of interest and to advise the school committee about the education and well-being of students with disabilities." (Guidance for Special Education Parent Advisory Councils, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/pac/default.html>, downloaded 5/16/2017)

Collaboration between the C-PAC, the Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Student Supports, and the Superintendent is critical for continuous improvement of Special Education and Student Supports.

#### 1. Public Comment (3 minutes):

The following individuals were heard:

Nancy Wes, Rockingham St., spoke in support of motion #17-98 regarding this year's kindergarten lottery in the Chinese Immersion Program; she shared how her family was impacted by a confluence of Committee rules and wanted to raise awareness to the fact that her family will continue to be impacted by these rules as they wait on the waitlist, even with sibling hardship status (statement on file in the School Committee office)

Pamela Blau, Sherman St., Karen Dobak, Allston St., Julie Viens, Loomis St., all spoke as C-PAC officers representing all children who have IEP's and also representing advanced learners; they expressed their concern regarding the process surrounding the search for an Assistant Superintendent of Student Services; they shared their alarm by the prospect that this will stall the ongoing reform and improvement efforts of the OSS and noted that this failed search has the potential to set the district back in terms of legal compliance, quality of services and outcome for the student; they requested that the Superintendent explain to the Committee and the community the process for hiring an Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and provide an explanation for not allowing for adequate transparency and public process; they asked that the district provide a written plan and timeline for recruiting and hiring a qualified Assistant Superintendent for Student Services without delay and should be the district's top priority; they asked that the Superintendent himself represent the School District in all future meetings with the PAC, until a permanent Assistant Superintendent for Student Services has been named (statement on file in the School Committee office)

Mark Gardner, Walden St., parent of 3 children in the CPS, spoke of his history with the special education department in CPS, his experience as co-chair of C-PAC and of the requirements under the Mass General Laws statues as they relate to the establishment of PAC and its functions; he shared his concern regarding the news that the Superintendent rejected the hiring committee's recommendation for Assistant Superintendent of Students Service; he spoke of his frustration with the lack of providing a clear and transparent hiring process and the lack of communication and collaboration with PAC prior to the Superintendent rejecting the hiring committee's recommendation (statement on file in the School Committee office)

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Kelly, it was voted to suspend the Rules to allow Mr. Gardner to speak for an additional minute. The Rules were suspended for the reason stated. Mr. Gardner spoke for an additional minute.

Andrea Koschwanez, Aberdeen Ave., Coordinator of the Parent Advisory Group for Advanced Learning, expressed her concern for the failed process related to the search for an Assistant Superintendent of Student Services; she noted that with Paula Feynman leaving and Dr. Greer soon to leave, there is no one else in the district with any experience serving students with advanced learning needs; she added that gifted experience was not highlighted as a job requirement for this position even though the MTSS framework specifically references students who are academically advanced; they would like to see the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services with deep experience serving the whole child and a dedication to making sure that all children learn to their potential (statement on file in the School Committee office)

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Kelly, it was voted to close public comment.

## **2. Student School Committee Report:**

Mari Gashaw reported that the Kimbrough Scholars returned from New Orleans and she welcomed the Members to attend their presentation on June 1<sup>st</sup>. The spring plays are happening. The Sisters on the Runway show is on May 27<sup>th</sup> at the MIT Walker Building. The CRLS scholarship ceremony is this week.

Paul Sullivan reported that this Saturday is the Senior Prom.

## **3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:**

On a motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the following meetings as presented:

- Special Meeting, April 25, 2017
- Regular Meeting, May 2, 2017

## **4. Reconsiderations: None**

5. **Unfinished Business/Calendar:** None

6. **Awaiting Reports:** None

7. **Superintendent's Agenda:**

7a. **Presentations:** None

7b. **Innovation Agenda:**

7c. **Consent Agenda:**

On a motion by Ms. Kelly seconded by Ms. Dexter, it was voted to move the entire Consent Agenda forward for discussion and adoption. Mr. Fantini removed **item #17-86**. Ms. Dexter removed **item #17-87**. On the following roll call, **items #17-85, and #17-88 through #17-96** were adopted: Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan ABSENT; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

**#17-85, FY16-17 General Fund Budget Statutory Transfers**, that the School Committee approves the following statutory transfers of appropriation within the General Fund Budget for FY2016-2017.

|             | <u>Statutory Coding</u>    | <u>Increase/Decrease</u> |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 51000       | Salaries, Wages & Benefits | (121,458)                |
| 52000/55000 | Other Ordinary Maintenance | 103,989                  |
| 57000       | Travel & Training          | 5,519                    |
| 58000/59000 | Extraordinary Expenditures | 11,950                   |
|             | Total                      | \$ 0                     |

**#17-88, Approval of Revisions to Cambridge Public Schools Family and Medical Leave and Small Necessities Leave Policy**, that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Family and Medical Leave and Small Necessities Leave Policy as detailed in the document (first reading).

**#17-89, Approval of Revisions to Cambridge Public Schools Leaves of Absence Policy**, that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Leaves of Absence Policy as detailed in the document (first reading).

**#17-90, Contract Award**, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Computer Hardware, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Apple Inc., 1 Infinite Loop, Cupertino, CA, for the period May 22, 2017 to June 30, 2018, in the amount of \$350,000.00.

**#17-91, Contract Award**, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Special Education Transportation, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

S.P.&R. Transportation Inc., 1 Gagnon Drive, Dracut, for the period:  
July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 in the amount of \$4,732,847.00; July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 in the amount of \$4,920,167.00; July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 in the amount of \$4,920,167.00. Total contract: \$14,573,181.00.

**#17-92, Contract Award**, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for custodial supplies, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Casey EMI, 8 Panas Rd., Foxborough, for the period July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, in the amount of \$200,000.00.

**#17-93, Contract Award**, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for custodial supplies, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

MD Stetson, 92 York Rd., Randolph, for the period July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, in the amount of \$250,000.00.

**#17-94, Contract Award**, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for three Vertical Machining Centers and one Lathe, funds to be provided from the Grant Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Southwestern Industries Inc., 2615 Homestead Place, Rancho Dominguez, CA, for the period April 27, 2017 to June 30, 2017, in the amount of \$150,118.80.

**#17-95, Contract Award**, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Computer Software, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

PeopleAdmin, Inc., 805 Las Cimas Parkway, Austin, TX, for the period:  
May 4, 2017 to August 31, 2017 in the amount of \$27,102.19; September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018 in the amount of \$22,058.40; September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019 in the amount of \$22,940.74. Total contract: \$72,101.33.

**#17-96, Approval of Gifts to Cambridge Public Schools**, that the School Committee accept and approve the following gifts and receipts as described.

1. \$1,500.00 to the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School from Health Resources in Action, Inc. in recognition of student participation in surveys. Funds will be used for the general support of the school's health education program.
2. \$1,500.00 to the Kennedy-Longfellow School made from the Ed Walsh Foundation through its Smile-On grant program. Funds will be used for an end of year field trip for grades 3-5.
3. \$221.32 to the Kennedy Longfellow School made from Recycle That, LLC, in return for items collected in the school's clothing/book collection box. Funds will be used for the general support of the school.
4. \$122.70 to the Morse School made from Box Tops for education in return for box tops collected on behalf of the school. Funds will be used for the general support of the school.
5. In-Kind donations to the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School's Photography Department from individual donors of a Nikon FM3 camera and accessories, a Mamiya Flex camera, a Kodak Carousel slide projector, a Nikon Camera, a Nikkormat Camera, a tripod, and other assorted accessories.

## 8. Non-Consent Agenda:

**#17-86, Approval of Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Cambridge School Committee and the Cambridge Education Association Units A & B for a one-year collective bargaining agreement for the period of September 1, 2016 through August 31, 2017 and for a three-year collective bargaining agreement for the period of September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2020**, that the School Committee ratify the Tentative Agreement between the Cambridge School

Committee and the Cambridge Education Association Units A & B for a one-year collective bargaining agreement for the period of September 1, 2016 through August 31, 2017 and for a three-year collective bargaining agreement for the period of September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2020. This tentative agreement has been ratified by the Cambridge Education Association Units A & B. On the following roll call, **item #17-86** was adopted: Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan ABSENT; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA; Ms. Keady Rawson, Director, City of Cambridge Personnel Department, for the City Manager YEA.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Kelly, it was voted to suspend the Rules for the purpose of reconsideration of the foregoing vote. The Rules having been suspended for the purpose stated, a motion to reconsider the foregoing vote, hoping the same would not prevail, failed of adoption. The vote on **item #17-86** is final.

**#17-87, Approval of Revisions to Cambridge Public Schools Wellness Policy**, that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Wellness Policy as detailed in the document (first reading). Ms. Dexter inquired about recess being with held for punishment and also asked about trained staff being on the playground during recess. On the following roll call, **item #17-87** was adopted and referred to a second reading: Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan ABSENT; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#### **9. School Committee Agenda (Policy Matters/Notifications/Requests for Information):**

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Bowman, it was voted to move the entire School Committee Agenda forward for discussion and adoption. Mr. Fantini removed **item #17-97**. Ms. Kelly removed item **#17-98**.

**#17-97, Motion by Ms. Bowman, Mr. Harding and Ms. Nolan**, that the School Committee requests a plan of action specifying the criteria which will be used to determine whether additional resources are needed to address the challenges identified and addressed with extra resources this year, the Haggerty School current second grade cohort and the PAUS math program. Further that the plan of action be delivered to the School Committee and directly communicated to the affected school communities by June 1, with an update by July 15.

Dr. Salim spoke about the reserved staff positions and tiered support piece in the adopted budget. He shared that the action steps which may be taken may involve student privacy and they would be limited in the range and depth of information they can share related to that. He added that these two schools along with a number of schools have needs that emerge over the school year and as a cabinet they seek to address those needs during the school year. He responded that rather than naming a specific school, he would inform the Committee of the range of types of different issues that come to his office and he would give a clear picture of how those issues and concerns are being handled.

Ms. Dexter indicated her support for this concept. She added that she would like an update on the reserved positions being used by the Superintendent. Mr. Harding indicated that he doesn't think the language in this motion would restrict the assessment and he's not sure he understands the confidentiality piece. Mr. Harding shared that since Ms. Nolan has some strong thoughts on this and she is out of town, he would be willing to calendar this motion. Ms. Bowman added that both pieces of this motion are important and she would be willing to separate these two pieces. Mr. Fantini placed **item #17-97** on the Calendar.

**#17-98, Motion by Ms. Bowman, Mr. Fantini and Ms. Nolan**, that whereas the current controlled choice policy recognizes the importance of family togetherness and prioritizes siblings in the Kindergarten lottery and whereas the only time siblings registered in the January cycle have not been assigned to the requested schools are in the immersion programs, that the policy on the Kindergarten assignments to the immersion programs be referred to the Community Relations subcommittee for discussion and review. Further that the subcommittee is charged with exploring solutions and ensuring public discussion of the issue and a report back to the full Committee by September of 2017.

Ms. Kelly noted that the date of September 2017 needs to be moved back to the June 20<sup>th</sup> or the July summer meeting so that if a solution is arrived at with the affected siblings, they can be notified before school starts. She suggested an amendment changing the date from September 2017 to June 20, 2017. She added that the Committee's discussion around this issue should have a limited scope and the Committee should not get involved in controlled choice overall. That is a very complex issue which should be taken up after the election at which time a thorough review could be done in January with an Ad Hoc Sub-Committee.

Mr. Harding indicated that many issues around controlled choice have been recurring. We need to start work on this comprehensive review soon. He added that because issues are so complex we need to brainstorm on what we will be looking at. He also noted student demographics have changed in our schools since the time of the Controlled Choice inception. Mr. Harding added that there is so much work to do that he doesn't think we can put it off. Ms. Bowman shared that she would prefer to initiate a conversation on this now to start ground work. She also wants to go on record from the School Committee's perspective that they do not wish to separate families. She indicated that this immersion program is becoming very popular and we need to manage to allow equitable opportunity to families who want to have access. Ms. Kelly added that it has been explained to her that this motion will not affect this kindergarten cycle so the date of September 2017 is fine. Mr. Fantini noted that this issue is just about resolving the siblings on the waitlist and feels there could be a quick solution. He would rather resolve the smaller issue and deal with larger picture later. Mr. Harding added that we have to be better looking at these things at a higher level. This is a complex and layered issue. If you fix it for these families, you need to do it expediently the next time for other families. Mr. Harding added that if this fix is easy, it should be done by the administration. Ms. Dexter noted that this isn't just about one family; there are issues re internal transfers and that the Committee should take a look at this. She agrees with Ms. Bowman and Mr. Harding not to put this off.

Mr. Fantini offered a substitute motion to **item #17-98**, seconded by Mr. Harding, that the matter be referred to the Superintendent with the goal of resolving the immediate issue of having 3 siblings on the wait list and to bring back a recommendation to resolve that issue.

Mr. Fantini in the Chair (6:50 PM)

Mr. Harding asked if Mr. Maloney, COO, could explain any unintended consequences regarding this motion. Mr. Maloney shared that this is a complicated matter and that 2 years ago they brought this issue before the King School Council, both Ni Hao and Mandarin immersion side and before Principal Yung. They raised the possibility of this and there was no consensus at the time at the school to change the rules or to move a recommendation to the School Committee. This year we have 3 sibling families impacted by this. There are others to be heard. By beginning the discussion on this with this motion we would have taken the first step. The longer term view is separate. Under the existing rules there are limitations. We are at 33 for that class, which is 8 over the limit for first grade; the wait list for Ni Hao is larger than the wait list for Mandarin. He shared that he thinks Ms. Nolan's motion to get a discussion started by the Community Relations Sub-Committee is the way to go. He also noted that the Controlled Choice Policy calls for an annual review which they have had. He recommends adopting **item #17-98** as is.

Mr. Harding added that if we do this for these families, it becomes the precedent then it becomes uncontrolled choice. Mr. Maloney stated that you never want to change the rules in midstream and that the immediate issue would be very difficult to solve.

Mr. Fantini asked for and received unanimous consent to withdraw his substitute motion of **item #17-98**. On a voice vote, **item #17-98** was adopted.

#### **10. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolence):**

The following motions were adopted by voice vote:

**Motion by Mayor Simmons**, seconded by Mr. Harding, that the School Committee goes on record in expressing its deep condolences to Jim Maloney for the loss of his father, James P. Maloney, Sr.

**Motion by Mr. Harding**, seconded by Ms. Dexter, that the School Committee goes on record in extending its appreciation and congratulations to CRLS teachers Brenda Divilbliss and Mila Thigpen for leading the Modern Dance Company in an amazing performance last weekend.

**Motion by Ms. Dexter**, seconded by Ms. Bowman, that the School Committee congratulates Cambridge Public Schools music teacher Andrea Gaudette for again having her compositions performed in the annual Cambridge Science Festival. One of her songs, "There's a Certain Flash of Light," explains the physics of lighting while also capturing, through words and music, the dramatic experience of lightning storms. The other, "Water March," describes the destructive effects of climate change on coastal areas, and the importance of water to human life.

Ms. Gaudette is a wonderful example of a performing artist who is deeply interested in the sciences and brings art and science together through music. The students of the Cambridge Public Schools are fortunate to have a teacher who is such a talented composer and lyricist.

#### **11. Announcements:**

Mr. Harding thanked Ms. Nolan and Mr. Fantini for being the School Committee representatives in negotiating a successful Cambridge Education Association Unit A & B contract. He also thanked the administration for their hard work on these contract negotiations.

Ms. Dexter thanked Superintendent Salim, Assistant Superintendent Anda Adams, and Principals Jen Ford and Pat Beggy, and World Language Coordinator James Kelleher for their work in putting together the World Language pilot program for 2017/18.

Ms. Dexter thanked Mr. Fantini for the support he gives to the RSTA students.

Ms. Dexter thanked Mr. Harding for the comments he gave at the Cambridge Arts Center anniversary party.

Ms. Kelly announced that Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 pm there will be a rally for public education at the Boston Common. The Cambridge meeting spot is the Beacon and Charles Street Starbucks.

#### **12. Late Orders:**

On a voice vote, the following late motion was adopted:

**Motion by Ms. Kelly**, seconded by Mr. Fantini, that the Superintendent and the School Committee confirm their commitment to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Department's understanding of the critical role the District's C-PAC has in ensuring the success of Special Education and Student Supports.

"In addition to parents participating in the special education process on behalf of their child, they may also participate in their local Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The PAC helps to guide the special education services provided to all eligible students in a school system. In Massachusetts, each school system is required by state law to have a PAC. The purpose of the PAC is to allow parents of students with disabilities the opportunity to talk about common areas of interest and to advise the school committee about the education and well-being of students with disabilities." (Guidance for Special Education Parent Advisory Councils, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/pac/default.html>, downloaded 5/16/2017)

Collaboration between the C-PAC, the Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Student Supports, and the Superintendent is critical for continuous improvement of Special Education and Student Supports.

Ms. Dexter submitted the following late motion. No action was taken on this motion. It will be placed on Agenda for the next Regular Meeting on June 6, 2017.

**Motion by Ms. Dexter**, that whereas the School Committee is interested in sustainable practices, the Committee requests that the Committee's Executive Secretary survey the Committee members to determine how many would forgo paper copies of meeting materials if provided, via loan, a digital device for reading electronic materials sent by email; and whether members believe that the high school student representatives should be issued digital devices to use while on the Committee. The Committee further requests that the Executive Secretary obtain price quotes from the ICTS Department for iPads, PC tablets, and Chromebooks.

**Distributed Back-up Documents/Handouts:**

Statements and letters left at public comment by the following individuals:

- ✓ Nancy Wei
- ✓ Cambridge Parent Advisory Council on Special Education
- ✓ Mark J. Gardner
- ✓ Andrea Koschwanez

**E-mail communications received:**

- ✓ Email from Monica Veigos re please consider mindfulness
- ✓ Email from Joan Epstein re important article on need for our children to be moving
- ✓ Email from Mark Gardner re Superintendent fails to hire new OSS head`

*The communications are on file in the Office of the Executive Secretary to the School Committee and can be viewed.*

On a motion by Ms. Bowman, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adjourn the Regular Meeting (7:05 PM).

Mr. Fantini announced that there will be a Roundtable Meeting on the High School Extension Program after a 5 minute break.

Judith T. Martin  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee