

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

September 29, 2015

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. Cronin, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Harding, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Osborne,
Mayor Maher

Also Present: Student School Committee Members: Griffin Andres and Ben Austin

Mayor Maher in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1. Public Comment:

The following individuals were heard:

- Rosie Jones, Valentine St., innovation agenda, world language offerings as a criteria for selecting the new superintendent
- Brian Burke, Francis Ave., innovation agenda and budget, ask superintendent candidates their experience with immersion
- Heather Hoffman, Hurley St., innovation agenda and budget, keep promise of languages to be taught other than English at every grade level
- Sean McDonnell, Old Dee Rd., Treasurer of Friends of Cambridge Athletics, support of motion #15-236
- Nien-He Hsieh, Ballard Place, criteria for next Superintendent, support for world languages and immersion program
- Beatriz Meza-Valencia, Standish St., dual language, importance of supporting mono-lingual and bilingual families
- Terry Gist, CEA president, re #15-233 contract award for rental of a parking lot, Contract states that adequate parking will be provided at each school; wants the Members to be aware that they were told the new Putnam Ave. Building will not have enough parking spaces for staff

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

2. Student School Committee Report:

Mr. Austin reported on the following:

- ✓ Curriculum Night is October 1st
- ✓ College Fair is October 7th
- ✓ Club Day is tomorrow and Thursday
- ✓ Glocal challenge with Education First will happen in October
- ✓ Freshman took a reading comprehension test today
- ✓ Football team won on Friday night – another home game is this Friday night
- ✓ Student government had a meeting – spoke about dress code and having more conversations with school administration

Mr. Andres talked about a project he is working on which is called Real Talk, a series of workshops with a team of facilitators who go into classes and facilitate conversations on race, class, and gender. They have 23 teachers interested in having workshops this year; last year they had only 7 interested.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

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

- Regular Meeting – September 8, 2015
- Special Meeting - September 16, 2015

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 Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Kelly, it was voted to bring forward items **#15-227** through **#15-234** for discussion and adoption. Ms. Kelly removed **#15-227**. Mr. Harding removed **#15-228** and **#15-231**. Ms. Cronin removed **#15-234**. Ms. Nolan removed **#15-229**. On the following roll call, items **#15-230**, **#15-232** and **#15-233** were adopted: Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mayor Maher YEA

#15-230, Pest Management Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for pest management services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Ecologic Entomology, LLC, 953 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, for the period July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, in the amount of \$44,000.00.

#15-232, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for rental of ice, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Facility Management Corp., 100 Schoosett Street, Bldg 3, Pembroke, for the period November 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, in the amount of \$35,280.00.

#15-233, Contract Award, that the School Committee execute a successor lease with the following vendor for rental of a parking lot, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Chiccarelli Real Estate, P.O. Box 2215, Acton, for the period:
October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016 in the amount of \$21,000.00; October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017 in the amount of \$24,000.00; October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018 in the amount of \$24,500.00; October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019 in the amount of \$25,000.00; October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020 in the amount of \$25,750.00; October 1,

2020 to September 30, 2021 in the amount of \$26,522.50; October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022 in the amount of \$27,318.18; October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023 in the amount of \$28,137.72; October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024 in the amount of \$28,981.85; October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025 in the amount of \$29,851.31. Total contract: \$261,061.56.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#15-227, Approval of Revisions to the Controlled Choice Policy:

1. That effective with the 2016-17 school year, the School Committee restore the +/-10% SES band for assigning students to grades K-8.
2. That effective with the 2016-17 school year, the School Committee restore the calculation of student socio economic status to capacity of a school's grade rather than the actual enrollment of the grade.
3. That effective with the 2016-17 school year Kindergarten Lottery, the School Committee raise the cap on the Kindergarten age students at a school to a number equal to no more than the number of seats in a school's first grade plus two.
4. That effective with the 2016-17 school Kindergarten Lottery, the School Committee restore the 3 year average SES of JK/K enrollment when calculating the SES ratio for Kindergarten Lotteries (first reading).

Ms. Kelly asked for more background on page 2 and number 2: "restore the calculation of student socio economic status to capacity of a school's grade rather than the actual enrollment of the grade". Mr. Maloney responded that more flexibility was needed and it has been difficult to assign new students. He noted that this would make it easier for parents to understand and that it would be easier to adhere to the policy without having to create "work arounds". Ms. Nolan asked about the new definition of economic disadvantaged by the State. Mr. Maloney noted that we are a slightly less low income district with this new criteria. We are still allowed to use the free and reduced lunch measurement. Mr. Harding asked how permanent a move this would be on movement of the band. Mr. Maloney indicated that they would look at this each year to see the trends. Mr. Fantini indicated that Cambridge is still one of the few school systems to keep our schools diverse.

On the following roll call, **#15-227** was adopted: Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mayor Maher YEA

#15-228, Contract Award, that the School Committee execute a successor lease with the following vendor for rental of 159 Thorndike Street, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston, 49 Sixth Street, Cambridge, for the period: November 1, 2015 to October 31, 2016 in the amount of \$162,186.12; November 1, 2016 to October 31, 2017 in the amount of \$167,052.00; November 1, 2017 to October 31 2018 in the amount of \$172,063.56; November 1, 2018 to October 31, 2019 in the amount of \$177,225.48. Total contract: \$678,527.16.

Mr. Harding asked if the lease could be altered if the Cambridge Street building construction project was completed in 3 years. Mr. Maloney noted the construction project will take until September of 2019 and we are not certain if the administrative offices will be housed in the new Cambridge Street Building. This lease is designed to be in sync with that process. Ms. Nolan expressed her wishes that this be the last lease for this building due to the challenging working conditions in that building. If the Cambridge Street Building doesn't work for the administrative offices, she asked the Committee to commit to finding an alternative building for the administrative offices in the next 3 years. Mr. Fantini indicated that the Archdiocese has been fair in the cost of the lease.

On the following roll call, **#15-228** was adopted: Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mayor Maher YEA

#15-229, Day & Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge School Department, that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions as detailed in the lists in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

	# Active Contracts	Amount
Day	15	\$1,813,526.75
Residential	5	\$1,298,978.53
45 Day Program	<u>2</u>	<u>\$154,878.00</u>
Total	22	\$3,267,383.28

Ms. Nolan noted that we are over budget on this. Ms. Spinner, Chief Financial Officer, responded that we are showing a shortfall due to not receiving our final Circuit Breaker allocation and that funding will be coming forward.

On the following roll call, **#15-229** was adopted: Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mayor Maher YEA

#15-231, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Nursing Services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Cambridge Public Health, 119 Windsor Street, Lower Level, Cambridge, for the period of September 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, in the amount of \$68,460.09.

On the following roll call, **#15-231** was adopted: Mr. Harding PRESENT NOT VOTING; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mayor Maher YEA

#15-234, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Educational Services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee, 11 Inman Street, Cambridge, for the period September 22, 2015 to June 30, 2016, in the amount of \$52,000.00.

Ms. Cronin asked about the sex education program which was listed as being developed 25 years ago. Dr. Huizenga indicated that the Health Education Department conducted a curriculum review and the "Know your Body" curriculum was being revised. She will look at the recommendations during the full curriculum review. On the following roll call, **#15-234** was adopted: Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mayor Maher YEA

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

#15-235, Motion by Mayor Maher, whereas the Mayor's Office, in conjunction with School Department Cabinet members and members of the Cambridge School Committee, have identified the achievement and opportunity gap as one of the most pressing issues facing the Cambridge Public School district, I am submitting for consideration the attached document entitled "Bridging Educational Equity and Excellence: A Plan to Raise Academic Achievement and Close Gaps in the Cambridge Public Schools". This document outlines ten clear goals and accompanying strategies to raise academic achievement and make schools more equitable for students and should be used as a platform to discuss the above referenced gap. Additionally, I am recommending that it be included as part of the Leadership Profile Report to be considered in the hiring of a new superintendent. Mayor Maher thanked Ed Byrne, Project

Manager in his office and Maryann MacDonald, Assistant Superintendent, for their work on this document. He also recognized Alanna Mallon, Education Liaison from his office. The Mayor asked Mr. Byrne to address the Committee. Mr. Byrne indicated that he and Ms. MacDonald attended the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) conference last October. After input from the Cabinet, the community and from School Committee discussions, a framework was drafted which outlines ten clear goals and accompanying strategies to raise academic achievement and make schools more equitable for students. Mr. Byrne noted that the next phase could include revisions, additions and the development of an action plan with benchmarks and timelines. The Members thanked Mr. Byrne and Ms. MacDonald for this impressive framework. Discussion followed and it was mentioned that it may be too late for this to be included in the Leadership Profile Report to be considered in hiring a new superintendent. The Mayor amended his motion to add that the Mayor and the Superintendent will schedule a Roundtable Meeting on this issue and use the document entitled "Bridging Educational Equity and Excellence: A Plan to Raise Academic Achievement and Close Gaps in the Cambridge Public Schools" as a guide. On a voice vote, **#15-235, Motion by Mayor Maher** was adopted as amended.

Mayor Maher exited the meeting (7:55 PM).

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

#15-236, Motion by Ms. Nolan and Mr. Fantini, that whereas, recently there have been questions on the district's fundraising policy, especially as it relates to district partners such as FOCA, CSV and other organizations that work to provide resources to students, and whereas the School Committee wants to encourage such activities while being mindful of the need for clarity and limitations on activities so they do not distract from the educational mission, now therefore the School Committee orders that the Governance Sub-Committee work with the administration, and with the MASC and partner organizations on how best to address this concern. Further, that all partners who have done solicitations in the past years without incident be allowed to continue such activities until the policy is clarified. Mr. Harding asked Mr. Maloney, Chief Operating Officer, for clarification on this motion. Mr. Maloney updated the Members on the policy for fundraising and the use of the CPS website. According to the Student Fundraising and Public Solicitation policy, FOCA can fundraise but would be in violation of this policy if the district website is used for fundraising activities and public solicitations. He noted that the only exceptions to this prohibition, subject to the approval by the Superintendent, are school clubs, teams or groups conducting fundraising for a field trip or school-sponsored trip. Members suggested that FOCA be grandfathered in temporarily since they are in the midst of fundraising. Mr. Austin, Student School Committee, asked for clarification on the word "teams" and whether that would include non-athletic teams such as the debate team or Model United Nations team. He is a member of Model UN and they have been trying to receive team classification for fundraising such as a sports team receives. He explained the personal financial burden to participate in a national event in New York City. Mr. Harding noted that this is an important point and needs clarification. On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Cronin, it was voted to delete the last line of the motion "Further, that all partners who have done solicitations in the past years without incident be allowed to continue such activities until the policy is clarified" and to refer the motion to the Governance Sub-Committee to come back with a revised updated policy for the next academic year. Mr. Harding offered a friendly amendment which was accepted by Mr. Fantini and Ms. Nolan, to add "that FOCA be granted an exemption to be allowed to use the CPSD website for the remainder of this academic year".

On a voice vote, **#15-236, Motion by Ms. Nolan and Mr. Fantini, was referred to the Governance Sub-Committee and adopted as amended:** that whereas, recently there have been questions on the district's fundraising policy, especially as it relates to district partners such as FOCA, CSV and other organizations that work to provide resources to students, and whereas the School Committee wants to encourage such activities while being mindful of the need for clarity and limitations on activities so they do not distract from the educational mission, now therefore the School Committee orders that the Governance Sub-Committee work with the administration, and with the MASC and partner organizations on how best to address this concern. That FOCA be granted an exemption to be allowed to use the CPSD website for the remainder of this academic year.

#15-237, Motion by Mr. Harding and Ms. Kelly, Co-Chairs of the Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole), that the School Committee begin deliberations regarding the FY2017 School

Department Budget and further that the School Committee discuss with the Superintendent the Budget Guidelines, the Budget Calendar and any public hearings associated with the FY2017 School Department Budget. Mr. Harding thanked outgoing Budget Co-Chair, Mr. Osborne for his work. He acknowledged Ms. Kelly, incoming Budget Co-Chair, and thanked her for beginning this budget planning process at this early date. Mr. Harding suggested that this year an opportunity be added to the budget calendar for students to speak on their budget priorities. He asked if the Student School Committee Members would be willing to assist in organizing students to come before the Committee to speak on the budget. Ms. Kelly added her desire to hold two public budget hearings for parents, one of which would be at a location other than the Attles meeting room. Mr. Austin will talk to students about the budget process and get back to Mr. Harding. Mr. Austin also asked if there would be an opportunity to have the student voice heard in the selection of the new Superintendent. Ms. Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources, responded that they are looking at ways to have a student forum once the finalists for superintendent are decided and she would be willing to speak to Mr. Andres and Mr. Austin at any time. Mr. Andres noted that students are willing to get involved in the budget process but may not have the greatest understanding of the budget guidelines. On a voice vote, **#15-237** was adopted.

On a voice vote, the following was adopted: **#15-238, Motion by Ms. Nolan**, that the school district administration report on: all current and future plans for playground improvements and renovations on school grounds (in conjunction with City staff); existing conditions at all schools with regards to number of bathrooms and presence of AC in classrooms; and sustainability initiatives and programs; and further that these reports be given to the School Committee, with a presentation to the Building and Grounds Sub-Committee by January of 2016.

On a voice vote, the following Report was accepted as presented: **#15-239**, Report of the Meeting of the September 11, 2015 Ad Hoc Sub-Committee/Task Force on Norms and Goals

**AD HOC Sub-Committee/Task Force
on Norms and Goals**

**September 11, 2015
9:00-11:00 AM**

Called for the purpose of discussing the formation of a set of Norms for the School Committee and School Department.

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Chair; Ms. Kelly, Ms. Cronin

Also Present: Dr. Huizenga, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment; Ms. Likis, Chief Planning Officer; Ms. MacDonald, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education; Ms. Mallon, Education Liaison for the Mayor and Terry Gist, CEA President

Mr. Fantini and Dr. Huizenga Co-Chairs

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM

Mr. Fantini turned the meeting over to Dr Huizenga who explained the meeting would be conducted by going through the agenda and stated they would begin with Ms. Mallon reviewing and defining norms. Dr. Huizenga noted that Ms. Likis would act as master facilitator.

Ms. Mallon mentioned that this Sub-Committee was created from a retreat held last January. The first meeting of the Norms and Goals AD HOC Sub-Committee was held about 6 months ago. This document to be created today will be reviewed annually to help the new Superintendent see that the School Committee is committed to working together with the Cabinet and be open to bringing new ideas to the table. It was agreed that the members of this meeting want short norms.

In order to be clear and exact about norms, Ms. Mallon read a full definition of **NORM**: A principle of right action binding upon the members of a group and serving to guide, control, or regulate proper and acceptable behavior.

Dr. Huizenga explained that everyone would participate by working on a consensogram of the different options taped to the wall and condense them down to between 6-8 options. She explained that a consensogram allows individuals to go around and identify the things that resonate most importantly with them. The members were given different colored stickies to identify the options that were most important to them, neutral, and that they did not like. Ms. Cronin read the options of "How we Govern" and then read the options of "How we Communicate" and "How we Improve." A discussion followed on the following questions, ideas and concerns:

- How we Improve: What is the process for members to check each other on following the rules of norms?
- Develop and adhere to a norm monitoring process. A member asked for examples of how to do this. One suggestion is at the start of the meeting one or two people agree to be norm checkers and at the end of the meeting they share their observations on how good the people behaved during the meeting.
- The norms should be included in writing in every packet for the members at all meetings
- In the past, the operating principles were posted in the meeting room
- Ms. Likis suggested we ask other communities how they monitored their use of norms

Dr. Huizenga suggested that everyone go through the room voting on the options taped to the wall. Everyone cast their vote with interesting results. Next, each member walked around the table and explained what they saw and then moved on to wonderings.

The members moved on to the analysis phase of the agenda which included taking notes on what they saw on the consensograms, i.e. "I saw Option 5 had complete consensus, Option 2 was split consensus (no agreement)."

How we Communicate: It was stated that options 2, 4 & 5 are similar and could be combined. One is about surprises and the other about concerns and response. They were read, but one member of the committee did not agree they could be combined. The members collaborated on what to keep or not keep. Option 6 needed a lot of teamwork for revision resulting in *"The Superintendent recognizes the importance of pro active communication including providing background information and reports pertaining to agenda items and agrees that there will be no surprises. If the Superintendent has questions or concerns, he/she will contact the School Committee Members well in advance of the meeting."* The Superintendent agrees to investigate and provide all School Committee Members responses of issues/problems from parents and school community. The members agreed to keep option 5 (for now).

How we Improve: Again, the members collaborated on rephrasing the language to read *"The School Committee will develop and adhere to a Norm monitoring process."* It was suggested that although it is important, option #1 is not a norm but actually a practice or an operating procedure. The question was asked about what the MASC says about school board inductions, the answer being there is a required 2 hour program for new School Committee Members. It was suggested new members should have mentors help them learn Roberts Rules, it will not become part of the norms, but it should be in the induction. Dr. Huizenga instructed the secretary to make sure it is in the minutes that "it was agreed that Sub-Committee members will have further discussions about inductions." There was a discussion on the second part of option 1 in How we Communicate. It was agreed to include language stating *"We agree Norms is a living document that will be reviewed annually."*

How we Govern: It was agreed to include language stating *"No member should represent his or her individual opinion as an opinion of the whole. The School Committee is an operating body of the whole and no individual Member's action should be interpreted as representing the whole Committee"*. The fact that SC Members only have power at SC Meetings was discussed, which raised some concerns about option 1. It was also stated that we have more power than we think we have. Some members have concerns about being on list/serve. It was brought up that list/serve has been filtered and now the moderator has to make the distinction between political and non political statements.

Ms. Likis, as a master facilitator also suggested: The powers of the School Committee are granted to the Committee of the Whole and not to individual Members. There was enthusiastic agreement.

Brainstorming and working together as group, Option 3 was reworded, (under how we govern) to say *"Members bring their best intentions and an open mind to seek creative solutions to issues."*

Ms. Likis noted that the biggest spreads in votes were options 3 and 7 regarding "respectful tone when being the first speaker" and "agree without being disagreeable." There was a lot of discussion around these two options. Some of the concerns brought up were:

- Respect is a big part of having a conversation
- Tone is tricky
- It is acceptable to be angry as long as everyone continues to be respectful
- Consensus does not mean agreement

The resulting language will state *"The School Committee will strive to reach decisions by consensus and agrees to disagree and remain respectful and professional. The School Committee will focus on issues rather than individuals."*

The next two issues discussed were the vetting of motions and SC Meetings are meetings held in public, they are not public meetings. The Open Meeting law has the public at meetings but the public is not invited to be a part of the meetings. They are having a working meeting not a public meeting.

Option 2 should include a Statement of Intent and be prominent at the opening of the meeting. Language was changed to *"We acknowledge that a School Committee meeting is a working meeting of the School Committee that is held in public, not a public meeting. The below norms will ensure that committee meetings are effective and efficient."*

Next they turned to how motions are vetted. This led to a discussion on the fact that the roles of Sub-Committees have not been defined. This issue was put on hold.

It was brought up that collaboration has not come up at all in these norms. It is something they want the Superintendent to concentrate on.

Option 3 will be changed to say *"deliberating issues collaboratively"* and get rid of being disagreeable.

Wonderings: School Committee will review norms annually. Ms. Cronin suggested an internal retreat among SC Members. We vote them in at the beginning of every year, but we don't discuss them. Ms. Likis suggested an annual self assessment on how you are doing with your norms.

Dr. Huizenga stated, in the spirit of collaboration, we need to work on one joint agenda of School Committee and Superintendent. This may help to decide how to define the operations of sub-committees.

There was not enough time for Identifying Next Steps which is on part 2 of the Agenda.

The next meeting, to be held on Friday, September 25, 2015 at 9:00 AM will be about actions steps and timeline.

What worked and what did not work for this meeting:

- Early preparation was a good tool for efficient use of time
- Cooperation for group writing was well done
- Organization and clarity could improve
- Instead of walking around to paper taped on the walls, provide a scorecard with written statements and room underneath for comments

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM

Dosha Beard
Confidential Secretary

Distributed Documents (on file in the School Committee office)

Agenda
Cambridge School Committee Operating Principles

10. Resolutions: None

11. Announcements:

12. Late Orders:

It was voted to adopt the following:

Motion by Mayor Maher, that the School Committee send a letter of condolence to the family of Cathie Ann Marqusee, long time occupational therapist at the Peabody School.

Motion by Mr. Harding, that the School Committee send a letter of condolence to the family of Mushtaque Mirza.

On a motion by Ms. Cronin, seconded by Mr. Osborne, it was voted to adjourn (8:30 PM).

Judith T. Martin
Executive Secretary to the School Committee