

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

June 2, 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

Mayor Maher in the Chair.

Also present: Student School Committee Members Liz Kubicek and Lucy Sternbach

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

1. Public Comment:

There being no one signed up to speak, on a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Kelly, it was voted to close public comment.

Mayor Maher introduced the City Manager, Richard Rossi, and Deputy City Manager, Lisa Peterson, to give an update on the fire which occurred on May 30th at the 100 Putnam Avenue building which is under construction and which was scheduled to be ready for the opening of school in September for the M.L. King School and Putnam Ave. Upper School. Mr. Rossi informed the Committee that the fire broke out at approximately 1:55 p.m. and was contained to the roof portion of the building. The entire flat roof portion will need to be removed and replaced. There is significant water and smoke damage throughout the building. Their team has been meeting all weekend with the contractor and architects to figure out a plan for recovery. They believe they have a good chance to keep this on schedule for a September 1st opening. This work may now include Sunday work and double-shifts. The contractor is fully insured to cover all losses. The contractor plans to keep a team together to finish the school as if this didn't happen and to bring in a separate team to deal with remediation necessary to repair all the damage caused by the fire. The contractor has been asked to bring in an independent firm to evaluate any toxicity from the smoke and fumes, if any. Mr. Rossi hopes to have a better idea by the end of the week of how much is involved and how long this will take. He noted that this should not disrupt the plans for King Open building. They will have a contingency plan if needed. He indicated that the cause of the fire is still under investigation and the State Fire Marshal has been called in. The Chair, the Members and the Superintendent thanked the City Manager, Deputy City Manager and their team and also Assistant Fire Chief Mahoney and the Cambridge Fire and Police department members who responded to the fire.

2. Student School Committee Report:

Ms. Sternbach and Ms. Kubicek reported the following:

- ✓ This is their last meeting as Student School Committee Members and they will be graduating on Thursday, June 4th.
- ✓ The Boys' Volleyball Team is going on to the next round; the Girls' Track and Field Team had tremendous success in the Girls Division 1 Championships and placed 2nd overall in the Girls All State Meet with Brianna Duncan being the first female student athlete to win 3 events in a Division 1 meet
- ✓ Student government elections will be held soon
- ✓ Nest Fest was very successful

The Chair, on behalf of the entire Committee, thanked Ms. Sternbach and Ms. Kubicek for their service and expressed appreciation for their input and perspective given during their time as student members. He noted how important it is to hear a student's point of view. He presented engraved clocks to Lucy and Liz in appreciation of their hard work and dedication. The Members, the Executive Secretary, the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent individually thanked, praised and congratulated the students and wished them well.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

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

- Roundtable Meeting – May 12, 2015
- Regular Meeting – May 19, 2015

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar:

Mr. Fantini moved, seconded by Mr. Harding to bring forward **#15-98**, Recommendation: Revisions to Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (second reading) C15-131, 5/19/15 (Cronin). Ms. Cronin noted that she had points for consideration she wanted to raise which she has shared with Attorney MacFarlane during the week. She indicated that she feels strongly that we have safe ways to use the internet and personal devices in the schools and outside of school. She noted that there is particular criteria on cyber-bullying which exceeds the generic bullying definition and that the policy is not clear in terms of consequences for violations of the policy. She would like to either embed a more defined cyber-bullying policy within our current Bullying Prevention Plan or have it as a standalone policy. Attorney MacFarlane noted that the current Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan has a definition of cyber-bullying as well as bullying and we also have a Non-Discrimination Policy and an Acceptable Use Policy which address these issues and sexual harassment issues. She indicated that these concepts are addressed in the Students Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Attorney MacFarlane noted that cyber-bullying could be expanded and defined more fully if the will of the Committee. The Committee agreed that they would take a closer look at a separate cyber-bullying policy in the future. On the following roll call, **#15-98** was adopted: Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

6. Awaiting Reports: None

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

7a. Presentations: None

7b. Innovation Agenda:

Ms. Nolan expressed concerns and had questions regarding the accelerated math program and the testing currently going on. She has heard from some parents that the practice of encouraging every

student possible to be on the accelerated math pathway is not being followed. She has heard that the goal is to have 1 class of 25 at the 4 upper schools with Amigos doing a separate class. She wants our goal to be that every school has 50% of their students in the accelerated math pathway. She indicated that some students are feeling discouraged and that this is the opposite of everything we want that is of a school climate with a growth mindset. Dr. Young responded that he agrees with the growth mindset and noted that Dr. Huizenga is not present this evening. He would refer to her and get a response to the Members at the end of the week and would look into Ms. Nolan's concerns.

Ms. Nolan asked when the Committee would finish the discussion begun at the Upper School Roundtable including a review of our goals set three years ago. The Mayor noted that there would be another roundtable to continue this discussion in the early fall. In the meantime, if there were questions that the Members have, they could be sent to Dr. Turk and Dr. Young.

Ms. Kelly indicated that she would like to rethink how roundtables are structured and how we use the time. She noted that PowerPoint presentations don't always address the questions that the Members want answered. Ms. Kelly would like to create a safer place for the people who come before the Committee. She'd be willing to come up with ideas to create a roundtable structure which would permit conversation and talk about the actual challenges and successes.

Ms. Nolan indicated her desire to have reports at least five days before the roundtable meeting so that there would be questions rather than a presentation.

Student School Committee Member, Ms. Sternbach, indicated her feelings that the Members should interact more with the leaders who affect student success. She indicated that teachers are afraid to express their opinions at School Committee meetings. She noted that it is all about getting to know people in a less formal and more interactive way.

On a motion by Mayor Maher, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted that the broader issue of structuring Roundtable Meetings including their productivity and usefulness be referred to the Governance Sub-Committee for review and a recommendation back to the Committee of the Whole.

7c. Consent Agenda:

Ms. Nolan moved, seconded by Ms. Kelly, to bring forward the Superintendent's Agenda for discussion and adoption. On the following roll call, **#15-112** was adopted: Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

#15-112, Grant Awards, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. **Hasty Pudding Theatricals**, for the period June 2, 2015 to June 30, 2016, in the amount of \$12,454.45. Project/Grant SC15775.
Description: These funds will be used to subsidize the purchase of tickets for students of the Cambridge Public Schools to attend field trips to museums, concerts, theater and other arts events.
2. **Massachusetts Cultural Council-STARRS / Rindge Ave, Putnam Ave, Vassal Lane**, for the period November 15, 2014 to May 1, 2015, in the amount of \$11,000.00. Project/Grant SC15894.
Description: This grant supports residency artists at the Rindge Ave, Putnam Ave, and Vassal Lane Upper Schools in collaboration with cultural partner Cambridge Creativity Commons (CCC). During the Rindge Ave residency, CCC worked with all 8th grade science classes to run a two week creativity lab as a final project at the end of their unit of study in electricity, electromagnetics, and gravitational fields. During the Putnam Ave and Vassal Lane residencies, CCC collaborated with science teachers to facilitate a program for all 6th graders to create a stop-motion animation to demonstrate learning in plate tectonics.

8. Non-Consent Agenda: None

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

#15-113, Motion by Mr. Fred Fantini, that the School Committee enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy for collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. On the following roll call, **#15-113** was adopted: Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

#15-114, Report of the Meeting of the May 20, 2015 Building & Grounds and Curriculum and Achievement Joint Sub-Committees was placed on the Calendar by Ms. Nolan.

10. Resolutions: None

11. Announcements: None

12. Late Orders:

It was voted to adopt the following:

Motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by the entire Committee, that the School Committee send a letter of congratulations to the following CRLS Super Seniors 2015:

Rose Chafin-Wakeley
Skyeler Delva
Elorphenon Deneus
Eva Diianni-Miller
Isabel Goldstein
Autumn Harrison
Arjun Joyce
Nisha Kabir
Cam Lindsay
Eleanor McCartney
Brett McFarland
Sheikh Nasher
Nathaniel Quigley
Jessie Rubin
Karim-ben Saunders
Harriet Small
Eric Smith-Sokol
Lucy Sternbach
Kabir Uddin
Mohammed Uddin
Michayra Zapata
Amy Zhao

Motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by the entire Committee, that the School Committee send a letter of congratulations to the CRLS Girls Track Team medal winners in the Girls Division 1 Championships and in the Girls All State Meet Finalists and the Boys CRLS Track Team medal winners in the Boys Division 1 Championships as follows:

Girls Division 1 Championships

55 Meter Dash- Brianna Duncan 1st place; Sydney Fisher 2nd place
300 Meter- Sydney Fisher 2nd place
600 Meter- Maya Halprin-Adams 1st place

4 X 200 Meter Relay- Brianna Duncan, Maya Halprin Adams, Sydney Fisher and Esmeralda Asprilla 1st Place
Long Jump- Brianna Duncan 1st place

Girls All State Meet- State Finalists- 2nd place overall

55 Meter - Brianna Duncan 1st place
Long Jump-Brianna Duncan 1st place

Boys Division 1 Championships

Mile- Esu Alemseged 1st place; Daniel Aschale 3rd place
4 X 800 Meter- Ian Woodhouse, Esu Alemseged, Will MacArthur, Daniel Aschale 2nd place

Motion by Ms. Cronin, seconded by Ms. Kelly, that the School Committee send a letter of congratulations to the following eighth grade students in Jenny Chung's social studies class at the Putnam Ave. Upper School who were featured in and/or had selections of their writing showcased in an article entitled, "Here's what eighth grades can teach us about perpetuating stereotype", as part of PRI's Global Nation Education project focusing on immigrant student life in the United States.

Gilli Danenberg
Betty Derege
Noore Elkatta
Nellisha Leonce
Sumaiya Mahee
Christelle Perceval
Tanzid Sakib

Motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Fantini, that the School Committee send a letter of acknowledgement and congratulations to the individuals who worked with the AVID students this year.

Motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Osborne, that the School Committee send a letter of congratulations to the CRLS 2015 recipients of the Colby Sawyer College Progressive Scholarship as follows:

Martha Aschale
Abnet Elias
Betelhem Tesfaye
Cynthia Major
Meaza Solomon
Emenet Sisay

Combined Motion by Mr. Fantini and Ms. Cronin, that the Superintendent report back to the Committee with an explanation of how the CRLS scholarship process works and also provide clarification on why the athletic awards ceremony did not occur.

The Chair announced that the School Committee voted to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy for collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. The Chair announced that no votes would be taken and that the School Committee would not reconvene in open session.

On a motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Osborne, it was voted to adjourn the Regular Meeting (7:42 PM).

Judith T. Martin
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

