

# SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## OFFICIAL REPORT

**Regular Meeting**

**March 4, 2014**

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, and Mayor Maher

Also Present: Student School Committee Members Lucy Sternbach and Emily Gray

Mayor Maher in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:12 PM.

### **1. Public Comment:**

The following individuals were heard:

- Elizabeth Ball, Athens Street, re 8<sup>th</sup> grade algebra
- Beftu Sultan, Putnam Gardens, re 8<sup>th</sup> grade algebra
- Ellan Rohan Ball, Athens Street, re 8<sup>th</sup> grade algebra
- Jane Hirschi, Rindge Avenue, re City Sprouts
- Jean Cummings, Asburton Place, re the School Committee agenda
- Alan O'Driscoll, Ellery Street, re language teaching
- Freedom Baird, Reed Street, re Middle School math changes
- Adam Manacher, Dana Street, re staff support/class size
- Michele Sprengnether, Chilton Street, re controlled choice agenda item
- John Delancey, Elm Street re, algebra
- Emily Dexter, Fenno Street, re Innovation Agenda

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

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

Ms. Sternbach and Ms. Gray reported the following:

- ✓ Annual fund raiser *Pennies for Patients* started; the money helps children with leukemia and their families
- ✓ \$2,500.00 was raised last year; the students hope to exceed that this year
- ✓ Class size and guidance counselors are still an issue
- ✓ Teachers are stressed
- ✓ Guidance counselors have a large number of students to service
- ✓ Winter sports have ended; spring sports start March 17
- ✓ The Black History assembly was a huge success
- ✓ The girls' track team won the division title
- ✓ The Boston Globe Scholastic Art and Writing Awards were presented to CRLS students; 9 gold keys; 22 silver keys and 20 honorable mention keys. Also 3 gold key Portfolios; 1 silver key

Portfolio and 2 Honorable Mention Portfolios. The gold key winners' work will be on display at Boston City Hall March 7 through March 30

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

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

- Regular Meeting – November 19, 2013
- Regular Meeting – January 21, 2014
- Special Meeting – January 28, 2014
- Regular Meeting – February 4, 2014

### **4. Reconsiderations: None**

### **5. Awaiting Reports:**

- ✓ Report by spring 2013 on high school resource room, as recommended by WestEd review of special education services (C12-061)(April 3, 2012)

Ms. Nolan noted that the AP report received from the Superintendent was not the complete report and that it should be returned to Awaiting Reports on the Agenda.

### **6. Unfinished Business/Calendar:**

Members passed over all Unfinished Business:

**#14-06, Joint Motion by Mr. Harding and Mr. Osborne**, that the Superintendent consult with the high school principal and staff around making a change to college preparatory designation for all classes at CRLS. Further, that any potential change of the course name be implemented by the 2014/15 school year.

**#13-213, Motion by Ms. Nolan** that whereas research suggests that taking a college level course helps prepare students for college, and whereas the District allows students to take classes at local colleges when appropriate, that the policy on students who take college courses be clarified and written into the course catalog: that four classes is a full course load and that at most one of the four classes each semester may be at a local college/university/community college, including Harvard Extension. Students, who want to take more than four classes, counting any outside college class including Harvard Extension, need to petition their guidance counselor since a balanced student workload is encouraged. Students taking a college class outside the regular school day will work with their guidance counselors on assignment during that period, if not at the beginning or end of the day.

**#13-122, Motion by Mr. Fantini and Mr. Harding**, that each of the elementary and middle schools be provided with feedback in the form of a written report, provided by an expert consultant retained under the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, as to the progress each school is making towards meeting the data-driven, high-quality improvement strategies as noted in the School Improvement Plans, other guiding documents and other indicators as designated by the Superintendent, including parent satisfaction. Further, that the Superintendent shall provide copies of each report to the School Committee as part of its annual review of the School Improvement Plan as required by law. Further, the Superintendent shall provide analysis of the progress or lack thereof of student achievement.

### **7. Superintendent's Report/Presentations/Consent Agenda:**

**Presentation:**

**6a. Innovation Agenda:**

Ms. Nolan asked for an update on graduation dates for the Upper Schools. Dr. Young stated that it is still too early to set the dates; that will be done when the weather gets warmer and the possibility of snow is gone.

**6b. Consent Agenda:**

Superintendent Recommendations **#14-15** through **#14-22** were brought forward for discussion/adoption: Mr. Harding removed **#14-16** and **#14-17**; Ms. Nolan removed **#14-18** and **#14-19**.

**#14-15, Approval of 2014/2015 Kindergarten Assignment Ratio**, that the School Committee approve a 2014-15 kindergarten assignment ratio of +/- 13% the District's JK-5 October 1, 2013 percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch compared with full pay lunch status plus a cap of 51 kindergarten-age students for those schools with two kindergarten classes. On October 1, 2013, those percentages were 57% full pay and 43% free or reduced status students. It is further recommended that the +/- 13% band be for kindergarten assignment purposes only and that the band be managed down to +/- 10% as vacancies occur.

The Superintendent offered a substitute to **#14-15**: That the School Committee adopt a 2014-15 Kindergarten Assignment Band of 9%+/- the District's JK-5 October 1, 2013 percentage of students qualifying for free/reduced lunch compared with full pay lunch students, further, that all students be assigned to a seat in a school in this lottery. In assigning all students, the Superintendent shall have flexibility to exceed the cap of 50 Kindergarten age students per school after the lottery is run. In so doing the integrity of the waitlist shall be honored. On the following roll call it was voted to adopt **#14-15**, as amended: Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor Maher YEA. Ms. Nolan moved suspension of the Rules for the purpose of reconsideration of the foregoing vote, hoping that the same would not prevail. The motion failed of adoption. Ms. Nolan moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini that the second reading be waived. It was voted to waive the second reading of **#14-15**

On the following roll call the following items were adopted:

**#14-20, Contract Award**: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Work Force Program, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Cambridge Housing Authority, 362 Green St., Cambridge, for the period September 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014, in the amount of \$100,000.00

**#14-21, Approval of Gift of \$1,000**: that the School Committee accept and approve a gift of \$1,000 from the Christian Mission Pentecostal Tabernacle Church in Cambridge, made for the general support of the Amigos School.

**#14-22, Grant Awards**: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant awards in the amounts and for the periods indicated:

1. Exxon Mobil-Amendment, for the period February 28, 2013 to June 30, 2014, in the amount of \$500.00. Project/Grant SC14108.  
**Description**: An increase of \$500 in Exxon Mobil grant to the Tobin School, to be used at the school's discretion. The Tobin plans to purchase Montessori science materials with these funds.  
**CPS Target Population**: All K-5 students at the Tobin School  
**Outcomes and Measures of Effectiveness**: Additional science materials will support student engagement in a range of science topics.

2. Mass. Cultural Council STARRS-Amigos School, for the period February 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014, in the amount of \$1,200.00. Project/Grant SC14114.  
**Description:** Increase in SC14114 to include an artist-in-residency program at the Amigos School with Erica Sigel of Dance in the Schools to work with two Kindergarten (JK & K) classrooms. Students will engage in dance activities that will develop oral language and movement skills.  
**CPS Target Population:** Two Kindergarten classrooms at the Amigos School.  
**Outcomes and Measures of Effectiveness:** Enriched language and movement experiences supports healthy development of essential skills.
  
3. Race to the Top (RTTT), for the period July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014, in the amount of \$38,922.00. Project/Grant AR14887.  
**Description:** Remaining funds for Year 4 of Race to the Top, a grant that supports a variety of professional development activities, including: implementation of the new Statewide educator evaluation framework; development of curricula aligned to the revised MA curriculum frameworks; participation of several teachers in the State sponsored mentor-training program; and participation in Statewide frameworks and vocational competency tracking committees.  
**CPS Target Population:** The target populations are CPS teaching staff, instructional leadership teams, and ultimately all CPS students.  
**Outcomes and Measures of Effectiveness:** At the end of the 4 years: full integration of the State's educator evaluation framework; full alignment with MA curriculum frameworks; development of a school-based mentoring program; progress towards 100% of staff trained in State approved programs for mainstreamed and SEI ELL students. Ultimately these efforts will lead to more effective instruction and improved achievement outcomes for students as measured by State and local assessments.

Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

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

**#14-23, Motion by Mayor Maher** that the School Committee convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy for litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the School Committee. Mayor Maher requested that his motion be considered at the end of the meeting.

**#14-24, Report of the January 14, 2014 meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole):**

Called for the purpose of drafting Final Budget Guidelines and Final Budget Calendar

Members Present: Mr. Osborne, Co-chair; Ms. Cronin, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Harding (ABSENT), Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan, and Mayor Maher

Also Present: Dr. Young, Superintendent; Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Greer, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Dr. Huizenga, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum; Ms. Spinner, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Maloney, Chief Operating Officer; Ms. Colbath-Hess, President CEA

Mr. Osborne in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, Mr. Osborne called the meeting to order at 6:12 PM

Hand-outs presented at the meeting by Ms. Spinner included:

1. Agenda
2. School Committee Budget Guidelines
3. Budget Development Calendar
4. CPS Internal Budget Process
  - a. Meetings with Schools and Departments
  - b. School meetings with School Councils

Also handed out were the proposed Budget Guidelines for the 2014/15 School Department Budget which were placed on the Calendar at the December 3, 2013 Regular Meeting and referred to the new Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole) for modification and approval.  
(Hand-outs are on file in the School Committee Office)

Ms. Spinner introduced Miranda Fasulo, Assistant Director of Budget and Finance, to the Members.

Mr. Osborne opened the floor up for discussion by the Members on each of the items listed on the proposed budget guidelines prior to the process of their anticipated adoption at the next Regular Meeting as follows:

1. Student Achievement
  2. Innovation Agenda (as it pertains to Elementary, Upper and Amigos Schools)
  3. Program & Curriculum Evaluation
  4. High School Program
  5. Special Populations
  6. Family Engagement and School Climate
  7. Operations & Long Range Planning
- Program and curriculum evaluation should be tied more directly with student achievement
  - Student achievement guidelines are really broad; need to be more specific in addressing the achievement gap
  - How do the actual goals of the District align with the budget guidelines
  - Goals need updating before we adopt these guidelines; State moved to a different MCAS reporting system (Levels 1, 2, 3)
  - Helps to have broad point of view and then to have each area be related to accomplishing the goals we have set for student achievement
  - Put emphasis on need for benchmarks at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level
  - Look at 5<sup>th</sup> grade; maximize the benchmarks we set before these students move into upper school
  - Language of closing the achievement gap is not mentioned in these budget guidelines; need to put direction on this budget right now
  - Suggested language: staffing decisions will be based on the district-wide goals with an eye towards closing achievement gaps and raising achievement for all. Ties directly to goals and specifically mentions closing achievement gap
  - When would it be appropriate to indicate desire for full-time music and art teachers
  - Guidelines are not meant to identify specific programs or initiatives
  - We are entering Year 2 of the Innovation Agenda; update language to make relevant
  - Move to goals for high school, middle schools, and elementary schools
  - NEASC provided rich report in identifying areas of focus for the high school; we need to support these recommendations
  - Looking at Special Populations; it would be helpful to be more discreet when talking about out-of-district students
  - College and career readiness not delineated in our budget guidelines; vocational tech. is a discreet program
  - Need to have accelerated improvement and focus on direct service to children

- Strive for all children to reach grade level for reading and math by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
- Should have language for programs to support children before and after school day and resources for schools that have high numbers of special needs, low income and children of color
- Need to address class size issue at the high school
- Develop plan on family and community engagement to ensure wider participation across the district; build on Dr. Mapp's work
- Fold family engagement into the larger picture of inclusive schooling
- Communicate work we are doing on curriculum revisions, family engagement plan, need to make a stronger statement of our intent behind these
- State has chosen not to fund some of the next projects that we have; make a statement about this and allocate funds
- Other school buildings have issues; need to make sure existing schools get updating they need
- Need to address a permanent location for our administrators; they are working in subpar building
- Develop a way to have world language K-5 in the district

The Superintendent and his staff responded to Members' questions, comments and concerns:

- Student Achievement and Program & Curriculum Evaluation categories could be consolidated into one guideline
- We haven't hired Program Evaluator yet; instead decided to conduct two or three outside evaluations
- Hired vendor for program evaluation of co-teaching model; will begin soon
- The co-teaching model evaluation includes Haggerty 6<sup>th</sup> grade and high school
- Instructional coaching model evaluator is currently in formal invitation for bid process and will hopefully be included on the February 4<sup>th</sup> School Committee Agenda for approval
- We don't anticipate needing more funds for program evaluation in addition to what already exists
- Budget guidelines needs to be a broader level vs. very specific benchmarks
- Budget process has begun; longer we go before we get set of guidelines, the harder it will be to use them
- Consider implication of what helps and what doesn't; if more time is devoted to a specific subject then why, how much time and taken from where?
- We have a guideline that represents all schools; want to make sure that all areas of the district are included; we are a district as a whole

Discussion followed on the Budget Development Calendar:

- The goal is for the Superintendent to present the proposed budget to the School Committee at a public meeting during the second Tuesday of March and for the School Committee to adopt the budget at first meeting in April.
- It is necessary to present to City Council for their deliberations by mid April.
- Propose having a public hearing at the January 28<sup>th</sup> Budget Retreat; useful to get input before we give input; frame it around discussion on the budget guidelines
- Ms. Spinner can adjust Budget Calendar; will sort out call of the meeting with the Executive Secretary to the School Committee
- Public should know that there is very little flexibility in budget

Ms. Spinner was heard relative to the Internal Budget Process:

- Budget starts with projections that support current program and staffing needs based on enrollment
- Budget process begins in December with an all administrators meeting (Principals, Curriculum Coordinators, Department Heads)
- Discussed the initiatives for school budget and where most of focus and resources should be:
  - Alignment of curriculum

- Inclusive schooling (creating schools that are welcoming to all; family engagement, services directly for students e.g. ELL, student with disabilities)
- Behavior issues and what the district focus will be in dealing with these
- Educator and leader professional development
- Continue to refine our upper school program
- Have actual budget meetings by program areas
- Get direction from School Committee's policy level on areas of focus
- Update the School Committee through Budget retreats, costing out programmatic changes that are being suggested and presenting information
- Encourage principals to be in contact with their school councils

The Superintendent and his staff responded to the Members' questions, comments and concerns:

- Do you want to give budget flexibility to Principals re their administrative positions
- Are our after school programs aligned with our efforts for academic achievement
- What are some tools we can use to achieve academic goals
- What is the update on our partners' effectiveness; are funds being used for outside tutors
- What is the progress of the afternoon tutoring centers
- What is the update on Assistant Principal and School Administrative Manager
- We should make an investment in marketing of what we are doing in Cambridge: target recruits; take families back from other selections; hold families in the system
- Need to do market research before developing a marketing plan
- Give positive message about schools; decisions were being made based on outdated information
- IA is a 3 year investment; want to see what is working well
- In areas of discipline; are we giving these schools adequate resources
- Is there a need to pilot a project to address a specific issue
- Data was presented at October IA Roundtable from a variety of sources indicating what is going well and what needs to be fixed
- Look at areas of possible reductions since restructuring with new Assistant Superintendent positions; these positions added tremendous value to our system
- Look at administrative structure – may be a way to accomplish many jobs now with a different level of personnel
- Provide a safe environment; someone trained to help homeless kids (stress, hunger, etc.)
- Our enrollment is up 733 students since the 2007 school year; we have had enormous success in the last 5 years in growing, recognition and acceptance
- We are not losing students; Principals call Chief Operating Officer looking for more space
- Based on State statistics, we have an extremely high percentage of kids who opt out
- Hope to start a 3-year old Chinese immersion program for low income kids

On a motion by Mr. Fantini seconded by Mr. Osborne, it was voted to adjourn (7:40 PM)

Adjourned  
Judith T. Martin  
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee  
to the School Committee

**#14-25, Report of the January 28, 2014 meeting of the Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole) (Retreat):**

Called for the purpose of a retreat.

Members Present: Mr. Harding and Mr. Osborne, Co-Chairs; Ms. Cronin, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan, and Mayor Maher

Also Present: Dr. Young, Superintendent; Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Greer, Assistant

Superintendent for Student Services, Dr. Huizenga, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum; Ms. Spinner, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Maloney, Chief Operating Officer; Ms. Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources

Mr. Osborne and Mr. Harding in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Mr. Osborne called the meeting to order at 6:52 PM.

Ms. Spinner presented the Members with the following documents:

- School Committee Budget Retreat Agenda
- FY2015 Calendar of Budget-Related School Committee Meetings
- FY2014-15 Budget Prioritization Process
- SY13-14 Enrollment by School and Grade  
(on file in the School Committee Office)

Mr. Osborne turned the meeting over to the Superintendent. Dr. Young addressed the Members and indicated that the purpose of this presentation was not to make budget decisions of any kind but to acquaint the Members with the topics and issues which have arisen during budget deliberations. These topics are not listed in any particular order of importance or with associated costs.

Mr. Harding thanked the Superintendent and his staff and indicated that this is a positive way to begin the process. The retreat gives the administrators an opportunity to educate the Members on priorities which they have identified and for the Committee to ask clarifying questions.

Ms. Spinner requested that the Members send her any additional questions during the week.

The Superintendent invited his Cabinet members to come forward to update the Members on each of the agenda items as follows:

1. Introduction (J. Young)
2. Update Budget Development Process (C. Spinner)
3. Bilingual Program Requirements (J. Huizenga)
4. Math in Focus Implementation (J. Huizenga)
5. Elementary World Language (M. MacDonald)
6. Curriculum Development in FY15 (M. MacDonald/J Huizenga)
7. RTI Update & Budget Need (M. MacDonald)
8. School Improvement Fund for Level 3 Schools (M. MacDonald/J Huizenga)
9. Family Engagement Plan/Cultural Competency Training (L. Likis)
10. Upper School Program (C. Turk)
11. Secondary Schools (C. Turk)
12. Special Education Program (V. Greer)
13. School Climate/Behavior (C. Turk)
14. Staff Diversity (B. Allen)
15. Transportation (J. Maloney)
16. Leadership Development (C. Turk)
17. New Teacher Orientation (J. Huizenga)

The Superintendent and his staff responded to the Members clarifying questions, comments and concerns.

The Co-Chairs thanked the Superintendent and his Cabinet for their informative presentation. The possibility of calling a Budget Sub-Committee at the next Regular Meeting on February 4, 2014 was discussed. The purpose would be to further discuss the budget priorities and follow up to the retreat.

Adjourned (9:22 PM)

Judith T. Martin  
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee  
to the School Committee

**#14-26, Report of the Meeting of the February 11, 2014 (2:30 PM) Sub-Committee on Curriculum and Achievement:**

Called for the purpose of a presentation by Dr. Jessica Huizenga, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, on the proposed 2014-2018 Curriculum Review Cycle and Implementation of its Roll Out

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

Also Present: Dr. Huizenga, Ms. Feynman

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, Ms. Cronin called the meeting to order at 2:40 PM.

Ms. Cronin in the Chair.

Handouts presented: Agenda, Understanding by Design Template 2.1 Established Goals/Standards, Model Curriculum Unit: Biography ELA and Literacy, Grade 3 (on file in the School Committee Office)

Ms. Cronin stated the purpose of the meeting and turned the meeting over to Dr. Huizenga, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.

Dr. Huizenga walked the Sub-Committee through a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed 2014-2018 Curriculum Review Cycle and Implementation of its Roll Out as follows:

- Targeted Areas of Need:
  - Horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment
  - Professional development – Curriculum Design, Massachusetts Frameworks, Instruction
  - Communication
  - Instructional Management System
- What is curriculum?
- Status of current review
- Year-1 strategy
- Multi-year roll-out
- Budget implications

Dr. Huizenga indicated that to accelerate learning and close the achievement gap for all students, we must have an aligned curriculum and instructional system. She pointed out that our current instructional management system is contained in a 3-ring binder and hopefully moving forward, we will have a system which will allow teachers to analyze real time data and be able to respond in instruction.

An explanation of the tier system of supports in the Response to Intervention (RTI) model followed:

Tier I – Core Instruction

Strong curriculum and instruction is really core and our Tier I goal is to have 75% achieving proficiency, which at the elementary level, consists of whole class instruction and a first dose of small group direct, explicit and systematic instruction.

Tier II – Supplemental Instruction

Some students, 10%-15%, need an additional dose of supplemental direct intervention given in small groups of 5-6 students. This is based on the diagnosis of the assessments given (universal screeners).

### Tier III – Intensive Individual Instruction

A small group of 5% of students need in addition to Tier I and Tier II, an additional dose of Tier III intensive individual instruction. When we have done everything we can (4 doses of small group instruction) then that is when a student should be referred for special education testing.

A discussion followed on what curriculum is, what quality curriculum is and the State adopted Understanding by Design Process (UBD) for curriculum design. Earlier this year Grant Wiggins, architect of UBD, and his team were brought in to work with 110 of our staff for 3 days. Understanding by Design is a curriculum framework and a means of developing units of instruction and curriculum on a larger scale.

Dr. Huizenga introduced Ms. Paula Feynman, Algebra teacher, who attended the 3 day training. Ms. Feynman spoke about her transformative experience, what it meant to her teaching and how it changed her perspective. She expressed her thoughts on how important it is to provide a rigorous curriculum. Dr. Huizenga and Ms. Feynman explained the 3 stages of backward design used in UBD:

1. Identify desired results
2. Determine acceptable evidence
3. Plan learning experiences and instruction

The Chair thanked Ms. Feynman for her comments.

Dr. Huizenga walked the Members through examples of UBD Units, curriculum standards and frameworks and essential questions. She noted that the standards and frameworks are the blueprints for implementing a curriculum design.

The Cambridge Public Schools multi-year curriculum roll-out and timeline was explained in detail by Dr. Huizenga. The Curriculum Review and Implementation Planning (CRIP) team is working to craft, JrK-12 transfer goals which should be thought of in the 40-40-40 rule of what students should be able to do in 40 days? 40 weeks? and 40 Years? The Curriculum Implementation Plan in the elementary schools is set up to ensure that no more than one curriculum area will be focused on in any one year. Dr. Huizenga gave the members a sample of what a current curriculum unit looks like and what it will look like in the future. Dr. Huizenga noted that the budget implication is a 4 year commitment and that the Design teams are working very hard; it will take an investment to do this work.

Members raised the following questions, comments and concerns:

- Need to address technology and engineering component of Massachusetts Frameworks
- Explain curriculum committees and functions
- Make curriculum accessible to teachers, students and parents
- Need for cohesion across grades levels vertically and horizontally and within the unit
- Make sure students are engaged; don't want to hand teachers a script but provide them tools to do their best and still ensure their creativity in the classroom
- Need to provide high quality general education environment
- RTI is supposed to include advanced learners; how can we ensure that all kids' needs get met
- How do we change and respond to these children who are different; structure inhibits this
- Common core has changed everything
- Who will oversee that we are on target; will we see a significant increase in student achievement
- Instructional leadership is key standard for proficiency
- Have clear evaluation benchmarks to fulfill the standards
- Every teacher gets specific data/flags on their students
- Key is to strengthen core Tier 1 instruction
- Parents will have access to online computer program model – how will they be instructed
- Not all families have access; work with family engagement teams
- Looking at demos on instructional management system, e.g. Aspen provides parent component

- How are benchmarks used; what is the purpose of universal screeners

The Chair made closing remarks and stated the need to address professional development at the next Curriculum and Achievement Sub-Committee meeting. She thanked Dr. Huizenga for her presentation.

Adjourned (4:03 PM)

Adjourned  
Judith T. Martin  
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee

**#14-27, Report of the February 11, 2014 (6:00 PM – 8:00 PM) Meeting of the Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole) Budget Retreat:**

Called for the purpose of a budget retreat and Superintendent's update on budget preparation with the School Committee.

Members Present: Mr. Harding (~~Absent~~) and Mr. Osborne, Co-Chairs; Ms. Cronin, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan, and Mayor Maher (~~Absent~~)

Also Present: Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Greer, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Dr. Huizenga, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Ms. Spinner, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Maloney, Chief Operating Officer; Ms. Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources; Ms. Likis, Chief Planning Officer

Hand-outs: Comparison of Math in Focus with Investigations Chart (on file in the School Committee Office)

Mr. Osborne in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole) being present, Mr. Osborne called the meeting to order at 6:12 PM and turned the meeting over to Dr. Turk.

Dr. Turk stated that the purpose of this meeting would be to continue the process started a few weeks ago. She framed the contributions that the administrators will be making tonight into three areas:

1. Update on budget projections
2. Leadership Team – to discuss areas which they are finding difficult to move forward (current dilemmas) – elementary world language and the math program
3. Time for further questions and thoughts from the Members

Ms. Spinner followed by giving a brief budget overview:

- Base budget of \$157M, is \$6M or 4% more than this year's adopted budget; it is one of largest increases we have had in a decade
- There was no need to make reductions to have a balanced budget to start
- In November, enrollment projections were incorporated into the base budget as much as possible
- Reserve teachers are always incorporated in as we hear about compliance related needs
- We will see the biggest increase in FTE's (ESL, SEI, interventionist) within the Bilingual Program for next year due to the change in testing and levels, we have more children who qualify for ESL services and are required to stay in the program longer
- There will be few FTE increases in special education to meet program needs
- Meeting with Principal and scheduler regarding the class sizes at the high school
- Would need to find ways to redirect resources to fund any new initiatives/program improvements

Ms. MacDonald was heard regarding the issue of offering world language in the elementary schools:

- It's not a budget issue but a programmatic issue on how we put a quality world language program in the elementary schools within the constraints of a 6 hour day
- If we were to add world language - what grades, what would it be, and how much time would it take
- The Superintendent will come forward with budget recommendations for the King School, Grades 3-5, and for adding a Spanish teacher to the Fletcher/Maynard Academy. Both schools have an 8 hour day
- Elementary principals and others involved are committed to ensuring proficiency in reading, writing and math in grade 3; focus will be on those areas in JK-3 program
- What would world language program look like in grades 4 & 5 (needs to be 90 min. 3 x week); what would we take away
- Possibility of having to take away 75 minutes from literacy and reduce math instruction
- We are recommending an additional 180 min. of science to strengthen program in grades 4 & 5
- Reminder that for the first time in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, MCAS will be testing science and technology; grade 5 also picks up instrumental instruction 2 x week

Dr. Huizenga added that under RTI Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention, there would be no time in the day to do so. The students would have to come out of somewhere (core subjects, world language); this is a time dilemma of how we fit it all in. What is the end goal?

Mr. Harding joined the meeting.

Dr. Huizenga walked the Members through the comparison chart of the two math programs, Comparison of Math in Focus with Investigations (which we currently use). She recently spoke to editors of Math in Focus in Singapore and has talked to math experts in the Boston area who feel that on the Common Core, Math in Focus is one of the strongest math programs in publication and is highly recommended.

Dr. Turk thanked the Members and wanted them to know that their questions, thoughts and concerns were taken seriously during the work involved in trying to figure out the best program for our students. She welcomed any additional questions, comments and concerns:

- The outlook for world language appears to be bleak considering the time constraints
- Principals are committed to having students learn a second language; trying to figure how to do it
- Will supplementary work will be necessary to make sure that we are keeping in line with math testing
- There are three components in Math in Focus within a grade and across the grades which will provide the balance: concrete, pictorial and abstract solving the problem with numbers and symbols
- The expectation in Math in Focus is that students will master certain concepts at certain grades
- World language - less is often more, effectiveness is what matters, not number of minutes
- Why not change things that don't work; think outside the box
- Offer second language as another form of literacy, second language can help with math as well
- Math challenge with Investigations requires high teacher level of competency especially in K-5
- We need to provide teachers with specific help in being more effective; part of our issue is ensuring teacher development and comfort level in math
- Math in Focus provides more scaffolds for teachers and children; it requires a student's mastery and continues to build those progressions of skills
- Will continue to support math content knowledge for all our elementary teachers and are offering licensure support to teachers in becoming math certified
- Need to look at additional reading specialist support for upper school students in consideration for a math program that requires language proficiency to succeed, our huge weakness in English language literacy and looking at the Common Core as well

- Thinking outside the box on world language – it takes 600 hours to be proficient in Spanish; how do we develop a program without having it during the school day, e.g. before school, after school, during vacation, virtual schools, flexible scheduling
- Hiring elementary world language teachers is difficult – being asked to support green cards to get high quality world language teachers
- Do any 6-hour/day school systems offer elementary world language

Mayor Maher joined the meeting.

- Visual representation of elementary school weekly schedule would be helpful
- What has district done in assessments of literacy and math
- Liked emphasis on access for all students in the math curriculum and where they should be in Grades 3 and 8
- How will this budget invest in the effort to obtain a representational teaching force
- Staff and individual relationships need to be ensured for the social and emotional growth of our students
- Look into allocating Title I staff to the two upper schools that are far above the poverty percentage of the other two schools
- Continue to support Breakthrough; program being very responsive to offering social and emotional support
- What is the function of the mental health staff and how effective are they in their roles; further discussion is needed
- Guidance counselors do not have bandwidth to provide level of support which is required by 9<sup>th</sup> graders; their time is used in helping 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders get into college of their choice
- Student/Guidance counselor ratio is currently 211/1; it is consistent with similar size districts
- Class size at high school has to be fixed; do practice scenario of no class size more than 25 with a target for 20
- Class size is a complex issue due to migration from CP classes into Honors and AP; need to know what the goal of college prep. courses is and do further analysis
- School spending package is generous for community this size; what are the priorities
- If you spend more in some areas, something has to give
- Have you thought of voluntary staffing incentives to turn over staff; taking higher paid positions and possibly replacing with lower paid positions
- Classification of positions has changed dramatically over the past decade; is there possibility of eliminating or collapsing positions; cost savings could be used for pilot phases, e.g. social workers, etc.
- Could advance concept with City Manager; have incentive possibly come from City to help school system in this transformation
- Support our partner organizations; consider them as such
- Educational goals should drive resources of the budget; all children reading at grade level at grade 3
- Would like to pilot extensive tutoring in one of the schools most in need
- Work with biotech companies in our community to obtain volunteers in science and technology for our schools; need to tap into those resources for tutors and mentors

Adjourned (7:44 PM)

Judith T. Martin  
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee  
to the School Committee

## 9. Non-Consent Agenda:

**#14-16, Approval of Proposed Revisions to the Upper School Academic Challenge Policy**, that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Upper School Academic Policy as detailed in the

document (first reading). Mr. Harding asked if this policy will get us to a place where all students in the middle schools, particularly in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, will be able to access Algebra I. Dr. Young, Dr. Huizenga and Mr. Healey were heard. On the following roll call, it was voted to refer **#14-16** to a second reading: Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

**#14-17, Approval of Revisions to Student Transportation Policy**, that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Student Transportation Policy as detailed in the document (second reading). Mr. Harding asked if students from Rindge Avenue en route to the Vassal Lane Upper School are entitled to transportation services. Mr. Maloney was heard. On the following roll call it was voted to adopt **#14-17**: Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding NAY; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor Maher YEA. It was voted to allow Mr. Fantini to change his vote from YEA to NAY.

**#14-18, Approval of SY2014/2015 Cambridge Public Schools Academic and School Committee Calendars**: that the School Committee approve the recommendation of the Superintendent for the SY2014/2015 Cambridge Public Schools Academic and School Committee Calendars. The Chair noted that the December 16, 2014 Regular Meeting falls on the first night of Hanukah; therefore, it should be cancelled. On the following roll call it was voted to adopt **#14-18** as amended: Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

**#14-19, Special Needs Contracts for Day and Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge School Department**: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions on the list 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:

1 student	Wayside Youth and Family Support Network	\$49,783.69
<u>1</u>	<u>Judge Baker Children's Center</u>	<u>44,667.84</u>
2		\$94,451.53

Ms. Nolan moved the adoption of **#14-19**. On the following roll call it was voted to adopt the above recommendation: Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

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

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by the Committee, it was voted to send letters of congratulations to the recipients of gold medals in diving, girls' track and boys' track.

#### 11. Announcements:

The Chair announced that the summer meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 5, 2014. He asked that Members let him know by tomorrow if the date is in conflict with their schedule.

DESE will be holding a community forum Thursday, 6:30 PM in the CRLS Media Cafeteria to discuss the PARCC testing program.

Mr. Fantini brought forward **#14-23, Motion by Mayor Maher** that the School Committee convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy for litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the School Committee. On the following roll call it was voted to enter into Executive Session for the purpose stated: Ms. Nolan YEA; Mr. Osborne YEA; Ms. Cronin YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor Maher YEA. The Chair announced that the Committee would not reconvene the Regular Meeting and that no votes would be taken in Executive Session.

**12. Late Orders:** None

Adjourned (8:43 PM).

Patricia A. Berry  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee