



Boston School Committee Meeting

June 11, 2008

The following is a brief summary of the public meeting of the Boston School Committee held on Wednesday, June 11, 2008, at 6:00 p.m. in the Edward Winter Chambers, 26 Court Street. This summary is not intended to serve as official minutes of the meeting.

For more information about any of the items listed below, contact the office of the Boston School Committee: feedback@boston.k12.ma.us or 617-635-9014.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The Committee presented citations to two graduating seniors who were recipients of special scholarships:

- John Casper, a senior at Boston Latin Academy, won the Richard R. Green Scholarship. It is a \$10,000 prize presented by the Council of the Great City Schools in honor of Chairperson Reilinger's leadership on the School Committee. The scholarship goes to a student graduating from a Boston public high school with a record of academic achievement and a commitment to pursuing a career in public education. In the fall, Mr. Casper will attend Boston College, with a double major in Secondary Education and General History. He intends to become a high school history teacher.
<http://boston.k12.ma.us/bps/news/news-6-12-08.asp>
- Keyla Veloz, a senior at the Boston Community Leadership Academy won the Thomas W. Payzant Public Service in Education Scholarship. The \$2,000 prize is awarded annually to a student graduating from a Boston public high school with a record of academic progress who has made significant contributions to improving education in BPS. It is named in honor of the former Superintendent Tom Payzant. Throughout her high school career, Ms. Veloz has taught in the after-school program at the Gardner Pilot Academy in Allston, where she herself went to school. She has taught dance, served as a teacher's aide and translated for bilingual families in the program. Ms. Veloz also served on the Boston Student Advisory Council. Ms. Veloz will attend Emmanuel College in the fall, where she intends to double-major in Education and Political Science.

This Thursday Mayor Menino and community members will launch Boston R.O.C.K.S (Recreational Opportunities for City Kids) at the Mission Hill Playground on Tremont Street. This is a great way to find summer programs for children and teenagers, including jobs and volunteer opportunities. Parents can also call 617-635-KIDS to learn more about how their children can have an enjoyable and constructive summer.

On Tuesday, June 17th (Bunker Hill Day) BPS will hold the 6th Annual All-City Baseball Classic at Fenway Park. All-star players from BPS high school baseball teams will play on the field. This is an amazing chance to support BPS students and visit Fenway Park. The game begins at 3:00 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

High school graduation season is in full swing and the Superintendent encouraged everyone to attend at least one of these inspiring ceremonies. The remaining graduations for the year are:

- Thursday, June 12: Academic of Public Service, 6 p.m., at the school; Boston Adult Technical Academy, 6 p.m., at Roland Hayes Auditorium; Boston International High School, 6 p.m., at UMass; English High, 6 p.m., at the school; Excel High, 6 p.m., at the school; and Madison Park, 6 p.m., at Northeastern.
- Friday, June 13: Boston Arts Academy, 10 a.m., at Symphony Hall; Boston Community Leadership Academy, 6 p.m., at Faneuil Hall; O'Bryant High School, 7 p.m., Matthews Arena at Northeastern; Parkway Academy of Technology and Health, 5 p.m., at Wheelock Family Theater.
- Monday, June 16: Community Academy of Science and Health, 6:30 p.m., at Matthews Arena.

The Superintendent also congratulated School Committee member Rev. Groover, whose daughter is graduating from Boston Arts Academy this year.

The final ceremony for the Mayor's School Awards took place last night at Faneuil Hall. The Superintendent thanked Martha Pierce in the Mayor's Office, who puts the entire program together, for making sure students are honored in such a meaningful way. The Superintendent also congratulated principal Catherine James of the Bates Elementary School who has attended every Mayor's School Awards ceremony since they began 24 years ago and is retiring this year.

On Monday, BPS honored four teachers who were named as the 2008-09 Conant Fellows at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. These teachers receive a year's tuition to earn their master's degrees from Harvard. They are: Patricia Lampron, Murphy K-8 School; Kathryn Meyer, Hernandez K-8 School; Eugene Roundtree, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School; and Jalene Tamerat, Quincy Upper School. <http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2008/06.12/09-conant.html>

The Superintendent informed the Committee of three recent personnel moves:

- Danielle Carrigo, director of the Office of Language Learning and Support Services (OLLSS), is leaving BPS to pursue other opportunities. Since she came to BPS a year ago, Danielle has really helped BPS re-think how this office should operate and has been a committed advocate for English Language Learners in the district. The Superintendent appointed Bud Larievy as Interim Director of OLLSS. Mr. Larievy has extensive experience in the education of English Language Learners. He started in the Boston Public Schools in 2000 as a bilingual coordinator, bilingual program specialist, and was Interim Director of the Office of Language Learning & Support Services in 2005. Prior to coming to BPS, Bud served in a variety of teaching and administrative positions in the Worcester Public Schools for 30 years. We will be launching a search for a permanent director soon.
- Nadia Cyrien, who is currently the Assistant Headmaster at Monument High School, will replace Jonathan Pizzi. Mr. Pizzi has been appointed Assistant Academic Superintendent for High Schools, working with Irvin Scott.
- Kwesi Moody, who is currently Assistant Headmaster at East Boston High School, will replace Dr. Jack Leonard, who is taking a position at UMass-Boston, as headmaster of Noonan Business Academy. Mr. Moody was formerly a Boston Principal Fellow at Noonan.

The Superintendent has filled nearly all principal and headmaster vacancies for the 2008-09 school year and will update the Committee as the remaining vacancies are filled. The complete list can found here: <http://boston.k12.ma.us/bulletins/PrincipalsAll.pdf>

The Superintendent commented on Governor Patrick's plan for "readiness schools", noting that this concept is modeled after Boston Public Schools pilot schools. The Superintendent does not have much information at the moment but looks forward to getting more information about "readiness schools" and discussing the issue with Paul Reveille, Chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

ACTION ITEMS (VOTES)

Approved: Grants totaling \$13,848,472

Approved: The Committee approves membership of the Boston Public Schools in the National School Board Association (NSBA) for school year 2008-2009 as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

REPORTS

Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) Annual Report: Members of BSAC presented a report detailing the activities and initiatives BSAC has undertaken to increase student engagement in the Boston Public Schools. Highlights include: the "Friendly Feedback Form", a tool used to informally evaluate teachers' lessons; a student government circular containing revised policies and procedures that instruct high schools on how to elect, maintain and strengthen student government; efforts to work with the Superintendent's staff to strengthen the district's homework policy; clarification of the rules around how students can opt out of being contacted for military recruitment; and a companion guide to "Dimensions of Effective Teaching" called "Dimensions of Effective Learning."

Externally Funded Initiatives – Policy Statement: The Superintendent presented a draft policy statement that would require School Committee approval of initiatives that start with external fund sources and later require Boston Public Schools resources to support. The Committee recommended some changes to the language and the Superintendent will return at an upcoming meeting with a revised draft.

Extended Learning Time – Update: MASS 2020 President Jennifer Davis, consultant Kate Carpenter Bernier, and Edwards Middle School principal Jeffrey Riley presented an overview of the extended learning time initiative in the Boston Public Schools, now in its second year. Three BPS middle schools – Edwards, Timilty and Umana – extended their school days in an effort to improve student achievement. Initial results are encouraging, with students at these schools raising their MCAS scores in almost all grades and subjects. Equally important, BPS students were able to participate in swimming, tennis, arts, robotics and extra science and math lessons as part of their longer school day. The report included an overview of the statewide extended learning time initiative and a case-study of the Edwards Middle School.

NEW BUSINESS

Committee member Marchelle Raynor recently attended the BPS adult diploma ceremony and heard the inspiring stories of students who returned to school to get their diplomas after long absences. Ms. Raynor suggested that Academic Superintendent for High Schools Irvin Scott to work with Director of Adult

Education Maria Harris to organize a speakers' bureau through which former dropouts could share their stories with current students.

Ms. Raynor also mentioned that Countdown to Kindergarten plans to pilot a new strategy to welcome kindergarten students to school at the beginning of the year. The new initiative will encourage other adults to come into kindergarten to help shepherd children into school to help them get comfortable in the school setting.

Alternate Student Representative Adeoye Owolewa proposed increased recycling in schools as a revenue-generating strategy for the district. Ms. Dájer added that it might make sense for students to take on the task of sorting the recycling.