



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

April 3, 2013

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on April 3, 2013 at 6 p.m. at the Edward Winter Chambers, 26 Court Street, and Boston, Massachusetts.

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

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Superintendent's Memo: Boston Day & Evening Academy Charter Amendment – Mission and Vision Statement

Superintendent's Memo: AFSCME Council 93, Local 230 (Cafeteria Workers) Collective Bargaining Agreement

Report: BPS Enrollment: Round 1 for the 2013-2014 School Year

Report: BPS Capital Planning Update/MSBA Statements of Interest

Report: Interim Salary Payment Order for External Funds

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Vice-Chairperson Alfreda Harris; John Barros; Meg Campbell; Mary Tamer; and student representative Dan Chu.

School Committee Members Absent: Rev. Gregory G. Groover; and Claudio Martinez.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. O'Neill called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. He announced that the meeting was being broadcast live by Boston City TV (Comcast Channel 24 and RCN Channel 13) in cooperation with BNN-TV and would be rebroadcast at a later date.

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CITATION

The School Committee and Superintendent presented a citation to the Boston Latin School (BLS) Big Band for winning the Best Big Band Award at the Charles Mingus High School Competition and Festival at the Manhattan School of Music. Mr. Paul Pitts, BLS Director of Fine Arts, accepted the citation and introduced the students.

APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The School Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the March 27, 2013 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Today the Boston City Council voted to authorize the spending to purchase 585 Commercial Street, allowing the district to move forward with its plans to create a new downtown school.

Central office teams have been deployed to schools this week to help observe MCAS testing conditions and ensure integrity of the process.

Last week, a study by Harvard University and the Society for Research in Child Development found that the academic gains of students in BPS early education programs are “the largest found to-date in evaluations of large-scale public pre-kindergarten programs.” *Time Magazine* published a story about the program this week. The Superintendent thanked Mayor Menino for his longstanding investment in early education.

Channel 5 recently featured a story on the Harlem Globetrotters’ visit to the Eliot K-8 School.

On April 11th, Excel High School will hold a fundraiser to benefit its arts education programs. On April 5th, the Conley Elementary School will hold its first-ever “Walk for Autism Awareness” event, with proceeds going to Autism Speaks.

In honor of Autism Awareness Month, the Superintendent invited parent Liz Gomes and her son Mason to share their positive experiences at the Joseph Lee Elementary School. She then presented a video from BNN-TV highlighting a mural project by students in the school’s autism program.

The Committee voted by unanimous consent to accept the Superintendent’s Report.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Kenny Jervis, parent, Roger Clap Innovation School, testified regarding converting specialty rooms to classrooms.

Lola Omolodun, parent, Boston Arts Academy, testified regarding renovations to the facility.

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Karen Kast-McBride, parent, Washington Irving Middle School, testified regarding the need for more inclusion opportunities at the school.

ACTION ITEMS

Approved – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved a charter amendment revising the mission and vision statements for Boston Day and Evening Academy.

Approved – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved an agreement between the Boston School Committee and AFSCME Council 93, Local 230 (Cafeteria Workers) for 2010-2013.

Approved – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved an agreement between the Boston School Committee and AFSCME Council 93, Local 230 (Cafeteria Workers) for 2013-2016.

REPORTS

Boston Public Schools Enrollment: Round 1 for the 2013-2014 School Year – Kim Rice, Chief Operating Officer for Programs and Services, presented the Round 1 results of the BPS enrollment process for next school year. BPS expects to add 1,200 students, bringing the total projected enrollment to more than 58,000 – the highest level since 2005. The vast majority of this growth is occurring in grades K-2. The district has identified 34 of the approximately 70 classrooms that will be needed to accommodate the increased enrollment in the early grades. Approximately 4,900 families are on wait lists for schools; about 1,860 families are on multiple wait lists.

School Committee members asked questions about the process of identifying new classroom space and the impact it could have on student learning, all of which were answered by the Superintendent and her executive team. Mr. Barros encouraged the district to explore earlier registration as a means of building community. Ms. Tamer suggested moving elementary schools into facilities that currently house high schools that may have excess capacity. Mr. O’Neill strongly encouraged the district to conduct three-five year enrollment projections as part of its long-term planning.

BPS Capital Planning Update/MSBA Statements of Interest – Carleton Jones, Executive Director of Capital and Facilities Management, presented a high-level overview of the first phase of the district’s two-phase capital planning process. The district’s capital needs exceed its capital budget. Therefore, funding priority is being given to projects which will help the district achieve its goals around expanding K-8 opportunities, early education, inclusion, and dual language schools, as well as arts, athletics and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Mr. Jones also presented Massachusetts School Building Authority Statements of Interest (SOIs) for Boston Arts Academy, Mario Umana Academy, Blackstone Elementary School and the West Roxbury Education Complex.

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Committee members asked questions about how the district prioritizes its capital needs, all of which were answered by the Superintendent and Mr. Jones. Mr. Barros offered to help the district leverage capital dollars. He also suggested creating another school for the arts, given the popularity of Boston Arts Academy. In response to Ms. Campbell, Mr. Jones noted that the SOIs build in flexibility. Ms. Campbell proposed the creation of a community asset inventory to help the district think more broadly about the available resources to support student learning. Ms. Tamer requested a list of BPS facilities that are handicapped accessible. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the SOIs on April 24th, the same day that the Superintendent presents the district's complete capital plan.

Interim Salary Payment Order for External Funds – Chief Financial Officer John McDonough presented a brief report requesting that the School Committee approve an interim salary payment order for personnel who are paid through external funds. This order is requested annually due to the delay in receiving external fund award letters and finalized budgets from various funding sources. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the request on April 24th.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

The following people testified regarding the BPS Capital Planning Update/MSBA Statements of Interest Report:

Gene Gorman, parent and Governing Board member, Roger Clap Innovation School
Josh Weiss, parent, Joseph Hurley K-8 School
David Eppstein, board member, Boston Arts Academy
Peggy Wiesenberg, former BPS parent

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Tamer requested the following information:

- A list of outstanding information requests from School Committee members
- The number of substantially separate classrooms that the district is adding for the 2013-2014 School Year
- Information on how Quality Improvement Grants will be disseminated
- Fifth and sixth grade attrition rates for the past five years

On behalf of the Committee, Mr. O'Neill extended his best wishes to Rev. Groover, who is recovering from surgery. Mr. O'Neill also noted that the oak gavel used by the Committee chair is 75 years old.

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Edward Winter Chambers

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ADJOURN

At 9:06 p.m., the School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:

Elizabeth Sullivan

Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary