



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

June 19, 2013

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on June 19, 2013 at 6 p.m. at the Edward Winter Chambers, 26 Court Street, 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: Grants for Approval Totaling \$6,671,506

- Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant - \$855
- Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant - \$939,037
- Educator Observation I Pad Application - \$75,000
- Inclusive Preschool Learning Environment Renewal Grant - \$309,201
- Math and Special Education Leadership Continuation Grant - \$9,613
- School Redesign Grant (SRG) Cohort IV – Mattahunt and English High School - \$3,679,000
- Summer Food Services Program - \$1,658,80

Superintendent's Memo: International Travel Request: Boston Arts Academy – Johannesburg, South Africa, July 26-August 7, 2013

School Committee Memo: Continuation of the English Language Learners Task Force as a Monitoring Body

Superintendent's Memo: Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy

Superintendent's Memo: District Wellness Policy

Letter of Agreement between Boston School Committee and Interim Superintendent John McDonough, June 7, 2013

Report: Increasing Inclusive Practices in the Boston Public Schools

Report: Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPac) Update

Report: National Grid Easement at the James W. Hennigan Elementary School

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ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Vice-Chairperson Alfreda Harris; Meg Campbell; Rev. Gregory G. Groover; Claudio Martinez; Mary Tamer; and student representative Dan Chu.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

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.

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS AND CITATIONS

The School Committee and Superintendent Johnson presented a citation to the Harbor Pilot Middle School in honor of being named Outstanding Middle School of the Year by Best Buddies of Massachusetts.

Wilmer Quiñones, a graduating senior at Greater Egleston Community High School, was awarded the \$2,000 Thomas W. Payzant Service in Education Scholarship. Mr. Quiñones will attend the University of Massachusetts at Boston.

The following graduating seniors who are members of the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) received citations:

- Yveline Amazan, Boston International High School
- Christina Arcy, BSAC Secretary, TechBoston Academy
- Dan Minh Chu, Student Representative on the School Committee, Boston Latin Academy
- Bianca Martinez, BSAC Vice President, Greater Egleston Community High School
- Angelica Mendes, Urban Science Academy
- Audrey Ngankam, Teens in Print writer, Boston International High School
- Heaven Reda, BSAC President, Urban Science Academy
- Shaquell Stevenson, Greater Egleston Community High School

APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The School Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the June 5, 2013 School Committee meeting.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The Gaston Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston recently released a report on two-way bilingual education in Boston Public Schools (BPS).

http://www.umb.edu/news_events_media/events/two_way_bilingual_education_in_boston_public_schools_features_guidelines_and

Former student representative to the School Committee and Boston Latin Academy alumna Moriah Smith was recently awarded a Fulbright Scholarship.

The BPS Arts Expansion Initiative has released a new case study on the impact of Arts Education in Boston Public Schools. http://www.edvestors.org/other-files/2013_Arts_Case_Study.pdf

Unesco and Veolia Transportation, the District's new transportation provider, are sponsoring a photo exhibit at City Hall entitled, "Journeys to School." A team of photographers traveled the world to document the struggles students endure just to get to school every day. Students from the Carter School are among those featured.

The Superintendent congratulated the 2013 BPS Educators of the Year. Those honored include: Janira Arocho, biology teacher at Boston International High School; Neema Avashia, grade 8 history teacher at Dever/McCormack K-8 School; Erik Berg, grade 2 teacher at Philbrick Elementary School; Rainelda Borrero, community field coordinator at Rafael Hernandez K-8 School; Linda Cruz, grade 5 special education teacher at the Ellis Elementary School; Carmen Davis, grade 10 geometry teacher at Urban Science Academy; Seamus Foy, grade 11 English teacher at Another Course to College; Cynthia Hairston, counselor at Boston Arts Academy; Ester Louis Jeudi, grade 4 Inclusion and English language learners teacher at the Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary School; Marlayna McDuffie, kindergarten paraprofessional at Higginson/Lewis K-8 School; Cameron Calderon O'Hara, guidance counselor at Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers; Amy Piacitelli, a History teacher at Charlestown High School; Cynthia Soo Hoo, a K-5 math teacher at the Quincy Elementary School; and Seth Peterson, English teacher at Muriel Snowden International High School. Students, parents, and colleagues nominated teachers. A selection committee then chose those who were honored.

Mayor Thomas M. Menino recently joined Governor Patrick to announce a new collaboration between Madison Park Technical Vocational High School and Roxbury Community College (RCC) called RoxMAPP. The first-of-its-kind partnership will allow students attending Madison Park to enroll directly into RCC after high school and graduate with a high school diploma, an associate's degree and a technical training certificate in a high-demand field in as few as five years. The partnership will also connect RCC graduates with local employers in their field of choice for employment options after college, and create more defined pathways to local four-year universities for students who want to pursue higher degrees. The School Committee is scheduled to receive the plan on July 31.

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The Superintendent presented a gift to her special assistant, Barbara Connolly, as a token of her gratitude for all of her hard work and support.

Jakia Warren, a graduating senior at Boston Community Leadership Academy, is the recipient of the Matthew U. Johnson Scholarship, established in honor of Dr. Johnson's late husband. The Superintendent chose Dan Chu, student representative to the School Committee, as the recipient of a \$10,000 scholarship from Partners Healthcare.

Ms. Tamer thanked Diane Lescinskas for her work on behalf of students with special needs.

Rev. Groover thanked Dr. Johnson for working closely with the community throughout her tenure.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Boston City Councilor Ayana Pressley testified in favor of the District's Revised Wellness Policy.

Mark Culliton, parent and member, Harbor Pilot School Governing Board, testified regarding the Henderson/Harbor School pathway.

Jackie O'Dwyer, parent, Harbor High School, testified regarding the school's expansion process.

Dottie Engler, Co-Chair, Fenway High School Governing Board, testified regarding renovations to the school's facilities.

John St. Amand, Vice Chair, SpedPac, testified regarding special education issues.

Dianne Lescinskas, parent, Harbor High School, testified regarding the school's expansion.

Sandra Nijjari, parent, East Boston High School, testified regarding the process for finding a permanent headmaster.

Karen Kast-McBride, parent, Irving Middle School, testified regarding the Roslindale K-8 Pathway.

The following people testified regarding the BPS Countdown to High School Initiative:

- Jessica Madden-Fuoco
- Shannon Moran
- Sierra Morton
- Neema Avashia

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The following people testified in favor of adding a girls' soccer team at Boston International High School:

- Cassania Gilson, student, Boston International High School
- Vanessa Rosa, student, Boston International High School
- Yara Mendes, student, Boston International High School
- Betsaida Vicioso, student, Boston International High School
- Evanilde Seimedo, student, Boston International High School
- Antonio Lopes, athletic coach, Boston International High School

ACTION ITEMS

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved grants totaling \$6,671,506.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international travel request for students and chaperones from Boston Arts Academy to travel to Johannesburg, South Africa from July 26-August 7, 2013.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the continuation of the English Language Learners Task Force as a Monitoring Body until June 30, 2014.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee approved the District Wellness Policy by the following vote:

Yes: Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Vice-Chairperson Alfreda Harris; Meg Campbell; Rev. Gregory G. Groover; and Mary Tamer - 5

No: 0

Abstain: Mr. Martinez – 1

Mr. O'Neill entertained a motion to vote on the six proposed collective bargaining agreements as a slate, which was moved and seconded by the Committee. During the roll call, BPS Legal Advisor Ali Ocasio informed the Committee that the United Steel Workers of America Local 2936 (Bus Monitors) has not yet ratified its agreement. Rev. Groover then proposed an amendment to remove the Bus Monitors agreement from the slate and vote on that contract individually.

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Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved an amendment to vote on the United Steel Workers of America Local 2936 (Bus Monitors) agreement individually and take a separate vote for the following collective bargaining agreements: Local 1952, Painters & Allied Trades, District Council #35 (BPS Custodians); Planning and Engineering Union, SEIU, Local 888; Boston School Department Plant Administrators Association; American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO, Council 93, Local 2814, Storekeepers and Stores Deliverymen’s Union; The Boston Police Superior Officers Federation (Superior School Police Officers).

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the collective bargaining agreements between the Boston School Committee and the following unions: Local 1952, Painters & Allied Trades, District Council #35 (BPS Custodians), 2010-2013 and 2013-2016; Planning and Engineering Union, SEIU, Local 888, 2010-2013 and 2013-2016; Boston School Department Plant Administrators Association, 2010-2013 and 2013-2016; American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO, Council 93, Local 2814, Storekeepers and Stores Deliverymen’s Union, 2010-2013 and 2013-2016; The Boston Police Superior Officers Federation (Superior School Police Officers), 2010-2013 and 2013-2016.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a collective bargaining agreement between the Boston School Committee and the United Steel Workers of America Local 2936 (Bus Monitors) for the period 2010-2013 and 2013-2016.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a supplemental appropriation request for Fiscal Year 2013 in the amount of \$722,946 to cover the cost of the following agreements: \$589,990 for the Local Union #1952, Painters & Allied Trades District Council #35 (BPS Custodians); \$60,490 for the Planning and Engineering Union, SEIU, Local 888; \$28,484 for the Boston School Department Plant Administrators Association; \$17,075 for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO, Council 93 and Affiliate Local 2814, Storekeepers and Stores Deliverymen’s Union; and \$26,907 for the Boston Police Superior Officers Federation (Superior School Police Officers).

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a supplemental appropriation request for Fiscal Year 2013 in the amount of \$121,794 to support the collective bargaining agreement between the United Steel Workers of America Local 2936 (Bus Monitors) and the Boston School Committee.

REPORTS

Update on Agreement with Interim Superintendent of Schools – Mr. O’Neill announced that John McDonough has accepted the Committee’s offer to serve as Interim Superintendent at an annual salary of \$250,000 effective July 1, 2013. Mr. McDonough will work alongside Dr. Johnson until her departure at the end of July to ensure a smooth transition.

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Increasing Inclusive Practices in Boston Public Schools – Eileen Nash, Deputy Superintendent for Individualized Learning, presented an update on the district’s efforts to increase the number of students with special needs who are served in inclusive settings with their non-disabled peers. Research shows that students with special needs achieve at higher levels when effectively taught in an inclusive setting. Currently, 43 percent of students with special needs are educated in substantially separate classrooms. The Superintendent created a working committee and a steering committee to increase inclusive opportunities in BPS. The district has set a goal of adding 1,600 inclusive seats in the next five years. Ms. Nash announced that the district will open a 6th grade class for Haley students starting this fall, creating an inclusive pathway that parents have been seeking.

Ms. Campbell encouraged the district to accelerate the pace of inclusion expansion. She also asked Ms. Nash to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to all of the district’s high schools in light of earlier public testimony suggesting possible variations in high school admissions policies.

Reuse of the Henry L. Higginson School Building – Ms. Nash presented the Superintendent’s proposal to create a new school at the now-vacant Henry L. Higginson School building at 160 Harrishof Street, Roxbury, for the fall of 2013. The new school would serve early childhood students in grades K0-2 in fully inclusive settings. The school would feed into the Higginson-Lewis, which in the next few years would become a full-inclusive school for students in grades 3-8. This option would help BPS adapt to the ongoing increased demand for early childhood special education seats. Ms. Nash explained that the working committee and steering committee on inclusive practices plan to meet next week to address outstanding concerns about the proposal.

Ms. Campbell and Ms. Tamer expressed concerns about the Superintendent’s proposal to re-open the building citing excess capacity in higher grade levels and limited resources. Rev. Groover applauded the proposal, stating that the Roxbury community needs more inclusive K-8 options. Ms. Campbell restated her request for a comprehensive long-term facilities plan. Mr. Martinez stated that he conceptually supports the Higginson proposal. He also raised questions about the current student assignment plan. Ms. Tamer requested data on the need for special education services by neighborhood. Ms. Harris stated that she supports the Superintendent’s proposal to re-open the Higginson building.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPac) Update – Carolyn Kain and John St. Amand, Chair and Vice Chair of SpedPac, respectively, presented an update on SpedPac’s work. Key priorities include increasing inclusion programs district-wide, implementing transition services for students ages 14-22, and expanding highly specialized strands to high schools. SpedPac is also advocating for more vocational educational opportunities for students with special needs.

Ms. Tamer repeated an earlier request for the district’s five-year plan to increase assistive technology for students with special needs. She also suggested that a member of SpedPac serve

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on the board of RoxMAPP, a new partnership between Madison Park Technical Vocational High School and Roxbury Community College.

National Grid Easement at the James W. Hennigan Elementary School – Khadijah Brown, Director of Facilities Management, presented a request by National Grid for an easement on the grounds of the Hennigan Elementary School in Jamaica Plain. Mr. Martinez asked questions about the process to date and the potential impact of the easement, which Ms. Brown and representatives from National Grid agreed to provide.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Emily Born, parent, Dennis Haley Pilot School, testified regarding plans to expand the school to a full inclusion K-8.

Peggy Wiesenberg, former BPS parent, testified regarding the Superintendent's proposal to re-open the Higginson building.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Tamer requested the following information:

- An update on renovations to Fenway High School
- A review of pilot high school admission policies
- A copy of the state report on turnaround schools

Mr. Martinez requested a report on the high school assignment process.

Ms. Campbell requested information on how athletic funding is allocated to ensure gender equity.

ADJOURN

At 10:18 p.m., the School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary