



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

June 5, 2013

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on June 5, 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 \$1,209,188.

- Jeremiah E. Burke High School Redesign Grant - \$582,216.
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Grant - \$50,000.
- Turnaround Sustainability Grant - \$576,972.

Superintendent's Memo: Supplemental Appropriation for Special Education - \$6 million

Report: Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy Update

Report: District Wellness Policy

ATTENDANCE

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

School Committee Member Absent: Vice-Chairperson Alfreda Harris.

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.

June 5, 2013

APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The School Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the May 22, 2013 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

On May 28th, Mayor Thomas M. Menino, the School Committee and Superintendent Johnson celebrated the top graduates from each BPS high school at the annual Valedictorian Luncheon at the Boston Harbor Hotel.

During the month of May, Mayor Menino held his annual School Awards at Faneuil Hall recognizing students across the district for academics and school spirit.

The annual BPS Citywide Arts Festival will be held on Boston Common on June 6th-7th. The Superintendent thanked EdVestors for supporting the BPS Arts Expansion Initiative.

June 1st, BPS students participated in numerous events across the city, including the Technology Goes Home graduation, Robotics Olympics, the Roslindale Schools Arts Festival and the Dorchester Day Parade. Students also participated in the BUILD Business Plan competition at Northeastern University. The event featured 100 9th grade students representing their innovative business ideas and 55 10th grade students selling products from businesses they have launched in the last year.

The Office of Instructional and Information Technology this year has placed more than 100 high school students in paid, technology-related summer internships. In the last three years, 650 students have graduated through online credit recovery, and next month the District will launch its summer learning season with more than 11,000 students participating – the highest figure ever.

Dr. Carroll Blake, Executive Director, Achievement Gap, recently won the \$50,000 Collaborate Boston Competition, along with the Codman Square Brotherhood Project. Dr. Blake's collaboration is called "Black and Latino Boys at the STEM of Success," which seeks to improve the lives and futures of young men aged 9-15 in Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan.

Dr. Blake and Mary Ann Crayton, Executive Director of Community Engagement and the Circle of Promise, organized an event on June 3rd at the Shelburne Community Center, bringing together faith and community leaders in the Circle of Promise to discuss the progress to date and future goals.

On June 5th, BPS celebrated a playground renovation project at the Roger Clap Innovation School with the New England Patriots and the NFL Play 60 initiative. Patriots owner Robert Kraft presented a \$50,000 check to the school and announced that the Clap will get a new playground and physical education equipment, as well as a football for each student.

June 5, 2013

Mr. Kraft also visited the Russell Elementary School on June 3rd to personally match a \$30,000 award the school received from Discovery Education for the creation of a community garden.

A celebration will be held at City Hall on June 17th at 6 p.m. for “Journeys to School,” a photo exhibition by Unesco and Veolia Transdev, the District’s new transportation provider. A team of photographers traveled the world to document the struggles students take just to get to school every day – including the Carter School.

The Superintendent congratulated Ms. Tamer, for earning her master's in Education Policy and Management from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. .

John McDonough has been named as a finalist for “CFO of the Year” by the Boston Business Journal.

The Superintendent thanked Pat Brandes, who is stepping down as president of the Barr Foundation, for her dedication, passion and relentless energy.

The Superintendent’s Chief of Staff, Tim Nicolette, is leaving BPS to serve as chief administrative officer for Unlocking Potential. Assistant Chief of Staff Laura Dziorny will fill in until a permanent replacement is found. Ms. Campbell thanked Mr. Nicolette for his service.

Mr. O’Neill noted that Mayor Menino recently held his last series of School Awards ceremonies. Mayor Menino began the tradition as a City Councilor 28 years ago. He thanked the Mayor’s Education Advisor Martha Pierce for organizing the event each year.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The following people testified regarding the District’s Revised Wellness Policy:

- Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Commissioner, Boston Public Health Commission
- Marc Dones, Commissioner, Massachusetts Commission for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Youth
- Jessica Taubner, Chief of Staff, Boston City Councilor Ayana Pressley
- Christopher Lavaud, student, Jeremiah E. Burke High School
- Liz Salomon, Project Director, Fenway Health, The Fenway Institute
- Genesis Bautista, student, Fenway High School
- Astrid Pena, student, West Roxbury Academy
- Sheri Kasper, member, BPS Wellness Council and representative, New England Dairy Food Council
- Angie Cradock, Deputy Director, Harvard Prevention Research Center, and BPS parent
- Julia Gaggin, parent, Joseph P. Manning Elementary School
- Dr. Shari Nethersole, Boston Children’s Hospital

June 5, 2013

- Barbara Cohen, sexual health consultant
- Stephanie Cope, student, Community Academy of Science and Health
- Patricia Quinn, Executive Director, Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy, and BPS parent
- Wesley King, Boston Teacher Residency resident
- Tolle Graham, member of the BPS Wellness Council
- Julian Dormitzer, nurse, Fenway Health Center
- Sendy Lamour, student, Community Academy of Science and Health
- Dejonell Ricks, student, Community Academy of Science and Health
- Jerry Mogul, Executive Director, Massachusetts Advocates for Children

Susan Rothstein, professor at Northeastern University School of Law and member of the BPS Code of Conduct Advisory Council, testified regarding updates to the Code of Conduct.

Sam Tyler, Executive Director, Boston Municipal Research Bureau, testified regarding the supplemental appropriation request for special education and suggesting that the District explore establishing a fiscal reserve

Emily Born, parent, Dennis Haley Pilot School, presented a video in favor of expanding the school to a full inclusion K-8

Carolyn Kain, Chair, Special Education Parents Advisory Council, testified regarding the supplemental appropriation request for special education and other special education issues.

ACTION ITEMS

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved grants totaling \$ 1,209,188.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a \$6 million supplemental appropriation request to provide services for students with disabilities.

REPORTS

CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) Policy Update – Deputy Superintendent of Operations Joe Shea presented an update on the Superintendent's proposed CORI policy, originally presented to the Committee on April 24, 2013. Based on the state model CORI policy, the proposed policy addresses the provisions of a new state law on CORI checks and provides the district with more discretion in determining the suitability of potential and current employees. Mr. Shea explained that the district is awaiting guidance from the state regarding fingerprinting and will return to the Committee with that policy language in the next few months.

Committee members asked questions about the CORI review process, all of which were answered by Mr. Shea and the Superintendent. Mr. Martinez and Rev. Groover cautioned that the policy and its implementation must be fair and balanced. Ms. Tamer suggested that the district

June 5, 2013

consider performing financial background checks on employees who are responsible for managing large budgets. Mr. O'Neill recommended that the CORI review panel maintain records of its votes. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the recommendation on June 19th.

District Wellness Policy – Over the past year, the District Wellness Council has engaged more than 250 community members in its work to revise the BPS wellness policy. Stressing the link between student health and academic achievement, Jill Carter, Executive Director of Health and Wellness, presented the comprehensive policy which addresses eight areas of health and wellness: cultural proficiency; school food and nutrition promotion; physical activity and physical education; health education; healthy school environment; safe and supportive schools; health services; and staff wellness. The policy would provide all high schools students with equal access to condoms and sexual health counseling with parental approval.

School Committee members asked questions about various aspects of the policy and how it would be implemented. Ms. Campbell and Ms. Tamer emphasized the need for mental health services for students. Several Committee members urged the Superintendent to clarify the term “zero- tolerance” the Safe and Supportive Schools section of the policy or remove it. Ms. Tamer requested data on current physical education offerings by school, which Ms. Carter agreed to provide. Mr. O'Neill cautioned that the policy language must be carefully worded to differentiate between recommendations and directives. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the proposed policy on June 19th.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

No speakers.

NEW BUSINESS

The Superintendent presented a 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 exclusive settings, which allow students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers. 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.

School Committee members posed a number of questions about how the proposal would work, budget implications and facilities, all of which the Superintendent agreed to provide.

The Superintendent congratulated student representative Dan Chu on his upcoming graduation from Boston Latin Academy. Mr. Chu will attend the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Ms. Tamer asked the Committee to consider establishing a policy on granting honorary diplomas. Mr. O'Neill appointed Ms. Tamer to lead the effort.

School Committee Meeting
Edward Winter Chambers

June 5, 2013

Ms. Tamer requested data on the breakdown of sports teams and athletic budgets by school.

Ms. Campbell requested a follow-up report on principal evaluations.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On roll call, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining strategy and prepare for negotiations with non-union personnel. The Committee did not return to public session.

ADJOURN

At 10:40 p.m., the School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary