



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

July 31, 2013

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on July 31, 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 \$4,424,772.

- 21st Century Community Learning Centers Continuation Grant - \$50,000
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers Continuation Grant - \$279,000
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers Continuation Grant - \$140,000
- Career & Vocational Technical Education Perkins Grant - \$1,447,920
- Community Adult Learning Centers - \$175,000
- Establishing an Academic-Community Partnership to Promote Child Health in Boston - \$13,752
- Expanded Learning Time Implementation Grant - \$1,244,100
- Promoting Adolescent Health through School-Based HIV/STD Prevention and School-Based Surveillance - \$275,000
- USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program - \$800,000

Superintendent's Memo: Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) – Annual Membership Renewal

Superintendent's Memo: Field Trip Transportation Providers

An Inclusive School at the Higginson: A proposal to open the Higginson Building and create an inclusive pathway to the Higginson-Lewis

Superintendent's Memo: National Grid Easement at the James W. Hennigan Elementary School

Report: RoxMAPP: Massachusetts Academic Polytechnic Pathway – Roxbury

Report: Proposed Code of Conduct Revisions

Boston Public Schools Code of Conduct, Revised 2013, Summary of Changes

Horace Mann In-District Charter Amendments: Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School

Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School: Conditions for Expansion

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ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael O’Neill; Meg Campbell; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Rev. Gregory G. Groover; Mary Tamer; and student representative Dan Chu.

School Committee Members Absent: Vice-Chairperson Alfreda Harris; 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.

Mr. O’Neill welcomed Interim Superintendent John McDonough, who is presiding over his first School Committee meeting in his new capacity. He congratulated Mr. McDonough on being named Chief Financial Officer of the Year, Non-Profit, by the Boston Business Journal. He also welcomed new School Committee member Dr. Hardin Coleman, Dean of Boston University School of Education.

PRESENTATION OF CITATION

The School Committee presented a plaque and an engraved chair to Dr. Carol R. Johnson in recognition of her six years of service as Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools (BPS).

APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The School Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the June 19, 2013 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent McDonough thanked Dr. Carol Johnson for her support as he transitions into his new role. He is working closely with his executive team to keep the district moving forward, building on the progress BPS has made under Dr. Johnson’s leadership. The graduation rate is the highest it has ever been in the city of Boston. On national benchmark exams, BPS students consistently outperform their peers in nearly every other major urban district in the country. The college-going rate is up significantly, and the number of remedial courses BPS graduates have to take when they arrive in college is down significantly. Mr. McDonough credited former Superintendents Carol Johnson, Thomas Payzant and Michael Contemposis, as well as the School Committee and Mayor Menino for their outstanding leadership.

Today the Massachusetts School Building Authority board voted to explore merging the existing Quincy Upper facilities project with the Boston Arts Academy request. The opportunity would allow both schools to have a custom-built facility – one that is more cost-effective than separate projects and has the advantage of offering students in both schools a more complete facility. One

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potential site for the location is near South Station on land currently owned by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. Both schools are supportive of the concept and BPS planners are collaborating with the schools and the city to create a preliminary schematic design.

Boston Latin School has won a national competition called the “Global Green School Makeover Competition,” which provides the school with \$75,000 in green technology, an Office Depot gift card and \$65,000 worth of technical support.

Angel Charles, principal of the Haley School, has won the Comcast Leadership Award. She started her career as a City Year Corps member and has risen as a teacher and school leader.

BPS is serving approximately 11,500 students through summer learning programs.

The district’s new transportation contractor, Veolia Transportation officially took over from First Student on July 1st, 2013. Since March, Veolia has been cooperating with BPS and First Student to ensure a seamless transition.

Don Kennedy is now Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Kennedy joins BPS from the Bridgeport Public Schools, and was previously the Chief Financial and Operations Officer for the Seattle Public Schools. In 2008, he was awarded the Bill Wise Award by the Council of the Great City Schools, which honors outstanding business officials who have distinguished themselves through service to urban education.

Dr. Eileen de los Reyes is has been appointed Deputy Superintendent of Academics. She previously served as Assistant Superintendent for English Language Learners, where she made extraordinary gains in closing achievement gaps.

Mrs. Alfreda Harris was recently inducted into the 2013 class of the National Junior College Athletic Association Women’s Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Susanne Bartlett, parent, Roger Clap Innovation School, testified in favor of the school’s expansion.

Paul Puopolo requested an honorary diploma for his mother, who dropped out of school as a girl to support her family.

John St. Amand, Vice Chair, Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPAC), testified regarding special education issues.

Carolyn Kain, Chair, Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPAC), testified regarding special education issues.

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

Chris Smith, President and Executive Director, Boston After School and Beyond, testified regarding Boston Learning Together.

Carol Ridge Martinez, BPS parent, testified regarding inclusion.

Sherman Zemler Wu, parent, Mather Elementary School, testified regarding activities planned to commemorate the school's anniversary.

Mary Grady, parent, Mather Elementary School, testified regarding activities planned to commemorate the school's anniversary.

Heather Cochran, parent, Haley Elementary School, testified regarding the school's grade expansion.

Karen Kast-McBride, parent, Irving Middle School, testified regarding plans to expand the Haley School into an inclusive K-8 school.

The following people testified regarding the revised Code of Conduct:

- Dawn Ashe, Co-Chair, Code of Conduct Advisory Council
- Susan Maze Rothstein, Co-Chair, Code of Conduct Advisory Council
- Michael Gregory, Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative
- Janie Crecco, Federation for Children with Special Needs
- Carlos Rojas, Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC)
- Ayo Olumuyima, Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC)
- William Robinson, Chair, Political Action, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Ann Lambert, American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts
- Rose Miller, BPS parent

ACTION ITEMS

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved grants totaling \$4,424,772.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved annual membership dues to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees in the amount of \$7,280.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved field trip transportation providers for the 2013-2014 school year.

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Approved – On roll call, the Committee approved the reopening of the Henry L. Higginson school building, 160 Harrishof Street, Roxbury, to create a new, fully inclusive pre-K to grade 2 school, serving as a feeder to the Higginson-Lewis K-8 School, 131 Walnut Avenue, Roxbury. The order was approved by the following vote:

Ms. Campbell – Abstain

Dr. Coleman – Yes

Rev. Groover – Yes

Mr. Martinez – Absent

Ms. Tamer – Yes

Ms. Harris – Absent

Mr. O’Neill – Yes

Mr. O’Neill announced that the School Committee will establish a task force on inclusion practices. He appointed Mr. Martinez and Dr. Coleman to serve on the task force and asked Ms. Tamer to serve as Co-Chair. Ms. Tamer agreed to present an update at the next School Committee meeting.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved an easement to National Grid on the property of the James W. Hennigan School, 200 Heath Street, Jamaica Plain.

REPORTS

RoxMAPP: Massachusetts Academic Polytechnic Pathway – Roxbury – Massachusetts Secretary of Education Matthew H. Malone presented an overview of RoxMAPP, a new collaboration between Madison Park Technical Vocational High School and Roxbury Community College. The partnership will establish new academic and career development programs, expose students to career options early in their high school years, and provide them with greater access to work-based learning opportunities. RoxMAPP will also create seamless pathways to employment for students in high-demand industries such as health care, information technology and life sciences.

School Committee members asked questions about RoxMAPP’s current and potential partners, enrollment, and vocational pathways offered, all of which were answered by Secretary Malone. Ms. Campbell asked that minutes of the RoxMAPP planning committee be posted online. Ms. Tamer requested an update on Madison Park’s redesign in the fall. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the partnership at its next meeting.

BPS Code of Conduct Update – Chief Operating Office Sam Depina presented revisions to the district’s Code of Conduct (COC), which was last updated in 2010. Over the past year, the Code of Conduct Advisory Council, Boston Parents Organizing Network and Boston Students Advisory Council worked with a variety of BPS offices to update the COC. The proposed revisions would align the COC with a 2012 Massachusetts law that emphasizes the importance of

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giving all students the opportunity to make academic progress during suspensions and expulsions; offers progressive and supportive approaches to discipline and provides due process for students facing potential suspension or expulsion.

Ms. Tamer asked the Superintendent to clarify several aspects of the revised COC prior to the next Committee meeting, including the district's definition of egregious, the necessity of a third party witness, bus safety and sexual assault protocols, which the Superintendent and Mr. Depina agreed to provide. She also requested a list of schools that are currently utilizing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), as well as schools that have staff who are trained in PBIS. Rev. Groover asked that the Committee receive a document highlighting proposed revisions compared with the current policy. Dr. Coleman asked questions about training and implementation, which Mr. Depina answered. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the revised Code of Conduct at its next meeting.

Horace Mann In-District Charter Amendments: Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School – Jill Conrad, Senior Advisor for Human Capital Strategy, and Jesse Solomon, Executive Director of Boston Plan for Excellence, presented proposed changes to the charter of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School (DSNCS), which opened in the fall of 2012 as a BPS Horace Mann In-District Charter. DSNCS is seeking a minor amendment to revise its calendar and length of school day, as well as a major amendment to expand from a K1-5 to a K1-8, increasing total enrollment over time to 957 students.

Committee members asked questions about the thought process behind the amendments, the school's vision, and how the changes fit into the district's long-term facilities plans. Rev. Groover stated that he is a member of the Boston Plan for Excellence Board of Directors and would not participate in the discussion or the vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Peggy Wiesenber, former BPS parent, testified regarding the Superintendent's proposal to amend the charter of the Dudley Street In-District Charter School.

REPORTS *(continued)*

Following a brief recess, during which Rev. Groover recused himself from the meeting, the Superintendent withdrew the district's request for the major charter amendment regarding grade expansion, explaining that the district needed more time to fully develop the proposal.

ACTION ITEM

Approved – On roll call, the Committee approved the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School's application for a charter amendment relating to its school calendar and length of school day, effective upon approval by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The order was approved by the following vote:

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Ms. Campbell – Yes
Dr. Coleman – Yes
Rev. Groover – Absent
Mr. Martinez – Absent
Ms. Tamer – Yes
Ms. Harris – Absent
Mr. O’Neill – Yes

Immediately following the vote, Rev. Groover returned to the meeting.

DISCUSSION: HONORARY DIPLOMAS

Mr. O’Neill announced that the Committee was tabling its discussion of honorary diplomas until it received more information from legal counsel.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Jerry Mogul, Executive Director, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, testified regarding the proposed revisions to the Code of Conduct and RoxMAPP.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. O’Neill announced that the district is adding a page on its web site, www.bostonpublicschools.org, that will provide updates on the superintendent search process. He also bid farewell to student representative Dan Chu, a 2013 graduate of Boston Latin Academy, who will attend the University of Massachusetts at Amherst this fall.

ADJOURN

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

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary