

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, October 16, 2017 – Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. - Board of Aldermen's Chambers – Somerville City Hall

Members present: Mayor Curtatone (8:22 p.m.) Mr. Futrell, Ms. Palmer, Mr. Roix, Ms. O'Sullivan, Ms. Normand, Alderman White, Mr. Green and Ms. Pitone.

Members absent:

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Pitone called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with a moment of silence and asked that we remember former Somerville Public Schools student Kevin Raymond who passed away unexpectedly this weekend. The moment of silence was followed by a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

Ms. Pitone asked the Superintendent to call the roll, results of which were as follows: PRESENT – 8 – Futrell, Palmer, Roix, O'Sullivan, Normand, White, Green and Pitone and ABSENT – 1 – Curtatone.

II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Student Representatives Aislinn and Emily reported that students at Somerville High School who took the PSAT last week were upset that they were not notified, ahead of time, that they needed to bring their own calculators for the test. Overall, the testing went well, but lack of information was upsetting.

Ms. Skipper thanked the students for notifying us and agreed that everyone needs to know everything they need to have to be prepared for such events.

III. AWARDS AND CITATIONS

A. Recognition of teachers who have recently attained Professional Teacher Status

Mrs. Skipper announced that Human Resource Director Mariana MacDonald initiated a program to recognize those teachers who have achieved Professional Teacher Status and, tonight, we have some of the most recent staff members who have received PTS here for recognition. Mrs. Skipper invited Mrs. MacDonald and STA President Jackie Lawrence to join her at the podium to introduce the honorees. Mrs. MacDonald announced that she is very happy to honor these teachers and she and Assistant HR Director Sharon Ellis will take turns presenting each person with a certificate along with a statement provided by their principal/administrator. She introduced the teachers in alphabetical order:

- Matthew Collins
- Denise Etheridge
- Jessica Ferris
- Mark Hecox
- Jennifer Kuszmar
- Leslie Lartey
- Megan Magill
- Ariel Mayer
- Madeline Mayerson
- Jennifer Miller
- Mario Sousa
- Tara Stead
- Jeffrey Stuart
- Melissa Warren

Mr. Green asked for an explanation of what, exactly, Professional Status means for those watching at home and who may not have an understanding of the term.

STA President Jackie Lawrence explained that teachers must work three full, consecutive years, in a subject for which they are professionally licensed. The Association is extremely proud of these educators and all of the hard work they have put in over the past three years.

Ms. Normand announced that she is excited to see teachers come and stay and that it is gratifying to honor those who have direct contact with our kids.

The meeting recessed at 7:15 p.m. so members could interact with our guests.

The meeting resumed at 7:28 p.m.

The listing of items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. September 25, 2017 Regular Meeting
- B. October 2, 2017 Regular Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to approve the minutes of September 25 and October 2, 2017.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

- C. October 10, 2017 Emergency Meeting

Ms. Pitone provided a report on the meeting of October 10, as follows:

The School Committee met for an emergency meeting on the morning of Tuesday, October 10, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. and the one item on the agenda was the approval of an overnight field trip for the Brown School's grade 5 students to Nature's Classroom. Through an oversight, the field trip form did not get to use in time. The field trip was approved and the students were able to leave for their trip later that morning.

Discussion ensued relative to not having this happen in the future and Mrs. Skipper assured members that our administrative team, including Mr. Maguire from the Brown, are normally very prompt with paperwork, but this just was a situational issue that should not happen again.

Minutes will be approved at the November 6 meeting.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**D. PERSONNEL REPORT**

Mrs. Skipper announced that there is nothing of immense significance on this month's Personnel Report, which is included in this week's packet.

E. DISTRICT REPORT

- Next Gen MCAS 2.0 Update – On Wednesday, the public release of MCAS data (currently embargoed) will take place. At our next School Committee meeting, there will be a full presentation on the results, including changes to the parent reports. Statewide, districts will be held harmless regarding accountability for grades 3-8 due to the new test. This is a baseline year for those grades. Kenya Avant and Mrs. Skipper will be reviewing all data and reporting back at our next meeting. Messaging will be sent to parents/guardians on Wednesday.

Discussion ensued relative to

- how growth will be measured – transitional SGP will be determined.
- how and when parents/guardians will receive their students' results – by mail
- Update on supporting residents of Puerto Rico – a press release is in the works regarding fundraising efforts to assist resident of Puerto Rico. Monetary donations are being managed by the Boston Foundation and donations of materials to be sent to Puerto Rico will be managed here in the city. Further details will be in the press release.
- Letters of Support Clarendon Tenants' Association - Lengthy discussion ensued relative to the students and families who will be outplaced during renovations of these apartments. Members will review draft letters to both the Tenants' Association and the property developers that are in packet and provide feedback to Mr. Curley. Will take action on these at the regular meeting on November 6. Discussion ensued among members which included the following:

- Identifying students involved – could be 100
- Allowing displaced students to remain in SPS under a similar system as what is currently used for high school seniors
- Making an amendment to the School Choice Assignment Policy in Rules Management
- The need for a Project Manager of the project developer to work as a liaison on this
- Impact on school communities
- Tenants have formed a residents' association and learned their rights and how to express their needs and concerns
- Governmental boundaries - Somerville Housing Authority, Massachusetts Housing and Development are not City agencies
- The big piece is transportation
- Being mindful of the level of anxiety for students and families at this time.

Dr. Almi Abeyta provided her report, as follows:

Homework Task Force

A subgroup of the Homework Task Force met most recently on October 12, 2017, to finalize the questions for the homework survey. Our goal is to send out the survey by the beginning of November. Regarding empirical research, Dr. Jack Schneider, a parent at the Kennedy and professor at Holy Cross,

shared his analysis of the impacts of homework and the research with us. We will use this research to inform our recommendations.

SHS Headmaster Search

On October 18th, consultants from UMASS Boston will host focus groups for SHS students, teachers and administrators at SHS. We will be hosting the community focus groups on November 6th and 8th. Messages were sent out today in 4 different languages.

Peer Supporter Pilot Program

A Peer Supporter will work closely with educators who are in need of additional instructional and/or professional support. Peer supporters will be offered to certain educators as a resource for growth and development. Participation as a Peer Supporter and as a Peer Educator is completely voluntary. The outcomes of this pilot program will help inform negotiations at the end of 2017-2018. We will be hiring 6 Peer Supporters.

Mrs. Skipper continued her report:

- Mrs. Skipper will be presenting next week at the Mass Cue Conference at Foxboro Stadium. She will be a CUEByte speaker and the topic will be on Personalizing the Learning Journey: Caring for the Academic, Social-Emotional and Physical Well-being of Every Student. There are expected to be approximately 2,000 people in the audience.
- Somerville High School will be hosting its annual **Post-Secondary Fair** this Wednesday, October 18th, from 6:30-8:00pm at the SHS Field House. All high school students and families are invited to come out and meet college admissions representatives, and learn about additional post-secondary opportunities available throughout the U.S.
- Congratulations to Somerville High School Teacher, Gino Colantuono, for being named **Italian Teacher of the Year!** Mr. Colantuono has been a member of the SHS World Language team for 13 years, and is also the advisor for the SHS Italian Club. He will be officially recognized at the MA Foreign Language Association's annual conference later this month.
- We are very excited to share the news that a two-year, \$300,000 **Barr Foundation planning grant** proposal on which we partnered with the Center for Collaborative Education (CCE), was selected for funding. The Barr Foundation announced awardees last week, of its "*Preparing for Post-Secondary Success through the Wider Learning Ecosystem*" request for proposals. Selected projects will focus on designing high school educational models that provide learning opportunities outside the traditional classroom as a core part of every students' educational experience.

We look forward to working with CCE and a team of community partners to envision and plan a new model at Somerville High School that leverages the many resources and partners in our dynamic community and the surrounding area to provide every student at SHS with an educational experience that fully prepares them for the next steps in their journey.

VI. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

F. Rules Management Subcommittee: October 2, 2017 (Mr. Green)

Rules Management Subcommittee 10.02.17

In Attendance: L. Palmer, S. Roix, A. Green, M. Skipper, J. Curley

I. Ferrari, B. Hazell, L. O'Keefe, G. Lottie, (SHS GSA students) S. Eustice (GSA Faculty Advisor), F. Hess (Harvard Grad Student)

Time started: 6:01pm ET Time adjourned: 7:00pm ET

Subjects discussed:

- SPS should be a model for how non-binary students are treated.
- School ID cards should reflect students' preferred names.
- Andre and Jeff to revisit Gender Identity Support policy, share back with GSA students.
- Share this work with the SHS Cultural Proficiency Committee follow-up.
- New HS will have non-gendered bathrooms. Some students will be invited to join the Building Committee when design gets closer.
- Need for staff PD/student health curriculum updates in early grades
- Teachers need to respect student preferred pronouns
- Concerns about privacy particularly for students who may not have come out to their parents
- Need to increase line item for School Committee PD – currently only \$2,900/yr.

- Motion to strike all recommended policies based on MASC guidance from the current Policy Manual. Unanimously approved.
- Start conversation about DBC Budget Deadlines.

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, to strike the following recommended redundant policies from the Somerville Public School Policy Manual:

- DJG Vendor Relations
- H Negotiations
- IHAE Physical Education
- IJJ Textbook Selection
- IJK Supplementary Materials
- IJM Special Interest Materials
- JBA Student to Student Harassment
- JICG Tobacco
- KJA Relations with Boosters

Members would like time to review the policies listed above and so the action will be deferred to the November 6th meeting. Motions will be posted for full member review.
The motion was withdrawn.

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, to accept the report of the Chair of the Rules Management Subcommittee meeting of October 2, 2017.
The motion was approved via voice vote.

B. Finance and Facilities Subcommittee: October 11, 2017 (Mr. Futrell)

On Wednesday, Oct 11, the Finance & Facilities subcommittee held a meeting at 8 Bonair Street, which began at 6:34pm. In attendance were myself, Mr. Green, Mr. Roix, Superintendent Skipper, Finance Director Gordon, and 3 members in the audience including Ms. Pitone and Ms. O'Sullivan.

On the agenda were a review of the Draft FY19 Budget timeline, the September Expenditure Report and Bill Rolls, a Facilities Update, and an update on outdoor space.

We spoke at length on the draft FY19 budget timeline, incorporating two distinct periods for community engagement through School Committee members, and highlighted at which points in the process budget requests would be made. We also discussed the variety of different ways that a parent or community member could make a budget request but for the sake of simplicity of message, Principals are the primary point of contact for all budget requests. Principals are expected to have received requests from their parent community, their School Improvement Council, and their PTA. We sequenced the timeline such that School Committee member requests follow a week after Principals submit their requests, so that School Committee Members can identify which parent requests they've fielded were included by the Principal and which were not, and then make their own requests accordingly.

The draft budget timeline will be sent out to the full School Committee, and will be approved by the Finance & Facilities Subcommittee at our November 15 meeting.

We then reviewed the Expenditure Report, which included questions around the timing of the School Committee budget line and training opportunities represented, as well as questions around Facilities and our agreements with the city. Lastly we noted that the Special Education line will be reviewed periodically to true up committed dollars, in an attempt to smooth out adjustments to this budget line over the course of the year.

We then discussed the Bill Rolls, which included questions on the rollout of Chrome Books and services provided by the Home for Little Wanderers. Mr. Roix moved and Mr. Green seconded a motion to pass the Bill Rolls, which passed unanimously.

We then discussed facilities, which didn't include any major updates at this point in the year. We did discuss security updates at the West that were recently completed by our vendor Lantel security, which included cameras at the entry doorways, outside, and at the parking lot. Of note: there are no cameras in classrooms and no video feed is being recorded. Access to these cameras right now is limited to in-building viewing. Once we complete additional upgrades, these cameras will provide access locally in the building, as well as to police and select DPW officials. We discussed a need for a policy on how the district will store audio/video data, how long the district will store it, and who can view it, which Mr. Green agreed to include in a future Rules Subcommittee agenda.

Lastly, we discussed outdoor space at the West and the Brown. Mr. Gordon talked through the Board of Alderman meeting a couple weeks' prior regarding CPA funding. The highlights are as follows:

- CPA funding applications have to go through the city
- CPA funding does not include turf, but does include major updates to play spaces
- The West and the Brown will join in submitting an application for CPA funding
 - Arne Franzen is the key point of contact for this
 - The application will be submitted over the winter
 - Parents and community members should expect to hear more in the Spring
- The process is typically a 3-year process
- The city is committed to community engagement during the planning phase
- Given the long lead time, there is an opportunity for small improvements through a partnership between the city and SPS
 - These small improvements could include tables, umbrellas, benches, and other accommodations to support outdoor classrooms
 - March/April is when community members should expect further engagement on interim improvements

Finally, the subcommittee agreed that, in addition to recurring monthly work, the additional topic on our November agenda will be a full review of Community Schools - how they are funded, how they work, where the money goes and how it's tracked, etc.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm, moved by Mr. Green and seconded by Mr. Roix.

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to accept the report of the Chair of Finance for the meeting of October 11, 2017.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the FY18 bill rolls.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

The School Committee recessed at 8:47 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 8:49 p.m.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

• **MASC Conference Delegate Selection and guidance re: resolutions**

Members will elect a voting delegate and an alternate voting delegate to represent them at the MASC Conference in November. Guidance should also be provided to said delegates regarding the Committees' voting preferences on the following resolutions.

Delegate selection:

Three members, Mr. Futrell, Mr. Green and Ms. Palmer volunteered to serve as delegates. Due to scheduling, Ms. Palmer had to withdraw. Following discussion, Mr. Green was selected as the Delegate and Mr. Futrell as the Alternate.

Resolutions

Ms. Normand announced that she, as one member, has full confidence in the decision of the voting delegates.

Anyone wishing to provide feedback on these resolutions should submit it to Mr. Green by the end of the week. Mr. Curley will review the resolutions and provide additional information to members.

- Resolution 1: Movement of the Chapter 70 Funding Enrollment date to March 15
- Resolution 2: Reform of Circuit Breaker funding
- Resolution 3: Litigation for fair school finance
- Resolution 4: Privatization of Public Education and the oversight of public schools, including small and regional districts
- Resolution 5: Use of Federal funds
- Resolution 6: Foundation budget
- Resolution 7: Affordable Care Act and Medicaid

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

G. **Field Trips** (recommended action: approval)

January 10, 2018

Next Wave/Full Circle students to Pat's Peak Ski Resort, Henniker, NH. Transportation via school van. Cost to students is \$25.00 each.

February 8, 2018

Next Wave/Full Circle students to Pat's Peak Ski Resort, Henniker, NH. Transportation via school van. Cost to students is \$25.00 each.

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Normand, to waive the reading of the field trips and approve.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

B. Acceptance of Donations (recommended action: approval)

The Superintendent recommends the acceptance, with gratitude, of the following donations:

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program donated to
Monetary	Lucy and Jason Van Beever	Somerville, MA	\$200	5 th grade activities
Monetary	SHS Class of 1947 c/o Marilyn Kelly	Sandwich, MA	\$875	SHS Athletics
Food grinder and meat slicer	Daniel Tsiakos, Univex Corp.	Salem, NH	\$9,209	SHS Culinary Arts

MOTION: Ms. O'Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Futrell, to accept, with gratitude, the above listed donations.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

Future Items of New Business

1. Reminded about scheduling an executive session with the new attorney regarding the ESCS civil suit
2. Announced two (2) bills that are currently in the legislature – one regarding working parents being able to use finance funds to pay for daycare, etc. and the other regarding recess.
3. Reminder on honoring former SHS teacher, Kevin Dua at a future meeting.

IX. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Futrell

Asked about discussion of a later start time for the school day. Ms. Pitone responded that this is being discussed in Long Range Planning.

Ms. Palmer

1. Inquired about a concern over potential hacking of student records and mentioned that at least one school district (not sure where) had records held hostage. Mrs. Skipper reported that she has reached out to both John Breslin and Bruce Desmond to look into this. We have top-notch firewalls and our server security is very tight. She is awaiting a formal response, but is assured that we have good protocols and secure data.
2. Reported on why she has been sitting during the Pledge of Allegiance and that she will continue sitting until racial justice is addressed.

Ms. Normand departed the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Mr. Futrell asserted that equity is always at the back of everyone's mind when making decisions.

Ms. Pitone reported that we are collaborating with Mrs. Skipper to bring in professional support and that we are not avoiding the issue, more so making sure what we do is the most effective and that we take a right vs do fast approach.

Mr. Green asked for an update on initiatives in the district.

Mr. Roix

1. reported that he will be unable to attend the meeting on Thursday evening relative to negotiation training by the MASC.

Ms. Pitone replied that there will be follow-up in the near future during a meeting for Executive Session.

Mr. Green asked if the meeting on Thursday night with the MASC was open to the public. It is an open meeting

Mayor Curtatone

1. Announced that the City had undertaken an extensive Conversations Project about race, etc. and offered to share the results with the School Committee as a possible framework for future discussions.

Mr. Green

1. Announced that draft procedures for Public Comment will be on the agenda for the November 6th Rules meeting and asked that members please share their comments, edits, in advance of the meeting in order to move the policy along.

Ms. Palmer requested that this be a meeting of the whole so that all members may participate in discussion prior to the policy going before the open board for first reading.

Ms. Palmer

1. Requested more information on the Lockdown Drills. Asked about notification procedures.
2. Asked who would be communicating back to the Clarendon Tenants' Association regarding the letters. Ms. Pitone stated that Ms. Normand is the representative who has been working with them, so she will communicate with them.

Mr. Green

1. Asked about the smoke stack at Somerville High School emitting an unpleasant odor today and if efforts have been taken to prevent this from happening in the future.

Mrs. Skipper responded that there were leaks in the boiler that caused the odor and that they had been fixed by DPW.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Prior to adjourning, Mr. Green offered condolences from the School Committee to staff members who have recently lost family members.

- William Buckley, father-in-law of Michele Buckley, SPS Payroll Office.
- Dan Foley, retired employee of the Technology Department.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m. via voice vote.

Related documents:

Agenda

Two (2) sets of minutes for approval

October 2017 Personnel Report

Two (2) out of state field trips for approval

Two (2) draft letters regarding the

Three (3) donation acceptance forms