

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Monday April 11, 2016 – Regular Meeting**

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

**Members present:** Ms. Palmer, Alderman White, Ms. Pitone, Mayor Curtatone (8:01 p.m.), Mr. Futrell, Mr. Green, and Ms. Normand.

**Members absent:** Mr. Roix, Mr. Bockelman and Superintendent Skipper

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Carrie Normand called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Board of Aldermen's Chambers at City Hall at 7:08 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Ms. Normand asked for a roll call, the results of which are as follows: - Present – 6 – Palmer, Futrell, Green, Pitone, White and Normand and ABSENT – 3 – Curtatone, Roix and Bockelman.

Ms. Normand reported that Superintendent Skipper and Mr. Roix are unable to be at tonight's meeting as they are currently in attendance at the Somerville High School Building Committee meeting. Also, Mr. Bockelman is traveling for work and is unable to attend this evening.

Dr. McKay filled in during Mrs. Skipper's absence.

Ms. Normand announced that, unless there was any objection, we would now take **Item. 6C. SHS Building Committee Update – Proposed New Chapter 74 Programs** – out of order and invited CTE Director Leo DeSimone to the podium to provide information relative to these new programs.

Mr. DeSimone gave an historical report on CTE programs over the past several years and the careful review of these programs and also research into what new programs would be beneficial to our students. Mr. DeSimone reported that Somerville High School currently offers 13 CTE Programs – Automotive Technology, Construction Technology, Child Development, Information Support Services and Networking, Culinary Arts, Architectural Design/Pre-engineering, Cosmetology, Electrical, Health Careers, Graphic Design and Visual Communication, Machine Technology, Metal Fabrication, and Dental Assisting. The proposal is to add four (4) new offerings with the completion of the new high school – Plumbing, Barbering, Medical Occupations and HVAC.

Discussion ensued relative to:

Enrollment trends, how new programs may impact current course enrollments, some classes being available as electives to non-CTE students, funding, and discussion regarding the Fab Lab, which will be available to the public outside of school hours (3:00 – 9:30 p.m.)

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by to maintain the existing 13 programs and to add four new – HVAC, Plumbing, Barbering and Medical Occupations.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

**II. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Mr. Ojo was not present at this evening's meeting.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- March 7, 2016

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the minutes of March 7, 2016. The motion was approved via voice vote.

**IV. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

Mr. Futrell assumed the Chair so that Ms. Normand could provide her report on Long Range Planning.

**A. School Committee Meeting for Long Range Planning: March 12 (Ms. Normand)**

Present: Carrie Normand, Paul Bockelman, Steve Roix, Dan Futrell, Lee Palmer, Andre Green, Laura Pitone, Superintendent Mary Skipper, and Assistant Superintendent Vince McKay.

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 am.

*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.*

There were three items on the agenda taken out of order:

1. **Other**

As reference material, Carrie Normand distributed copies of five School Committee policies for members to reference without discussion. There was a brief conversation about the need to put social media postings in context so that those reading the posts would have a better understanding of the larger School Committee discussion.

2. **Director of Special Education Job Description**

The Director of Special Education is one of positions the School Committee directly hires. The Committee reviewed and suggested a few changes to the job description including a demonstrated commitment to including special education students in general education classes, experience with working with dually identified students, experience developing in-district programming, and an understanding of current regulations and best practices. The hiring process will have community involvement and the School Committee will publically interview the finalist. The position will be posted with a July 1, 2016 start date.

3. **District Goals 2016-2017**

The Somerville School Committee sets district goals in conjunction with the Superintendent. These goals establish district priorities. The School Committee's annual evaluation of the superintendent includes progress towards district goals.

Superintendent Mary Skipper presented a list of ten proposed goals including: halving the performance gaps for special education students and English Language Learners, develop and implement innovative measures of student academic performance and school quality, differentiation of curricula through Universal Design, instruction and assessment, PreK-12 social emotional learning framework, cultural proficiency and trauma sensitivity, universal kindergarten readiness, literacy plan PreK to grade 5, develop a Digital Blueprint, Human Capital strategy, and support the Whole Child. Next the School Committee generated an extensive list of topics to consider: community engagement, volunteerism, improving communication, community participation in school committee, strengthening district profile and reputation/PR, Healey unification plan fulfillment, narrow performance gaps (ELL, SPED and socio-economic), STEAM Academy, strengthen connection between elementary schools and high schools, universal k readiness focusing on social emotional health, teacher/staff diversity and retention, increase birth-5 years old supports, strengthen SFCL, strengthen unstructured playtime at earliest grades, review middle grades structure, school assignment, have a plan for K readiness/outside partners, Tufts partnership, Unidos, dual language programs, new high school, staff retention, staff with variant experience, understanding of neurodiversity, physical activity, recess and lunch time, mind/body understanding, supports, prek-12, project-based learning, integrated, unstructured time, whole child curriculum, school day length, stress-reduction, schedule, extended learning time, explore opportunities at Next Wave/Full Circle, look at nontraditional student, drop out recovery, SCALE, facilities, outdoor space, and Somerville Evening Program.

To winnow the list down, each participant indicated their top five priorities. The most popular were closing performance gaps and creating local formative assessments for a variety of areas. After discussion, ideas were grouped into five categories: human capital, early education, community engagement, developing assessments, and performance gaps. Further work needs to be done to refine categories and set measurable goals under each heading. Somerville Public School's vision statement will be used alongside district goals.

MOTION: Ms. Normand made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, to accept the report and minutes of the School Committee Meeting for Long Range Planning of March 12, 2016.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

Ms. Normand returned to the Chair following her report.

**V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

**A. Personnel Report (March 2016)**

Dr. McKay announced that the March 2016 Personnel Report is in members' packets and drew attention to the three most recent retirements:

- Susan McAnney, Speech Language Pathologist at the Winter Hill School
- Linda Manzelli, Grade 6 teacher at the Argenziano School

- Mary DiGuardia, Director of Special Education

Dr. McKay congratulated the three new retirees and wished them all well in the future, but took a few minutes to say a few words regarding Mary DiGuardia.

*Mary DiGuardia has served over 40 years with the District. She has served as the Special Education Director for the last two years, and was Assistant Special Education Director for 5 years prior to that. Other roles included the Early Childhood Special Education Liaison and School Adjustment Counselor. Mary has been an outstanding member of our team, whose expertise and dedication will be sorely missed.*

*As a member of the District's leadership team, Mary demonstrated a high level of commitment to her work, always keeping the focus on how we can best meet the needs of all the students and staff members we serve in our district. She has provided invaluable support and guidance in my own transition to Somerville, and I have seen that same level of commitment to her colleagues throughout the District.*

*Our sincere thanks to Mary for her many years of exceptional service to the Somerville Public Schools community.*

### **B. District Report**

- Congratulations to the **SHS Culinary Arts team** of Marianthi Kapotas, Getulio dos Reis, Guadalupe Pleitez, and Chef Stuart for winning the "Best Dessert" award at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Culinary Vocational Technical Cook-off, hosted by Bristol-Plymouth Technical School in Taunton, MA last week. The team's winning dessert entry sounded incredible – it consisted of vanilla bean and orange jasmine rice pudding, honey ruile, caramel sauce, spun sugar and coconut caviar. The team also competed in the entrée category, and featured Classic Beef Wellington with mushroom duxelles, foie gras, beet and gorgonzola panna cotta with parmesan truffled gaufrette potatoes.

If that doesn't entice you to try the Highlander Café for lunch, I'm not sure what will! The Highlander Café is open to the public for lunch on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Congratulations to Chef Stuart and his students on an exceptional showing!

- Work on the SHS Building Project continues, and we encourage the community be part of the discussion. The Building Committee met/is meeting this evening, and will be narrowing down the remaining 3 options to one. Visit the **Somerville High School Building Project** website ([www.somervillema.gov/highschool](http://www.somervillema.gov/highschool)) for a look at the progress to date on this project, and to offer your input on the remaining option. There are several remaining meetings and forums coming up in which you can also participate. A public forum will be held on Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, starting at 6:30pm at the SHS Auditorium. Hope to see you there.
- The SFLC's community-wide wellness event, "**Growing Up in Somerville**" was a great success. More than 125 people took part in a variety of sessions that focused on raising healthy children, representing topics relevant to today's parents and guardians in our community. The SFLC looks forward to bringing you this event annually. A special thanks to all of the partners who made this event possible, including the Cambridge Health Alliance, Somerville Community Schools, COPE, and the PEP grant program.
- Congratulations to the 65 Somerville High School Honor Society inductees, who were recognized at a special induction ceremony at the SHS Auditorium last week. 38 seniors and 27 juniors were inducted into this year's Honor Society. We are incredibly proud of your commitment and your leadership!

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- The final Parent-Teacher Conferences of the year begin this week. With the exception of Somerville High School, all conferences will be from 6:00-8:00pm at the respective school. The SHS Conferences are from 6:30-8:30pm. Coming up next week are:
  - Next Wave/Full Circle Conferences were held today
  - Winter Hill Community Innovation School - Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>
  - Kennedy School - Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup>
  - Healey School - Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup>

Conferences will continue the week after spring vacation. Please check our website Calendar of Events for a complete list.

- The El Sistema Somerville Spring Concert will be held tomorrow night, Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, starting at 7:00pm at the East Somerville Community School. Stop by and enjoy the beautiful sounds of this intensive orchestra music program. Students will perform works by Sibelius, Mozart, Rossini, and more.

- Winter Hill Community Innovation School and Somerville High School will be making their School Improvement presentations this Wednesday evening at the Winter Hill Library. These presentations are open to the public. Please join us to learn about the work the schools and their respective School Improvement Councils have done to date as they continue their work toward developing a school improvement plan for the coming year. The Winter Hill presentation is from 6:00-7:00pm, and the SHS presentation is from 7:00-8:00pm.
- Somerville celebrates the “Week of the Young Child” this week with an event at City Hall on Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup> that focuses on children’s civic engagement. The event will provide Somerville’s youngest residents the opportunity to sing, tour various city hall offices to learn about city management, participate in a civic engagement activity, and be part of a proclamation reading by Mayor Curtatone. Pre-K classrooms from around the City, along with local dignitaries and early education leaders from around the state, will be part of the celebration. The event begins at 10:00 a.m. this Wednesday.
- Believe it or not, Spring Vacation is upon us. There will be no school next week. All schools will be closed the entire week. School and district offices will be closed on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, for Patriots’ Day, but open the remainder of the week. Have a great spring vacation, everyone.

Ms. Normand commented that the National Honor Induction Ceremony was incredibly impressive and deeply moving. The accomplishments of our students are incredible!

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Field Trip** (recommended action: approval)

- April 29-30, 2016** Somerville High School Band to Hershey, PA for competition. Transportation via coach bus with a cost of \$75 per student.
- May 1, 2016** Somerville High School Outdoor Club to Mount Cardigan, Orange, NH for hiking trip. Transportation via mini-bus with no cost to students.
- June 7, 2016** Next Wave students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH. Transportation via school van with a cost of \$20 per student.

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, 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 donation:

<b>Donation</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>City, State</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Program donated to</b>
Monetary	Albert & Linda Palombo	Alpharetta, GA	\$200	El Sistema
Instruments	Nancy Macias-Smith	Somerville, MA	\$600	Music Department
Ukulele	National Music, Inc.	Woburn, MA	\$80	Music Department

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Ms. Pitone, to accept the donations, as presented, with gratitude.  
The motion was approved via voice vote.

**C. Proposed Resolution regarding Charter School Cap** (Ms. Palmer)

Ms. Palmer introduced a proposed resolution in opposition to any lift of the Charter Cap: no taxation without representation.

Ms. Palmer read the resolution into the minutes after which, discussion ensued relative to members’ questions about specific aspects of the resolution including funding, oversight and the Rise Act.

*Mayor Curtatone arrived at 8:01 p.m.*

MOTION: Mr. White made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, to suspend the rules and not refer this item to subcommittee and to include in on the agenda for debate at our next regular School Committee meeting.  
The motion was approved via voice vote.

**VII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS - NONE**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Prior to adjourning, Ms. Pitone expressed the School Committee's condolences for the following staff members and family of staff members who recently passed away:

- Patrick Finn, husband of Cindy Finn, Assistant Teacher in the Afterschool Program at the Healey School.
- Rita Ranucci, retired Music Teacher from the Somerville Public Schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m. via voice vote.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of March 7, 2016 for approval
3. March 2016 Personnel Report
4. Three Out-of-State Field trip requests
5. Three donation acceptance forms
6. Four (4) condolence letters
7. Correspondence from City Clerk, John Long, regarding the field at Lincoln Park