# CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL COMMITTEE

# Monday, June 19, 2017 – Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. - Central Office Conference Room – 8 Bonair Street

Members present: Mr. Futrell, Mr. Roix, Ms. Palmer, Ms. O'Sullivan, Ms. Normand, Mr. Green and Ms.

Pitone.

**Members absent:** Mayor Curtatone and Alderman White

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Laura Pitone called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Central Office Conference Room at 7:10 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Mr. Green asked for a roll call, the results of which are as follows: - Present – 7 – Futrell, Roix, O'Sullivan, Normand, Palmer, Green and Pitone and Absent – 2 – Curtatone and White.

#### I. AWARDS AND CITATIONS

# A. Celebration of Retiring Staff Members

Ms. Pitone announced that she is pleased to welcome our honored guests this evening for what is one of her favorite yearly events – that being the honoring of retiring staff members. She thanked them for their service to our students and families and wished them happiness and health. School leaders were in attendance and presented to the retiring member(s) and shared a few words about their staff. The names of retirees in **bold** are those who were present this evening. Citations were mailed to those who could not attend.

- Principal Margaret DePasquale Green presented to Joel Blackmer and Paul O'Brien from Full Circle/Next Wave.
- Winter Hill Principal Chad Mazza presented to John Welch.
- Somerville High School Interim Headmaster Sibby LaGambina presented to Ana Caldeira.
- East Somerville Principal Holly Hatch presented to Betsey Reardon and Barbara Vozella
- West Somerville Principal Kathleen Seward presented to Joyce Danis
- Ms. Margues presented to Anna Aiello with words submitted by Lauren Mancini
- Director of Special Education Christine Trevisone presented to Christine Thompson
- Laura Pitone presented to Harriet Lesser
- Mary Skipper and Laura Pitone presented to Vince McKay

Joel Blackmer Harriet Lesser Ana Caldeira Paul O'Brien Charlene Caton Lisa Patalano Joseph Dabeniano Miosotis Pena Joyce Danis **Betsey Reardon** Maura Dickerson **Christine Thompson** Mary Ann Hellen Barbara Vozella Ellen Isbitz John Welch Anna Aiello

# II. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

# A. Somerville Public Schools Public Budget Hearing: May 17, 2017 (Mr. Futrell)

On May 17, 2017, the Finance & Facilities Committee of the whole received the presentation of the Superintendent's FY2018 Budget proposal, in a public meeting with about 20 members of the public in attendance.

The meeting began at 6:30pm in the East Somerville Community School auditorium, with interpreters for Spanish and Portuguese. No audience members requested use of the interpreters.

Mr. Futrell, serving as chair of the Finance Subcommittee, began the meeting by reviewing the budget process to date, which began in January and included a new process of budget collaboratives that sought to identify resource needs across the district in order to rebalance, rather than increase, resource needs where appropriate.

The chair then emphasized that the budget process was meant to reflect the vision of Somerville Public Schools:

We believe in developing the whole child -- the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical potential of all students -- by providing students with the skills, opportunities, and resources that will nurture innovative ideas, foster pride in diversity, inspire students to become lifelong learners and empower them to enrich their communities.

The Superintendent then began her presentation, explaining how the budget proposal she was about to present was meant to adhere directly to the goals of the district:

- Goal 1: Increase achievement and access for all students. Reduce all performance gaps by half.
- Goal 2: Develop and implement a comprehensive PreK-12 social-emotional learning framework that provides students with the skills they need for social and academic success.
- Goal 3: Increase engagement with the community to reflect the community in which we live.
- Goal 4: Continue to develop and implement innovative ways of measuring student academic performance and school quality such as formative assessment, performance-based tasks, and whole quality indicators.
- Goal 5: Develop a comprehensive plan for Universal Kindergarten Readiness that supports intellectual, physical, and social/emotional growth from birth to Pre-K.
- Goal 6: Develop and implement a strategy to recruit, develop, and retain a diverse and talented staff.

She thanked retiring Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Vince McKay, for his ten years' service to Somerville, and she thanked her team and the community for helping to turn a vision statement and a set of goals into tangible and positive outcomes for Somerville kids and families.

The Superintendent explained the process and noted that the materials she was presenting this evening were posted online 5 days prior on Friday, after over five months of input.

The Superintendent and her staff then presented her budget to the community. This presentation included an overview of FY17 highlights:

- State-leading urban district for growth in MCAS; Commendation School Award for Brown for outstanding MCAS growth; Somerville High School only urban high school Level 1 four years running
- Winter Hill Community Innovation School awarded Pozen Prize for Innovative Schools (\$75,000 award)
- City School partnership in the By All Means initiative at Harvard, helping establish a vision for Universal K Readiness and Universal Access to high quality Out-of-School Time opportunities for students Pre-K through 12
- Implementation of an intensive and analytical, data-driven School Improvement planning process; principals and schools-based teams analyzing a range of qualitative and quantitative data points to develop targeted improvement plans
- Successfully launched new online registration system for ALL Pre-K & K; expanding to grades 1-12 by Fall of 2018
- Recognized by College Board nationally as the top Massachusetts district for a 50% increase in AP enrollment
- SPS continues to be recognized for its leadership as a founding district of the MCIEA consortium working to influence policy in state assessment practices and whole school quality
- SPS Human Resource Department holds the first ever SPS Career Fair for prospective employees;
   250 eager and talented educators attend helping us to meet our goal of hiring a diverse and talented workforce

#### And increased academic achievement:

- Growth: Highest combination of ELA & MATH SGP of any testing year in SPS
- Math: Test scores up significantly in grades 3, 4, 6, and 7. The largest percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced over the past 4 years.
- ELA: Test scores up at most grade levels and the largest percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced over the past 5 years.

 SHS graduates: Acceptances flow in to first choice, top tier colleges including Princeton, Dartmouth, Stanford, MIT, University of Chicago, Berklee College of Music; 2 full POSSE scholarship recipients - Union and Bucknell.

The FY18 budget included investments in support for teaching and learning through:

- Technology
- Out-of-School time
- Early Education
- Special Education
- ELL Programming
- Somerville Family Learning Collaborative
- Social-Emotional Supports

The proposed budget increases salaries by 4.17% to \$54.3M, and operations by 7.39% to \$14.2M, for a total increase of 4.82% to \$68,549,180. Of note, the history of budget increases are as follows: 2016, 3.1% increase. 2017, 4.6% increase. 2018, 4.8% increase.

Lastly, the Superintendent presented elementary class size projections, with an average class size of 17.9, and a maximum class size of 19.9 in kindergarten.

Following the presentation, the Subcommittee held a public hearing where 13 family and community members spoke to advocate for programming and investments. There was a significant amount of advocacy of the theater program from parents and kids alike, as well as advocacy for a snack program, increased family engagement and support at West Somerville, increased interpretation services, an expansion of Unidos, increased support for immigrant parents, and further support of El Sistema.

The budget presentation will be followed by deliberation of the Finance Subcommittee of the Whole on Monday, May 22 and, if needed, on Wednesday, May 31 in preparation for presentation of the School Committee's budget request to the Board of Aldermen in the first week of June.

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance & Facilities of May 2, 2017. The motion was approved via voice vote.

MOTION: To accept the report of the Public Budget Hearing of May 17, 2017.

**B. School Committee Meeting for Finance & Facilities:** May 22, 2017 (Mr. Futrell) The School Committee met for Finance and Facilities on May 22, 2017 in the conference room at Central Office.

This report was deferred to our next meeting.

# C. School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction: May 23, 2017 (Ms. Normand)

The School Committee met for Educational Programs and Instruction in the conference room at 8 Bonair Street on May 23, 2017. Committee of the Whole Members present: Carrie Normand, Steve Roix, Dan Futrell, Lee Palmer, Andre Green, and Laura Pitone.

Also in attendance: Superintendent Mary Skipper, Assistant Superintendent Vince McKay, Powderhouse Studios Presenters Alec Resnick, Molly Josephs, and Shaunalynne Duffy.

Audience Members: Five

Ms. Normand called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

There were two items on the agenda.

# 1) District Updates

**Online Registration** Superintendent Skipper reported that Online Registration for the 2017-18 school year was launched for all incoming Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students and it went well. The Argenziano was added to the West Somerville Neighborhood School as a pilot site for all grades online registration with the entire district migrating in the following year. The intent is improve record keeping, improve communication with families, and decrease the number of forms

families have to fill out.

**Opt Out of MCAS** Dr. McKay reported that a total of seven students opted out of the 2017 MCAS and the procedure went smoothly.

**Homeschoolers Taking Academic Classes in SPS** Superintendent Skipper reported that she had received three letters from families considering homeschooling their students for 2017-18. The Healey 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were working independently on Algebra and requested that if their students passed the qualifying test they be allowed to take math at the Somerville High School next year. Superintendent Skipper outlined two concerns: 1) access to advanced math in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 2) homeschooling. After a brief discussion about access, equity, and differentiated instruction, Chair of Ed Programs Carrie Normand noted that homeschooling was not specifically on the agenda and given the broader interest in the topic ended the discussion.

# 2) Powderhouse Studios Innovation School Proposal

The Powderhouse Studios Innovation Committee approved the plan in March. Alec Resnick presented aspects of the plan that are not currently being negotiated with the Somerville Teachers Association or the City of Somerville. His presentation focused on the structure of the school and autonomies granted by the state. The School Committee has not formally been given the plan and will have a public process before taking a vote on the plan. Mr. Resnick reported that the 2017-18 school year is intended as a planning, hiring, and training year and a time to work out more of the details. Powderhouse Studios will run a lottery intended to enroll a student body that reflects the student make-up of Somerville High School. A cohort of 30-40 students will be enrolled the first year and the school will grow over time. The curriculum is project based allowing students to pursue their interests while mastering required standards. Powerhouse Studios will have a Board of Directors, typical of innovation schools, and ultimately report to the Superintendent and School Committee. Several questions were asked about how different student populations are to be served at PHS. The overall framework was presented. A more detailed plan would evolve in response to the actual student body.

Once the School Committee is given the plan with the negotiated language, it will launch a more extensive public process including a public hearing before taking a vote on the Powderhouse Studios Innovation School.

Ms. Normand adjourned the meeting at 9:04 p.m.

MOTION: Ms. Normand made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction of May 23, 2017. The motion was approved via voice vote.

# **D. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management**: May 31, 2017 (Mr. Green)

The School Committee met for Rules Management on May 31, 2017 in the Central Office conference room.

Members present were: Mr. Roix, Ms. Pitone, Ms. Normand, Ms. O'Sullivan, Mr. Green

Also present were: Mrs. Skipper, Attorney Long and Ms. Margues

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m.

Mike Long, the School Committee's new counsel attended to give us a quick update on the Open Meeting Law, as members are still trying to determine how to best comply with the letter and spirit of the law while still communicating with each other and the public in a timely and effective manner. Some highlights that will affect School Committee Operations going forward.

- On Social Media or other places where people "comment" online: a quorum is understood to be reached when a majority of members have commented.
- Sharing emails sent to one member with the full committee can be construed as deliberation. Best practice may be to share those emails through Patti
- The "meeting packet" as it is technically a communication from the District to each member is not deliberation. Members sharing documents with each other in advance of meetings, however is. Members are advised to send documents to the chair to put in the packet.

The Rules Committee will work with the district to flesh out best practices and standard operating procedures in the fall.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Normand, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management of May 31, 2017.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

#### III. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

### A. Personnel Report

Mrs. Skipper announced the names of staff who recently submitted resignations for the purpose of retirements and wished them health and happiness.

- Joseph Dabenigno, Physical Education at Somerville High School
- Lisa Patalano, Paraprofessional at Somerville High School
- Lina Fazzolari, Food Service Part-Time Helper
- Natalia Furtado, paraprofessional at Somerville High School

Sunita Mehrotra is not retiring, but has resigned from the Somerville Public Schools.

- **B. District Report** Mrs. Skipper presented her District Report, as follows:
- With only a day and a half to go before summer break officially starts, schools are wrapping up another great year. Final year-end celebrations included the Argenziano and Healey 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Moving On Ceremonies this evening. Tomorrow morning, the East Somerville Community School will host a Completion Ceremony for their Kindergarten students.

The end of a school year is cause for both celebration and anticipation as students and educators look back on all they've accomplished throughout the year, and look forward to what lies ahead as they transition to a new grade or a new school.

- The accolades continue to roll in for both students and staff members. On Friday, Kevin Dua was one
  of several MA educators recognized at the State House for their positive impact as educators. Kevin
  was officially awarded the *Gilder Lehrman MA History Teacher of the Year* award. Last week,
  he also received the MTA's *Kathleen Roberts Creative Leadership Award* for his "Matter Speaks
  Series" at Somerville High School. Congratulations and thank you for your commitment to Somerville
  youth, Kevin!
- Congratulations to the **All-City Middle School Ensemble** students and teachers for earning three medals at the Eastern Regional Adjudication last week. The Somerville Chorus earned a platinum medal, and the orchestra and band each earned gold.
- For the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year, SHS students have won the **MPY (Middlesex Partnerships for Youth) PSA Video Contest**. This year, junior Desi Feldman (also the winner of last year's video contest), sophomore Alexa Sousa, and senior Michelle Magalhaes-Teixeira produced the winning video "**Keep Going**" in response to the contest theme of "Challenge Yourself Be Resilient". Congratulations to Desi, Alexa and Michelle, and to Braden Moriarty, their Media Instructor. Thank you for the great work!
- Summer offers its own opportunities for students to continue their learning. Through summer reading, family vacations or 'staycations', summer school, and other summer enrichment programs, students can stay connected with their learning throughout the summer.

Every year, our curriculum department puts together a summer reading list. That list is available on our district website.

And, every summer our Food & Nutrition Services department offers a FREE Summer Meals program that provides breakfast and lunch throughout the summer at various locations across the city. The Summer Meals program kicks off on July 5<sup>th</sup>.

Visit <a href="https://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/summer">www.somerville.k12.ma.us/summer</a> to learn more about these and other summer programs.

• Finally, just in case you need a reminder, the last day of the 2016-2017 school year is Wednesday, June 21st. It will be a half day for all students. All students will be dismissed at noon.

Thank you for another great year. Have a safe and enjoyable summer full of learning experiences.

# Recognition of Dr. Vincent P. McKay

Ms. Pitone presented Dr. McKay with a resolution honoring his service to the District upon his retirement. Members took turns wishing Dr. McKay well and thanking him for his work while here. Dr. McKay thanked everyone for their kind words and said that he has greatly enjoyed his time working here in Somerville. The text of the resolution is included at the end of these minutes.

#### IV. NEW BUSINESS

# A. <u>FY2017 SCALE/ADP Graduates</u> – (Recommended Action: Approval)

The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the following students, who have successfully completed the requirements for graduation from SCALE, be granted their diplomas:

Giancarlo Mazariegos Perez
Jared James Leary

50C Memorial Rd., Apt. #36
7 Greenwood Ave.

Somerville, MA 02143
Saugus, MA 01906

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Normand, to approve the SCALE ADP graduates. The motion was approved via voice vote.

# B. <u>Somerville Public School Diploma</u> – (Recommended Action: Approval)

The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the following students, who have successfully completed the requirements for graduation, be granted her diploma:

- Tina Caruso
- Giovanni Ricci
- Lucy Glazier

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, to approve the Somerville Public Schools diplomas.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

#### **C. Acceptance of Donations** (recommended action: approval)

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

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program donated to
Monetary	Linda Berggren	Alpharetta, GA	\$500	El Sistema
Monetary	Joanna Tousey Revocable Trust	Tuscon, AZ	\$200	El Sistema
Monetary	Claire Foley	Needham, MA	\$180	El Sistema
Monetary	Charles Epstein	Brookline, MA	\$100	El Sistema

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to accept all the above-mentioned donations, with gratitude.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

# D. <u>Improved connection with the community regarding School Committee activities</u>

Ms. Palmer announced that she would like to introduce the idea of having our agenda translated into the target languages and posted widely to try and improve communication with all constituents. Discussion ensued which included the following:

- Using google translate instead
- Length of time it takes to get documents translated
- Will translations be next? That could be an even bigger issue.
- Will we offer translation services for Regular meetings only or also subcommittee?
- We would also need to then translate our meeting materials.
- This could have a huge impact on staff.
- The need to be more thoughtful about our agenda

Mrs. Skipper will do some research on translation/interpretation and their impact, etc. and report back.

#### E. Participation in National School Lunch and Breakfast Program

The Superintendent of Schools recommending that the School Committee vote to participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program, and the Commodity Food Distribution Program, in

conformity with requirements of the State Bureau of Nutrition Education and School Food Services for the 2017-2018 school year, as in previous years.

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, to the School Department participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program, and the Commodity Food Distribution Program, in conformity with requirements of the State Bureau of Nutrition Education and School Food Services for the 2017-2018 school year, as in previous years.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

Ms. Palmer asked whether the pilot program for free lunch was being expanded. Mrs. Skipper responded that, at this time, it will remain at the Healey and Full Circle/Next Wave only.

# F. Student Accident Insurance - (Recommended Action: Receive and place on file)

The Superintendent advising that the contract for Student Accident Insurance for the 2017-18 school year has been renewed with Moran Insurance Agency, 23 Spruce St., Suite B, Malden, MA 02148 at the following rates:

#### Plan A – STUDENT INSURANCE

Premium: School Time \$ 7.50 Premium: 24-Hour Coverage \$49.00 Dental: Extended \$10.00

# Plan B - ALL-SPORTS, SHOP AND LAB COVERAGE

Premium: Gold Plan \$5,835.00 Catastrophic Cash Benefit \$ 990.00

Information was received and placed on file, however, discussion ensued relative to how the vendor is determined, whether the District is mandated to offer said insurance, and the history of the vendor's relationship with the School Department. This will be placed on a future meeting agenda for further discussion.

# **G.** <u>Authorization for Summer Months</u> – (Recommended Action: Approval)

MOTION: to: Authorize the Superintendent to act on the School Committee's behalf to:

- a. Pay bills on school department accounts for which commitments have been made by bid or purchase order before the close of schools, said bills to be ratified by the committee at the first meeting in September.
- b. Expend from FY2018 Salaries Account funds for payment of salaries of personnel under all federal grants beginning in September.
- c. Expend from the FY18 Salaries Account funds for payment of salaries of personnel as detailed in the FY18 budget.
- d. Use Salaries Account and School Operations Account funds to pay encumbrances and salaries for summer programs.
- e. Authorize and/or reauthorize school department revolving accounts. To accept all monies received by the School Committee in connection with the conduct of said revolving accounts according to the purposes of the program or programs from which receipts in each account were derived.
- f. Accept all state and federal grant monies awarded through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Department of Early Education and Care and to authorize the establishment of separate grant accounts that may be expended by the School Committee without further appropriation for the purposes designated in each grant proposal.

MOTION: Ms. Palmer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Futrell, to waive the reading of the above mentioned actions and approve.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

# H. Acceptance of FY2018 Grant Funds

MOTION: To accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools during FY2018 and to authorize the establishment of separate

grant accounts that may be expended by the School Committee without further appropriation for the purposes designated in each grant proposal.

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, to waive the reading of the language above and approve.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

#### ٧. **ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

#### Mr. Green

Shared his appreciation of Dr. McKay's commitment to equity and his work on closing achievement gaps for minority students.

#### Mr. Futrell

Asked if the vision statement at the top of the agenda/call could be restored to its full format. Part of the text seems to have been cut off.

# Mr. Roix

Thanked Dr. McKay and stated that he appreciates that Vince has always cared about our most vulnerable kids. Also that Dr. McKay has been one of the architects who got Somerville to be the highest performing urban district in the state.

# Ms. Normand

SGP Growth, Urban District leadership – the difference is made on the ground by the people doing the core work. There have been lots of curriculum improvements over time thanks to Dr. McKay and Dr. McKay has also shown tremendous patience through the years with his dealings with the School Committee.

#### VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

#### **RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

- 1. Agenda
- 2. Citations for retirees
- 3. June 2017 Personnel Report
- 4. Two (2) requests for SCALE diplomas
- 5. Three (3) requests for Somerville Public Schools diplomas
- 6. Four (4) donation acceptances
- 7. Information on the student accident insurance

Somerville School Committee Official Citation

This certifies that

### RETIREE

Has earned special recognition and is hereby granted this Certificate of Award for years of Dedicated Service to the Students of the Somerville Public Schools. Presented with special thanks and many warm wishes for a very happy and healthy retirement!

Somerville School Committee

Laura Pitone, Chairperson

Andre Green, Vice Chairperson

Steven Roix

Paula O'Sullivan

Dan Futrell

Carrie Normand

Lee Erica Palmer

Joseph Curtatone, Mayor

William A. White, Jr., Aldermanic President

Mary E. Skipper, Superintendent of Schools

Inspiration Inspiration

#### **School Committee**



# Dr. Vincent P. McKay

WHEREAS,

Dr. Vincent P. McKay, who has unselfishly dedicated thirty years of his life as a public school teacher, assistant principal, and assistant superintendent, as well as many other administrative roles, is retiring on June 30, 2017, after serving as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for the Somerville Public Schools for the past 10 years, and

WHEREAS,

Dr. McKay, a steadfast and patient educational leader, is the champion of professional culture in our district who strives to ensure that every school community holds itself to the highest academic standards, and

WHEREAS,

During Dr. McKay's tenure as the Curriculum Leader of the Somerville Public Schools, he was instrumental in facilitating significant student growth through his strategic curriculum planning, including guiding staff to focus on core instruction in consistent ways, and

WHEREAS,

Dr. McKay's strength in the area of data analysis was instrumental in assisting staff to differentiate instruction according to each student's needs, thus increasing the overall student success and growth in the District, while also ensuring that our students had other rich experiences by helping to support out of school activities, such as Robotics and the El Sistema program, and

WHEREAS,

Dr. McKay assisted the School Committee and District by leading the Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee, providing orientation sessions for School Council members and new School Committee members, mentoring principals and other school leaders, as well as supporting other staff to be the best educators they can be, therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** 

That the Somerville School Committee publicly and proudly praise the wonderful career of Dr. McKay, and wish him health, happiness and success upon his retirement, and be it further

**RESOLVED:** 

That these well-earned Resolutions be included in the minutes of tonight's School Committee meeting, and that a framed copy be presented to him.

### Somerville School Committee

Laura Pitone, ChairpersonAndre Green, Vice ChairDan FutrellLee Erika PalmerSteven RoixCarrie NormandJoseph A. Curtatone, MayorPaula O'Sullivan

Mary Skipper, Superintendent

William A. White, Jr., Aldermanic President