

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, October 17, 2016 – Regular Meeting

7:08 p.m. - Aldermanic Chambers - City Hall

Members present: Ms. Palmer, Mr. Roix, Mr. Futrell, Mr. Green, Ms. Pitone, Ms. Norman, Alderman White

Members absent: Mayor Curtatone

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carrie Normand called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the aldermanic chambers 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 – 7 – Palmer, White, Roix, Futrell, Green, Pitone, Normand and Absent – 1 – Curtatone

II. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL: Dessources Domond

- 10th and 11th graders will be taking the PSATs on Wednesday
- 12th graders on Wednesday, will be visiting colleges or working on their financial aid
- Homecoming is this Friday
- The homecoming dance is this Saturday
- SAT scores are coming out on Thursday
- The Hispanic Heritage event went well

Mr. Roix asked, for those Seniors opting to stay and do their financial aid forms, do we have guidance available for them and for those students visiting colleges, are they able to do their financial aid at another time? Mr. Domond stated that everyone can get help, not just Seniors. They can book an appointment with Erika.

The Superintendent stated that with the funding from Biogen, Erika now has full time hours at SHS. Freshmen and Sophomores can learn about the process too.

Ms. Normand asked if there were any future plans to include the middle grades. The Superintendent stated that she would look into it.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 26, 2016 Regular Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green to approve the minutes of September 26, 2016

The motion was approved by voice vote.

IV. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee: Mr. Roix (Sept 19)

The Educational Programs Subcommittee met on September 19, 2016 in the conference room at 8 Bonair Street. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

Attendees were Steve Roix, Laura Pitone and Andre Green

Also in attendance were Superintendent Mary Skipper; Dr. Vince McKay Carrie Normand; Dan Futrell, Kenya Avant; Uri Harel 2 other members of the public (Karen Murdock, Stephanie Hirsch)

Approval of minutes - Ms. Pitone made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve minutes from June Ed. Programs meeting. The motion passed 3-0.

Data Dashboard/Student Insights rollout - We received a presentation on the data dashboard software that the district has developed with the assistance of the code for America grant from Uri Harel, our K-8 curriculum coordinator.

Whole School Quality Measures (Beyond testing) update - Our own District Data Coordinator, Kenya Avant, gave us a look at what the District is gleaned from Dr. Jack Schneider's report, and specifically how we are using the web tool he has produced to make that data useful to our schools, at a school level.

Learning Management System - We next received a brief presentation on the new Learning Management System that we are introducing called Schoology. This is a communication and collaboration tool for staff but also up for interacting with students - students will have all logins on this system.

Other Program Updates

- Memo from Supervisor of Health and Physical Education, Steve Simolaris, on two topics: update to middle grades health curriculum and Introduction to Dance class addition.
- Memo from The Early Ed Steering Committee and Dr. Lisa Kuh, our Director of Early Education, summarizing early ed. programming over the summer and those starting this school year.
- Also we had a very brief discussion about the Powder House Studios STEAM innovation school. Response was given to an audience member that the school still needed to follow the public process for approval as an innovation school, question asked in light of the XQ grant publicity.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM

MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green to approve the minutes of the Finance and Facilities Subcommittee for the meeting of September 19, 2016.

The motion was approved by voice vote.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. PRESENTATION

We were fortunate to have Kenya Avant, our data analyst, here for a presentation

(While Ms. Avant was setting up, the Superintendent reviewed the handouts):

- *2013-2014 Enrollment Projections*

Question was asked, what was the enrollment information that had been provided to MSBA for the High School building project. The handout you have is what was presented to them.

- *Mock up for 2017-2018 calendar*

The Superintendent stated that we will review the calendar to ensure that religious holidays are marked. We will take this up in Rules.

Regarding Item #1, Mr. White would appreciate it if we could supplement by email, the historical data, as is on page 6, for the following two years (2014-2015 and 2015-2016). Mr. White then requested 2016-2017 also.

- *Projected Charter School Tuition Aid*

Ms. Skipper stated that she and David Gordon had been talking about what could be a hypothesis for what would happen if the cap was to be lifted. They drew up a hypothetical scenario of a school with 390 students to give a sense of the magnitude of what that would mean to the Somerville Public Schools.

Mr. Gordon then reviewed the chart reviewing each item:

enrollment – per pupil cost – tuition – reimbursement – impact to schools

The Superintendent stated that this was to show you how it would decimate our programming.

Ms. Avant then began her MCAS presentation, explaining each slide. There was discussion throughout the presentation. Dr. McKay reminded everyone that our growth was by design. Seven years ago, we took an approach for the long haul, investing in our people and our curriculum. It took a lot of doing across the district to get here. The hallmark of the success of our program and how we built our model is the consistency of programs across our schools and grade levels. The consistency is by enforcing a consistent curriculum, reinforced by our professional staff. That is what I'm most proud of – for what our schools have been able to accomplish in achieving those growth numbers. The Superintendent noted that she has an appeal into the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, as the Healey School should not be a Level 3 school. Ms. Skipper explained that the Brown School (Commendation School), was in the 93 percentile. Mr. Futrell would like data showing demographic shifts. Question was asked about our after school program offering English help. Dr. McKay stated that the Community School program was not designed to be an intervention program. The summer program, yes, it has very strong ELL programs. Mr. Green requested data on racial subgroups and their performance gap. Ms. Avant stated that she could get him the information, but to note that it's hard in Somerville to get that data because of the demographic shift.

B. DISTRICT REPORT

- We had a packed house at the grand opening of the new **Fab Lab at Somerville High School** (Fabville) last week. The Lab will be integrated into the CTE academic programming during the school day, and will be open to the community in the evenings. Several pilot programs are already scheduled for the evenings, including tool training sessions, as well as a series of Winter Wonderland workshops such as Card Making, Ornament Making, and Jewelry Making. You can sign up for any of these sessions by visiting the Fabville website (www.somerville.k12.ma.us/fabville) and clicking on the **Sign Up** link under Program Options. You can also sign up now to receive information about longer-term sessions where you'll have an opportunity to prototype your own products at workshops such as "Mutant Bike Creation" and "Personal Weather Station."

This project has been an incredible team effort. I would like to take a moment to publicly thank and recognize our CTE director Leo DeSimone and Ben Sommer from the OSPCD for their leadership and commitment to this project. There are many partners who have been and will continue to be very actively involved in this project – among them are Tom Bent and Bent Electrical, The Fab Foundation and MIT, Artisans Asylum, Canopy City, and sprout & co. We are so excited about the opportunities that Fabville will provide to our students and to our community. As I said that evening, "Let the prototyping begin."

- Angela Tagtow, Executive Director for the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be visiting the Winter Hill Community Innovation School tomorrow morning, October 18, from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Ms. Tagtow is in town for the Food and Nutrition Expo taking place at the Convention Center, and expressed interest in visiting the Winter Hill Community Innovation School to learn more about our outstanding Food & Nutrition Services program and our Farm to School efforts. Ms. Tagtow's visit will include:
 - learning about the Breakfast in the Classroom program at the Winter Hill, observing a garden activity, and
 - a conversation with city and school stakeholders involved in our farm to school and MyPlate initiatives.

We're excited to showcase the great work happening in our schools and throughout our community as part of the Farm to School movement.

- Last week, I had the opportunity to attend my first "**Matter Speaks**" presentation at Somerville High School. The latest in this important series of presentations by Somerville High students and staff members was the fifth in the series and it focused on Hispanic Heritage Month. It was a compelling learning experience for me, and I would guess for all of the guests in attendance. Presenters have an opportunity to share personal experiences or lessons about a particular topic that may have helped shape who they are. Under the guidance of Somerville High teachers Cynthia Massillon, Amber Jackson, and Kevin Dua, Matter Speaks is giving voice and a face to the people who make up our community and the issues that impact our community. I look forward to being part of the conversation at a future Matter Speaks event, and to continuing to share this work with you.
- Mark your calendars now for one of the most fun and inspiring events of the year. The **Somerville Early Childhood Literacy Fair** will take place on Saturday, November 5th, from 10:00am to noon at the Healey School Auditorium. The event is free, and includes activities for children of all ages as well as an opportunity for Somerville families to learn about programs and resources in and around our community. This is a family event, and all Somerville families are welcome. We hope to see you there! Visit the SFLC website (www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families) to learn more.
- On October 3rd, about 200 celebrated the Powder House Studios kickoff.
- On September 30th, I attended the MPY Superintendent/Chiefs Breakfast. One of sophomore students was awarded first place for creating an amazing video on stress.
- October 1st, a group from East Somerville and Healey attended Harvard RIDES Program. It was an emotional day with a lot of sharing.
- October 2nd, Tufts Community Day – about 1000 people participated. As an alum, it was nice to go back
- October 5th, we celebrated the Concussion Legacy Foundation. Grade 5-8 students heard from specialists.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

None

VII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Green

- We were promised answers to our field use questions back in September, but have heard nothing yet – The Superintendent stated that Jill Latham and Nicole Viele are on the November 14th agenda. Ms. Normand stated that the other day, SHS JV Soccer was all ready to play but the visiting team refused to play on our field. We have had to schedule all of our remaining games as away games. Field issues have a day to day effect on our kids. Mr. Green requested a listing of all councils, advisory committees, task forces, etc, especially those that have or would like to have a relationship with parents.

Ms. Pitone

- The High School early release days are not on the calendar. Superintendent Skipper explained that Mr. Oteri works out the early release day the second half of the year. For the online calendar, yes, we can list those days.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m., by voice vote.

Maryann Coulombe
Administrative Assistant

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of September 26, 2016 for approval
3. One (1) condolence letter
4. 2013-2014 Enrollment Projections
5. Mock Up Calendar
6. Projected Charter School Tuition and Aid
7. Student Performance & Growth