

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Monday, January 12, 2015 – Regular Meeting**

7:00 p.m. - Aldermanic Chambers – City Hall

**Members present:** Mr. Sweeting, Alderman White, Mr. Roix, Mr. Futrell, Ms. Pitone, Mr. Bockelman, Ms. Normand and Ms. Rafal.

**Members absent:** Mayor Curtatone

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Adam Sweeting called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Board of Aldermen's Chambers of City Hall at 7:02 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Mr. Sweeting asked for a roll call, the results of which are as follows: - Present – 8 –Sweeting, Roix, Bockelman, Futrell, Rafal, Pitone, Normand and ABSENT – 1 – Curtatone.

**II. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Our Student Representative, Joshua Ojo, was not present this evening.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- December 2, 2014 School Committee Meeting for Personnel

MOTION: Ms. Rafal made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to approve the minutes of December 2, 2014.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

- December 3, 2014 School Committee Meeting for Personnel

MOTION: Ms. Rafal made a motion, seconded by Mr. Futrell, to approve the minutes of December 3, 2014.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

- December 4, 2014 School Committee Meeting for Personnel

MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rafal, to approve the minutes of December 4, 2014.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

- December 8, 2014 School Committee Meeting for Personnel

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to approve the minutes of December 8, 2014.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

- December 15, 2014 Regular Meeting minutes

MOTION: Mr. Bockelman made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rafal, to approve the minutes of December 15, 2014.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

**IV. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

**A. District Report**

Mr. Pierantozzi provided his District Report:

- January and February are very important months. The first six and a half weeks have only one day off due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday which makes this a great, intense period for learning. Also, ACCESS testing for our English Language Learner students takes place as well as mid-term examinations for our high school students. We have been lucky, so far, that the weather is smiling upon us!
- 2015 All-State Treble Chorus – Britney Flores (ESCS) and Jasmine Fridman, Mary Duffy and Katja Sturma from the Brown School, have been selected to sing in the 2015 All-State Treble Chorus. The Chorus, comprised of grade 4-6 students from across the Commonwealth who were selected through an audition process, will perform at the 2015 Massachusetts Music Educators Association Concert on March 21<sup>st</sup> at the Seaport Hotel/World Trade Center in Boston. Congratulations to all of you and to the Music Department! Also thanks to all

students, parents/guardians and staff for all of the work put into the approximately 17 concerts that were performed prior to the winter break.

The Superintendent deferred to Finance Director, Patricia Durette for some budget process information:

Ms. Durette reported that planning is underway for the FY16 budget development. Meetings have been held with principals who have been told to plan for a level-funded budget scenario to start and administrators have been asked to identify needs for increased funding based on either rising costs or expansion of current initiatives. This information will be presented at the February Finance meeting.

Ms. Durette is also currently working with HR and Payroll staff on the staffing plan and reminded members that information from the School Improvement Plan presentations will also guide the budget development.

Discussion ensued relative to level-funded vs. level-service budgets and the role of the incoming Superintendent in the budget planning process.

*Mr. Pierantozzi continued his report:*

- Kindergarten Registration for next school year is under way with information sessions and upcoming Open Houses. Registration begins Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>. Packets have been backpacked home with all pre-K students enrolled in the District, and with Head Start students. Families with eligible children who were born in Somerville have been mailed a packet. Please contact the PIC (617-629-5671) if you have any questions or have not received a packet.
- Open Houses – As part of the K registration process, we encourage you to visit our schools to see first-hand the great learning experience your students will have in our District. K-8 Open Houses are Jan. 21, 22, and 23 from 8:30-1:30. No appointments are necessary to attend an Open House. The High School will be having Open House events in February.
- Somerville High hosts two important College and Career Readiness events.
  - Sunday, January 25, 2-14pm – SHS College Goal/FAFSA Day
  - College and Career Night for 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students and families – January 28, 6:30-8:30pm at Somerville High School

The Superintendent deferred to Dr. Vincent McKay, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, for some curriculum-related information:

**School Improvement Plan Presentations** - first I'd like to provide a preview of the School Improvement Plan presentations coming up over the next two weeks. I am the facilitator of this process - a process that encompasses instructional planning, assessment as well as budget and staffing. These public presentations are the annual focal point for an ongoing, data driven, improvement cycle. SIP presentations are the culmination of an intensive process, the data analyst and I meeting approximately 3 times since September. These have been intensive two hour meetings. So you can do the math, 6 hours per school and you quickly realize that I've spent better than a week's time in this effort. I feel it's a VERY good use of my time. My personal commitment is to learning the needs of each school. I have been working with Kenya Avant.

Ongoing, review meetings will result, as Ms. Durette indicated, in an aligned budget request. The School Improvement Process is aimed at a single goal: The smartest and the best use of our resources to improve learning of all of our students. This is where our school-based improvement planning really shines. School level planning is a rock solid commitment of this administration. Based on the belief that Principals and their leadership teams know best how to serve their students. Needs change based upon student results, but also shifts in demographics. for example, the Healey School, just to cite one example, has seen an increase in their ELL population by about 5 percentage points from last year to this year. School leaders need to make decisions on how to best address this need.

Presentation Dates:

1/20  
1/22  
1/27  
1/29

**Educational Programs Subcommittee** - Finally, a reminder about the Educational Programs subcommittee meeting coming up on Wednesday – the meeting will include a feature presentation by the Early Education Steering Committee.

*Mr. Pierantozzi continued his report:*

- Packets for next week's School Improvement Plan presentations will be delivered to members by the end of the week.
- Summer planning has begun. At the request of the Special Education Parent Advisory Council, who asked for more lead time for notification of summer programming dates, we are working on developing *all* summer programming earlier so that all parents/guardians can be made aware of the dates and times by February vacation – not in April as in past years.
- At your seats is a copy of the most recent Middlesex Partnerships for Youth (MPY) Newsletter. Mr. Pierantozzi is the Vice President of MPY and is proud to make members aware of the good work of some of the Somerville Public Schools (SPS) staff at recent presentations of MPY. On page two of the newsletter, the School Safety Summit is featured and our Student Services Director, Richard Melillo, was a presenter at this event. On page four, the Alternative Educational Opportunities Workshop was featured and SPS staff members Vince McKay, Janice Philpot, Richard Melillo, Mary DiGuardia and Mr. Pierantozzi were all presenters. Also presenting was Dr. Dana Gordon of Riverside Health who is assigned to our District for mental health issues.

Discussion ensued regarding the number of staff members who attend these workshops, the increase in the number of students suffering from depression (Youth Risk Behavior Survey results) and the ways we are working to help our students.

## **V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **A. 2015-2016 School Calendar**

After review and discussion – including seamless transition to summer programming and having Friday, September 4, 2015 and Election Day as no school days, the following motion was moved:

MOTION: Ms. Rafal made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to approve the 2015-2016 School Calendar, as presented.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. FY2014 SCALE/ADP Graduate – (Recommended Action: Approval)**

The Superintendent of Schools recommended that the following student, who has successfully completed the requirements for graduation from SCALE, be granted his diplomas:

Alex B. Flores                      32R Oliver St, Apt. 1                      Everett                      02149

MOTION: Ms. Rafal made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to approve the SCALE ADP Graduate. The motion was approved via voice vote.

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

MOTION: Mr. Bockelman made a motion, seconded by Ms. Pitone, to accept the following donations, as specified.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

- The Superintendent requested the acceptance, with gratitude, of \$100.00 from Carol Gyurina of Melrose, MA to the El Sistema Program of the Somerville Public Schools.
- The Superintendent requested the acceptance, with gratitude, of \$100.00 from Lila Brown of Somerville, MA to the El Sistema Program of the Somerville Public Schools.
- The Superintendent requested the acceptance, with gratitude, of \$240.75 from Ben Torrey of Malden, MA to the El Sistema Program of the Somerville Public Schools.
- The Superintendent requested the acceptance, with extreme gratitude, of \$1,000.00 from Rosanna Nigrosh of Fitchburg, MA to the Commission Project of the El Sistema Program of the Somerville Public Schools.

- The Superintendent requested the acceptance, with extreme gratitude, of a \$5,000 grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council to the El Sistema Program of the Somerville Public Schools.
- The Superintendent requested the acceptance, with extreme gratitude, of \$4,500 from Amy Roschelle to the Brown School to be used for K-6 grade level science materials, as specified on the donation form.
- The Superintendent added on the request for the acceptance, with extreme gratitude, of carpeting valued at \$2500 from Lyle Hamm and the New England Carpenters Union to Somerville Family Learning Collaborative Playgroup space located at the Cummings School. The donation includes installation of the carpeting by members of the union.

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

June 3-5, 2015

Healey School grade 7 and 8 students to Washington, DC. Transportation via bus at a cost of \$230.00 per student.

MOTION: Ms. Rafal made a motion, seconded by Ms. Normand, to approve the field trip. The motion was approved via voice vote.

**VII. COMMUNICATIONS**

A thank you note from the family of the late Mary Carafotes for remembering their mother at a recent School Committee meeting.

A thank you note from the family of the late Paul Tighe for remembering Mr. Tighe at a recent School Committee meeting.

Both notes were received and placed on file.

**VIII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. Sweeting welcomed everyone and extended his wishes for a Happy New Year. He looks forward to working with everyone this year.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Prior to adjourning, Ms. Normand expressed the School Committee's condolences for the following relatives of staff members who have recently passed away:

- Konstantinos Vlahakis, husband of Acrivi Vlahakis, retired teacher from Somerville High School.
- Vincent Dabenigno, father of Joe Dabenigno, physical education teacher at Somerville High School and the late Robert Dabenigno who was an employee in the Somerville Public Schools IT Department.
- Helen Hanefant, sister of Barbara Synan, retired secretary from the Capuano Early Childhood Center and sister-in-law of Jim Synan, retired Utility Aide from Somerville High School.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m. via voice vote.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

Agenda

Minutes of December 15, 2014 Regular Meeting

Minutes of School Committee Meetings for Personnel for December 2, 3, 4, and 8, 2014

Seven (7) donation acceptance forms

One (1) SCALE ADP approval

Draft 2015-2016 School Calendar for review

One (1) out of state field trip approvals

Two (2) thank you notes from families whose loved ones were remembered at a recent meeting

Eight (8) letters to Collective Bargaining Leaders

Two (2) condolence letters

Five (5) donation thank you letters