

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday August 31, 2015 – Regular Meeting

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

Members present: Mr. Roix, Mr. Futrell, Ms. Rafal, Ms. Pitone, Mayor Curtatone (7:05 p.m.), Mr. Bockelman, Alderman White (7:05 p.m.), Ms. Normand, Mr. Sweeting

Members absent:

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Adam Sweeting called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Board of Aldermen's Chambers at 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 – 7 – Sweeting, Roix, Rafal, Pitone, Normand, Bockelman, and Futrell, and ABSENT – 2 – White and Curtatone.

Mr. Sweeting welcomed everyone back and said it was his distinct honor to welcome Ms. Mary Skipper to her first School Committee meeting as Superintendent. Ms. Skipper has officially been on board since July 6th.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- June 22, 2015 Regular Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Bockelman made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rafal, to approve the minutes. The motion was approved via voice vote.

III. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee: June 16 (Ms. Pitone)

The Ed Programs Subcommittee met on June 16 in the Central Office Conference Room at 42 Cross Street.

Members present: Christine Rafal, Paul Bockelman (7:40), and Laura Pitone

Others present: Steve Roix, Carrie Norman, Dan Futrell

SPS Administrators present: Vince McKay, Leo De Simone Jr., Thomas Bent, John Oteri, Sarah Davila, Regina Bertholdo, Anna Fox Doherty (SomerPromise), Anne Herzberg, Nancy Macias-Smith

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Career Vocational Technical Education: Advisory Committee Presentation

Leo De Simone Jr., Director of Career and Technical Education and Thomas Bent, Generally Advisory Committee Chairperson, presented the CTE 2015 report.

Highlights for 2014-2015 School Year included:

- OSHA 10 & 30 certified trainer now on staff (Mario Sousa, Carpentry educator) funded by Perkins. Therefore, all electrical & carpentry students will receive the 30-hour certification, a real advantage when looking for work or post 2ndary training.
- Overall excellent Coordinated Program Review (CPR), congratulations to staff.
- First year competing at SKILLS_USA, with two students awarded metals.
- 100% of CTE seniors OSHA certified, 98% seniors are placed (work, college/post-secondary, military)
- Revamped the culinary arts program with several new industry partners, including Future Chefs, and a return to catering community events.
- Continued understanding in our community and with families choosing a CTE track doesn't preclude college, but provided real-world experiences that prepare our students for life after SHS, whether it is college, other post-secondary training, the military or work.

Future Goals/Needs outlined included:

- Consideration to future programming, such as Barbering , HVAC/Plumbing, expanding culinary into hotel/restaurant management
- A second educator for electrical and metal fabrication/welding to support program growth
- Data driven decision on the viability regarding CTE program(s)
- Future major capital equipment updates.

Highlights of equipment purchased through Capital Equipment Account - 2015

- Four wheel alignment machine and updated can-tool (automotive)
- Welding simulator and roll-bender machine for Metal Fabrication
- Graphic machine and 3-D printer for Architectural Design/Pre-Engineering
- 20 Apple Computers with color printer for Design and Visual
- Dental program upgrades, grant funded
- New grill, convection/steam oven, and Point of Sale accounting system for Culinary Arts

The report also provided detailed data on each CTE department including numbers on enrollment, distribution of students, post SHS placements, number of partnership agreements and Coop placements.

2. English Language Learner Program report:

Sarah Davila presented regarding responding to special populations, recent immigration trends and students with interrupted education

Over the last two year, 90 unaccompanied minors arrived in Somerville, all from Central America. Many considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act definition. Many considered SIFE, "Students with Interrupted Formal Education".

Immigration Trends:

- Salvadoran Enrollments increased 327% over the last 5 years.
- Haitian population diminishing, which may be due to unpredictable emigration policies
- Increasing trend of new comers from native countries, versus other parts of the US as had been in the past (2010.)
- ELLs relatively younger, 15 – 17 (17 most common age), no longer enrolling older students (20-21.)
- Spanish language speakers increasingly dominant. 67% were Spanish language speakers in 2014, versus 25% in 2010.

SAFE Program (Students Accessing Formal Education) is how the School, City and Community are responding together. The SAFE Program at SHS consists of a cluster of courses for newcomers including ESL, Literacy, Math in Spanish and pre Biology as an onramp to SHS. Additionally, the school district, city and community organizations are collaborating on programs and services including a newcomer study, creating networks to access basic needs, a clinical social worker for intervention and support, afterschool student support group and other, staff training, and evening and summer student support.

3. Updates and New Business:

An update on Early Education data and K readiness was received as part of ongoing effort to collect data on preschool and kindergarten performance and trends.

Documentation was provided on the uAspire partnership at SHS. uAspire is an organization that works to assist students and families with finding an affordable path to higher education, including workshops and individual help completing financial aid forms. This partnership launches September 2015.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday September 8th at 7:00 p.m. at 42 Cross Street.

At 9:15 p.m. Mr. Bockelman moved to adjourn. Ms. Rafal seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Pitone made a motion, seconded by Mr. Futrell, to accept the report of the Chair of the Educational Programs Subcommittee for the meeting of June 16, 2015. The motion was approved via voice vote.

IV. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**A. District Report**

Mrs. Skipper provided her District Report which included the following:

1. Since coming on board July 6, Mrs. Skipper has been spending time listening to a variety of stakeholders and relearning Somerville. She has been so impressed with the positive spirit here and desire of everyone to do what is best for students.
2. She will be providing SC with a draft of her Entry Plan on Sept 11th and hope to present her final entry plan at the next SC on Sept 21st. Thus far, she has spent time getting to know the central office staff; the school leaders and school-based admin; the teachers I have been able to meet during summer school; community organizations and non-profits working with SPS; and parents who have attended various events.
3. She will continue throughout the fall to immerse herself in the schools and to attend PTA and open houses so that she can meet more teachers, school-based staff and families.
4. She has taken what she has heard, seen, and experienced from last spring and this summer and have begun to work on building additional systems, structures, and PD opportunities with the central staff, our school leaders and the school-based admin.
5. Our focus as you will see in her draft entry is on Proficiency for ALL and using data to drive our decision making at all levels. Strategies will focus on the levers of Talent, Teaming, Technology, Time, and Totality (Whole Child). Amazing response thus far. She feels very fortunate to be in Somerville.
6. Busy Summer –
 - a. Pilot Summer School Director Position to create more cohesion and learning opportunities for our students- whole child. Great deal of PD
 - b. Students:
 - Summer Program for English Language Learners (SPELL) - 216 enrolled with 192 average daily attendance
 - New HS SPELL and SAFE Program for SIFE. Collaborated with summer school for ELL Support in Math credit recovery and offered ESL credits for SIFE. Piloted Blended Learning Program using Chrome Books
 - Special Ed- Our summer programs ran at Capuano, Healey and Kennedy with a total of 261 students receiving services, 138 of them were in full programs that ran from 8:30-1:30, 4 days a week. The remainder were students who walked in for services including Resource Room, Speech and Language, OT and PT.
 - c. The participants per activity were as follows:
 - Elementary Summer School – 146
 - Kindergarten Transition – 107
 - SHS Summer School – 138
 - SPELL Elementary – 231
 - SPELL High School – 62
 - Summer Success – 38
 - Overall for programs Listed – 722
 - Average attendance rate - 85%
 - Others:
 - Next Wave/Full Circle – 15
 - Community Schools – 191
 - Grand Total - 928
 - d. Teachers: Approximately 200 Commitment and interest of teachers and staff to learn and develop in addition to teaching summer programs
 - 163 teachers and staff participated in professional development classes on talking and writing about text, project based learning, student discourse in math, supporting ELL students in math, and a new teacher workshop.
 - Additional ELL Teacher Team worked to develop ELL supports and Common Assessments that will be embedded in District Literacy Units.
 - Family Engagement Institute (18 Teachers)
 - Teacher Collaboration and Co-Teaching course (14 Teachers)
 - e. Support for Parents
 - Pilot collaboration with Welcome Project for Parent English Class - will continue collaborative model in school year 2016

- Collaborated with Parenting Journey for "Parenting in America" workshops - will continue collaboration in school year 2016
- Initiated August Outreach Program with Wrap Around Coordinator and SFLC Liaisons - targeted ELL Families transitioning from Capuano to AFA and ESCS and AFA to WHCIS

7. This Year-

- a. Excited to welcome 117 new staff*/educators to our District this school year. They participated in two exceptional days of orientation and professional development last week, in preparation for the kickoff of the 2015-2016 school year which begins this Wednesday for students in Grades 1-12, and next Tuesday, September 8th, for preK and K students.
- b. New Admin STAFF
 - ELL Assistant Director: Sunita Mehrotra (new position)
 - ELL Assessment Specialist: Dr. Teresa Lopez (replacement)
 - Assistant Principal at Healey: Bridget Dowling (replacement)
 - Special Ed- 3 Department Heads at Capuano, Healey and Kennedy: Krista Brother, Susan Maday and Victoria Vendola
 - 14 Professional Staff, including a new Psychologist and a new Assistive Technology Specialist
 - 8 long term substitute teachers to cover maternity leaves – all in place at start of school
 - Full Report at next SC meeting
 - 67 teachers
 - 19 Paraprofessionals
 - 11 afterschool staff and athletic coaches
- c. Student Enrollment figures as of today
 - PK = 280 (includes students in the ECIP Program)
 - K = 487 (I gave you 499 the other day but I mistakenly included retentions – sorry about that L)
 - Grades 1-8 = 94 + 12 in process of registration = 106
 - SHS = 46 + 8 in process of registration = 54
 - Total = 927
- d. All students will be dismissed at noon on Wednesday, September 2nd. That afternoon starting at 1:00pm, we're looking forward to welcoming all our professional staff back with a "Welcome to School Year" celebration, which will be held at the SHS Auditorium and Atrium. Example of how we will be working together as one Somerville Community this year. Excited to begin!
- e. Community partners continue to play an integral role in supporting our students.
 - Students at the Winter Hill Community Innovation School will be starting off the year with a brand new backpack filled with basic school supplies, thanks to the generosity of Essendant (formerly known as United Stationers, Inc.). On Thursday, August 27th, Essendant delivered 460 backpacks to the school in preparation for the start of the school year. This is the second year that the company has provided backpacks for every student at one of our schools. ESCS was the beneficiary of their generosity last year.
 - Cradles to Crayons has been an outstanding community partner for our District for many years. This year, they are once again donating 1,200 backpacks filled with school supplies to our District, for distribution at ESCS, Healey, and Argenziano (*targeted for grades 1-5, but Principals have discretion on distribution*). We will be hosting a Cradles to Crayons Backpack Distribution event at the East Somerville Community School Auditorium on Thursday, September 3rd, from 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Our sincere thanks to both of these outstanding partners for helping our kids get the school year off to a good start.

- f. On Tuesday, September 8th, at 10:30 a.m. Somerville High School will hold a kickoff event to celebrate a new partnership with Mass Insight Education that will support increasing interest and enrollment in AP courses. Enrollment in AP courses at SHS has been steadily rising, with enrollment in some courses nearly doubling or tripling. The number of exams taken from spring 2014 to spring 2015 doubled, and we are

projecting an increase of more than 150 AP exams in 2016 compared to 2015. We want to work on both access and performance and Mass Insight will help us to do both.

- g. We are so excited to be partnering with the City of Somerville on Community Cabinet, a partnership between the City and the Somerville Public Schools that brings together leadership from departments across the City to analyze and strategize around student support. We launched this innovative new partnership last Tuesday, August 25th, and will be coming together throughout the year to work on specific approaches that will support our joint commitment to providing students and families with the best support and resources to help students flourish. In all 90 City staff and district admin worked together to begin looking at issues that impact our students and families academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

8. Announcements:

As Somerville’s pilot trip to Cuba, a contingent of students and adults will be traveling together from April 14, 2016-April 22, 2016; Jim Nocito, K-12 World Language Supervisor and Alicia Kersten, Social Studies Department Chair, will be chaperoning a group of 13 students on the trip’ 12+ adults are also coming on the trip. We have ten spots filled. The adults on the trip will not have any chaperoning responsibilities! The trip is led by Explorica, a travel company with extensive experience leading trips in Cuba; this could be one of the last opportunities to travel in Cuba before US-Cuba relations change dramatically; Cost is roughly \$3800 per adult, which includes all meals, hotels and transportation.

The Superintendent deferred to Assistant Superintendent Vincent McKay for a wonderful announcement:

Dr. McKay was excited to announce that Charlie LaFauci, Supervisor of Library/Media Services, and Shawn Stzurma, parent of a Brown School student and volunteer extraordinaire, will be recognized by the Mass Technology Leadership Council at the MassTLC Awards Gala on September 11th, for their outstanding collaborative work on the Hour of Code event last school year. Charlie and Shawn coordinated a district-wide event that gave every student in our District an opportunity to experience at least one hour of coding during the one-week Hour of Code event. It was a phenomenal partnership effort. MassTLC is creating a video for the event to highlight Charlie and Shawn’s creative partnership.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Acceptance of Donations (recommended action: approval)

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

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program donated to
Monetary	Ahold Financial Services	Carlisle, PA	\$619.97	Capuano Center
Monetary	Julia Belock	Somerville, MA	\$100.00	Kennedy School Library

MOTION: Mr. Bockelman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Futrell, to accept the donations, with gratitude.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

B. Field Trip (recommended action: approval)

Oct. 2, 2015 Next Wave and Full Circle students to Mount Monadnock, NH. Transportation via school van. Cost to students is \$10.

April 7-10, 2016 Somerville High School Music Department students to Orlando, FL to participate in the World Strides Heritage Music Festival. Transportation via air and bus. Cost to students is \$970. (Multiple fundraising will be done to help those students who cannot afford this cost)

MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bockelman, to waive the reading of the field trips and approve.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

C. Somerville High School Summer School Graduate (recommended action: approval)

Somerville High School Headmaster John Oteri recommended that the following students, who have successfully completed the necessary requirements, be granted a SHS diploma:

Selin Park	Princess Wilson
Thalianny Silva	Lorena Ramirez del Rosario
Jonathan Aguilar-Mendoza	

MOTION: Ms. Rafal made a motion, seconded by Ms. Pitone, to approve the Summer School graduates, with congratulations from the School Committee. Ms. Rafal read the names of the graduates into the record of the meeting.
The motion was approved via voice vote.

VI. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Roix

1. Asked for an item to be added to the Rules Management Meeting. File JCA-Controlled Choice Student Assignment Plan should be reviewed for understanding and planning purposes.

Mr. Futrell

1. Open House at Argenziano School on September 9.

Ms. Rafal

1. She will be attending the MASC-sponsored Opioid Crisis event on September 12.

Mr. Bockelman

1. Announced that members had received a copy of a letter from the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation inviting us to attend their 25th Anniversary Gala on October 17. Mr. Bockelman lauded the accomplishments and generosity of this organization and encouraged everyone to attend their event.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

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

- Daniel Macero, retired Assistant Superintendent of Schools for the Somerville Public Schools.
- Robert Gooch, husband of Mary Gooch, retired paraprofessional from the Healey School.
- Louise Nikkel, mother of Joy Nikkel, teacher at the Brown School.
- Petronilo Andrade, father of Yolanda Flores, paraprofessional and afterschool assistant teacher at Capuano.
- Sharon Mazza, mother of Chad Mazza, Principal of the Winter Hill Community Innovation School.
- Alzira Santos, mother of Jose "Joe" Santos, Art Teacher at Brown and Capuano.
- Lisa Splaine, former employee in the Food Service Department of the Somerville Public Schools.
- Irene (Woodford) Padden, mother of Nancy Holmes, Early Childhood Liaison at the Capuano School.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m. via voice vote.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of June 22 Regular Meeting
3. Two (2) overnight field trip requests
4. Two (2) donation acceptance forms
5. Five (5) Somerville High School Summer School graduate requests
6. One (1) condolence letter
7. Five (5) thank you letters for donations