

Quincy, MASSACHUSETTS – December 14, 2011

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Regular Meeting of the Quincy School Committee

A regular meeting of the Quincy School Committee was held on Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at North Quincy High School. Present were: Mayor Thomas Koch, Chairman, Mrs. Jo-Ann Bragg, Mrs. Elaine Dwyer, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mr. Dave McCarthy, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Vice Chair.

Regular Meeting

Chairman Presiding

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There was a moment of silence for service people on active duty, Mr. Peter Chrisom, former teacher and principal of North Quincy High School, Mr. Paul Todd, father of Director of Special Education Judith Todd, and Mrs. Terry Phelan, mother of former Mayor and School Committee member William Phelan.

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The Superintendent called the roll and Mrs. Lebo was absent. Also present were: Dr. Richard DeCristofaro, Secretary; Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk; Messrs. Ahearn, Draicchio, Gilbert, Hennessy, McGuire, Mullaney, Mulvey, Murphy, Rendle, Santoro, Keith Segalla, Kevin Segalla, Sylvia; Mrs. Erler, Fredrickson, Hughes, Kisielius, Palmer, Papile, Pegg, Roberts; Ms. Fay-Beers, Green, Hallett, Margaret MacNeil, Maureen MacNeil, Todd; Ms. Allison Cox, President, QEA, and Mrs. Tracey Christello, representing the Citywide Parents' Council.

The Mayor opened the meeting by noting that it was the last School Committee meeting for both Mrs. Bragg and Mrs. Dwyer. He noted their many years of service to the children of Quincy and expressed thanks on behalf of the people of Quincy before dedicating the meeting in their honor.

Mrs. Bragg made a motion to take an agenda item out of order and to begin the meeting with the New Business item, American Education Week. Mrs. Dwyer seconded the motion.

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Assistant Superintendent Mrs. Roberts introduced the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners of the American Education Week essay contest in each grade-level grouping. This year's theme was "My Education: My Right and Responsibilities." The 1st place winners read their essays aloud and all winners were presented with a certificate and

New Business

American Education Week Essay Contest

a gift card to Barnes and Noble and congratulated by the Mayor, members of the School Committee, and the Superintendent.

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After a brief recess, the Mayor called the meeting back to order. Mrs. Bragg made a motion to return to the order of the agenda and Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion.

Mrs. Bragg made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, to approve the regular session minutes for November 9, 2011. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Regular Meeting
Minutes Approved
11/9/2011

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The Superintendent opened his remarks by noting some recent and upcoming events, including thanking Mrs. Roberts for her leadership of the American Education Week Essay Contest and Athletic Director Mr. Rendle for the recent successful 79th annual Thanksgiving High School football game between North Quincy and Quincy High Schools. Lego Robotics competition was held at NQHS on Saturday, December 3; Point Webster Middle School team will be traveling to Worcester for the State Championships. The Superintendent thanked the teachers who coach all the teams and Bluefin Robotics, a business partner who sponsors the robotics program at all five middle schools. Rachel’s Challenge presentations were held at Quincy High School on December 5 and 6 for Grade 9 and 10 QHS students and 650 Grade 7 students, plus a parent night, all sponsored by Masons and Quincy Lodge of Elks. The 8th Annual ‘Tis the Season was another successful event, all 750 seats sold, and business partners provided tickets for students from seven elementary schools.

Superintendent’s
Report

The Superintendent recognized the Fall All-Scholastic student athletes from both North Quincy and Quincy High School. He also reviewed the recent Teacher Mentor meeting held at the Clifford Marshall School for new professional staff and their mentors and mentioned the upcoming orientation meeting for the two new School Committee members, Mr. Bregoli and Mrs. Hubley, on December 19th.

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Jill Gichuhi, President of the Quincy Parent Advisory Council to Special Education thanked both Mrs. Bragg and Mrs. Dwyer for their years of service and their dedication to the children of Quincy.

Open Forum

Daniel Long spoke in support of keeping the Winfield Elm tree on the new Central Middle School site and mentioned there are federal grant programs that would help pay for the tree’s maintenance.

Elaine McGrail also spoke in support of preserving the Winfield Elm tree. Mrs. McGrail has taken samples from the tree and sent one to the University of Massachusetts Extension service to have the tree tested for Dutch Elm disease.

Lori Hagborg, parent of two Quincy Public School students, spoke about the plans for the new Central Middle School and concerns about the Music and Band practice facilities. Ms. Hagborg suggested both a Music classroom and Band/Chorus practice space.

Matthew “Twig” Largess, from Johnston, Rhode Island, spoke in support of retaining the Winfield Elm on the Central Middle School site and offered his professional services in evaluating and maintaining the tree.

Mrs. Tracey Christello, representative for the Citywide Parents’ Council, spoke on behalf of Citywide in support of creating a community service graduation requirement for both high schools. She also thanked Mrs. Bragg and Mrs. Dwyer for their many years of service and commitment to the Quincy Public Schools.

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The next item on the agenda was the update on building projects, renovations, and construction from Mr. Murphy. The list of issues from the recently approved School Improvement Plans have been distributed to the different trades within the Maintenance Department and many projects are underway or already completed. In addition, the department continues to address daily work orders.

Old Business
Building Projects
Update

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Mrs. Bragg reported that the December 12 Central Building Committee meeting was postponed to early January. She reported that abatement was completed on November 10 and demolition began on November 21. Once demolition is complete, grading of the site will begin. The abatement and demolition contracts came in \$180,000 under budget. During the prequalification process, of the fourteen building trades had an average of six contractors prequalified. Bidding is expected to begin in January 2012 for both contractors and subcontractors. Overall, the project is on schedule, with construction expected to begin in the spring of 2012 for occupancy in September 2013.

New Central
Middle School
Project

Mr. McCarthy requested a review of the wall height on the motel side to see if it can be increased. Mrs. Mahoney inquired about whether there was work going on at night and Mayor Koch replied that under city ordinance, there is a required fire watch detail on site during a demolition project.

The next item on the agenda, the Update on MASC Resolutions, was tabled until the next School Committee meeting on January 11, 2012.

Update on MASC
Resolutions

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Mrs. Bragg then reviewed the Middle School Improvement Plans, which were presented at the November 28 School Policy Subcommittee meeting. All five middle schools had goals related to increasing performance on the MCAS; some schools

New Business
Middle School

retained their goals from last year, but added new action steps. All cited professional development opportunities, such as rationalizing numbers workshops and curriculum initiatives, such as *Study Island* as being key to support attaining their goals. Broad Meadows and Sterling are both focused on teaching research skills. Technology skills are being integrated through other courses, such as Science.

Improvement Plans

Mrs. Bragg made a motion to approve the School Improvement Plans for Atlantic, Broad Meadows, Central, Point Webster, and Sterling Middle Schools and the minutes of the November 28, 2011 School Policy Subcommittee meetings. Mrs. Dwyer seconded the motion, and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

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Mrs. Bragg then discussed the November 30 School Policy Subcommittee meeting, where the High School Improvement Plans were presented. Both high schools are preparing for their NEASC evaluations and their goals for this school year reflect that. Both North Quincy High School and Quincy High School have had impressive results with AP testing; over 75% of students taking the test received grades of 3 or above. Additional goals for the high schools are focused on increasing the number of students with disabilities who achieve a proficient score on the Mathematics MCAS (North Quincy High School) and fostering growth in Vocabulary knowledge (Quincy High School).

High School Program Improvement Plans

Another agenda item at this meeting was the review of School Committee Policy 2.5.8, School Committee-Staff Communications. After review and discussion, the subcommittee voted to leave the Policy as is.

School Committee Policy 2.5.8

Mrs. Bragg made a motion to approve the North Quincy High School and Quincy High School Improvement Plans and the notes from the November 30, 2011 School Policy Subcommittee Meeting. Ms. Isola seconded the motion and, on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Bragg then introduced a resolution relating to community service becoming a high school graduation requirement in the future. To that end, Quincy Public Schools will develop a pilot program for community service, with a phased-in introduction of the graduation requirements over three years. She read the following resolve into the record.

WHEREAS, community service is giving of one-self to help others and many Quincy Public Schools' students through their clubs and organizations such as the National Honor Society and ROTC have already benefited from the virtues of community service. Community service develops character, honesty, and responsibility, builds self-esteem, creates leadership skills and gives a sense of belonging to your community.

Resolution on Community Service Graduation Requirement

WHEREAS, community service enhances one’s self-worth, instills values and encourages compassion for people of all ages and capabilities. It is an opportunity for all to excel and give life true purpose by investing ones time and actions for the benefit of others;

WHEREAS, making community service a graduation requirement we are providing an opportunity for students to be active citizens who will be contributing to the improvement of our community;

THEREFORE, be it known the Quincy School Committee is adding community service as a high school graduation requirement to be phased in over three years for a total of 30 hours.

Requirement for Community Service:
Class of 2014 must complete at least 10 hours
Class of 2015 must complete at least 20 hours
Class of 2016 and beyond must complete at least 30 hours

Students are encouraged to accumulate more than ten hours per year but only ten hours per year counts towards this requirement. Hours may be earned during the summer. Court ordered community service will NOT count towards this graduation requirement nor will service activities which the students is already receiving credit or for disciplinary actions. Community service is an activity which is performed for no pay or academic credit. It must benefit a least one other person who is not a related party. It is to be completed at an approved non-profit organization or civic agency or community initiative to count towards this requirement. Each high school will develop a list of community service opportunities. Any community service activities that are not on the list must be pre-approved prior to any hours being recorded. A pre-approval form and Community Service Activity Form will be developed by the administration and posted on the Quincy Public School’s website as well as available at each high school. Principals or their designee may grant waivers for extenuating circumstances.

Mrs. Bragg made a motion that the resolve be moved into the School Policy Subcommittee for further review and development of a pilot program. Ms. Isola seconded the motion, and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

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Mr. McCarthy requested written clarification from the City Solicitor Mr. Timmins about under whose jurisdiction the new Central Middle School building site falls. He is requesting this information in reference to the Winfield Elm tree issue. Mr. McCarthy also requested clarification on the issue of the space allotted for music instruction and practice in the new Central Middle School.

Additional Business

Mrs. Bragg made a motion to accept the gift of 650 dictionaries for all Quincy Public Schools Grade 3 students donated by the Quincy Lodge of Elks. Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it. A letter of thanks is to be sent to the Elks from the School Committee.

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Mrs. Bragg stated that since the School Policy Subcommittee meetings were reviewed earlier under New Business, the only items remaining were to remove two items from the School Policy Subcommittee: School Committee-Staff Communications Policy 2..5.8 (referred June 15, 2011) and Program Improvement Plans (referred September 7, 2011).

Reports of Special Committees

School Policy Subcommittee

Mr. McCarthy reported on the Health, Safety, and Security Subcommittee Meeting which was held on December 5, 2011. At the meeting, there was a review of all of segments of the Security Department and Mr. Draicchio was praised for his efforts in improving the safety and security of the Quincy Public Schools. He is especially active in maintaining relationships with the many supporting agencies in Quincy, including the Quincy Police Department, but also the Norfolk County District Attorney’s Office, the Norfolk County Sherriff’s Office, the MBTA Transit Police, the Quincy Fire Department, Quincy Probation, the Department of Children and Family, and the Department of Youth Services. Representatives from each of these agencies participate in the monthly Security Roundtable meetings. The team is focused on reviewing and revising emergency procedures this school year.

Health, Safety, and Security Subcommittee

Mr. McCarthy also spoke about the morning traffic issues at Quincy High School and the letters sent by the Quincy High School Parent Advisory Council to the Quincy Police Chief and the City’s Traffic Engineer, Jack Gillon. Mr. McCarthy requested that copies of the letters be sent to all School Committee members.

Mr. McCarthy made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2011 Health, Safety, and Security meeting. Mrs. Dwyer seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Mahoney reported on the Budget & Finance Subcommittee Meeting, which was held on December 7, 2011. At the meeting, there was a review of all of accounts and how they stood as of the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2012, ending September 30, 2011. Academic Classroom Teachers, Academic Programs, Academic Support, Non-Academic Support are all in line with historical standards. For Academic Expenses, current spending levels are also in line with historical standards. Special Education Tuition and Transportation is traditionally an area of concern; the budget supports the current level of placements.

Budget & Finance Subcommittee

Mrs. Roberts presented the Quarterly Professional Development report. Many of the Professional Development opportunities began in the summer and carried into the fall and winter. We are utilizing DSAC grants wherever possible as well as the QPS

Professional Development budget. State Street grants are being used for some of the high school Professional Development. Other Professional Development opportunities are provided by textbook publishers to support newly purchased textbooks and instructional technology. About half of the Professional Development budget has been spent to date.

Mrs. Roberts then shared information about the additional Music department funding received through the movie rental of the old Quincy High School building. The funding totaled \$80,000 and the Music and Band teachers worked together to create a list of priorities, including new Band uniforms; new instruments, including all new recorders for Grade 3 and portable keyboards on carts for elementary music teachers; money for entry fees for competitions; and musical scores for all grade levels.

The \$10,000 rental fee for Veteran's Stadium was used to purchase new uniforms for both the Quincy High School and North Quincy High School football teams. There is also \$22,500 in rental fees for the use of the Coddington Hall building. Mrs. Roberts proposed that this money be shared between Central and Point Webster Middle Schools to fund after school activities.

Mrs. Mahoney made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 7, 2011 Budget & Finance Subcommittee meeting. Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion and on a roll call vote, the minutes were approved 6-0. Mrs. Lebo was absent.

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Dr. DeCristofaro then spoke about Mrs. Bragg and Mrs. Dwyer, who dedicated themselves to the Quincy Public Schools in many ways over their years of service and presented each with a book signed by the Superintendent's Leadership Team.

Mrs. Dwyer, who was Vice-Chair from 2006 to 2008, showed extraordinary leadership during difficult times. She chaired several subcommittees and was an advocate for music, drama, class size, and student achievement. She developed alternative approaches to SPED transportation and championed full-day Kindergarten and Literacy. Her dedication to school facilities was thorough, culminating in her work on the Quincy High School Building Committee, where she was involved with everything from the planning process through the reality of the completed and inhabited building. Her forthrightness and sense of purpose will be missed.

For Mrs. Bragg, this is the second time to say farewell. During her tenure, Mrs. Bragg also served as Vice Chair and chaired almost every subcommittee. She was an advocate for full-time nurses, class size, and sponsored many resolutions over the years. Mrs. Bragg served on the School Building Task Force in 1998 and was involved in many construction initiatives, the Quincy Education Fund, after-school child care, and the Teen Mothers Program. She approached every role with an always-appreciated enthusiasm and tenacity.

Ms. Isola, Mrs. Mahoney, and Mr. McCarthy each added their thanks to Mrs. Bragg and Mrs. Dwyer for the example they provided, their assistance to each as a new School Committee member, and the professional spirit in which they approached each issue and debate. Mayor Koch added his good wishes for health and happiness and cited Teddy Roosevelt who said that while it is not easy to be in public service, the credit belongs to those who get into the arena and experience the victories and defeats.

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The School Committee noted the following Civil Service retirement:

Barbara Boehler

Retirement

SPED
Paraprofessional

The School Committee noted the following Civil Service resignation:

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Resignation

Cafeteria Worker

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On a motion by Mrs. Bragg, seconded by Mrs. Dwyer, the Committee adjourned at 8:30 p.m. for the evening. There was no executive session. The ayes have it.

Adjournment