

SCHOOL POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, April 30, 2012

A meeting of the School Policy Subcommittee was held on Monday, April 30, 2012 at 4:30 pm in the 2nd floor Conference Room of the NAGE Building. Present were Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, and Mr. Paul Bregoli, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Mrs. Colleen Roberts, Mr. Kevin Mulvey, Mr. Keith Segalla, Dr. Earl Metzler, Mr. Frank Santoro, Ms. Allison Cox, President of the Quincy Education Association, and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Mr. Bregoli.

The Superintendent called the roll and Mrs. Lebo, Mr. McCarthy, and Mayor Koch were absent.

Mr. Bregoli opened the discussion on the Community Service Pilot by reviewing the previous discussions on this topic and thanking Dr. DeCristofaro for his research on Community Service in other cities and towns. Following the last Policy meeting on March 19, Mr. Bregoli and Dr. DeCristofaro met with the two High School principals and the class presidents from grades 9 through 12 to discuss Community Service. The student leaders were enthusiastic and made suggestions, including at the NQHS meeting, using the “buddy system” to help with ELL issues. Many clubs and organizations (for example, National Honors Society and ROTC) are already doing community service. The High School Class Advisors will work with homeroom teachers to oversee Community Service.

Should the School Committee vote to implement a Community Service policy, it would be rolled out through assemblies this spring with current students, extended homerooms, and included in next fall’s Freshmen Orientation. A Community Service directory and guide will need to be developed, as well as finalizing the Community Service Reporting form, revising the School Committee policy booklet and adding the information to the POS books for both High Schools.

Drafts of a Community Service overview, the School Committee Policy change, and the student record form were shared with the Subcommittee. Dr. DeCristofaro spoke about the management and recording of Community Service hours being the key issue – who will clear the problems and approve projects that are outside the scope of what is pre-approved. There was a discussion about whether Community Service hours could count for multiple purposes, i.e., both towards the graduation requirement and for ROTC. Most school districts do not allow this. There was also discussion about limiting Community Service to Grades 9-11 and what would happen if someone fails to complete a yearly requirement, specifically, would it impact promotion? Dr. Metzler suggested there could be a “summer school” option of making up Community Service hours not completed by the end of the school year.

Mr. Bregoli reminded the Subcommittee of the point that Mr. McCarthy had raised at the previous Policy subcommittee meeting about whether there were legal issues around making Community Service mandatory. Mr. Mulvey reiterated the contents of the memo he sent to the School Committee on April

4, outlining his review of relevant recent cases and his opinion that there are no legal issues involved in implementing this policy.

Dr. DeCristofaro noted that we will be working with QEA on the transition to this being a graduation requirement. Mr. Santoro mentioned that as part of the NEASC process, homeroom teachers are now serving as student mentors. Once a month, there are extended homerooms and this will be a good opportunity for teachers to follow up with students. The Class Advisors at both high schools are ultimately responsible for making sure the requirement is completed, and the Assistant Principal will be a part of the process as well.

Ms. Isola asked if aside from logistics, are teachers enthusiastic? Ms. Cox replied that she has heard some concern about where the volume of Community Service opportunities will come from. Dr. Metzler mentioned a conversation with Athletic Director Jim Rendle about formalizing some of the sports team mentoring that student athletes are already doing.

Ms. Cox inquired whether the option to roll a single grade level to start the process is feasible. Mr. Bregoli replied that in the student leader meetings, the class presidents felt it would be more advantageous everyone start at the same time. Ms. Isola sees the benefit of everyone learning about the process at the same time. Dr. DeCristofaro stressed that we have to guarantee that we give enough support to the staff as they implement this. Quincy Public Schools is a larger school system than many of the other school systems who have already implemented Community Service.

Ms. Isola stated that as this is a Policy change, it will be on the agenda for the May 16, 2012 School Committee meeting and that will allow for commentary at Open Forum. Mr. Bregoli asked if everyone present was comfortable with the Overview and all agreed. Dr. DeCristofaro noted that the draft documents would be shared with the School Committee members not present.

Ms. Isola made a motion to accept the Overview of the Community Service Pilot with attached documents to present to School Committee at the next Regular Meeting on May 2, 2012. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a roll call vote of subcommittee, the ayes have it.

Mr. Bregoli made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 pm and Ms. Isola seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.