

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

November 3, 2003 REGULAR MEETING

November 3, 2003

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mary Jo Rossetti called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the aldermanic chambers at 8:10 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

II. ROLL CALL

Present were Ms. Cardoso, Ms. Harris, Alderman O'Donovan, Ms. Bauer, Mr. Sullivan Ms. Taylor, Ms. Murray and Ms. Rossetti.

Mayor Gay was absent.

III. AWARDS AND CITATIONS

There were no presentations made this evening.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes were approved as follows by voice vote:

October 20, 2003:

- Regular Meeting

V. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Student representative Maya Nitzberg reported on the following items this evening:

- Informed the committee she spoke to a school staff person regarding the English Immersion Program. In order for Ms. Nitzberg to better understand the foundation of the program they discussed the program's basic purpose and history. Ms. Nitzberg brought the information she received to eight students in the high school who are part of the Structured English Immersion Program. She informed the committee of the feelings of the students, some who felt there has been relatively little change in the classroom and others stating they felt very behind and that it was difficult to be in a classroom where not every student is on the same level. Ms. Nitzberg suggested the students meet with School Committee members directly, to discuss the changes that will make it best for everyone this year and also going into next year.

In response to this item, Ms. Taylor invited Ms. Nitzberg and interested students to attend one of the community forums; the first one scheduled is Monday, December 8th at 6:30 p.m. at the East Somerville Community School. There will also be three more meetings scheduled. The dates/times are not yet available.

- Reported last week, the student run club Teens Against Dating Abuse (TADA) received notification they are the winners of a large grant of \$5,000. The students are presently

V. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (cont.)

working on a handout to be distributed to teens in Somerville regarding teen resources, survival stories, the signs of an abusive relationship, and what make a relationship healthy.

- o Reported that on Halloween all the seniors dressed up, the day went smoothly and there were no problems. Everyone had fun and felt safe. All classes enjoyed the creative and unique outfits that were displayed throughout the day.
- o Announced that preparation classes and auditions will be held in mid-November for the musical *Cabaret*, for all students at the high school. The show will open in March.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Argenziano reported on the following items:

1. Thanked all members of the committee for attending the Michael E. Capuano Early Childhood Center Dedication on Sunday, October 26th. Dr. Argenziano mentioned that Senator Charles Shannon was unable to attend the October 26th dedication and reported that the Art Room was dedicated in his honor today, at 1:30 p.m.
2. Provided to members is a draft copy of upcoming meetings for November and December 2003. The first community forum is scheduled for December 8th at 6:30 p.m. at the East Somerville Community School. Headsets will be available for the purpose of translations.
3. Enclosed is a memorandum from Mayor Dorothy Kelly Gay in reference to the Conwell School, as previously requested. Also provided are Dr. Argenziano's letters to Mayor Gay and Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board of Alderman, William White. There is a response to the committee from Mr. White, which members will receive on Wednesday, November 5th.
4. Enclosed is a copy of the memorandum sent to school staff, students, and parent/guardians regarding American Education Week, November 17 – 21, 2003. Dr. Argenziano applauded the efforts of our school staff and all who work with our young people.
5. Enclosed is a letter from the American School Board Journal acknowledging the nomination of our program "Success Plan for All Somerville High School Students," which was submitted by Ms. Ferrari, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, for consideration in American School Board Journal's 2004 Magna Awards. Earlier this evening in the Finance and Facilities meeting, Ms. Candyce Dostert, Grant Writer, spoke about the success of this program especially for our vocational and bilingual students who all successfully passed.
6. Informed members that this Wednesday evening at the Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee meeting, Mr. Charles O'Donnell will be present. He is the consultant doing the research and study of our guidance services. A one-page resume of Mr. O'Donnell is provided for all members.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT (cont.)

7. Three notices were put at members seats this evening:
 - An email from Heather Rowe on behalf of Mayor Dorothy Kelley Gay
 - Minutes of the December 13, 2000 Rules Management Committee of the Whole meeting with information concerning the residency requirements waiver
 - A copy of the Superintendent of Schools Performance Appraisal, with goals and objectives on page 2 completed by the Superintendent, in order for members to complete page 5 - Summary of Results.

8. Enclosed is a memorandum from Ms. Pamela Holmes, Supervisor of Early Childhood Education/Title I, regarding Parent Involvement Surveys distributed to Parents/Guardians for completion. The completed surveys are to be returned to Ms. Ellie Blute at the Winter Hill Community School on November 7th. Also provided to members is a copy of the *Parent Involvement in Education* policy. Either before, or at the school fair, there will be an additional policy with corrections regarding the parent teacher conferences vs. the PTA meetings.

9. Provided to all members is an outline from Mr. Philip Bassett, Vocational Director, on the total number of vocational students. The Superintendent reported that out of the total 1680 students at Somerville High School, thirty percent of our students are involved in a vocational program. Dr. Argenziano applauded Mr. Bassett and the staff for their outstanding recruitment of students.

10. Enclosed is the Somerville Public Schools *Calendar of Events* for November 2003.

11. Dr. Argenziano extended his thank you to the following retirees for their years of service in the Somerville Public Schools:
 - Carole Gilberti, Health Department Head - 33 years of service
 - Francis Ferraro, Principal, Capuano Early Childhood Center - 32 years of service
 - Ms. Marjorie Gorman, PHCS Teacher - 32 years of service

12. Informed members that an update regarding Question 2 is available if the committee would like a report once Ms. Bauer reports on the October 22, 2003 Ed. Programs Subcommittee meeting. Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Argenziano have met four times since that meeting took place, with the staff, the implementation team, and the headmaster.

Ms. Taylor referred to item #8 regarding the Parent Involvement Survey and mentioned the school policy book and her concern about items that may be outdated and the procedure for updating those items. Following brief discussion, this issue was referred to Rules Management Committee for further discussion.

Regarding item #6, Dr. Argenziano responded to Ms. Murray's request to refresh her memory about the consultant for the guidance department, and the available funding for this position.

VII. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. *Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee:* (Ms. Bauer) Oct. 22

Subjects discussed:

- ✓ Question 2 Transition and Implementation

Ms. Bauer reported on the items discussed during the evening, as follows:

- The committee met with the entire implementation team, which included Ms. Sarah Slive Davila, Outreach Consultant, Ms. Yvonne Gunzburger, Supervisor of Reading, Mr. Francis Russell, Coordinator of English, and Mr. Luigi Palazzo, Counselor/Tester
- discussed the overview of the activities that the transition team has been participating in including attending Department of Education training sessions
- topics discussed concerned waivers, students requesting waivers and those that have been granted, the waiver process, the alternative bilingual supports available to students who do receive waivers, the professional development the teachers are receiving in order to help them implement the Structured English Immersion Program, and arrangements in students schedules to better serve both the English language learners and some speakers of English as a first language.

Following Ms. Bauer's report, Dr. Jenkins, District Administrator for Student Services gave an update on the Question 2 Transition and Implementation process. He reported four meetings have taken place since the October 22nd Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee meeting. Staff in attendance at the meetings were the SEIP teachers, ELL teachers, the Department Heads of Language/Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies, the Headmaster and John Breslin who does the scheduling, Sarah Slive Davila, and Dr. Jenkins, representing the transition relative to SEIP, Structured English Immersion and Sheltered English Immersion and ELL Students. Some of the items discussed were ELL at Somerville High School, ELL-SEIP Waivers, and Alternative Bilingual Education. Dr. Jenkins informed the committee that the transition team met with Dr. Argenziano last Thursday, October 30th, and will again this Thursday, November 6th. The switches and changes discussed are scheduled to take place on Monday, which is the first day of the second quarter.

When complete with his update, Dr. Jenkins answered questions asked by school committee members and addressed any concerns they had.

Ms. Bauer announced the next Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 5, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. at 181 Washington Street, 3rd floor conference room. Members will meet Mr. O'Donnell, the gentleman who will be helping to improve the guidance services, and agenda items for discussion are guidance services and elementary block schedules.

Brief discussion took place regarding the approval of waivers and developing guidelines for the appeals process. This item was referred to Rules Management Committee for further discussion.

VII. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES (cont.)

- ✓ Approval of In-service Courses

Approved motion from Subcommittee:

- To approve the In-service Course, Orff-Schulwerk: A Process for Music Making in the Classroom

B. *Long Range Planning Committee of the Whole:* (Ms. Rossetti) Oct. 27

Subjects discussed:

- ✓ Presentation K-8 Parent/Guardian Survey
- ✓ Public Relations

Approved motion from Committee of the Whole:

- That the Somerville School Committee hosts four city wide meetings geographically separated and language accessible for the purpose of gathering community input.

Ms. Rossetti announced that the first community forum has been scheduled for December 8, 2003 at 6:30 p.m. at the East Somerville Community School.

Ms. Rossetti reported the committee had asked the Superintendent to gather information from individual principals as it relates to each of their buildings for the possibility of a future citywide mailing. Further discussion of this matter will take place when the school committee meets individually with the school councils early next year.

C. *Finance and Facilities Subcommittee:* (Ms. Murray) Nov. 3

Ms. Murray reported on the following:

1. Foodservices Update, given by Ms. Mary Joan McLarney, Director and Ms. Tasha Griffin, Assistant Director, Foodservices Department.
2. Grants Update, given by Ms. Candyce Dostert

Ms. Murray briefly discussed the after-school and summer programs run last year, as well as the academic enrichment program, which focused primarily on ELL students and math enrichment around the MCAS. She stressed what an incredibly successful program it was and made a request to send a letter to our state legislators showing them the model the committee was given in the academic support services program report, what the staff has done, the level of success we've had and the risks we are now facing this year with the loss of funding. Ms. Cardoso requested that a copy of the letter also go to Congressman Michael Capuano.

3. Quarterly Expenditures - review of the FY2004 First Quarter Operations Expenditures, as submitted by Ms. Marie Ferrari, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Annual Performance Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Harris reminded members to return the completed performance evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools to her by Friday, November 7th. The results of this evaluation will be discussed at the Personnel Committee Meeting of the Whole on November 19, 2003 at 7:00 p.m.

B. Residency Requirement

Ms. Cardoso referred to the minutes of the Rules Management Committee of the Whole Meeting of December 13, 2000 regarding the residency requirement item and the motion that was made *to request the Board of Aldermen to look at residency requirements as it affects school department employees as soon as possible after their new Legislative Matters Committee is formed and that two school committee members be present at this meeting.* Lengthy discussion took place. Board of Alderman President, Mr. O'Donovan responded to questions asked by school committee members. Following discussion, it was suggested that the school department request clarification from the city solicitor's office. Dr. Argenziano will send communication to Ms. Lisa Mead, City Solicitor, asking her to address this issue discussed in December 2000, regarding putting a committee together of Board of Aldermen members and School Committee members to address the residency requirements ordinance.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Field Trip – Approved by voice vote.

Nov. 21, 2003: Powder House Community School, Grade 8, to New York City, NY. Transportation by tour bus at a cost of \$75.00 per student.

B. SHS Summer School Graduates

Mr. Thomas F. Galligani, SHS Headmaster, recommended that the following students, who have successfully completed summer school and have earned the required credits, be granted a SHS diploma. Approved by voice vote.

Jeff Jean-Baptiste
Maria Lopez
Jonathan Mackey II
Ivonne Zavala

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Murray

1. Reminded the public Tuesday, November 4th is Election Day and urged everyone to vote. Polls are open from 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

Ms. Cardoso

1. The Lincoln Park Community School started their Thanksgiving Food Drive today, November 3rd. Ms. Cardoso reminded the community that anyone wishing to donate non-perishable food items, please do so by bringing them to the school.
2. During Election Day, November 4th, the Lincoln Park Community School will be having a bake sale, as well as other schools throughout the city. Ms. Cardoso encouraged the community to purchase baked goods and support our schools.
3. Wednesday, November 5th, Title I will be having *Books for Bingo* at the Winter Hill Community School at 6:30 p.m.

Charlene Harris

1. Wished luck to the girls swim team. There are a group of girls who qualified for the sectionals and they will be swimming this weekend in Haverhill.
2. Announced this is the first time Somerville High School's Girls Volleyball Team advanced to the play-offs. Today's game was at Chelmsford and Ms. Harris wished the girls luck.

Alderman O'Donovan

1. Reminded everyone tomorrow, November 4th, is Election Day and urged the public to vote.

Ms. Bauer

1. Reminded the community that the Culinary Arts Program is still taking order for Holiday pies.
2. Mentioned we are approaching the end of the first quarter of the school year, report cards will be sent home and citywide PTA meetings are scheduled. The Cummings School PTA will be held on Thursday, November 13th, from 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Mr. Sullivan

1. Announced that The Michael E. Capuano Early Childhood Center Dedication held last Sunday, October 26th was a great success and Mr. Sullivan commended Superintendent Argenziano for a job well done. He also congratulated Ms. Ellie Blute, for whom the Parents Resource Room is named after and also commended her on the great job she did serving on the dedication committee.
2. Encouraged the public to vote tomorrow, November 4th, Election Day.

Ms. Taylor

1. Informed members that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees Convention will be held next Wednesday, November 12th and Ms. Taylor will be representing the School Committee at this convention. Ms. Taylor summarized the eight resolutions that are going

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

to be presented, three concern funding:

- To suspend implementation of the No Child Left Behind until it is fully funded
 - To allow school departments to keep all Medicaid reimbursements
 - To provide flexibility for municipalities on how they can collect funding.
2. Informed members that there is a hearing on bilingual education at the State House on Thursday, November 13th, at 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Rossetti

1. Informed members on November 10, 2003 the school committee will be having either an executive session meeting or a meeting with the Board of Aldermen. After she and Ms. Murray speak with Board of Alderman Finance Chair, Mr. White, Ms. Rossetti will report back to the committee.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no items of communication this evening.

XII. PERSONNEL

Complete report submitted to members. – Received and placed on file.

School Committee members were notified and accepted the following personnel actions of November 3, 2003 as follows:

A. Retirements

1. Francis Ferraro, 15 Erwin Rd., N. Reading, MA 01864 (Principal, Capuano Center) effective 6/30/04.
2. Marjorie Gorman, 6 Tennyson St., Somerville, MA 02145 (2nd Grade Teacher at PHCS) effective 6/30/04.
3. Carole Gilberti, 1 Highland Ave., Methuen, MA 01844 (Supervisor, Family Consumer Science) effective 6/30/04.

B. Unpaid Leave of Absence

1. Catherine Lynch, 167 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143 (Lunch Aide @ Capuano) from 10/19/03 to 1/1/04.
2. Mary Chochrek, 10 Franklin St., Somerville, MA 02145 (ECIP Paraprofessional) from 11/3/03 to 11/20/03.

XII. PERSONNEL (cont.)

- 3. Maureen Bastardi, 14 Virginia St., Somerville, MA 02145 (SPED Paraprofessional) from 10/2/03 to 11/8/03.

C. Medical Leave of Absence

- 1. Maira DeCastro, 76 Ten Hills Rd., Somerville, MA 02145 (SEIP Paraprofessional) from 10/8/03 to 11/10/03.

D. Maternity Leave of Absence

- 1. Mary Benson, 26 Tufts St., Malden, MA 02148 (ECIP Paraprofessional @Capuano) beginning on or about 10/17/03.

E. Authorizations

WHCS

SPED Paraprofessional
Effective 10/15/03
Vice: Ianelli (resigned)
Trans. from Kennedy

Martha O'Neil
119 Gloucester St.
Arlington, MA 02474
Salary: \$13,299

SHS

Vocational Resource Lab
Effective 11/3/03
Vice: D. Diaz (transferred)

Maryanne DiPasquale
59 Irving St.
Somerville, MA 02144
Salary: \$15,000

Brown School

Prov. Senior Clerk 1
Effective 10/27/03
Vice: M. Connolly (transferred)

Dignora Diaz
1168 Fellsway West
Malden, MA 02148
Salary: \$26,536

Athletics

Freshman Football Coach
Fall 2003 Season
Vice: Kebreau (resigned)

Robert McIntosh
8 School St.
Charlestown, MA 02129
Salary: \$2,740

Community Schools

Van Driver
Effective 10/20/03

Eleuterio Rosa
153C Alewife Brook Pkwy
Somerville, MA 02144
Salary: \$9.90/hour

XII. PERSONNEL (cont.)

Manager Child Care Program
 Effective 10/20/03
 Grant Funded Position

Patricia Fogarty
 22 Oak St.
 Exeter, NH 03833
 Salary: \$42,000

21st Century Site Coordinator
 effective 10/20/03
 Grant Funded Position

Allison Tugel
 48 Sunset Rd.
 Somerville, MA 02144
 Salary: \$20/hour

21st Century Site Coordinator
 effective 10/20/03
 Grant Funded Position

Sean O'Brien
 18 Elm St.
 Ipswich, MA 01938
 Salary: \$20/hour

Custodial Transfers

1st Shift Edgerly/Capuano
 effective 10/8/03

Joseph Owens
 1370 Broadway
 Somerville, MA 02144

2nd Shift Capuano Center
 effective 10/27/03

Michael Finigian
 10 Charlestown St.
 Somerville, MA 02145

Vocational Lead Teachers 2003/04 school year

Richard McCann	Auto Body
Robert Puopolo	Auto Mechanics
Jennifer Taylor	Buildings and Grounds
John Hart	Carpentry
Marilyn Camelio	Child Development
Yuri Petri	Computer Repair
Stella Apostolakos	Cosmetology
Thomas Cardon	Culinary Arts
Perry Navleris	Drafting
Patrick Smith	Electrical
Charles Gerlach	Printing
Grace Kennedy	Health Careers
Donald Medeiros	Machine
Dennis Jakimczyk	Marketing Ed.
Anthony Vecchiarello	Metal Fabrication
Paul Good	Painting & Decorating

XIII. MOMENT OF SILENCE

The superintendent reported with regret the death of the following person. A moment of silence was observed and a letter of sympathy will be sent to the family.

1. Joan Murphy, (Oct. 26), Cafeteria Employee, Powder House Community School

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m., by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano
Secretary