

Boston School Committee Meeting

March 24, 2010

*The following is a brief summary of the public meeting of the Boston School Committee held on **March 24, 2010** at 6:00 p.m. in the Winter Chambers, 26 Court Street, Boston. This summary is not intended to serve as official minutes of the meeting.*

For more information about any of the items listed below, contact the office of the Boston School Committee: feedback@boston.k12.ma.us or 617-635-9014.

CALL TO ORDER

School Committee members present: Rev. Gregory G. Groover (Chairperson); Marchelle Raynor (Vice Chairperson); John Barros; Alfreda Harris; Claudio Martinez; Michael O'Neill; Mary Tamer; and Michael Davis (Student Representative).

Rev. Groover called the meeting to order.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Boston Public Schools' four-year graduation rate for the 2009 cohort was 61.4 percent, marking the first time since rates have been recorded that the district's rate rose above 60 percent. Dr. Johnson attributed the improvement to the district's new initiatives focused on Graduation for All, and noted that last week Boston Day and Evening Academy celebrated its third graduation of this school year. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=5412>

On Friday, March 19, Mayor Thomas M. Menino, the Superintendent, and FableVision officials launched the Boston Live Wire Learning Community Project at Lee Elementary and Lee Academy Pilot Schools in Dorchester. The Project unites schools, libraries, community centers and families with a mission, tools and training to improve student engagement, achievement and outcomes. <http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/node/3904>

Ross Garrity, a seventh grader from Boston Latin School, won first place at the Third Annual Citywide Spelling Bee sponsored by the Boston Center for Youth & Families. He will participate in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington DC. Runners up hailed from the Jackson-Mann and Manning schools. http://news.bostonherald.com/news/regional/view/20100321big_cheese_seventh-grader_wins_city_spelling_bee_with_r-a-v-i-o-l-i/srvc=home&position=also

Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi, an 8th grade algebra teacher at the Timilty Middle School in Roxbury, earned an achievement award for mathematics teaching and learning from the Association of Teachers in Mathematics.

Anthony Powell of the Private Industry Council received an award from Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

The Boston Scholar Athlete Program presented its inaugural Alfreda Harris Coach of the Year Award to New Mission High School boys' basketball coach Cory McCarthy for helping to improve his team's performance in the classroom and on the court. The award was presented at the Boston City Basketball All-Star Classic held over the weekend. The Superintendent thanked Mayor Menino and Red and Blue Foundation for their continued athletic support.

On March 13, the Superintendent attended a summer resource fair organized by the BPS Department of Extended Learning Time, Afterschool and Services (DELTA), which was well attended despite the inclement weather.

The BPS annual publications *Summer Stuff* and *Summer Stuff J.*, containing hundreds of summer enrichment opportunities for elementary, middle and high school students, will be released next week. The Superintendent thanked Gretchen

O'Neill, publications specialist in the BPS Communications Office, for her hard work on district-wide publications.
<http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/summer>

This year, the Jewish Holiday Rosh Hashanah falls on the Thursday after Labor Day, which is traditionally the first day of school for Boston Public Schools. The Superintendent and her staff are working with the Boston Teachers Union to adjust the school calendar for the 2010-11 school year to resolve this conflict. The Superintendent will provide an update on this matter next month.

Last week, Dr. Johnson, Chief Accountability Officer Frank Barnes and Assistant Chief Academic Officer Shonda Huery attended the Council of the Great City Schools conference to learn about Race to the Top and the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind.

The Superintendent made the following personnel appointments for the 2010-2011 school year:

- Mike Sabin, former principal of the Edwards Middle School in Charlestown, and current school leader in Somerville, will be returning to Boston to lead the Dever Elementary School as well the McCormack Middle School.
- DaQuall Graham, the current principal at the McCormack, will lead the Lilla Frederick Pilot School, effective this summer, when current principal Deb Socia assumes a position in the district supporting technology citywide.

The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race & Justice at Harvard Law School is sponsoring a conference, "Exploring Equity-minded Approaches to Student Assignment and School Reform," on March 27, 2010, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. at City Year Headquarters, 287 Columbus Avenue.

Also on March 27, the Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts (BEAM) will host its annual conference at the Quincy Marriott Hotel.

REPORTS

Dr. Johnson presented her final Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Recommendation in the amount of \$821,382,404, representing a 0.4 percent increase from the FY10 appropriation. <http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/files/3-24-10%20FY%2011%20Budget%20Presentation.pdf> The proposed budget provides the financial blueprint for carrying out Year Two of the five-year Acceleration Agenda for the Boston Public Schools, which is designed to close achievement and access gaps and raise academic performance in every classroom of every school.

ACTION ITEMS (VOTES)

Approved: Grants, totaling \$420,575.00

Approved: Travel request for 25 students and four chaperones from Boston Arts Academy to Doha, Qatar from April 17 – April 24, 2010.

Approved: Travel request for 7 students and 2 chaperones from the Josiah Quincy Upper School to travel to Montreal, Canada, April 26 – May 1, 2010.

Approved: The Committee approved the annual budget for Fiscal Year 2011 in the amount of \$821,382,404, as submitted by the Superintendent of Schools. <http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/node/3910>

NEW BUSINESS

Michael O'Neill stated that the School Committee had received a thoughtful proposal on expanding extended learning opportunities for BPS students and requested that the Superintendent come back to the School Committee at a future meeting with an analysis.

Dr. Johnson asked CFO John McDonough to introduce his budget team: Francine Bouchard, Seth Racine, Tim Nicolette, Erin Sullivan and Mary Fitzgerald.

Dr. Johnson reminded everyone to complete their 2010 Census forms to ensure that BPS receives adequate resources.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/census/>

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The School Committee adjourned to Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining strategy.

ADJOURN

The School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.