

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, April 4, 2022 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – Zoom

Members present: Ms. Krepchin, Dr. Ackman, Ms. Barish, Ms. Normand, Mr. Green, Ms. Pitone and Dr. Phillips, and President McLaughlin.

Members Absent: Mayor Ballantyne

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 with a moment of silence, followed by a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Chair Green asked Superintendent Skipper to call the roll, results of which were as follows: PRESENT – 9 – Dr. Phillips, Ms. Krepchin, Mr. McLaughlin, Chair Green, Ms. Barish, Ms. Pitone, Dr. Ackman and Ms. Dion. ABSENT – 1 – Mayor Ballantyne

Chair Green asked interpreters to introduce themselves:

Micaela Yang - Spanish

Elaine Metzker - Portuguese

Angie Surprise - Haitian Creole

II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student Representatives Bryan Recinos and Marcia Narh-Botchway were both present and reported the following:

- April 26th SHS students will be holding an x-block climate forum to educate student about climate change.
- March 23rd students from the Equity Club visited WHCIS to educate middle grade students on the use of the N-word.
- SHS PTA conferences are Wednesday April 6, 2022 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM.
- There is an SHS Dance on Thursday April 14, 2022.
- The junior and senior class are collaborating on a fundraiser.
- Softball and Tennis teams have games today and there is a track meet tomorrow.

Ms. Krepchin thanked students for their report, she loves the idea of high school students visiting and engaging with middle grade students.

Superintendent Skipper added that CTE students and the Mediations programs also visits middle schools.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- March 7, 2022

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Dion, seconded by Ms. Krepchin, to approve the School Committee minutes of March 7, 2022.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Green read the public comment guidelines and asked those who signed up, to comment at this time.

Jim Vetter – 3 Moore St- commented in opposition of the private school being considering tonight. He is concerned that they will not be able to provide the thoroughness and efficiency that SPS provides to students.

His areas of concern are as follows:

- SC is the body that can approve or deny this application
- They do not provide an area of student support
- They do not use scientific based teaching
- In science and history they talk about biblical creation

VII. NEW BUSINESS (Item A taken out of Order)

A. Real Life Learning Center Discussion

Chair Green introduced this topic out of order and spoke to the process that has taken place, he then invited attorney Peter Summers to further explain. Attorney Sumners reported the following:

- All Students must attend school, be it private, public, charter or a homeschool plan.
- the local School Committee shall approve or deny on the basis that the private school provide thorough instructions to students similar to that of SPS.
- the School Committee role is to approve the private school solely based on academic instruction
- will a student be able to be at the same grade level that of SPS students.
- The School Committee cannot deny on the basis of religion
- adequacy of instructional material
- In considering the application, he advised committee members to stay focused on the basic charge. To approve a private school when you are satisfied on the thoroughness and efficiency of instruction but not deny application on the basis of religious teaching.

The private school applicant tonight is going to be operated by or in a local church. We have raised the point that some of their teachings are religious teachings, those teachings are supposed to be set aside.

Attorney Sumners announced that he would stay on the call while committee members discussed the topic and that reps from RLLC were in attendance to answer questions.

He closed by saying that as elected officials, committee members have the right to disagree, but when considering an application it is important to focus on the basic charge of the law.

Comments and questions

Dr. Phillips struggled to understand some of the schools proposed teachings, which are factually incorrect, but also part of the religious teaching. Where does that fall? Attorney Sumners responded that this is not his area of expertise, but a religious teaching is legally protected under a statue of law, therefore, if they are proposing to teach creationism, then the school is permitted to have the teaching in their schools and any denial cannot be based on that religious teaching. If they were failing to teach or failing to make progress at grade level because of things they are not teaching then that would be in bounds, because they are not meeting a particular standard that is required by law.

Chair Green asked if courts have identified any limits to what a religious teaching can be. Attorney Sumner said there is no limits as to what religious teaching could be. Religious teachings do not have to follow any particular doctrine, church or entity but have to be held sincerely as religious beliefs.

Ms. Dion commented that after revising the curriculum she noticed there is not anything pertaining to US History and the constitution until senior year of high school. Dr. Adam Rondeau, who is a Consultant for RLLC, responded that this is not correct; US History and the constitution are covered in grades 4 and 8. Ms. Dion followed up and asked which page this could be found. Mr. Rondeau said that 8th grade covers American History and the Constitution and all the amendments, he believes in 5th and 4th grade they cover the Constitution and Declaration of Independence.

Chair Green requested that Mr. Rondeau provide where this information could be found on the scope and sequence by April 25.

Ms. Pitone Requested that file LBC – Relations with No- Public schools, be updated and provided to the public.

Attorney Sumner said the Committee does not have an ongoing or oversight role, just the role to approve. Once approved the School Committee may not hear from the applicant again. The district previously had a policy that was unspecific and did not limit the ability to consider those criteria. There may not be a recent private school that applied,

but the intent in developing the policy as the committee considers RLLC's application, is to apply the same criteria to everyone.

Ms. Pitone followed up and said she thought the policy was approved before beginning this process. Chair Green responded that the policy was drafted not to be in conflict with this process.

Dr. Phillips added that the committee followed this policy and that it would be Important to get it out for public view.

Conversation ensued between committee members and the RLLC team regarding specific questions the committee is seeking to have answered before taking their vote.

Chair Green asked attorney Sumners and Mr. Mazza to form a list of questions to be shared with RLLC for them to answer before April 25.

Ms. Dion commented that to her knowledge the committee has not received anything to the effect of the safety of the physical plant for fire codes and the building inspections and asked if a representative from RLLC could address the topic and clarify.

Christian Cole of RLLC responded that they have been at this project since September of last year and there was actually no application handed to him by the district and there was no application process along the way. Speaking to the building sager codes and fire codes, this was included in the very first presentation RLLC did for Chad Mazza and Sara Dion during the Educational Programs and Instruction subcommittee, he offered to resubmit the documents if needed.

President McLaughlin noticed that science is omitted from the categories listed that need to be taught.

Attorney Sumners said that private schools are not required to teach science, they are required to teach what is listed with the legislation.

Ms. Dion asked if LGBTQ are not a protected group under Massachusetts law. Attorney Sumners said he did not see anything in the handbook that is unlawful but added that it is not the School Committee's role to enforce this if there is basis of discrimination.

Ms. Pitone asked if in regards to student services, is this a space where there can be questions about included licensed guidance counselors. Attorney Sumners responded that guidance counselors do not provide instructions therefore; this would not be a lawful requirement.

Ms. Barish noted that in public schools we are required to teach and provide services to every student in the city and asked if a private school does not have access to a counselor are they not required to have one. Attorney Sumner responded that private schools may have selective criteria for admission; they do not have to provide the same services as public schools.

President McLaughlin asked several questions pertaining to how the district has handled other religious schools; was the standard equal? Has Somerville or MA ever rejected a school and on what grounds? Is this precedent setting? How are home applications handled?

Attorney Sumners said there have been private schools rejected in Massachusetts. In terms of other religious schools and the standard being equal it remains that you cannot deny an application based on religious beliefs.

Mr. Mazza added that he approves homeschool applications and there is a lot of overlapping criteria, he has not denied a homeschool application yet.

President McLaughlin requested the history of approval of Saint Theresa, the only current private school operating in Somerville, which was previously approved or has been operating since 1923.

Dr. Phillips asked for the number of students projected to attend to which Mr. Cole responded that they do not have a number yet.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

- K-8 Academic Update (Mr. Mazza)

Assistant Superintendent Mazza said several members of his team were present to attend and began by introducing Uri Harel, Title I Elementary Curriculum Coordinator to begin the update around curriculum.

Mr. Harel spoke to the following updates ([here is the presentation link](#)):

ELA

- Revision of lesson slides developed during the pandemic closure
- New ELA texts
- Writing mini-units
- Expanded phonics instruction
- Dyslexia screening and enhanced reading intervention in partnership with sped

Math

- Revision of K-5 lesson slides
- New K-5 math program search in 2022-2023 SY
- Minimum instructional time guidelines
- Middle grades coaching and professional development.
- Newly added family resources and workshops
- Main Intervention pilot and expansion

Science

- Units developed by SPS teachers over 4 years aligned to new frame works
- Partnership units Dr. Eve Manz from Boston University
- Last units being finalized this year
- Language supports built into units by ELL Teachers

Paused for questions:

Ms. Dion asked about when math intervention is happening. Mr. Harel responded that during X-block.

Dr. Phillips commented that she has been hearing a lot from parents about math instruction and their dissatisfaction, and asked Mr. Harel to say more about how the district is monitoring the math differentiations.

Mr. Harel responded that in general, you could only do so much in curriculum planning; there is a lot that happens in the implementation. Many of the supports come in different forms, one being coaching, and some of the work that happens as part of math intervention.

Ms. Pitone made a request for an update that documents the time line of this work moving forward.

Presentation continued:

Next, Ms. Karen Woods, Director of Educator Development shared the idea generated from educators to have a development and review cycle. She ran through how this process works.

- The district has been piloting this work for the past two years
- The process began in the study portion of the cycle.

Year 1- In the study, content alignment leaders.

Year 2- The Development year (currently being piloted) would be comprised of educators to review scope and sequence documents and will develop unit plans.

Year 3- Preparation year- pilots of different units will use data to inform the units. There will be a presentation to full SC at the end of this year.

Year 4- Ongoing implementation.

Year 5- Monitoring to continue to monitor how the implementation is going.

Year 6- Reflections; would formally ask educators to reflect on the past 3 years of implementation in order to use this data to begin the cycle again in the study year.

Dr. Jessica Boston Davis, Director of Equity and Excellence, then spoke to the social studies process that is currently happening pertaining to the review cycle referenced above.

Currently in the process of revising the social studies curriculum to be aligned with the 2018 DESE revised state history and social science curriculum framework.

- Process update
 - o Drafts of scope and sequences have been created in grades K-8.
 - o Educators are using that scopes and sequences to create unit plans for each grade level.
 - o Currently gathering input from community members.
 - o Completion will likely be this summer.

Question and comments

Dr. Ackman thanked Mr. Harel, Ms. Woods and Dr. Boston Davis for their presentation and expressed her excitement for this work.

Ms. Pitone asked a question around the decision to create a curriculum versus purchasing one. She also asked what the expectations are around adoption district wide.

Mr. Harel agrees that this is rigorous work. In the case of science, this has been an opportunity to be creative. For math, it is more challenging and not something you ever want to do but we are forced to, given the pandemic. The district is looking to transition into a new math curriculum.

Mr. Mazza added that all of the work that is being done is through a lens of equity.

Ms. Barish asked if the committee has already heard about the resources needed to be included in the current budget to complete this work.

Superintendent Skipper responded that the committee has heard of the resources needed, and added that it is work also being supported by grants and leveraged through title work. This provides a curriculum map within the district, similar to the work we are doing on policy.

VI. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

- A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee:** March 7, 2022 (Ms. Barish)
- B. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole:** March 9, 2022 (Ms. Krepchin)
- C. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee:** March 16, 2022 (Ms. Barish)
- D. School Committee Meeting for Long Range Planning Subcommittee:** March 16, 2022 (Mr. Green)
Tabled.
- E. School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction:** March 21, 2022 (Dr. Phillips)
- F. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole:** March 23, 2022 (Ms. Krepchin)

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Krepchin, second by Ms. Dion, to suspend the rules and waive the readings of all subcommittee reports listed on the agenda except the Long Range Planning Subcommittee meeting of March 16, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Phillips, seconded by Ms. Dion, to approve all Subcommittee Reports listed on the agenda except for the Long Range Planning Subcommittee meeting of March 16, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

All approved reports are attached below at the end of these minutes.

VII. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

B. Announcement of Spring 2022 School Committee Virtual and In-Person Office Hours

Ms. Barish announced that office hours are currently happening and the schedule could be found on the school website.

C. Field Trips (Recommended action: approval)

June 15, 2022

Eighth Grade Students at the Kennedy School will visit Canobie Lake Park in New Hampshire. Travel by Bus, student cost \$20.

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Ms. Krepchin, to approve trip to Canobie lake by Kennedy 8th graders.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

VIII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Ackman – announced that the Federal government would not be renewing the free breakfast and lunch program. Would like to bring up the possibility of SC publicly endorsing the state providing the funds.

Ms. Pitone- requested an update on the status of future SC meetings and whether they will be in person or continue virtually

Chair Green- actively working on ways to continue access to the public to return to in-person. Next meeting may be the last virtual Meeting.

IX. CONDOLENCES

X. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:53p.m.

Related documents:

Agenda

District

K-8 Academic Update Mr. Mazza <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/sites/default/files/K-8%20Curriculum%20Updates%20for%204-4.pdf>

Spring 2022 School Committee Virtual and In-Person Office Hours <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/district-leadership/somerville-school-committee/spring-2022-virtual-and-person-office-hours>

Subcommittee Reports

Submitted by: E. Garcia and
K. Santiago

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING – APRIL 4, 2022
ZOOM WEBINAR– 7:00 P.M.**

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the School Committee will be conducted via remote participation.

We will post an audio recording, audio-video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of these proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting on the City of Somerville website and local cable access government channels.

Copy & paste the following link into your internet browser to preregister or on the date and time of this meeting to view it live: https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_UrehXHpaTfut-o3dQKwcpw

Webinar ID: 840 0751 5994

Password: SPSSC22

Somerville Public Schools - School Committee Goals 2019 - 2022

Through the following long-range goals, we commit to addressing deep-rooted systemic barriers that have prevented us from achieving our district vision of equity and excellence and ensuring that all students, regardless of race or ethnicity, have the supports and resources they need to achieve educational success in our district now and in the future. By 2022, we will ...:

...increase the percentage of support staff of color by 6 percentage points, teachers and counselors of color by 5 percentage points, and administrators of color by 4 percentage points through evaluating and strengthening all elements of our human capital system.

... 1) conduct a district enrollment study to understand the prospective future population of the district and 2) craft a vision for school assignment and programming aligned with the district's equity policy.

... design, evaluate, and partially or fully implement student-based budgeting to ensure that every student has equitable access to rich learning opportunities that help them thrive.

... design a robust system of aligned developmental academic and social-emotional benchmarks which will be used to inform practices, policies, and resource allocation.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Call to order with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- March 7, 2022

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

- K-8 Academic Update (Mr. Mazza)

VI. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. Rules Management Subcommittee: March 7, 2022 (Ms. Barish)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management of March 7, 2022.

B. Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole: March 9, 2022 (Ms. Krepchin)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities of the Whole of March 9, 2022.

C. Rules Management Subcommittee: March 16, 2022 (Ms. Barish)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management of March 16, 2022.

D. Long Range Planning Subcommittee: March 16, 2022 (Mr. Green)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Long Range Planning of March 16, 2022.

E. Educational Programs and Instruction: March 21, 2022 (Dr. Phillips)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Educational Programing and Instruction of March 21, 2022.

F. Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole: March 23, 2022 (Ms. Krepchin)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities of the Whole of March 23, 2022.

VII. NEW BUSINESS**A. Real Life Learning Center Discussion****B. Announcement of Spring 2022 School Committee Virtual and In-Person Office Hours****C. Field Trips** (Recommended action: approval)

June 15, 2022

Eighth Grade Students at the Kennedy School will visit Canobie Lake Park in New Hampshire. Travel by Bus, student cost \$20.

VIII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**IX. CONDOLENCES****X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was conducted via remote participation and was called to order at 5:30 pm. Laura Pitone, Sara Dion, Matthew Buchanan, Fran Gorski, and Ellenor Barish were in attendance.

There were two audience members.

There were four items on the agenda.

1. Approve notes from February meeting

Laura Pitone moved to approve the notes from the February meeting of the Rules Management Subcommittee, seconded by Sara Dion.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Open Campus

Somerville High School principal, Matthew Buchanan outlined a proposal for allowing members of the class of 2022 to leave the high school at lunchtime. He hopes a new policy could be written and approved in time for this to begin in late April. This has been discussed with some students, deans, and Vice Principals among others. If School Committee approves the policy, he will hold an assembly to explain the policy to students, and a signed parental/guardian consent will be required.

Superintendent Skipper joined the meeting at 5:34 and noted that it would be important to make it clear in the policy that eligible students are not to access their vehicles during the lunch period.

Tracking and enforcement of attendance was discussed. Mr. Buchanan explained that while students would be expected to scan their IDs before leaving and upon returning to school, their teachers would be responsible for noting late arrivals and absences after lunch periods. Two late arrivals would result in a temporary suspension of the off campus lunch privilege.

Staff members who are already supervising the outdoor lunch space at the high school might be asked to shift toward Highland Avenue to support this policy.

Superintendent Skipper suggested reformatting the proposal as a policy and adding the language about vehicles. Ms. Pitone recommended that specifics be generalized to allow some flexibility. The subcommittee agreed to hold an additional Rules meeting to discuss only this policy prior to the next Regular Meeting with the hope that a new policy might be voted by the full School Committee before April break.

3. MASC update to fiscal policies

Finance Director Fran Gorski reported to the subcommittee regarding updates to fiscal policies recommended by MASC. The attorney did not have any concerns with the language. Mr. Gorski stated that the recommended changes are more of form than of substance and would not impact the budgeting process.

Sara Dion moved to bring the fiscal policy changes to the full committee, seconded by Laura Pitone. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Homework policy

Ms. Dion shared constituent input and questions that she collected.

There was a conversation about whether homework should be optional or recommended for grades K-2, why that change was made, and where nightly reading fit in. Mr. Mazza explained that the policy allows educators to ask students to practice what they are learning at home. He noted that the recommended durations of homework were meant to be maximum amounts and that reading would be expected on top of any homework assignments. He said the policy could be updated for clarity on that point. In discussing homework loads for older students, the complexity of the high school class schedule was raised as well as the importance of preparing students in the middle grades for the demands of the high school schedule.

Concerns were raised around how educators respond when an assignment takes some students longer than others or a student isn't able to complete an assignment. Mr. Mazza reiterated his confidence that educators know their students and that this policy gives them the flexibility to adapt assignments and expectations accordingly. He believes the policy addresses these concerns. He and Superintendent Skipper were in agreement that those situations are opportunities for a dialogue between the teacher, students, and caregivers.

Superintendent Skipper also stressed the importance of establishing a love of reading which starts with making it a habit.

Mr. Mazza said that any revisions to this policy should be made by April, should School Committee wish to enact a new policy in the fall. Subcommittee members will bring any language updates to the April subcommittee meeting and should plan to vote on the policy at that time.

5. Dress Code

Tabled until April meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35.

Documents used: Open Campus Draft, MASC Section D Track Changes, SPS Final Homework Policy - Approved Revisions 020419, Homework Policy Final Draft, February Rules Report

Finance and Facilities Subcommittee of the Whole March 9th, 2022
Via Remote Participation

Members Present: Emily Ackman, Ilana Krepchin, Andre Green, Ellenor Barish, Sara Dion, Laura Pitone, and Sarah Phillips.

Also in Attendance: Superintendent Mary Skipper and Director of Finance Fran Gorski and Audience Members:
There was one audience member

Ilana Krepchin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

There were 5 items on the agenda. Items were taken out of order.

Acceptance of FY2022 Grant Funds

Growing Literacy Equity Across Massachusetts (GLEAM) Preschool grant, additional \$7,500 for a total of \$63,000 – State Grant

Motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Dr. Ackman. Passed unanimously.

February Bill Rolls

Student services - nursing - outside contracts to fill various needs across the district. Additional charges for masks. We will be putting tents back up soon.

Homeless transport - will factor into the budget discussion. We have multiple vendors right now. This will go out for bid soon, with the hope of streamlining to one vendor. American reading company is for the dual language curriculum for Unidos. Sway medical - this is related to Athletics and concussion training

Motion to approve February Bill Rolls by Mr. Green seconded by Dr. Ackman. Passed unanimously.

Question about Community schools - Their salary goes through payroll. Their non-salary purchases and supplies show up on the revolving bill rolls (though none this month). Community schools finances are famously complicated. We'll have an overview of their finances at a future meeting.

Budget Update/ Discussion

We have completed most of the budget collaborative meetings. We are taking an all funds approach.

In terms of the student opportunity act (from the State) - We are a minimum aid district - which means we don't get much of an increase - about \$30/student so \$150,000 additional chapter 70 funding.

School Committee - annual fee for MASC, won't change

Administration - increase to cyber liability insurance. This still needs to be reviewed. Will be reaching out to our insurance agent. This is likely to go up significantly. This year, we had a lot less coverage for a lot more money. There are several high profile cases in the news which are making insurers nervous.

Increase to legal fees - we are in collective bargaining right now. If this carries into next fiscal year, there may be increased costs.

Curriculum - both materials for k-8 schools and some of the testing. Trying to address those needs by buying them this year.

Citizens schools changed their model. We may be moving away from them. If so, would be a reduction of \$150,000.

Right now they are at two sites. We don't want to lose them, it's been a great program, but they made a national change - they are pulling back from doing direct service, and instead changing to a train the trainers model. But our teachers can't stay till 6 pm. What we need are programs that can run direct service. They kept it for us this year, but after this year, they most likely won't be able to. Hoping to have a definitive answer in the next few weeks. If needed, we will move this money to a different org that can provide direct service. Greater Boston Breakthrough has a 6 year scope. Has been building up and following through to graduation. Increase of \$66,000 this year. Similar increase next year. Each cohort is 50-60 students, 7th- 10th grade, next year up to 250 students total.

Enroot - very pleased with the work they are doing for our newcomers. We are hoping to expand this program.

Student services - moved embedded counseling contracts to ESSER. Nurses came from the city. We placed them under student services. We will be creating their own section for FY23 Technology- no changes. There was a proposal for new smart boards. We are addressing that with efficiency dollars this year.

Facilities -No changes.

Professional Development - no changes.

Transportation - MBTA passes this year were \$500,000 for 9-12th. Open discussion if this will increase for 7/8th grade next year and what that will cost. Right now homeless transport is very decentralized. We are following the Cambridge model to go out to bid for one provider. Would assume this is going to be higher than what we currently pay (given inflation, gas, etc.). We had negotiated a hold on increases for SPED transport this year.

Nursing - this is new. Moving over the money from student services. Will need to increase this - we should have a firm number soon.

Brown - no changes

East- reduction from last year of K-2 curriculum, then addition of the 3-5.

Capuano - no change

Healey - We added Becoming a Man. Discussion about expanding to the Winter Hill and expanding at the high school. The program has been instrumental at the Healey. Creates a real community that extends to afterschool and the summer, about 40 students involved. Started at HS this year. It has grown. They have about 50 students at the high school. Looking at bringing a female version of the program.

Kennedy- No changes

Argenziano - brought in responsive classroom few years ago - they have additional educators to train.

West- as part of their equity audit, they are looking for additional books - we can use efficiency dollars this year

Winter Hill - no change

High School - Enroot increase - still needs to be finalized. There is a city commitment - will they bump that up on their budget? Shooter detection system - the actual cost is closer to \$40,000 or \$50,000. We believe we can get grant funding for most of this. Moving some of the specialist budgets from the high school back to each department - this will help with transparency. Athletics - question about adding football practice items. Looking for outside donations or perhaps purchase them this year instead of adding to next year's budget. MLE- no change

Guidance- no change

Health/PE - no change

Music - some items needed that we will purchase this year.

SFLC - no change

Early Childhood - there are some items that would typically be covered by a state grant - this grant has not been confirmed yet. Fairly certain that the funding will stay on the grant, so we won't have to cover it.

SPED - no changes. We will be looking at the costs of out of district placements. FC/NW - no changes

Net subtraction of \$51,000, but there are still major items that need to be addressed. There will likely be an increase in the non payroll budget

Salaries - we are bargaining right now, but this shows a typical increase. Still needs to be finalized.

There are mid year additions that will need to be accounted for- whether that is ESSER or general fund.

Right now, looking at about a 4% increase.

4.2 million would be a 5% increase (which is a typical year increase), which leaves 1.3 million currently unaccounted for, but many items still need to be addressed.

Donation Process and YTD Expenditure Update tabled till next meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm.

Submitted by Ilana Krepchin, Chair, Finance and Facilities Subcommittee

Documents used:

February Bill Rolls

YTD Expenditure Detail 3.2.22

The meeting was conducted via remote participation and was called to order at 5:30 pm. Laura Pitone, Sara Dion, Matthew Buchanan,
There was one item on the agenda.

1. Open Campus

Somerville High School principal, Matthew Buchanan shared highlights from a proposed policy allowing Seniors to leave Somerville High School at lunchtime. He noted that he has been meeting with Senior class leadership and with administrators to discuss this proposal. Several points were discussed, including:

- Clarity around the prohibition of accessing vehicles
- Distinction between parent/guardian consent and student contract
- Need for ample communication to caregivers about this change

Superintendent Skipper notified subcommittee members that a crossing guard has been requested for Highland Avenue during high school lunch periods.

Subcommittee members expressed concern about the format of the proposed policy, stating that less specificity would give Principal Buchanan more flexibility as challenges and opportunities emerge. To that end, Ms. Pitone presented some proposed changes to the policy language.

Ms. Dion moved to pass the policy with Ms. Pitone's revisions and additional revisions made in subcommittee out of Rules to the full School Committee. In the absence of a second, the subcommittee agreed to meet at 6:45 on Monday, March 21 to consider this policy once more.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 pm.

The Educational Programs Subcommittee met on March 21, 2022, via Zoom. Members present were Sarah Phillips and Sara Dion. Also in attendance was Assistant Superintendent, Chad Mazza and Director of Educator Development, Karen Woods.

Chair Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm. Superintendent Skipper joined at 5:36pm and SPS Legal Counsel, Peter Sumners joined at 5:42pm. There were three people in the audience.

There were three items on the agenda:

1) Curriculum Review and Development Cycle

Ms. Woods gave an overview of the curriculum review cycle the district has developed and is piloting. The work grew out of the Educator Leadership model the district developed between 2019-2020. The Curriculum Development and Review Cycle is a six year cycle, designed such that each subject is in one year of the cycle at all times. Stages include study, develop, prepare, implement, monitor, reflect and reflect. This cycle will help the district protect content areas from random changes and institutionalize a continuous improvement process. Families will be engaged through SICS and conditions for learning, and there is an equity pause embedded throughout the cycle to examine where and for whom curricular revisions are working. The schedule is theoretical and requires funding, primarily in the form of stipends for educators. Currently, the district is piloting the cycle in the Library/Media and Social Studies departments.

2) Real Life Learning Center (RLLC)

Pursuant to policy LBC, the subcommittee began deliberations regarding the RLLC's application to open a private school in Somerville. Dr. Phillips noted that she did not see evidence related to several subjects mandated by law in the application and asked if others could find evidence of curriculum related to the history and constitution of the United States, duties of citizenship, health education, physical education, drawing, or music. Mr. Mazza reported evidence of physical education, drawing, and music. Ms. Dion noted evidence of the history and constitution of the United States. Dr. Phillips also asked Mr. Mazza if he would approve the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) curriculum proposed by the RLLC if it were proposed by a home school family. He stated that he would. Ms. Dion asked about a court case referenced in Mr. Sumner's guidance to the committee. He explained that it helped establish school committee's rights to review private school applications.

The committee began deliberations Dr. Phillips argued that it's never in a district's interest to reject an application from a private school and argued that, while there is some evidence that the ACE curriculum does not produce academic outcomes similar

2

to the public schools, this evidence is not peer-reviewed and thin. She also noted that there are four schools in Massachusetts currently using the ACE curriculum.

Ms. Dion noted confusion, stating that she thought we had all agreed the ACE curriculum is lacking. She noted that teaching related to creationism is factually incorrect, highlighted the lack of diverse reading options, and argued that the RLLC fails to meet state law regarding emotional development and safe and healthy relationships. She argued that subcommittee members are or were professional educators with the technical expertise required to evaluate the curriculum. She argued that teacher qualifications were not on par with those required in SPS and expressed concern that teacher evaluations will be conducted by the RLLC's administrative assistant. She expressed concern approving the proposed school in light of evidence from this year's YRBS survey about struggles faced by LGBTQ+ students.

Dr. Phillips noted that private schools do not have to follow the same teacher qualification requirements as public schools, and Mr. Sumners reminded the committee that they had to take a vote using the criteria laid out in policy LBC and DESE guidance.

Ms. Skipper encouraged the committee to examine the RLLC's approach to the whole child, particularly students' social-emotional and physical needs in addition to their academic ones.

Ms. Dion moved to present the application from the RLLC to the full school committee with a recommendation to reject the application. Ms. Phillips seconded the motion and proposed a friendly amendment to add the statement, pending submission from the RLLC of missing materials. Ms. Dion opposed the amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

3) January and February Ed Programs Subcommittee Reports

Dr. Phillips moved to approve the January and February Ed Programs Subcommittee reports. Ms. Dion seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chair Phillips adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:20pm.

Documents used:

SPS Curriculum Review Development Cycle.pdf

Members Present: Emily Ackman, Ilana Krepchin, Andre Green, Ellenor Barish, Laura Pitone, and Sarah Phillips.

Also in Attendance: Superintendent Mary Skipper and Director of Finance Fran Gorski and Audience Members:
There were two audience members

Ilana Krepchin called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm

There were 4 items on the agenda.

Budget Update/ Discussion

We are mid-way through the process

Staffing changes - Includes positions added due to programmatic need in FY '22 Amount listed is a projection - it's the mid-level when looking at the teachers' scale Funding source listed might not yet be final - whether it's the general fund or ESSER. This list does not include conversion positions yet - We never want to put something up that impacts a staff member without speaking with them first.

A number of the new positions are linked to SLIFE and MLE and are directly linked to our increased newcomer enrollment - In a normal year we might have 140; we are currently at 230 - most of whom are at SHS - 30% are SLIFE and are coming with trauma

Need to add SFLC Liaisons because of the increased Brazilian population - we are seeing much higher Portuguese speaking numbers than in the past.

Because of a concern that newcomers are able to access CTE - we are proposing piloting a bilingual aide/para to work across the department

Adding Art Therapy for SLIFE students

Adding a BILINGUAL Tech specialist/trainer

School Health Services Director to be a conduit with the city and help with nurses. What is an Adjustment educator vs counselor? They are counselors in both cases. The key there is the counselors can do direct service. A dean of students facilitates conversations with families.

New Robotics Instructor - Will there be interdisciplinary opportunities? Is this just in math? Mostly about calculations? - Yes. This is the big question. Generally placed in science or math. Actually applied. Because it was placed in math before we couldn't use the facility and the teacher expertise in the way we needed. Moving it to CTE we have access to the facility. We envision physics/electrical/programming-/fabrication/math working together. Districts with the most advanced programs do it this way.

Expansion of Enroot due to increased enrollment - this is supplemented by Biogen so we get a lot more service than we are paying for. With the increase in newcomer population we should be expanding this as much as possible. Older students help to supervise and do internships in the community. The program really helps with transition and connecting with the community. Transportation - increase in cost of equipment, labor, fuel...

Payroll numbers will change with ongoing negotiations with union

Circuit Breaker - Allows us to take three teachers off GF and put them on circuit breaker. Looking at a 4.92% increase right now (this isn't complete yet)

5% is typical

YTD Expenditure Update

Looking at projections with vacancies factored in we are slated to close out the year on budget, potentially with a surplus

Larger goal is to close the year in surplus but typically we have some orgs in deficit. Nursing contracts added in for Student Services.

Facilities is in deficit - this is kind of a catchall. Ordering furniture. Edgerly ordered air conditioners. Copiers last year. Hoping the quiet period of COVID will continue but we have ordered some supplies and PPE. Some dollars can be shifted to ESSER. Transportation has gone into deficit. Homeless transportation. Going out to bid for one vendor

like Cambridge because it will give us more certainty around the cost. One vendor at a contracted rate would be a great change.

High school is in deficit: some items charged there: the contract for Roger Bourgeois, for example.

Most orgs are in surplus. Should be able to pre-purchase some items rather than putting them on the '23 budget.

CTE will have summer programming for the first time. About 120 middle school kids will have the opportunity to rotate through shops over the summer.

Donation Process

Donation Gift Acceptance Form is on website

With some donations - technology, for example - we have to talk with IT to determine whether/how it will be useful.

Financial donations - for example - SHS was named in a person's will. There is a check that was delivered via the solicitor's office. In those cases this money will go into an enrichment fund at the HS. Sometimes there is a specified purpose or destination.

It takes about 2-3 weeks from receipt to use.

Acceptance of FY2022 Grants Funds

Jae Lim Foundation \$3,000 Math and Science Awards for Juniors – Private Grant FC189 Proficiency-based Outcomes in Languages Other than English for Professional Development - \$42,250 – State Grant

MCC Stars Residency \$3,850 - Argenziano School – Malian Drumming & Dance Instruction – State Grant

School EBT Pandemic Admin Reimbursement – Food Service - \$9,203 – Federal Grant

FC 240 – IDEA Special Education Grant – additional allocation of \$7,492 = new total of \$1,631,385 – Federal Grant

FC 262 – IDEA – Early Childhood Special Education Grant – additional allocation of \$143 = new total of \$61,399 – Federal Grant

FC 252 – ARPA IDEA Special Education Grant – additional allocation of \$1,496 = new total of \$299,124 – Federal Grant

FC 264 – ARPA IDEA – Early Childhood Special Education Grant – additional allocation of \$1,393 = new total of \$27,859 – Federal Grant

Laura Pitone made a motion to approve the grants, seconded by Emily Ackamn, passed unanimously.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Submitted by Ilana Krepchin, Chair, Finance and Facilities Subcommittee

Documents used:

FY23 Roll Over Budget 3/23/22

FY23 Staff Changes 3/23/22

YTD Expenditure Detail 3.2.22

Donation Acceptance Form