

Called for the purpose of a Public Hearing inviting the input of Educators and Members of the Community regarding the FY20 School Department Budget Priorities.

Members Present: Mayor McGovern (ABSENT), Ms. Bowman (ABSENT), Ms. Dexter, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Nolan (ABSENT), Ms. Kelly (ABSENT), and Mr. Kimbrough (ABSENT), Ms. Nolan (ABSENT).

Also Present: Dr. Salim, Dr. Turk, Dr. Adams, Ms. MacDonald, Ms. Spinner, Ms. Allen, Mr. DeJesus, Mr. Monahan, Ms. Liss

Mr. Fantini in the chair, a quorum of the Sub-Committee being present Mr. Fantini called the meeting to order at 3:52 PM and read the call of the meeting.

Public Comment:

Dan Monahan, CEA President: Lexington Ave and Parent of CRLS Junior. There needs to be greater transparency and equity with regard to elementary staffing and class size information which was requested from Administration but is incomplete. Allocation of funds to co-create a K-12 Equity Action Network to figure out ways to release teachers from some of their work without sacrificing the supports our scholars need. We need to better respond to reported incidents and build our capacity with proactive and reactive restorative practices. (comments on file in School Committee office)

Francis Fennell 5th Grade Student at Baldwin: She is not in favor of extending the school day. (comments on file in SC office)

Jen Healy, Nicole Golding, Susan Comstock and Jessica Karwowski representing the Haggerty staff. Priorities are staffing in grades JK-2 they need a second adult with 20 kids in the classroom. Co-teaching to Close the achievement gap, a full time Social Worker, two Building substitutes and additional staffing during less structured times especially in AM with free breakfasts being offered, continue to have access to 2 part-time Interventionists. Maintain the computer lab and library so teachers can use it, fix/replace equipment that is not working well in the building; chrome books, Teacher's computers and old smart boards and projectors. Our Technology person is only ½ time.

Fabiane Noronha, King Open School OLA teacher: Create dual language education, need a 2nd Kindergarten in the new building, she has 20 kids age 4-6 in her classroom, 10 are JK's and it is hard to teach two languages when kids are at different levels. New books and a book room, we have no Portuguese books, teachers are using their free time to translate books and glue them together.

Ana Travasso, King Open School: 5th grade OLA teacher, We start with a full class but because of attrition it is hard for kids to join the class and have the language. Her class is extremely small which is not a good environment because there needs to be a lot of conversation in the class for kids. She wants an additional Kindergarten classroom in the new building which would allow them to pass a full class up to the 2nd and 3rd grade. When they reach 5th grade they love each other. Amigos and King have two Kindergartens so it is an equity thing. They anticipate more of a demand for the Ola Program.

Mary Elizabeth Cranton, CSUS Interventionist and Parent; She supports full time Family Liaisons. She read a statement from Allison Skully another staff member who supports full-time Literacy Interventionists and grade level Adjustment Counselors. If students don't get support they disengage in school over time and Teachers cannot be mental health clinicians. (on file in SC office)

Betsy Preval, CSUS 6th grade ELA teacher: Shares Allison Skully's views that they need more staffing including Counselors, full time Literacy Interventionist, Family Liaisons, Special Educators and Paraprofessionals. They need Lunch Aides because their funds for Lunch Aides were used to hire Mr. Soares. Our two Guidance Counselors are doing lunch duty and are needed elsewhere to support scholars. There should be a Counselor for grades 6, 7 and 8. Specialists and World Language Teachers need in class supports because they are IEP heavy. Behaviors escalate in the arts courses and need

more support staff. Her co-teacher is only in her classroom 40% of the week. Administration just approved for a .4 Literacy Interventionist, where are we going to get a dedicated, qualified person? Where is the relationship building for this? She invited everyone to come visit her classroom and see what it's like on a daily basis.

Jen Mason Stott, King Open School Library: Advocating for elementary and Upper School libraries and Paraprofessional staffing. She started as a Paraprofessional and worked her way up. Paraprofessionals are needed because they build trust and provide academic support for students. Out of the 12 elementary schools only four have Paraprofessional support. There is a lot of maintenance of the library materials that the Paraprofessionals can take care of. She read examples of what the Librarians that have Paraprofessionals do. The 3rd graders need handholding to get on the computers and learn. Tobin is unique because of the Montessori Model but she is requesting equity for all libraries and funding for Paraprofessionals.

Caitlin O'Donnell, Teacher at Fletcher Maynard Academy: She shared an excel spreadsheet with Ms. Dexter (on file in SC office) on class size numbers in general education classes. Only four Principals supplied data to her including the Cambridgeport, Fletcher Maynard Academy, Graham & Parks and Tobin Montessori. In general education grades 1 through 5 there is a huge discrepancy in the number of Paraprofessionals to Students ratios, which is shocking and alarming, and ranges from, 1-86 and 1 for 22 students. That is not equity. Some schools have Interns helping them. We need the data and need to look at the best staffed school in the district.

Rose Levine, 5th grade Teacher at Graham & Parks: She wants the budget to prioritize equitable access and outcome in all schools regarding staffing. Early grades are essential for the gaps between the students of color and their white peers. At her school there is a Paraprofessional or Intern in each classroom with the lead Teacher. Every classroom in the District should have two adults. She has a Paraprofessional in her classroom, which gives her the flexibility to work with some students while the other adult works with another group of students. Provide funding because we need adults to build relationships with the students and they need educators that look like them.

Robyn Towner, Special Educator at King School: Many Special needs students need individualized instruction. More Paraprofessional's are crucial but they are not Teachers and cannot supply services as detailed in a student's IEP unless they are specifically hired by OSS. Additional Special Educators are needed for adequate and equitable student support and to co-teach at grade level. Some Middle Schools have two Special Educators per grade level while in elementary schools Special Educators have 2-3 grade levels. The K-2 Special Educator can have as many as ten classrooms that they need to work with. Typical caseloads for elementary Special Educators is 20+ students. Fragmented work with students is not dependable support for students. 4-6 children in groups is not specialized instruction for each student. Fund additional Special Educators at the elementary level. (on file in SC office).

Ross Benson, CRLS Math Teacher: The district enrollment has increased and the district doesn't know who lives in Cambridge and the High School doesn't look proactively if students live here. Tax dollars should be used for kids that actually live in Cambridge.

Matt Dunkel, King Open Parent and VLUS Teacher: He supports the Equity Action Network because racism and inequity are impacting our young people and is corrosive in our District (on file in SC office). We need a comprehensive network based approach to build connection, solidarity and mutual support across initiatives. Equity work takes place outside of school hours and limits our impact. We need additional resources to fund an Equity Action Network to build Equity across the District.

Ed Walker, CRLS Guidance Counselor: He Supports funding the CEA recommendation for a strong Equity Action Network of educators that allows building based and district wide implementation particularly regarding racial issues, sharing best practices, building common purpose, increasing solidarity and ensuring collective impact that empowers every school, employee and student in a way that this district is capable of. (on file in SC Office)

Michelle Currier and Lilly Martinez Baldwin Teachers: Teachers feel they aren't being heard. It is divisive and she echoes what others have spoken about. They polled the whole school (64 people) and the majority don't want an extended day. Their staff said they need additional staffing in classrooms, more adults in classroom, parking at school, smaller class size, behavior support, social emotional curriculum across the district, pay teachers to tutor after school, more innovative curriculum instruction, more Special Education Teachers with general Education Teachers. Interns are being used for recess duty and they are not ready and should not be considered staff.

Karen Engels, Teacher: She is in favor of funding the Equity Action Team, increase staff in classroom, are Interns needed as staffing? Teachers and Librarians need full time Paraprofessionals, improve the co-teaching collaboration time, with the social emotional issues need more Guidance Counselors and Interventionists. The Elementary Program Review said we don't need more staffing but more time. We need to be included in the conversations.

Superintendent Salim announced that there will be two more public hearings on the Proposed Budget.

Ms. Dexter thanked everyone for coming and apologized for starting late.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Nolan, second by Mayor McGovern, the meeting ended at 5:03PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Gist
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee

Documents on file in the School Committee Office from the following;

Dan Monahan

Frances Fennell

Haggerty School Staff (Jen Healy, Nicole Golding, Susan Comstock, Jessica Karwowski)

Allison Skully

Robyn Towner

Matt Dunkel

Ed Walker

Rose Levine