

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

HEALTH, TRANSPORTATION, and SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, April 7, 2014

A meeting of the Health, Transportation, and Safety Subcommittee was held on Monday, April 7, 2014 at 5:30 pm in the 2nd Floor Conference Room at the NAGE Building. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, and Mr. Noel DiBona, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maria Anastasi, Mr. Michael Draicchio, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Mr. James Mullaney, Mr. Keith Segalla; Lieutenant Gerry Cuervels and Captain Richard Bryan from the Quincy Fire Department; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Mr. DiBona called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Mr. Draicchio introduced Quincy Fire Department Captain Bryan, who reviewed the process for quarterly inspections of each school building. Twenty-five items are reviewed and Custodial and Maintenance issues are sent to Kevin Segalla for resolution. The inspections also give personnel a working knowledge of the school buildings. Dr. DeCristofaro said the inspection system and schedule rotation has resulted in a more thoughtful process for the inspections. Mrs. Hubley asked how the Superintendent would be notified of an issue. Captain Bryan said that significant safety issues are brought to Mr. Segalla who will keep Superintendent DeCristofaro apprised. Ms. Isola asked about flammable liquids and Captain Bryan noted that gasoline and snow blowers are stored outside school buildings. Mrs. Mahoney asked about elementary schools and paper decorations. Captain Bryan said no more than 20% of wall surfaces can be covered with combustible materials.

Lieutenant Cuervels is the Quincy Fire Department Safety Officer and works with Mr. Draicchio on fire and lockdowns drills. He also works with all Grade 6 students on fire safety preparedness. Dr. DeCristofaro said that teachers and principals are very complimentary of Lieutenant Cuervels' work with students and thanked him for his efforts.

Mr. Draicchio then presented a Transportation overview – each day, the department transports 543 regular education K-5 students and 371 Special Education students at all grades. Four outside vendors transport 119 students to out-of-district schools; 31 in-district Special Education students; and 60 homeless students from shelters and foster care sites. In total, 1,124 students are transported daily. QPS buses are also used for middle and high school athletics, field trips, the ELC program, CTE training and internships, Special Education therapies, and All-City Band.

School bus drivers and monitors receive professional development including training for bus evacuation for students with disabilities, defensive driving techniques, student management and behavior.

Preventative maintenance is performed on a monthly basis: oil changes, fluid, brake and tire checks. Big buses and mini-buses are inspected three times a year; vans are inspected twice per year. The current fleet is 25 mini-buses, 14 large buses, and 9 vans. The oldest vehicles are from 2001, the most recent from 2013.

Mr. Mullaney presented the Transportation Budget detail. The \$4.367 million budget includes \$2.020 for payroll and \$1.958 in outside transportation costs. The Transportation revolving account provides an additional \$165,000 in funding through user fees and bus rentals, which is spent on driver salaries for rentals and supplies and expenses related to maintenance. Going forward, Transportation will be looking to address the aging fleet through additional three-year leases as were just completed.

Ms. Isola asked about capacity for field trip coverage. Mr. Draicchio said Transportation staff work with Principals to prioritize their requests or help them secure an outside vendors where necessary. Ms. Isola asked if bus drivers are required to be CPR certified; while not a requirement, training is offered. Mr. Draicchio will provide information on the number of drivers currently CPR certified. Ms. Isola asked for an analysis of earnings from bus rentals vs. wear and tear on the vehicles. Mr. Draicchio will provide information on regular outside rentals.

Mr. Bregoli asked how many drivers are employed by QPS; 54 drivers on 34 routes, plus athletics and field trip coverage. Mr. Bregoli asked how the routes are determined, seniority is a factor. Mr. Bregoli asked about the decision to retire a bus; sometimes the cost of repairing exceeds the value of the asset. Mr. Bregoli asked about buses with storage for athletics transportation where equipment is involved. Mr. Mullaney said these are historically more expensive by \$10,000.

Mrs. Hubley asked about rental rates and Mr. Draicchio explained that there are in-house usage rates (\$25/ hour, plus \$1.50 per mile) and outside rental rates (\$35/hour, plus \$3 per mile). Mrs. Mahoney asked for maintenance costs per vehicle. Mr. Mullaney said older vehicles are often used for longer runs; stopping and starting contribute to wear and tear. Mrs. Mahoney asked about flooding in the bus yard, and the department moves the vehicles from the bus yard as necessary. Mr. Bregoli asked about transportation fees; students living over two miles are transported for free, plus those eligible for free and reduced meals. 135 students currently pay transportation fees.

Mr. Bregoli made a motion to adjourn the Health, Transportation, and Safety Subcommittee at 6:25 pm. Mr. DiBona seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.