

# QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, November 25, 2013

A meeting of the Policy Subcommittee was held on Monday, November 25, 2013 at 5:00 pm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room at the NAGE Building. Present were Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Emily Lebo, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Mr. Dave McCarthy, and Mr. Paul Bregoli, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mr. Robert Cavallo, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Ms. Ellen Garofalo, Ms. Kerry Ginty, Mrs. Ellen Hunter, Mrs. Meg McMillen, Mrs. Maura Papile, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Mr. Lawrence Taglieri, and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Mr. Bregoli called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Community Service Coordinator Meg McMillen reviewed the completion rate, 95% of Quincy High School seniors have completed last year's requirement, while 79% of North Quincy High School seniors have completed their hours or are progressing. Dr. DeCristofaro noted that as we have discussed, there will be issues that preclude students from completing this requirement. The principals have the discretion to issue waivers as needed. Mr. Bregoli objected to waivers; Ms. Isola said this is for a student who faces multiple challenges, not that a student wants to avoid the requirement. Ms. Isola said that the principals and guidance counselors are in the best position to determine who might be recipient of this waiver. Dr. DeCristofaro said that waivers should be formalized in the policy. Mr. Bregoli asked if service inside the school was an option to help some of these students fulfill the requirement. Mr. Taglieri said that there are opportunities, especially for assisting with Athletics events. Mr. Taglieri feels that after New Year's, there will be many opportunities for students to contribute to the school community.

Ms. Ginty said that looking at the statistics for both Grade 11 and 12, we are far ahead of where we were last year. Mrs. Lebo asked how many students are doing service within their school community vs. outside the school. Ms. McMillen said 85 to 90% of the students are performing service outside their school. Mr. Bregoli asked about assistance from the Deans and Class Advisors. Ms. McMillen said that at Quincy High School, the Deans have been handling direct student contact and parent information. At North Quincy High School, the Deans, Guidance Counselors, and Class Advisors are all involved in communicating with students and parents.

Mr. McCarthy asked if too much time is spent on pursuing students. Mrs. McMillen feels the program has great value and with School Committee willing to stand behind the requirement, it will be successful. Communication has been emphasized this year, a consistent and persistent message to students and parents. Dr. DeCristofaro reminded the School Committee that this is a pilot and it is

their decision whether to keep the graduation walkthrough penalty. Ms. Isola said that it is a pilot and once it becomes part of the high school culture, there will be less effort required to ensure students complete the requirement. Ms. Isola said that the Community Service Coordinators are doing the groundbreaking work and that this pilot can be adapted over time as needed to create a better policy. Mrs. Hubley asked if parents have been notified that not walking at graduation is a consequence of not completing the Community Service requirement and it has been stated since the beginning of the year. Mr. Taglieri said communication began this school year with opening assemblies, Instant Alert messages to parents, emails through Naviance; completion status is reported on interim and term reports. Mr. Taglieri thinks that ultimately, we are taking about a very small number of students who will not be able to complete the Community Service requirement. Mrs. Mahoney asked if the interim and term reports note that Community Service is a graduation requirement; they will for the next term.

Mrs. Mahoney complimented the opportunities that the Community Service Coordinators have generated and that the School Committee has to be committed to working the pilot process. Ms. Ginty said that over 100 students participated in the recent Hero Walk, North Quincy High School Senior Stay Out Craft Fair, Milton 5K, Best Buddies Walk, Quincy Youth Soccer, Quincy Animal Shelter, Special Olympics, Wollaston and Beechwood Knoll Fall Festivals, Montclair Holiday Shopping Expo; other students will help out with Middle School intramural sports such as basketball and swimming.

Mrs. Lebo said that many students have done more hours than needed, and students at other grades are participating without getting credit. Both Community Service Coordinators agree that many students do far more than the requirement. Mr. Bregoli requested a subsequent report at the February School Committee meeting; there will be a Policy Subcommittee meeting in late January.

Mr. Keith Segalla then presented the **Information Technology Program Improvement Plan**. The mission is to provide effective and efficient communication to key stakeholders: parents, community members, and Quincy Public Schools staff. Communication resources include email, the QPS website, Channel 22, Social Media platforms (Facebook and Twitter), Instant Alert, Aspen, Inspiring Quincy, and School Tube. There are six teams within this program: IT Team, Elementary/Middle/High School POS/Scheduling Teams, the Data Processing Team, and Secretaries Team.

The Data Processing Team goals are ongoing, data submissions to the state and federal government and district reports (scheduling, interim, and report cards). The Elementary POS/Scheduling team is focused on integrating all Elementary school teachers into online Attendance. For Middle and High School POS/Scheduling teams, the goal is for all scheduling to be done online. Ms. Garofalo explained that at the high schools, teachers will prepopulate course recommendations for each student. If parents would like a different placement, they can request changes through Aspen, triggering a guidance review. Ms. Garofalo explained that the no one would be excluded from a course while the review is underway, the schedule is built to accommodate for fluctuations and move ins. Mr. Bregoli

asked about scheduling for students coming from private schools and suggested earlier contact with parents who may be considering other private school options. Mrs. Mahoney asked whether data from other districts using is accessible if students transfer, but it is not.

The IT Team has made progress on the fundamentals of Aspen training across all levels, including the student portal now available for middle and high school students and families. Training to support Aspen schedule building will be held in January; middle and high school Principals and Guidance Staff will attend. The Curriculum and Learning module and teacher page implementations are next. The Secretaries Team will have ongoing Aspen training to expand usage, especially focused on reporting.

Mr. Segalla also presented a progress report on technology purchased by QPS; at School Committee's request, PTO purchases will be added. Mr. Segalla reported that there is a secured wireless network in every building school building, as well as guest networks.

Mrs. Hubley requested a parent night to explain the options and features of the Aspen Student Portal; to middle and high school parents. Mrs. Mahoney suggested a tutorial be posted on website.

Mr. McCarthy asked whether we need to plan for additional staffing in next year's budget to support the many technology assets purchased in recent years. Mr. Segalla acknowledged that managing the workload is a challenge this year and additional positions will be requested for the FY2015 budget. No staff members have been added for at least four years. DESE recommends 200 computers per technician, QPS has 3,000 computers and 4 technicians. Mrs. Lebo mentioned that a complete equipment survey is needed to look at the equity issue across all schools.

Mrs. Mahoney asked whether Community Service can be logged in Aspen. Ms. Garofalo said it is a non-reportable class on the Aspen Gradebook and Community Service opportunities can be promoted through the student portal. Mrs. Lebo commended the Aspen rollout to the community.

Ms. Isola made a motion to accept the Information Technology Program Improvement Plan. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

The last item on the agenda was a review of requested Facilities Dedication currently in the Policy Subcommittee: naming the Quincy High School Custodians' Office in honor of Thomas Orseno and naming the green space that will be created on the former Quincy High School site in honor of Bruce McDonald.

For the green space dedication, an email was sent to all members of the School Committee suggesting that veterans be honored. Ms. Isola said that she understands the point of the email, but still supports Mrs. Lebo's motion. Mrs. Lebo said this is to celebrate an educator's 40-year career. Mr. McCarthy recommends waiting until the green space is more developed and making a decision at that time. Ms. Isola agrees that there may be multiple options for dedications once the plan is more finalized; the motion should be more general and capture the intention to honor Mr.

McDonald when the green space is completed. Mrs. Lebo said that she would like to come out of the meeting with the resolution that once the new space is incorporated into the Quincy High School campus, a portion of it will be dedicated to the memory and work of Bruce McDonald.

Ms. Isola made a motion to move the dedication of a portion of the green space on the site of the former Quincy High School to Bruce McDonald to School Committee. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Ms. Isola made a motion to move the dedication of the Quincy High School Custodians' Office to Thomas (T.O.) Orseno to School Committee. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

These dedications will be on agenda for the December 11, 2013 School Committee meeting and voted on at the January 8, 2014 School Committee meeting.

Mr. Bregoli mentioned that press box at Veteran Memorial Stadium is being dedicated to Charles Djerf at the Thanksgiving Day football game, but School Committee has not voted on this. Dr. DeCristofaro said that Mayor's Office is working with the Djerf family, creating a sign for the press box. School Committee agreed that they would address after the fact.

Ms. Isola made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 pm. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.