

RECORD OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON **THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2011** AT 6:00 PM IN THE JAMES F. WALSH SCHOOL COMMITTEE ROOM, 5TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL. STATUTORY NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK.

School Committee Members Present: Ms. Stone (Chair), Mr. Morse (Vice Chair), Ms. Charlupski, Dr. Childs, Mr. Cunha, Ms. Ditkoff, Ms. Meyers, Ms. Scotto, and Dr. Warren. Also present: Dr. Lupini, Dr. Fischer-Mueller, Mr. Rowe, Dr. Rochlin, Dr. Wilson, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Coyne.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

a. Calendar

Ms. Stone called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She noted upcoming events on the calendar.

b. Consent Agenda

ACTION 11-19

On a motion of Ms. Charlupski and seconded by Dr. Childs, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the items included in the Consent Agenda.

- 1) Past Records: March 24, 2011 School Committee Meeting and March 31, 2011 School Committee Workshop
- 2) Out-of-State Trip: Brookline High School Sojourn to the Past: Civil Rights Tour; February 16, 2012-February 25, 2012 (Attachment A)
- 3) Out-of-Country Trip: Brookline High School Angers Exchange; February 18, 2012-March 2, 2012 (Attachment B)

2. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Finance

Dr. Childs reported that the Finance Subcommittee will be meeting on May 2, 2011 to review the FY 2011 3rd Quarter Financial Report.

b. Capital Improvements

1) First Amendment to the Runkle School Project Funding Agreement

Ms. Charlupski reported that the bids for construction were favorable, so the town worked with the Massachusetts School Building Authority to reallocate funds to underfunded items, including technology and contingency accounts. She referred to the chart showing the proposed changes to the budget (Attachment C).

ACTION 11-20

On a motion of Ms. Charlupski and seconded by Mr. Cunha, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the First Amendment to the Project Funding Agreement between the Town of Brookline and the

Massachusetts School Building Authority for the Runkle School project and authorize Melvin Kleckner, Town Administrator, to execute the agreement.

Ms. Stone reported that the Pierce Auditorium project is moving forward. The architects met with representatives of the school community. The project will improve seating and storage. Concern was expressed about the number of seats available after the renovation. Kaestle Boos Associates has been looking at possibilities and will report back tomorrow. Ms. Charlupski reported that the Devotion Concept Study Commission of 7 will be meeting to review applications for the concept study.

c. Curriculum

Ms. Ditkoff reported that the Curriculum Subcommittee met on April 6, 2011 to discuss learning expectations for lifelong skills and how to integrate them across all content areas. This is part of an ongoing conversation and will be presented to the full School Committee next year. The presentation was enlightening and they appreciate the work that is being done by the staff to establish a strong framework. The Curriculum Subcommittee will be meeting on May 5, 2011 to discuss School Improvement Plans.

d. Government Relations

Ms. Stone reported that the Government Relations Subcommittee met on March 30, 2011 to discuss the Citizens for Public Schools petition against the Social Studies MCAS exam, the Student Voter Registration Bill, the status of bills filed on behalf of the Public Schools of Brookline, and the impact of private placement tuition increases. Massachusetts Association of School Committees Executive Director Glenn Koocher will present the bills to his legislative group. Ms. Charlupski noted that the Brookline League of Women Voters has been very active in facilitating student voter registration.

e. Negotiations

Mr. Morse reported that the Negotiations Subcommittee will be meeting with representatives of the Brookline Educators Union on April 26, 2011. They have tentative agreements with the custodians and food service workers. Mr. Morse expressed his appreciation to Dr. Wilson and Mr. Rowe for their input.

f. Policy Review

1) Student School Technology Use Policy (1st Reading)

Ms. Meyers presented the proposed Student School Technology Use Policy (Attachment D), which is a revision of an existing policy. The proposed policy is more narrowly drawn than the existing policy. It provides clarity for students. Ms. Meyers explained the changes. The introduction is as follows: *The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) views technology as an important tool for advancing educational excellence. In keeping with the system's educational mission, teachers may use and introduce to students a variety of technologies in order to help students learn more effectively. This policy and its related administrative procedures and school technology use contract are designed to ensure that students utilize school technology responsibly and safely. The PSB cannot regulate use of home technology. The proposed policy includes prohibitions,*

safety measures and a School Technology Use Contract to be signed by students and parents/guardians. The PSB will educate all students on the content of the policy in age-appropriate language. The Policy Review Subcommittee unanimously recommends that the School Committee adopt the proposed policy.

Ms. Charlupski suggested changing “Any other unauthorized use” to “Any other unauthorized or illegal use” in the section on Student Use of School Technology. Ms. Stone suggested adding “illegal” after “unsuitable” under the definition of “Inappropriate.” Ms. Meyers stated that she would be inclined to add the reference to the Student Use of School Technology section, rather than under the definition. In response to a question from Mr. Morse, Dr. Lupini stated that the policy is distributed to all students, including students who are new to the system. It is on the short list of policies that need to be translated. In response to a question from Mr. Morse, Ms. Meyers noted that the policy directs staff to educate students on the content of the policy. Ms. Richardson stated that the Student Council is working on a bill that covers the use of electronic devices in school. Dr. Warren asked how much work is involved in having students and parents/guardians sign the policy every year. If it not signed, does that mean that the students are not required to comply? Dr. Lupini stated that he does not believe that the system’s position would be compromised if the document is not signed. Ms. Meyers stated that the students receive a large packet of information at the beginning of the school year with a check list. Ms. Richardson stated that the teachers make sure that the signed documents are returned. Dr. Childs stated that the Finance Subcommittee is concerned with the amount of paper that gets generated in the schools. She asked if this process could be done electronically. Dr. Lupini responded that this will be part of the “parent portal,” which will be implemented very soon. The proposed policy will be scheduled for a 2nd Reading/Vote on May 5, 2011.

2) Flag Protocol and Pledge of Allegiance Policy (1st Reading)

Ms. Meyers presented the proposed Flag Protocol and Pledge of Allegiance Policy (Attachment E), which is a revision of an existing policy. The current policy was a compromise based on a state statute that is unconstitutional. There are different practices in different schools and the principals asked for guidance. The current policy states that “A teacher will cause his pupils to salute the Flag and recite in unison with him the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag at opening exercise, at least once a week.” A 1943 Supreme Court decision said that the reciting the Pledge must be voluntary, so there is a conflict. The Policy Review Subcommittee has spent a great deal of time on this policy. They received input from a number of people in the community. These comments were very helpful and they have incorporated some pieces of what was suggested. They appreciate all the thought that has gone into the comments.

Ms. Meyers explained the proposed policy. The sections which address the Pledge are as follows:

While Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, s. 69 requires teachers to lead their classes in a daily recital of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, the Courts have determined that it

is unconstitutional for any student or staff to be compelled to participate in the Pledge. Therefore, we believe that no member of the school community can be compelled by policy to recite or lead a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consistent with past policy and practice, however, the BSC is committed to honoring the intent of the law, which is to provide an opportunity to students to learn and recite the Pledge of Allegiance in school. The following, therefore, will guide all PSB schools regarding treatment of the Flag and recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance:

Definitions

Flag: The Flag of the United States of America.

Pledge of Allegiance: "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." (Public Law 829, Chapter 806, Section 7, as amended June 14, 1954).

Recitation: Aloud, verbatim repetition of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Opportunity: A regular, planned time when all members of a school community present in school have equal chance to participate in saying the Pledge.

Active Acknowledgment: Co-recitation, standing, and/or use of hand gestures (e.g. a salute or placement of hand over heart) that accompanies recitation of the Pledge.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Recitation of the Pledge by Students and/or Staff in Schools

A PSB Principal/Headmaster (or his/her designee) shall allow, as part of his/her announcements (aka "opening exercises") at the start of one school day each week, an opportunity for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance by a member of the school community.

Such recitation by a member of the school community of the Pledge of Allegiance shall constitute an opportunity for any student, staff or visitor wishing to do so to learn and/or recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Non-Coercive Environment

Respect for Human Differences, a Core Value of the PSB, will be observed. Classroom teachers will, therefore, ensure that any public recitation of the Pledge is received with respectful silence, as would be the norm for all opening exercises and/or announcements. Any individual in the room may choose to recite the Pledge along with the announcement.

No staff member or student shall cause any other individual in a classroom or other place of assembly to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or establish in any way a norm of active acknowledgment.

No staff member or student may prevent, prohibit, or demean voluntary acknowledgment (or absence of acknowledgment) of the Pledge by another student or staff member.

Pedagogical Context and Learning

The BSC believes the most important lessons to be drawn from the Pledge of Allegiance are best presented and discussed in the context of the regular curriculum, not through rote recitation. Therefore, the PSB will provide age- and grade-appropriate opportunities for all students to learn about the Pledge, its historical practice and significance, and the debates around compulsory recitation in schools.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as requiring recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in the Public Schools of Brookline.

Ms. Stone made the following statement:

I am sympathetic to a number of the arguments we have heard about the difficulties for those of different faiths and nationalities, as well as those sensitive from personal experience to the pernicious use in the past of certain loyalty oaths. I understand the passionate feelings around the Pledge raised by those experiences. I am also sympathetic to those for whom the Pledge is an affirmation of civic pride and allegiance to democratic values. It is a well established civic tradition, even if it continues to excite civil debate and even divisions. My own view is that the Pledge has legitimate historical significance and even value for countering secessionist impulses as well as promoting patriotism. But it is not responsible to discuss it without acknowledging its association with nationalism, and, historically, with the anti-democratic practices of political exclusion and ostracism. I personally believe that rote recitation does not advance teaching and learning of civic values or the historical record; whereas looking at both the Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance as significant national symbols and subjects of political debate does accomplish that goal. That's why I think it is so important to add to our policy a commitment to emphasize the pedagogical context and objectives. I could not support this policy without that section in it, but with it I believe we have taken a step in the right direction regarding this issue.

Ms. Stone suggested revising the second paragraph so that it clarifies that the School Committee is committed to honoring "longstanding civic tradition and practice." Ms. Scotto agreed with Ms. Stone. The policy impacts all children and their families in all of the schools. There is a wide difference of opinion. They have tried to craft a policy that respects everyone's interests, but may not please any one completely. They are trying to find a middle ground that allows everyone to feel comfortable in what they choose to do. Mr. Morse thanked the members of the Policy Review Subcommittee for the enormous amount of work on this and for coming up with a wonderful solution. Ms. Ditkoff stated that she is grateful for the work that has been done on this issue. All of the

emails they received are part of the success of the democratic process. She hopes that the process gets conveyed to the teachers and students. Ms. Meyers noted that their policies are always compromises and are targeted to the entire school community. The policies don't necessarily reflect the members' personal opinions. The Subcommittee carefully considered the suggestion that there be an "opt-in" and felt that this would separate the students out more. Dr. Warren agreed with Ms. Stone. This policy is an improvement. They could come back to it for further review, if necessary. Ms. Richardson stated that when she was a student at the Runkle School, they recited the Pledge. The education piece is important.

Ms. Meyers reported that the Policy Subcommittee will be meeting on April 13, 2011 to discuss the policies on Non-Discrimination/Equal Opportunity, Safe Schools and Service Animals in Schools. They may also discuss some small edits to the proposed policy on Flag Protocol and Pledge of Allegiance. This policy will be presented to the School Committee for a 2nd Reading/Vote on May 5, 2011

g. Additional Liaisons

Ms. Charlupski reported that the Early Childhood Education Celebration will take place on April 8, 2011 at 5:30 PM at Town Hall.

Ms. Scotto reported that the Human Relations Youth Awards will take place on May 9, 2011 at 6:30 PM at Hunneman Hall.

Ms. Scotto expressed the School Committee's appreciation to the Brookline Extended Day Program for contributing the lively and colorful artwork on display in the James F. Walsh School Committee Room.

Mr. Cunha reported that the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) will be sponsoring an Assistive Technology Fair on April 12, 2011 at 6:00 PM at the Lawrence School. The monthly SEPAC meeting with administrators will take place on April 15, 2011 at 8:15 AM.

Mr. Cunha reported that there will be an Enrichment and Challenge Support Program Parent Advisory Committee meeting on May 3, 2011 at 8:30 AM

Dr. Childs reported that the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration will take place on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, which is January 16, 2012. The event will be held at the Coolidge Corner Theatre.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Stanley Spiegel spoke regarding the proposed policy on Flag Protocol and the Pledge of Allegiance. The policy may honor the intent of the state law mandating recitation of the Pledge, but it does not honor the intent of the Constitution. Kids will be questioned regarding their beliefs. They should not be telling people what to say. This is pernicious. They should say that they recognize that the law is not constitutionally valid

and therefore will not implement a policy relative to the state law. The Pledge is coercive and kids will be hurt and taught a bad lesson instead of a good lesson. The law is not constitutional. This should not be debatable. The School Committee should reconsider the policy and teach the intent of the Constitution.

Martin Rosenthal thanked the School Committee members for the time and attention they have given to this issue. He would like to know the curriculum value of the pledge. Rote recitation does not advance civic values. Consistency is not a reason to continue a policy. The Pledge is coercive and divisive. If it is not acceptable to have voluntary prayer in a classroom, then why is this acceptable? This is bad educationally and is bad for the kids.

4. STUDENT REPORT

Ms. Richardson reported that Brookline High School (BHS) Peer Leaders sponsored "Kick Butt Day" on March 23, 2011 to encourage students not to smoke. The Junior Semi-Prom was held on March 25, 2011. Dr. Weintraub congratulated the students on their good behavior. Their four a cappella groups performed on March 19, 2011. BHS competed in the State Drama Festival on March 5, 2011. Spring sports have started. The BHS community has responded to the disaster in Japan by holding a number of fundraisers, including an Origami "Foldathon." The third quarter ended yesterday.

5. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lupini provided the following report:

Bullying Survey

The Leadership Team has been working with Dr. Jennifer Greif Green, Assistant Professor at Boston University, to develop and administer a survey of Brookline students regarding their experiences with bullying. This survey will provide us with a better understanding of the bullying experiences among our students, as well as guiding us in our selection of interventions. Following are a number of relevant points regarding the survey:

- The survey will be administered online during the week of April 27-29, 2011 to students in grades three, five, seven and nine.
- Students will be asked about bullying they have experienced or witnessed at school, as well as the impact that bullying has had on their emotions and school experience.
- Students will not put their names on the survey and answers will be anonymous. Therefore, the survey will only provide us with general information about the nature of bullying in our schools.
- Any child will be able to skip questions that they do not wish to answer or to choose not to complete the survey.
- The survey will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.
- Dr. Green will use information from the surveys to compile reports for our schools and system to enhance our understanding of the types of bullying that occur on each campus, the consequences of bullying for students, and the resources that students access when they have been bullied.

- A copy of the survey instrument will be available in each school office for parents to view by mid-week.
- The Lawrence School was already in the process of creating and administering a parent, staff and student survey. Given that their student survey is very similar to the instrument that will be used in our other schools, Dr. Green will integrate their results with our overall system profile when providing results.

Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) Institute

The MSAN Institute, which will be held in Chapel Hill on April 26th and 27th, is an intensive professional development opportunity for teacher leaders, principals and district-level leaders across MSAN systems. The event will focus on research and promising practices in developing “leadership for equity” and increasing cultural competency. We will be sending a team to this conference, including Pipier Smith-Mumford (Principal – Pierce School), Vanessa Beauchaine (Principal – Runkle School), Angela Allen (PK-8 Coordinator of Mathematics), Tracy Paradise (BCBA, Runkle School), Mary Gabriel (Literacy Specialist, Pierce School), Adrian Mims (Dean – Brookline High School), Daniel Green (Social Studies Teacher – Brookline High School), Jennifer Fischer-Mueller and Bill Lupini.

Carrie Wilson

Ms. Wilson, who will succeed Milly Katzman as Principal at Heath School on July 1, 2011, spent April 6th and 7th in Brookline. She was able to meet with teachers, parents and students, observe classes, spend time with system leaders, and finalize her entry plan.

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

We are continuing the advertising of this position and will be able to announce a timeline for hiring Anne Wilson’s successor on or before Friday, April 15, 2011.

Dr. Lupini also noted the events that have been taking place at the Brookline schools to support the Japanese community

6. FY 2012 BUDGET UPDATE

Dr. Lupini presented a second addendum to the Superintendent’s FY 2012 Budget Message.

Over the past few weeks we have examined a number of our original FY2012 budget recommendations in an effort to test assumptions regarding enrollment, staffing, and program costs. In addition, we have considered input from stakeholders on a variety of issues included in our original proposal (February 17, 2011) and addendum #1 (March 10, 2011).

As a result, we are prepared to offer this second set of modifications and recommendations to the FY2012 spending plan for The Public Schools of Brookline.

1. Our original proposal assumed savings of \$550k from anticipated retirements and other staff turnover. This was based on an assumption that we would experience fewer teacher

retirements than in FY2011, when this savings was set at \$600k. However, based on updated information, we now believe that the actual numbers will meet or exceed our FY2011 figures and, therefore, we recommend establishing these anticipated savings at \$600k for FY2012. This modification provides us with an additional \$50k for other priorities in this spending plan.

2. The initial proposal included an increase of \$500 for each town or school employee child enrolled through the materials fee program, resulting in an additional \$81k in revenue for FY2012. This revised plan increases the cost of this program by \$347 per student which, given the increased number of students participating, will equal the revenue projections included in our original concept. In addition, while not part of this FY2012 recommendation, the long-range plan calls for annual increases of 3%, along with a 10% discount for families with two or more enrolled children.

3. Our original recommendation included the following changes to special education staffing at Brookline High School:

- a. the addition of a 1.0 FTE general/special education (dual certified) teacher to facilitate the inclusion of students with IEPs in regular education classes;
- b. the addition of a 1.0 FTE special educator with educational testing experience (to provide consistency in evaluations) and reading certification (to provide direct reading instruction);
- c. given the retirement of a 1.0 FTE special education administrator (Unit B), the addition of a 1.0 FTE team facilitator position (Unit A);
- d. the addition of a .20 FTE team facilitator (representing an increase from 2.0 to 2.2 FTE) to fully implement the model envisioned in the FY2011 spending plan; and
- e. the elimination of eight (8) paraprofessional positions (6.74 FTE)

This revised proposal delineates the following changes to this plan:

- a. the elimination of one (1) additional paraprofessional position (.84 FTE);
- b. the elimination of the .60 FTE job coach position (transition services);
- c. the addition of one paraprofessional position to provide job coaching and transition services for students with IEPs (resulting in a total of two positions working in this role, under the supervision of the BHS Director of Special Education and Director of Career and Vocational Education)

The total savings resulting from this revised proposal is \$33.7k.

4. While we believe that the future for collaboration between the school system and the 21st Century Fund around innovative projects like the Calculus Project, Literacy Project and Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT) is bright, it became clear that both timing and funding commitments would not allow for partnering on such ventures for FY2012. Therefore, we propose funding the Calculus Project (\$22.2k), the Literacy Project (\$19.5k) and TSTT (\$20k) from the FY2012 operating budget. These valuable initiatives represent a total new cost of \$61.7 for the coming fiscal year.

5. Our original proposal included the elimination of the Director of Professional Development and Special Initiatives position. In addition, we also recommended allocating \$50k for targeted consultant services for system-wide initiatives (e.g., mentoring, professional learning connected to our strategic plan, child study team,

alternative evaluation projects, and instructional rounds). After considering the various alternatives available to us, we now recommend that the original Director of Professional Development and Special Initiatives position be retained as a .60 FTE role within the system. This will enable the system to better provide the level of desired support for our teaching staff and allow us to retain more of the original duties and functions of the present role. The total additional cost of this recommendation is \$19.2k.

The addendum does not include a recommendation for funding the Landmark Partnership Program. While we continue to work with Landmark School officials on the details of the FY2012 program, as well as the cost of services, we have discussed a third (and final) year of work at Lawrence School, the initial year of efforts at a second school (yet to be determined), continued focused professional development with our language-based program and staff, and discussions regarding how we might work together in establishing a Landmark Program in Brookline. We expect to have details of this proposal, including total costs and a recommended funding structure, available in early May.

We look forward to continuing to provide elected officials, appointed representatives, and the community with additional information (and recommendations) concerning the FY2012 spending plan, including updates to state aid, as it becomes available.

7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE

a. FY 2012 Budget (assumes no funds for School Choice)

Dr. Childs stated that the Finance Subcommittee recommends approval of the proposed FY 2012 budget votes. She expressed her appreciation to Dr. Lupini and the staff for their work on the budget. The School Committee recognizes that reductions are necessary in order to make the budget work and that the reductions will impact people. The proposed budget does not include all the resources devoted to the schools, such as health care benefits, building expenses and capital. The budget includes \$750,000 in one-time funds. Dr. Lupini has developed a responsible plan to reduce the system's reliance on one-time funds. Mr. Rowe referred to several charts summarizing the proposed budget. The net increase is \$2,913,470 and the total budget is \$78,260,399. Mr. Morse noted that all contracts with school employees expire on June 30, 2011.

Ms. Stone commended the staff for their extraordinary responsiveness and skill in crafting this budget. They were as responsive as they could be within the constraints of the budget. Professional development is one of the top priorities for the School Committee and the administration. Their professional development system has grown in its capacity to be responsive and there is a comprehensive infrastructure in place. She appreciates that they have restored a part-time Director of Program Development, so that they will still have a point person and so that the individual will be able to work more days. The position will be funded for 130 days per year, the same as the Coordinator of the Enrichment and Challenge Support Program. Ms. Stone expressed her appreciation to the group of employees that worked with the Superintendent to develop a Materials Fee proposal. Mr. Morse thanked Dr. Childs and the staff for developing a new budget

review process, which enabled the Finance Subcommittee members to provide input earlier in the process.

ACTION 11-21

On a motion of Dr. Childs and seconded by Mr. Morse, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to continue the combined Town/School Information Technology Department, as outlined by the Memorandum of Agreement between the Superintendent and the Town Administrator, and as established in the Town By-Law passed at the Special Town Meeting in November 2004.

ACTION 11-22

On a motion of Dr. Childs and seconded by Mr. Morse, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the specific actions listed in Attachment F representing \$2,913,470 of Net Growth for FY 2012.

ACTION 11-23

On a motion of Dr. Childs and seconded by Dr. Warren, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the Fiscal Year 2012 General Fund Appropriation of \$75,330,344, as allocated per Attachment G, to be supplemented by \$2,930,055 (\$467,251 in Tuition revenue, \$30,000 in Building Use Fees, \$750,000 in one-time revenue, and \$1,682,804 in Circuit Breaker Revenue) for a total operating budget of \$78,260,399.

ACTION 11-24

On a motion of Dr. Childs and seconded by Mr. Morse, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve a 10% increase to the Brookline Early Education Program tuition fees consistent with the rate chart attached (Attachment H).

ACTION 11-25

On a motion of Dr. Childs and seconded by Mr. Morse, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve an increase to the staff Materials Fee to \$2,347.

8. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS ON CURRENT ISSUES

a. Annual Strategic Plan Report Card

Dr. Lupini introduced Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Fischer-Mueller to present the Annual Strategic Plan Report Card (Attachment I). Dr. Fischer-Mueller explained that the Strategic Plan Report Card assigns letter grades for each of the Strategic Plan measurements using a 4.0 scale. Seeking continuous improvement, the outcomes for each measurement for the last three years are averaged and exceeding this average becomes the goal for the current year. The grades for all of the measurements of a goal are averaged, providing us with an overall grade for each of the goals. For 2010, they earned a B+ for Goal 1 (increase the achievement of all students by creating learning environments that successfully balance content, pedagogy and student-teacher relationships) and for Goal 2 (eliminate achievement gaps with

respect to race, ethnicity and socio-economic status and increase the achievement of students with special needs through individualized strategies and programs). Dr. Fischer-Mueller referred to charts summarizing measurement data for the goals. They look at MCAS scores, MCAS growth scores, Brookline Common Assessment scores, Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment scores, courses taken, Advanced Placement scores, SAT/ACT scores, graduation rates, and college matriculation. Ms. Ditkoff noted that the Curriculum Subcommittee reviewed a draft of this report and raised several questions. Are they setting the bar high enough? What is the percentage of Advanced Placement classes completed? How do you account for different cohorts at different grades? How do you factor for small sample sizes? What do we mean by achievement and equity gaps? How do we address small cohorts? Ms. Ditkoff stated that she is impressed by how far we have come and how rich and nuanced the conversation was.

Dr. Fischer-Mueller stated that the next step will be to have the Superintendent and leadership team review and make recommendations for revision. She expressed her appreciation to Director of Data Management and Evaluations Oscar Loureiro, Teaching and Learning Office Manager Betsy Fitzpatrick, Director of Grants and Program Review Amy Martin, and School Committee Executive Assistant Robin Coyne. Dr. Lupini thanked Dr. Fischer-Mueller. Dr. Warren expressed his appreciation to the members of the Curriculum Subcommittee. He noted that performance is impacted by the various policies that were in place over the years and that this adds to the complexity of assessing causes and predicting effects for purposes of revising policy.

9. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

By unanimous roll call vote at 8:45 PM, the School Committee entered into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing negotiations with non-aligned personnel. By unanimous roll call vote at 9:30 PM, the School Committee reconvened in public session.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Stone adjourned the meeting at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin E. Coyne, Executive Assistant
Brookline School Committee