

RECORD OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2010** 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.

PRESENT: All School Committee members, except Ms. Scotto and Dr. Warren. Also present: Dr. Lupini, Dr. Fischer-Mueller, Mr. Rowe, Dr. Rochlin, Dr. Wilson, Ms. Richardson and Ms. Coyne.

OTHERS: Beth Carlson Henderson, Amy Martin, and Charlie Simmons.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

a. Calendar

Ms. Stone called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She explained that the School Committee will be using a new arrangement of its docket items in order to allow meetings to begin earlier and to place less of a burden on staff who must stay late on meeting days. The start of our regular meeting will be 6:00 PM. Our intention is to carry out administrative business in the first hour, including in most cases our consent agenda, subcommittee reports, and executive sessions when needed. We will continue to have public comment at or very near 7:00 PM. and follow that with scheduled program reports, the Superintendent's report, and related discussions. We hope everyone will find this arrangement satisfactory and an improvement for both the public and our hard-working Public Schools of Brookline staff. Ms. Stone noted that the list of upcoming events. She stated that Ms. Scotto and Dr. Warren are out of town and unable to attend this evening's meeting.

Ms. Stone noted the school community's great sadness at the tragic loss of Tim Souder who was an instructional assistant at Baker School and the Head Coach of the Brookline High School Girls' Junior Varsity Soccer Team. He was a warm and caring educator and an enormously popular and talented coach. Even though Tim was only beginning his second year in our system, he had made a profound difference in the lives of an extraordinary number of students and families. Ms. Stone then asked for a moment of silence.

b. Past Record: July 13, 2010 School Committee Workshop

ACTION 10-58

On a motion of Mr. Morse and seconded by Ms. Myers, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the items included in the Consent Agenda.

- 1) Past Record: July 13, 2010 School Committee Workshop

2. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Finance

Ms. Stone announced that Dr. Childs is now the Chair of the Finance Subcommittee. Dr. Childs reported that they are in the process of finalizing a slightly

different structure for the subcommittee. The Finance Subcommittee will be reviewing the quarterly reports in detail at subcommittee meetings and then the Chairman will be providing a summary of the reports at the meetings of the full School Committee. The public is invited to attend all subcommittee meetings. There will be a subcommittee meeting on Monday, September 20, 2010 at 5:00 PM to review the Final FY 2010 Financial Report. A full summary will be presented at the September 23, 2010 School Committee meeting. Dr. Childs reported that the town will receive additional funds through the federal Jobs Bill and Town Meeting will be asked to vote on the appropriation. This is a net positive for the schools. The process will unfold over the next couple of months.

b. Capital Improvements

Ms. Charlupski requested that the Chair appoint three School Committee members to serve on the Pierce Auditorium Committee of Seven. Ms. Charlupski, Ms. Scotto and Ms. Stone were appointed and Mr. Cunha will serve as an alternate. Ms. Charlupski reported that the Runkle School project went out to bid. Bids should come in towards the end of September and the Runkle School Building Committee will meet to review the bids on October 8, 2010 at 8:30 AM. There will be add alternates for the roof and auditorium air conditioning. On September 23, 2010, the School Committee will be asked to approve policies on anti-idling and the purchase of Energy Star equipment. Approval is needed in order to finalize the submission to the Massachusetts Collaborative for High Performance Schools. Ms. Stone reported that they are hopeful that the Pierce Auditorium renovation will get started next summer. Ms. Charlupski reported that there will be a meeting on the Heath School Owners Project Manager on September 13, 2010 at 2:00 PM. The Heath School Building Committee will be meeting on September 20, 2010 at 8:30 AM.

c. Curriculum

Ms. Ditkoff had nothing to report at this time.

d. Government Relations

Ms. Stone reported that the Government Relations Subcommittee will no longer be a standing committee, but will meet at the call of Chair to discuss relevant issues as they arise and to organize the annual Legislative Breakfast. They will be meeting to discuss the Massachusetts Association of School Committee resolutions and all School Committee members are welcome to participate in this discussion.

e. Negotiations

Mr. Morse reported that the Brookline Educational Secretaries Association (BESA) has asked to reopen negotiations.

f. Policy Review

Ms. Meyers reported that the Policy Review Subcommittee will be discussing two major polices this fall – Bullying Prevention and Early Entry to Kindergarten. The Massachusetts Association of School Committees has developed a Bullying Prevention

model policy, which conforms to the new state law. The policy seems to be fairly comprehensive and is in line with what the Subcommittee had been exploring in the spring.

g. Additional Liaisons

There was nothing to report at this time.

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION

By unanimous roll call vote at 6:20 PM, the School Committee entered into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining, and to reconvene in Open Session. By unanimous roll call vote at 7:00 PM, the School Committee reconvened in public session.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one signed up for Public Comment.

5. STUDENT REPORT

Ms. Stone welcomed Sandra Richardson, the new Student Representative to the School Committee. Ms. Richardson stated that she is a junior at Brookline High School and is a Junior Mentor, Captain of the Junior Varsity Girls Soccer Team, and is in her third year of Student Government. She reported that Brookline High School is in its 169th year and that they welcomed a class of 415 freshmen. In her role as a Junior Mentor, she attended and spoke at the Freshmen Assembly. The assembly and barbecue seemed to go quite well. *Boston Magazine* ranked Brookline High School as 7th in the state, although she thinks they should be ranked even higher.

6. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lupini gave the following report:

Administrative Appointments

I am delighted to announce that four exceptional educators have joined us in administrative roles for the 2010-2011 school year.

- Ms. Mies Boet-Whitaker joins us as PK-8 Enrichment and Challenge Support (ECS) Coordinator, replacing Diana Beck, who accepted a Principal position in Bellingham. Ms. Boet-Whitaker comes to Brookline after working for nine years in Arlington, Massachusetts. Since 2005, Mies has served as Coordinator for Elementary Academic Challenge and Enrichment in Arlington. Prior to her time as Coordinator, Ms. Boet-Whitaker taught Academic Challenge and Enrichment classes.

Ms. Boet-Whitaker holds a Master of Education degree in Mathematics from Salem State College and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mathematics and Psychology from Ohio Wesleyan University.

- Ms. Patricia Kinsella has been appointed as PK-8 English Language Arts Coordinator, succeeding Terry Jewell, who has opted to return to the classroom. Ms.

Kinsella comes to Brookline after 16 years of service in the Boston Public Schools, where she most recently served as New Teacher Developer. During her time in Boston, Patricia also served as a bilingual teacher, a Spanish teacher and as a classroom teacher in kindergarten through 3rd grade classrooms. Prior to her time in Boston, Ms. Kinsella taught in Chelsea and Dorchester.

Ms. Kinsella holds a Master of Education degree in Bilingual Education from Boston University and Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from the University of Massachusetts (Boston).

- Ms. Melissa Silvia will serve as the Special Education Administrator at Brookline High School, replacing John Ivimey who has retired. Ms. Silvia has been a special educator for ten years and most recently served as the Senior Curriculum Access Coordinator for the Boston Public Schools. Prior to her time in Boston, Melissa worked as a special educator in Bristol and Providence (both RI).

Ms. Silvia holds a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Educational Leadership from Johnson and Wales University, a Master of Education degree in Special Education from Simmons College and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the State University of New York (Albany). Ms. Silvia is currently working toward a Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership at Johnson and Wales University.

- Mr. David Youkilis will be the new Vice Principal at Driscoll School, replacing Ann Carothers, who left to become Principal of the Diamond Middle School in Lexington. Mr. Youkilis has worked in Brookline since 2001 as the Technology Integration Specialist at the Devotion School. During his time in Brookline, David has also served as the Director of the Devotion After Hours U enrichment program and as Summer Director of the Cyber Summer Computer Program with Brookline Adult and Community Education. Prior to his time in Brookline, Mr. Youkilis taught for five years in Wilmington (MA) as a third and fourth grade teacher.

Mr. Youkilis holds a Master of Education degree in Elementary Education from Lesley College and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Sciences from Harvard University Extension School.

(Ms. Boet-Whitacker, Ms. Kinsella, Ms. Silvia and Mr. Youkilis all expressed their gratitude to the administration for providing them with this opportunity. They stated how fortunate they are to work in the Brookline system and expressed their appreciation to their supportive and hard-working colleagues.)

New Teachers and Paraprofessionals

We are beginning the 2010-2011 school year with 70 new teachers and approximately 75 first-year paraprofessionals. Michelle Gorden, Emily Kattaf Almeida and Sarah Zekri (substituting for Gene Thompson-Grove) coordinated an outstanding orientation program

for the new teachers on August 26th and 27th, which represents one aspect of our three year mentoring program. In addition, our new paraprofessionals took part in a one-day orientation program on September 2nd.

Opening Day(s)

Teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators participated in a variety of professional development and retreat activities prior to the start of the school year, including:

- Full-time first grade interns (from Wheelock College) gathered to discuss the new role on Thursday, August 26th. Vicki Milstein facilitated this work, which will continue in collaboration with our teachers throughout the coming year.
- Principals gathered with Senior Staff for their retreat at Wheelock College on Tuesday, August 24th and Wednesday, August 25th.
- Denise Rochlin and Lisa Lamont Harris worked with our new Team Facilitators on July 8th and 9th, as well as August 16th through the 20th and August 26th and 27th. The individuals who work in these important positions are as follows: MaryKay Deiss (Lincoln), Ellie Edraos (Baker), Teri Hauserman (Pierce), Tara Kelly (Driscoll), Amy Nevis (Lawrence), Kristine Barker (Devotion), Jed Miller (Heath), Marlene Skvirsky (Brookline High School) and Theresa Shanahan (Brookline High School). We are still in the process of filling the position at Runkle School.
- Our entire administrative staff gathered at Wheelock on Monday, August 30th.
- The Opening Day program for all staff was held on Wednesday, September 1st at Brookline High School. My thanks to Betsy DeWitt, Rebecca Stone, Jody Curran, and members of the Brookline High School Needs Improvement (Hannah Rimm, Gabe Walt, Adam Cohen, Sung-Jae Park and Sophie Lazar) for their participation in this annual event. In addition, Mark VanDerzee deserves a great deal of credit for his work in making the event run smoothly.

Building Preparation

The growth in our student enrollments, along with the accompanying increases in the number of sections, has necessitated a great deal of work in our elementary schools during the summer months. Thanks to Jay Pagliarulo, Ed Clancy, and Charlie Simmons for their work in having our buildings ready for opening day.

September 23rd Report

I plan to report to the Committee on the following issues at our next meeting:

- Summer Programs, including Extended School Year, Project Achieve, Project Discovery, Summer School, the Calculus Project and the Literacy Project;
- Enrollments, staffing and FY2011 budget implications;
- Town Meeting Warrant Article regarding the appropriation of funds to create additional classroom space for 2011-2012; and
- My participation in the League of Women Voters Forum on National Education (In response to a question from Ms. Stone, Dr. Lupini stated that this forum will take place after his October 7, 2010 report to the School Committee on the national educational standards.)

Enrollments

This year's K-8 enrollment on opening day was 4,671 students, which represents an increase of 203 students over last year's opening day enrollment. Four of the elementary schools now have more than 600 students and the Driscoll and Heath Schools now have more than 500 students when you include PreK.

7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTES

a. Approval of All Alcohol License: 21st Century Fund Gala

Ms. Stone stated that the 21st Century Fund is requesting the School Committee's approval to serve all kinds alcoholic beverages at their 21st Century Gala and to allow students to be present on the stage during the dinner portion of the program. Dr. Lupini stated that he recommends approval of these requests. Ms. Stone then introduced BHS 21st Century Fund Director of Events and Donor Outreach Beth Carlson Henderson.

Ms. Carlson Henderson made the following statement:

The Gala this year will be held on Saturday, November 13th and will take place once again entirely in the Schluntz Gym. Bar Service during the Cocktail Hour is scheduled to take place in the Gym from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. In April we applied for a One-Day All Kinds liquor license with the Town of Brookline and we have received this permit. In addition to beer and wine, we would like to serve one gin, vodka, or bourbon drink. We employ professional bartenders who are carefully instructed not to over-serve the guests, and only plan to serve the drink during the cocktail hour. We understand that as a rule the School Committee does not permit hard alcohol within the school grounds, but we are seeking permission to allow service for a drink during the cocktail hour of the event.

In addition, we are seeking permission to allow five to six Brookline High School students to briefly attend the event. They will be escorted by a Brookline High School teacher into the gym during dinner, speak briefly from the stage as part of the program or play in the jazz band, and then they will be escorted out. They will be chaperoned by an adult at all times and not be allowed to wander about the event. There will also be a dozen college student volunteers for the event as we have used at prior Galas, but as in the past all will be at least 21 years of age.

We feel confident that the five or six underage students will be strictly supervised at all times and will not have any access to alcohol, and are seeking permission to allow them access to the event to speak about our programs.

In response to a question from Mr. Morse, Ms. Carlson Henderson stated that hard alcohol would only be served during the cocktail hour, but that wine would be served during the dinner part of the program. The students will only be present during their part of the program. Ms. Ditekoff asked that parents/guardians be informed of this. In response to a question from Ms. Richardson, Ms. Carlson Henderson stated that they will make sure that there are no complications for any of the students who might be on sports

teams. In response to a question from Ms. Stone, Ms. Carlson Henderson confirmed that the dozen or so college student volunteers at the event will all be at least 21 years of age.

ACTION 10-59

On a motion of Ms. Charlupski and seconded by Ms. Meyers, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve of a liquor license under the current policy so that all kinds alcoholic beverages can be served.

ACTION 10-60

On a motion of Ms. Charlupski and seconded by Ms. Meyers, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to permit the 21st Century Fund to apply to the Board of Selectmen for an all kinds alcoholic beverage license with the understanding that the School Committee will waive the requirement in the current policy that no students be present at an event where alcohol is served to allow supervised student speakers to be present during the dinner, but with no other exceptions.

b. Annual Acceptance of Grant Funds

Amy Martin, Director of Grants and Program Review, provided an overview of Grant Awards for FY 2011 (Attachment A). FY 2011 No Child Left Behind grants total \$588,587, which is 76% of the FY 2010 award. The largest decrease was in the distribution of Title I funds, which are determined by income levels. The Title IID (Enhanced Technology) grant is now a competitive program targeting low-income schools. Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools) is being reconfigured at the federal level. FY 2011 state and federal grants from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education amount to \$3,677,938, which represents 98% of the FY 2010 amount. There were increases in Special Education funding and decreases for METCO and full-day kindergarten. FY 2011 Massachusetts Department of Public Health grants total \$114,900, which is the same as last year. FY 2011 state and federal grants from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care amount to \$263,508, which is 96% of the FY 2010 figure. FY 2011 foundation grants (Brookline Education Foundation, 21st Century Fund and the Teachers and Administrators Training Fund) total \$510,762, which represents 108% of the FY 2010 award. These grants total \$5,155,695, which is 95% of the FY 2010 amount. The FY 2011 America Recovery and Reinvestment Act grants amount to \$1,294,715, which is the same as FY 2010. These funds will end on June 30, 2010.

Ms. Martin noted that the curriculum coordinators have been able to develop partnerships with local universities, including collaborations with MIT and the Missouri Botanical Gardens, Boston University on the Global Change Initiative, and Northeastern University on a science, technology, engineering and math initiative for middle school students. Mindy Paulo was able to secure funding to enhance English language resources and Sheltered English Immersion training. In response to a question from Mr. Morse, Ms. Martin stated that the Boston University graduate students involved in the Global

Change Initiative are in the sciences, but have expressed interest in education. The teachers were excited by this opportunity.

Ms. Stone asked if we are creating our own agenda with the monies we are going after. Ms. Martin stated that they make a project fit our agenda within the parameters of the grant. Dr. Fischer-Mueller noted that they have turned down grants when they do not focus on our priorities. In response to a question from Ms. Charlupski, Ms. Martin stated that that Mr. Marcus and Mr. Wisner attended the meetings on the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math grants in an effort to provide continuity as the students move to the high school. In response to a question from Ms. Stone, Ms. Martin stated that the grant evaluation requirements vary. Many have rigorous evaluation requirements. Dr. Lupini stated that they look for grants that assist in creating better transitions and better offerings. Ms. Martin noted the American History Grant partnership with Newton. Ms. Stone thanked Ms. Martin for the report and expressed her appreciation to the Brookline Education Foundation, the 21st Century Fund and the Brookline Community Foundation for their support of innovation in the schools. We are fortunate to have such strong partners.

Dr. Childs noted that she is on the Board of Early Education and Care and will therefore recuse herself from the discussion and vote.

ACTION 10-61

On a motion of Mr. Morse and seconded by Ms. Charlupski, the School Committee VOTED (Dr. Childs recused herself from the vote) to accept the FY 2011 Grant Awards, shown in Attachment A.

8. PRESENTATIONS

a. Report on Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and Repair and Maintenance Projects

Ms. Stone noted that the School Committee members will be touring the Old Lincoln School, which is the temporary location of the Runkle School during the renovation. She then introduced Director of Public Buildings Charlie Simmons to present a report on Capital Improvements Program and Repair and Maintenance Projects.

Mr. Simmons presented slides of the work completed in the schools over the summer, which included projects at the Pierce School (occupancy sensors, carpeting, and sound panels), Devotion School (toilet modification for accessibility, carpeting, painting, lockers, sinks, auditorium stage, and auditorium air conditioning), Devotion House (roof), Baker School (flooring and sinks), Driscoll School (flooring, carpeting, and wall removal to add a classroom), Lincoln School (new computer room, auditorium flooring, cafeteria flooring, and painting), Heath School (space reallocation), Brookline High School (space allocation, including moving the Brookline Early Education Program office to the old greenhouse), Physical Education building (vestibule, flooring, and installation of a pump), Baldwin School (space reallocation and sinks), Runkle School (furniture and equipment removal and when possible reuse in other spaces), and the Old

Lincoln School (classrooms and offices for Runkle School and installation of a high efficiency boiler).

Ms. Charlupski thanked Mr. Simmons and his staff for all his hard work and for putting his heart into the job. Ms. Stone complimented him on the reuse of Runkle School equipment, which is good management and good for the environment. Ms. Meyers suggested that they come up with an alliterative name for the Runkle School at Old Lincoln, perhaps calling it Runkle on Route 9. In response to a question from Ms. Ditkoff, Mr. Simmons identified some of the other projects at the schools including the installation of hand dryers to reduce paper consumption and additional energy conservation measures. They continue to apply for energy conservation grants, but do not always qualify because they have already taken so many steps to make the buildings energy efficient. Ms. Richardson stated that she attended the Runkle School and it will be interesting to see the changes. The students don't know about all the work that goes on behind the scenes, but they appreciate the results. Dr. Lupini stated that they are so appreciative of all the efforts that went into making the schools ready for opening day. The town/school building collaboration works because of people like Charlie. They have had to add a number of sections because of growth in enrollment and Mr. Simmons has helped them to meet this need by reconfiguring space. He and the principals and teachers appreciate all the work done by Mr. Simmons and his department. Mr. Simmons expressed his appreciation to the school administration and said that he could not do his job without their support.

b. Evaluation of Superintendent

Ms. Stone presented the 2010 Annual Evaluation of the Superintendent conducted by the Brookline School Committee.

Annual Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools
Conducted by the Brookline School Committee
2010

Purpose and Process for the Evaluation:

The Brookline School Committee is charged with the supervision and evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools. Over the past two years, we have implemented an evaluation process designed to shift the use and perception of evaluation away from its judgmental and punitive past to a process that provides support for the Superintendent's professional development, allows for community reflection and critique, encourages continued improvement in his/her role, and contributes to the Superintendent's and the school community's satisfaction with the superintendency. In the 2008-09 school year, the Brookline School Committee worked with the Superintendent to revise the evaluation procedures in order to emphasize the above priorities for evaluation. The current process, in its second year of implementation, aims:

- To provide the Superintendent a meaningful process for his/her professional growth and support;

- To provide the School Committee sufficient feedback on which to make reasonable judgments about future compensation; and
- To provide the Public Schools of Brookline community an opportunity to be heard on the Superintendent's strengths and challenges so that the Superintendent's relationship with the community can be better understood and strengthened.

The evaluation process includes:

1) Community Feedback on the Superintendent's Performance

During the late spring, parents and staff are invited by the School Committee to comment in writing on their experience of the Superintendent (notice is made through multiple outlets including Parent Teacher Organization newsletters, the Brookline TAB, email, the Brookline Educators Union, etc.). The Brookline School Committee asks for feedback in four specific areas of performance:

- Leadership and Management
- Instructional Leadership
- Finance and Operations
- Communications and Community Relations

To encourage open and candid feedback, and to maintain fidelity with the new Open Meeting Law, questionnaire responses are kept strictly confidential and available only to the School Committee Chair. Summary documents may be provided to the Brookline School Committee, at the discretion of the Chair.

2) In-Person Interviews with Direct Reports

In order to assess more closely the Superintendent's role as supervisor and manager of Public Schools of Brookline senior personnel, including Senior Staff and Principals/Headmaster, the Chair of the Brookline School Committee conducts confidential, in-person interviews with a sample of the Superintendent's direct reports. As with questionnaires, these interviews are confidential, and the Superintendent does not know which of his/her direct reports have been interviewed. While only some of the direct reports each year are asked for such an interview, any direct report may request and will be given an opportunity to speak in person with the Brookline School Committee Chair as part of this evaluation process.

3) Superintendent's Self-Evaluation

The School Committee asks the Superintendent to provide a self-evaluation of his/her own strengths and challenge/development areas, following the four areas of performance listed above. This is typically completed after the close of the school year.

4) School Committee Review and Deliberation

Over the summer, the School Committee meets with the Superintendent to hear his self-evaluation, and then meets without the Superintendent to discuss his performance.

5) The Brookline School Committee Chair and Vice Chair are charged with the formal “statement of evaluation” for the Superintendent, and for the ongoing practice of ensuring that the process and its conclusions or action items are regularly reviewed and attended to.

Statement of Evaluation and Plan for 2010-2011

SUMMARY

Strong Leadership for Exceptionally Challenging Times

Leadership challenges for school year '09-'10 were in many ways very similar to the previous year. While a successful health insurance negotiation with the Town's unions resulted in our ability to negotiate contracts without dramatic layoffs of personnel, the Public Schools of Brookline's financial woes worsened along with the State's. In particular, increases in high-cost out-of-district placements for special needs students collided with Draconian cuts in state reimbursements for those same services. Our operating deficit therefore deepened, making both the current and future fiscal environment bleak.

Administrative staffing was similarly challenging, but ultimately very successful. Searches for permanent principals, including Driscoll School late in the year (due to Jim Parziale's and the Vice Principal's retirements), dominated the administration's hiring agenda. In addition:

- Central Office welcomed back its former Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and made the transition to a new Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and Director of Special Education.
- Baker welcomed a new Principal
- Runkle and Lincoln both operated with talented interim principals

At the same time, the Superintendent ably shepherded the crucial Runkle School renovation through a thorny community reaction, successfully developed expansion plans for Heath School (and secured School Building Assistance financing), implemented an innovative professional development approach for teachers and senior staff in Instructional Rounds [NB: this initiative was briefly halted at mid-year after the operating deficit forced immediate cut-backs and early feedback on the program suggested adjustments. Instructional Rounds were re-established with an improved approach under the leadership of Gene Thompson-Grove, later in the year]. The Superintendent responded to senior staff recommendations and refreshed his approach to team-building between Principals and other Senior Staff, he secured high-value principals for Runkle and Lincoln, and created a balanced budget for next year, again without drastic cuts.

For our fiscal stability to date, we also acknowledge gratefully the Town's generous reserve fund transfer, and attribute the success of that appeal at least in part to the Public Schools of Brookline's strong financial management and integrity, the strength of the Town-School Partnership, as well as the positive relationship between the Superintendent and his colleagues on the Town side.

Amidst tremendous uncertainty at both the federal and state levels, the Superintendent created a budget for next year that clearly focuses on the priorities established by the Strategic Plan. In the one instance where the School Committee (at the urging of the Brookline High School community) questioned the reasoning behind a major shift, the administration reconsidered and fashioned a solution – with the creative help of Brookline High School leadership – to keep important social work services at a level with which the community and Brookline School Committee were comfortable.

In his self-report, the Superintendent noted a number of these accomplishments with satisfaction, but he was equally eager to give credit to many other members of the staff for a significant number of steps forward. In particular, he praised the work of Gene Thompson Grove in implementing and refining a number of professional development initiatives, in particular Instructional Rounds; he highlighted the instructional leadership and progress on data analysis for student achievement shown by Jennifer Fischer-Mueller (a significant set of achievements noted by the Brookline School Committee as well), and he praised the exceptional new leadership in student services from Denise Rochlin and Director of Special Education Lisa Lamont Harris.

Like last year, the Superintendent was also thoughtful in his appraisal of areas where he would like to improve. He noted with admirable self-awareness that he likes to operate at a high level of involvement in most aspects of the school system. As he said, “no Superintendent likes surprises.” On the other hand, he reflected that his role is to set priorities and guide the system, not to do all the work himself, and the Brookline School Committee agrees that he has improved in the delegation of work to his highly talented staff. We hope this trend continues, paired with the Superintendent's strong articulation of system priorities such as educational equity and continued incorporation of the Strategic Plan into all aspects of Public Schools of Brookline operations.

The Superintendent's annual evaluation continues to elicit critiques revolving mostly around his communication style. On the one hand, Dr. Lupini receives praise from many for his detailed and forthright communication. Others perceive some of the same forthrightness as too aggressively defensive of his decisions. Various members of the community and teaching staff find the Superintendent's personal style less friendly and accessible than they would like; they would enjoy more opportunities to know the Superintendent and to feel that he knows them and their schools.

The School Committee acknowledges that Dr. Lupini's success in Brookline relies in part on his ability to inspire trust, understanding and enthusiasm for the innovations underway

and advances being made in the school system. We believe he succeeds in this regard in much of the community, but it is equally clear that improving the frequency, manner and tone with which the Superintendent communicates with various stakeholders in the schools could only strengthen the community's confidence in Dr. Lupini's leadership and therefore benefit him professionally and the Public Schools of Brookline overall.

The Brookline School Committee is also concerned that the admirable drive for system improvements may be taking a toll on staff as they are asked to implement multiple initiatives. While there may be no way to lessen the load, better articulation of priorities and greater recognition of the extraordinary efforts of staff and teachers to implement these many initiatives could help lift the morale of those working so hard to make each initiative succeed.

The School Committee continues to believe that Brookline is extraordinarily fortunate to have Dr. Lupini as Superintendent. There is in our experience no match in the Commonwealth for his level of detailed knowledge, understanding of local and state laws, finances, and politics, and commitment to achieving excellence with equity in public education. At a time of unprecedented budget challenges (especially given rising enrollments) and emphasis at state and federal levels for more uniform public education, Dr. Lupini keeps Brookline focused on innovation and improvement, on where and how we can serve children better, and he insists on a level of fiscal and capital planning that keeps Brookline more stable than most of its peer communities. If this focus on "continuous improvement" conveys to some that he is insufficiently proud of what Brookline already does, the Brookline School Committee respectfully disagrees. Dr. Lupini delivers a level of professional commitment and attainment that goes far beyond what any town could reasonably ask, and we commend his caring devotion to and the very positive direction of the Brookline schools.

Specifics of the Review

Strengths:

The Public Schools of Brookline is led with skill, knowledge, and confidence. Dr. Lupini is dedicated, extraordinarily skilled in budgeting, and innovative in creating collaborations that improve services while paring costs. He actively recruits and retains talented staff for the Public Schools of Brookline. His staff uniformly notes and appreciates his professional support and accessibility. He sets high standards, promotes accountability, and innovates to improve the overall excellence of the Brookline Schools, with special emphasis on equity.

Leadership & Management: Impressive grasp of multiple (and complex) issues; sets strong example for others to be straightforward with good and bad news; has reformed and improved Principal searches; very strong manager; is supportive of and accessible to direct reports; has risen to leadership in Minority Student Achievement Network

(MSAN) and Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS); commands high levels of respect from peers in other communities.

Instructional Leadership: Has led aggressively on closing the achievement gap and educational equity; initiated Instructional Rounds and revised/reformed the model in response to early critiques; continues to promote as a priority both Program Review and Professional Development for teachers and staff; consistently articulates the centrality of the child/student achievement to Public Schools of Brookline decisions.

Finance and Operations: Outstanding command of detail with ability to stay focused on long-term improvements, even in difficult financial times. Uniformly credited with superb skills in this area.

Communication and Community Relations: Very responsive to parent community and other constituencies; skilled in presenting complicated issues in clear, accessible language; increasingly visible at school buildings; tireless in responding to community/Town requests for information and explanation; very responsive to complaints with quick follow-up; eager to explain details when asked.

Challenges:

Dr. Lupini could increase his effectiveness by articulating top priorities among system initiatives and by focusing greater attention on connecting informally with the Public Schools of Brookline community. In particular, the Superintendent can demonstrate greater empathy, interest, and understanding of schools-based teachers and staff. Though he is more visible at schools than in the past and receives praise for that and for responsiveness, the Superintendent can do more with his varied interactions with the public and staff that would benefit the schools by improving receptivity to his leadership.

Leadership & Management: Dr. Lupini is a respected manager and institutional leader; he would benefit from improving/conveying a sense of caring for the community in his charge. Most direct reports (administrators and principals) feel Dr. Lupini is invested in their success, but all continue to desire more active collaboration on educational goals and methods. In particular, staff notes the pressure of multiple initiatives in the system and the need for more guidance in setting priorities among them. Teachers respect the Superintendent, but would like to know him better and have him demonstrate that he knows them and their classrooms/schools.

Instructional Leadership: See above on initiatives. Continue to articulate priorities among system goals to help staff manage instructional change and challenge. Involve the community to a greater degree in discussing difficult issues. Reach into classrooms more and recognize progress and accomplishments as central to a successful atmosphere of “continuous improvement.”

Finance and Operations: The Superintendent should not let the obvious demands of this area overwhelm or overshadow the importance of other areas.

Communication and Community Relations: Communicate an understanding of the unique aspects of our nine schools, both achievements and challenges. Continue to work on tone and style in public interactions with special attention to different audience needs and expectations. Continue working on improving responses in particular to public challenge and/or criticism.

Goals for 2010-2011

By October 15, create a 'professional goals and development plan' to build on the strengths and address the challenges noted above.

Ms. Stone expressed her appreciation to Dr. Lupini for the professional and cooperative manner in which he worked with the School Committee during the evaluation process. Dr. Lupini thanked the School Committee for their work on the evaluation. He appreciates that they regard the evaluation as a tool to provide support for the Superintendent's professional development and improvement, which is not the case in all communities. Dr. Lupini stated that he would not want to work anywhere else. He expressed his appreciation to the parents, teachers, elected bodies, principals, curriculum coordinators, and the most talented senior staff in existence. It is an honor that people have chosen to place their children in the Public Schools of Brookline and he relishes the responsibility of providing the students with the best possible education.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Stone noted an article in today's *New York Times* called "Forget what you know about study habits" by Benedict Carey.

Ms. Stone informed the School Committee that she has submitted an article for the Fall Town Meeting, which asks the town to submit a home rule petition to allow legal permanent residents to have voting rights in local town elections. This warrant article has no direct bearing on the public schools.

Dr. Lupini stated that he will be going to China to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the collaboration between the Public Schools of Brookline and Gao Xin. Ms. Stone wished him well and asked that he extend the School Committee's appreciation for this extraordinary partnership.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Stone adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin E. Coyne, Executive Assistant
Brookline School Committee