

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
MELROSE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
January 26, 2010**

A meeting of the Melrose School Committee was held this date in the Aldermanic Chamber of Melrose City Hall with the following members present: Ms. Driscoll, Ms. Thorp, Mr. LaRock, Ms. Kourkouvelis, Mr. Constantine, and Ms. Casatelli. Mayor Dolan was not present.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Joe Casey and Business Manager Greg Zammuto.

Ms. Driscoll called the meeting to order at 7pm.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Thorp moved, Ms. Kourkouvelis seconded and with six (6) votes in the affirmative (Ms. Thorp, Ms. Casatelli, Ms. Kourkouvelis, Mr. LaRock, Mr. Constantine and Ms. Driscoll), none (0) in the negative, and one (1) absent (Mayor Dolan), it was

VOTED: To approve School Committee Minutes of January 12, 2010, with changes

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Ms. Thorp moved, Mr. Constantine seconded to approve School Committee Workshop Minutes of January 16, 2010.

Ms. Kourkouvelis noted perceived discrepancies and insufficient publicizing of this workshop.

With three (3) votes in the affirmative (Ms. Driscoll, Mr. Constantine and Ms. Thorp), three (3) in the negative (Ms. Kourkouvelis, Ms. Casatelli and Mr. LaRock), and one (1) absent (Mayor Dolan), the motion to approve Workshop minutes failed.

Public Participation

Ms. Thorp moved, Ms. Casatelli seconded and with six (6) votes in the affirmative (Ms. Thorp, Ms. Casatelli, Ms. Kourkouvelis, Mr. Constantine, Mr. LaRock and Ms. Driscoll) and one (1) absent (Mayor Dolan), it was

VOTED: To open Public Participation

Mr. Gerry Mroz of Mt. Vernon St. commented on his public participation at the workshop and role of MASC representative Michael Gilbert as facilitator.

Ms. Thorp moved, Ms. Kourkouvelis seconded and with six (6) votes in the affirmative (Ms. Driscoll, Mr. Constantine and Ms. Thorp, Ms. Kourkouvelis and Ms. Casatelli) and one (1) absent (Mayor Dolan), it was

VOTED: To close Public Participation

Ms. Driscoll noted that Field Director of Information and Technology Mike Gilbert of MASC who served as the meeting facilitator is considered an expert in that field.

Report of the Student Representatives

Student Representatives Leanne Hogan and Joe LiCausi reported as follows: MHS mid-year exams ended today; Science MCAS retest on February 1 and 2; Math MCAS retest in early March; regular MCAS will follow shortly after; course selection night focusing on criteria for placement on March 4; congratulations to Ryan Dunn for receiving Gold Key in Scholastic Art Competition, and to Siena Mamayek for receiving Silver Key; Framingham State on-the-spot admissions at MHS on February 3; tickets on sale January 28 and 29 for the Senior Winter Ball at the Knights of Columbus this Sunday from 6-9pm; parents can call MHS to book conference times for parent/teacher night on February 11; students taking AP courses need to pay for their exams as soon as possible; Drama competition on January 26 and 27; Band Fuddruckers Night this Thursday; MHS 2nd quarter report cards issued on February 3; Snowball Dance in the Marcoux Gym next Friday from 7-10pm; MHS Seniors cap and gown measurements on February 3 at all three lunches.

(Mayor Dolan arrived at 7:18pm)

Announcements – Superintendent of Schools

MASS Mid-Winter Update – Mr. Casey reported on this well-attended meeting last week of statewide school superintendents which focused on the state of the economy and how it will impact communities. It looks like a very tough fiscal year ahead, but we will continue to monitor this situation closely. Mr. Casey also thanked Mayor Dolan in helping us maintain fiscal stability in Melrose.

Melrose School Committee Workshop Update – Ms. Driscoll commented that she felt the workshop was excellent in giving us an opportunity to listen and have a dialogue about how to have more efficient meetings. She presented draft copy of concepts heard at the meeting and a draft agenda for discussion. The Committee discussed agenda items and potential changes to improve the workshop process.

(Mayor Dolan left the meeting at 7:40pm)

(Mayor Dolan returned at 7:53pm)

Ms. Driscoll will take all Committee feedback and restructure the document for further review.

Educational Programs and Personnel – Donald Constantine

ECC, K and Grade 1 Registration Update –The Superintendent reported that the information night on January 20 at the Middle School and at the Winthrop School Open House last night were well attended by parents of K and 1st graders. Open Houses at the Lincoln, Roosevelt, Hoover and Horace Mann schools are scheduled for this week. In response to parent requests, we are offering pre-registration online at melroseschools.com from 9am on Friday, January 29 through 11pm on Sunday, February 7. In-person registration is on February 8 at the Middle School, and Wednesday and Thursday, February 10 and 11, at the Central Office. Timeliness of registration is not an issue

as placement is not configured on a first come-first serve basis. Parents will be notified by the end of March regarding their child's placement. As our goal is to balance class size throughout the district, families who may not get their first choice will receive a personal call from the Superintendent to discuss. An Early Childhood Center open house is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27 from 7 – 8:30pm. ECC registration is on Wednesday, February 3, with a snow date of February 4.

New Education Reform Initiative – Mr. LaRock presented an overview of this landmark education reform legislation noting innovations, interventions and improvements to close the educational achievement gap in Massachusetts. The Superintendent thanked the Legislature for their work in moving this forward which will allow Melrose to have a better chance at Race to the Top funding. Mayor Dolan noted that the flexibility and accountability in this legislation will help all school districts.

Finance and Facilities – Christine Casatelli

Ms. Kourkoumelis moved, Mr. LaRock seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: For the second time, that the Melrose Public Schools in partnership with the Superintendent, the School Committee, and the Melrose Education Association approve memorandum of understanding for Race to the Top

Ms. Thorp moved, Ms. Kourkoumelis seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: For the second time, to accept December 2009 Maintenance Report

Ms. Thorp moved, Ms. Driscoll seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: For the second time, to accept December 2009 Budget Summary

Ms. Casatelli noted that we will present the Budget Calendar as soon as certain budget issues are finalized.

Policy and Planning – Kristin Thorp

2010/2011 School Year Calendar – Ms. Thorp presented proposed calendar for review.

Ms. Driscoll moved, Mayor Dolan seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve 2010/2011 calendar as presented

Summary of 2010 Policy and Planning Subcommittee Work Plan – Ms. Thorp presented this draft document for review and follow-up discussion. These are just ideas and are open to public and Committee feedback. Document is posted on the melroseschools website.

Draft 2010 School Committee Goals – Ms. Thorp presented proposed goals in need of extra focus this year related to the governance of the business of the School Committee, as follows: evaluate meeting frequency and structure, increase professional development opportunities for the School Committee; continue Communication Plan; reaffirm our commitment to the Arts; execute an annual budget and manage financial concerns in a manner that is reflective of the values and priorities of the community we serve; continue revisions to the School Committee Policy Manual, increase frequency of educator and family input regarding academic achievement to support AYP in 2010 and reducing number of students scoring Needs Improvement/Failing categories on MCAS; work aggressively with Superintendent to pursue opportunities for external funding (through federal, state and foundations) and increase opportunities for inter-district collaborations that will promote fiscal efficiency and enhance educational opportunities for students; expand efforts to monitor implementation of “Meeting the Needs of All Learners” educational model and increase opportunities for public feedback; and work with Superintendent, high school administrators, and external entities (such as College Board and Virtual High School) to support development of plan to increase availability of Advanced Placement courses at MHS and improve percentage of AP test-takers scoring 3 or above. The Committee offered feedback and suggestions which will be incorporated into a revised document for further discussion.

Ms. Thorp moved, Mr. LaRock seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm