

October 26, 2009
Paul Rodrigues Administration Bldg.
455 County Street
Room 224
New Bedford, MA

MINUTES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

PRESENT: MARLENE POLLOCK, TOM CLARK, JOHN FLETCHER

ABSENT: NONE

The meeting convened at 6:40 pm.

The Committee asked about bus routes for the Normandin and Keith Middle Schools, particularly with regards to students that attend Hayden McFadden and Pacheco Elementary Schools that feed to the middle schools. Discussion ensued of a School Committee vote four years ago to move the fifth grade classes from both elementary schools to Keith Middle School. Prior to that vote, classes were split by the Coggeshall Street boundary. The discussion concluded with a recommendation to the full School Committee to reconsider that vote for the students affected at the two schools.

Chairperson Pollock asked about school boundaries. The Sub Committee was informed that school boundaries for elementary and middle schools are set by the full School Committee and it has been several years since this issue was last addressed. Mr. Oliveira said he would bring a copy of the boundaries map to the next Sub Committee meeting.

Atty. Clark wanted to discuss the transportation issue for the new unified Lincoln Elementary School scheduled to open in September 2010. The Sub Committee wished to be proactive and asked Mr. Oliveira to explore the cost of shuttle service to the new Lincoln Elementary School. Mr. Oliveira said he would prepare costs for multiple buses and also charges to parents inside the two mile zone to help defray said costs.

Ms. Pollock asked for an update on an alleged fight on a school bus. Mr. Oliveira informed the Committee that the incident occurred on a high school route coming from New Bedford High School. The bus driver was allegedly assaulted with rocks from a student inside the bus. The bus driver stopped at Rockdale Avenue and Hillman Street to ask for assistance from a detail officer at that location. Police escorted several individuals off the bus. One student was identified as the offender and had his bus privileges suspended. There is protocol that any time there is an incident with bussing that the Superintendent, Chief Administrator for Finance and Operations and the Transportation Supervisor are notified in that order.

The Committee Chairperson was provided with copies of six bussing contracts in place for the district for both regular and special education routes. The Chairperson was also given copies of each route for regular and special education. She will discuss with the Chief Administrator for Finance & Operations in detail at a future date.

The question of Friday afternoon dismissals from Casimir Pulaski Elementary School was addressed. The Sub Committee was informed that there are 17 buses that transport students to and from this magnet school. One parent had a concern about dismissal times. Mr. Oliveira worked with Mr. Tetreault from Tremblay Bus, Principal Camacho and Assistant Principal Houston to correct this disparity and coordinate a more equitable dismissal procedure. Ms. Pollock asked Mr. Oliveira to contact the parent questioning the dismissal policy.

The Committee decided that going forward, the January meeting will be held at the Hayden McFadden Elementary School and the March meeting will be held at the Ottiwell Elementary School to discuss issues pertaining to students in those two areas for Fiscal Year 2011 planning.

There being no further business, the Sub-Committee voted to adjourn at 7:25 pm on a motion by Marlene Pollock and seconded by John Fletcher.

Respectfully Submitted:

Lawrence W. Oliveira
Chief Administrator for Finance & Operations
Sub-Committee Liaison