

<b>REGULAR MEETING OF THE NEW BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE</b>
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PRESENT: MAYOR LANG, DR. FLETCHER, MR. NOBREGA, DR. FINNERTY

ABSENT: ATTY. CLARK, MS. POLLOCK

IN ATTENDANCE: DR. FRANCIS, MRS. LARKIN, MR. OLIVEIRA, MS. COSTA, MRS. DUNAWAY  
(Recording secretary)

Justin Braga, Student Representative, was in attendance.

On a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Dr. Finnerty, the Committee voted to nominate Jill Ussach as the Vice-chairperson for 2011.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Lang	Yes	Atty. Clark	Absent
Dr. Finnerty	Yes	Ms. Pollock	Absent
Dr. Fletcher	Yes	Mrs. Ussach	Yes
Mr. Nobrega	Yes		

5 - Yeas

0 - Nays

2 - Absent

Mayor Lang submitted the assignments for Sub-Committees dated January through August 31, 2011. Mayor Lang will reassign Committee members as of September 1, 2011 to include School Committee Member, Atty. Thomas Clark.

Public Comment was as follows:

- Carol Strupczewski – Endorsed Dr. Francis for Superintendent
- Tom Derosier – Endorsed Dr. Francis for Superintendent

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Finnerty and seconded by Ussach, to take up all requests for approval of minutes together.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Dr. Fletcher and seconded by Mrs. Ussach to receive and place on file the following: (Supporting documents labeled "4")

- November 22, 1010 – Special Meeting Minutes
- December 13, 2010 – Finance Sub-Committee Minutes
- December 13, 2010 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Oliveira gave a brief overview regarding the financial report. To date, psychological services, transportation and legal fees are exceeding the budget.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Nobrega and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, to receive and place on file the financial report. (Supporting document labeled "5A")

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Dr. Fletcher, to receive and place on file the Schedule of Bills for November. (Supporting document labeled "5B")

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Dr. Fletcher, to receive and place on file the Personnel Report. (Supporting document labeled "5C")

Marissa Perez-Dormitzer, Recycling Coordinator for the City of New Bedford gave a brief overview of the recycling program in the schools. She stated that 13 schools are involved with the program. Gomes School was chosen as the contest winner for January.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mrs. Ussach and seconded by Mr. Nobrega, to take item 6G on the agenda (Appointment of the Superintendent) out of order.

Dr. Finnerty addressed the Committee by stating that he was previously in favor of seeking out candidates for Superintendent in a hiring process with a comparison of candidates but commented that after Dr. Francis received an outstanding evaluation, he felt it was not necessary at this time. Dr. Finnerty also mentioned that not only would he like the Superintendent to inform the public and the Committee on the work that is being done but to also hold forums for the community to enable the public to assist in helping to improve our performance, especially with chronic and persistent problems. People would be encouraged to come with ideas on how they could join with the teachers, paraprofessionals, superintendent, principals and the school board to improve things. He stressed that it would not be a forum for the public to "throw rocks".

Mrs. Ussach agreed with Dr. Finnerty saying that she was originally in favor of a search but with the recent outstanding evaluation, feels the Committee should not look any further. She was also in favor of public input to assist collaboratively to help improve all educational endeavors.

Mayor Lang read a letter from Ms. Pollock who was absent from the meeting. Ms. Pollock wished to go on record in support of Dr. Francis and to offer her a contract.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mrs. Ussach and seconded by Dr. Fletcher to receive and place on file the letter from Ms. Pollock.

Dr. Fletcher concurred with his colleagues on the Committee that we need public involvement and that a search would be inconceivable at this time after the Committee gave Dr. Francis an excellent evaluation. We have already seen substantial progress and under the aegis of Dr. Francis, she has successfully worked with the teachers union for the benefit of the students while protecting the rights of the teachers. She is accessible to parents and has worked closely with community groups and School Committee members. The school system is on the cusp of change and feels Dr. Francis is key to that change. He went on to say that it would be the worst possible time to hire someone new cautioning that time would be lost as the new Superintendent tried to acclimate him/herself to the school system.

Dr. Fletcher stated that it is time to develop a new evaluation instrument which is more performance based. A new evaluation system will continue to be worked on in the spring.

Mayor Lang commented that over nine months ago, Dr. Francis took over under the most difficult circumstances. The Committee gave Dr. Francis the opportunity to show what she could do as leader of the school district and kept an open mind including the idea of a doing a search either prior or after doing her evaluation. Mayor Lang said that it is irrefutable that she received excellent marks in her evaluation with an evaluation form that was used before so she was compared in an equal manner to others that we evaluated under that system. The evaluation showed that she had the marks that showed excellent leadership and high marks from the community. The Committee members filled out the evaluation forms independently without communication or comment and came to the same conclusions.

Mayor Lang stated that that the candidate that we have in front of us, who has indicated that she would be willing to serve the school district, is the person who is most suited for this position. Mayor Lang went on to mention that it is a complex system of federal and state grants and requirements. Dr. Francis understands these issues and understands when she knows to get help. She has done a great job building support around the community and understands what our day to day weaknesses are and we need to attack them working together. He said he is enthusiastic about what Dr. Francis has proven to the Committee. She had to work to finish up a school year, work with her administrative staff on a budget, work on internal matters that take place during the summer, work with the unions, and handling in district and out of district issues and she did all this very, very well. We got off to a very positive start to the new year.

On a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Dr. Fletcher, the Committee voted to offer Dr. Francis a three year contract commencing July 1, 2011 and to enter into negotiations with the appropriate language, salary and benefits regarding her contract.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Lang	Yes	Atty. Clark	Absent
Dr. Finnerty	Yes	Ms. Pollock	Absent
Dr. Fletcher	Yes	Mrs. Ussach	Yes
Mr. Nobrega	Yes		

5 - Yeas

0 – Nays

2 – Absent

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mrs. Ussach and seconded by Dr. Finnerty, to direct the Superintendent and School Committee to offer a series of public forums, with details to be worked out by an Ad-Hoc Committee.

Mayor Lang appointed the Superintendent, Dr. Finnerty, Mrs. Ussach and Dr. Fletcher to work on the Ad-Hoc Committee.

A brief discussion took place regarding expanding the Superintendent's Administrative Team to assist with the responsibilities of the district.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, to advertise for the position of Director of Curriculum with a target date of July 1, 2011.

The Committee also discussed the hiring of an Assistant Superintendent to serve as a back up to the Superintendent and to assist with academically based duties.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Dr. Finnerty, to advertise for a new Assistant Superintendent.

Mr. Nobrega asked who would hire the new Assistant Superintendent.

Dr. Francis proposed that she would develop the job description and sit on the Committee to hire the Assistant however, the contract would be between the Committee and Assistant Superintendent candidate. Mayor Lang clarified that the candidate would be the ultimate choice of the Superintendent with the Committee available to lend assistance.

On the agenda item 6 H, "Discussion on closing school buildings" Mayor Lang explained that he asked that it be put on the agenda to hold this as a place as we begin to look at the budget coming up for 2012 and to begin asking Mr. Oliveira and Dr. Francis to look at some logistics in the event a that we have to cross that bridge. Mayor Lang continued by saying that discussions will take place over the next few months in regard to the closing of older buildings and that hopefully the closing of buildings will be the result of new schools being built rather than for budgetary matters.

Mr. Oliveira briefed the Committee on the Statement's of Interest that needed to be refreshed for the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) as follows:

*"In 2010, which is actually November of 2009, following a vote by the School Committee in May of 2009, the Committee voted a priority list to the MSBA which was submitted in November 2009 for 2010. The state is asking us to refresh that list. The list included: Priority number one was Campbell Elementary School to be built new; second a new DeValles Elementary School; number three was a new Taylor Elementary School; number four was a new Winslow and five was a new Brooks Elementary School. That was the list that we voted in 2010.*

*In 2009 we had Hannigan Elementary School as number one because it was closed. The state accepted Hannigan into their program and it is to be funded at 80%. On the 2010 list, Campbell is the number one school on that list and that list that was recited to you has to be voted on.*

*They usually fund one school a year but they did not fund any schools in New Bedford at the time because we were in the process of building Lincoln and we had not used the money that was set aside in 2007 for the Brooks Elementary School."*

On a motion by Dr. Finnerty and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, the Committee voted to refresh the Statements of Interest of November, 2009 for Fiscal Year 2010 with the appropriate priorities as voted on previously as follows: Campbell School, DeValles School, Taylor School, Winslow School and Brooks School.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Lang	Yes	Atty. Clark	Absent
Dr. Finnerty	Yes	Ms. Pollock	Absent
Dr. Fletcher	Yes	Mrs. Ussach	Yes
Mr. Nobrega	Yes		

5 - Yeas

0 - Nays

2 - Absent

Mr. Oliveira went over the 2011 priority list at follows:

*"There are two sets of figures that we deal with. The first part of the refresher is to build a new Hannigan at Sea Lab addition which is to be used with old money, the 90% money that was appropriated by the state in 2007 which was the Brooks money that would add an addition to the Sea Lab facility at 71 Portland Street to allow for grades K and 1 to be in that building as a K-5 fully functional elementary school.*

*Project number two is to renovate the Roosevelt Middle school from its current 6 - 8 status to a K-8 status renovating the first floor of the building to put K - 5 from the Taylor school across the street on the first floor and that can be done for approximately 2.5 - 3.5 M dollars and leaving grades 6, 7, 8 on the second and third floor of that building.*

*The third part of that priority is to build a brand new DeValles Elementary School which was number two on our list last year and by building a new DeValles school it would be larger than originally proposed. The*

*original proposal in 2005 was 300 student school; the new proposal would be a 600 student school to close in other neighborhood schools into one site to build you a new brand new DeValles.*

*The next school on the list would be Campbell School again as was previously designed. K – 8 to realign grades 5-8 in the middle school concept as voted by this Committee in 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006 and 2008. Campbell would be number two.*

*Number three would be an addition/renovation to the Hathaway School on Union Street, again folding in neighborhood elementary schools into an addition updating the infrastructure, classrooms, technology, saving the auditorium and adding additional classroom space to make it a four track school. Right now it is a two track school.*

*The next school on the list is to add/renovate Winslow which was originally submitted in 2003 and 2002 to the School Committee. Add/reno because there is space on the site. Increase the infrastructure, make it handicap accessible, new auditorium, new cafeteria for the building.*

*The next one would be the Brooks Elementary which was submitted to the School Committee in 2002 and 2003 and voted again in 2008 as the number five priority on your list. From Brooks school we had other priorities in the district.*

*The Administration Building is number 10. Number eight is the Adult Ed. and Pregnant and Parenting Teen program at the Hillman St. complex.*

*Number seven was the renovation of the four large elementary schools which were all built in the 70's. They are Carney, Hayden McFadden, Gomes and Pulaski.*

*Number nine is the Parker School which in the original plan from the School Committee in 2001 was to renovate windows, roof, and infrastructure.*

*This is the 2011 list that we will be submitting to the MSBA."*

Mayor Lang explained that the MSBA has indicated that they want to know our number one priority on new priorities for 2011. This will be the DeValles School. The number one priority for last year was Campbell. The leftovers were Sea Lab and Hannigan (Taylor and Hannigan).

Mr. Oliveira said that Taylor was actually number four on last year's list, the 2010 list.

Mayor Lang went on to explain that the MSBA wants new city schools projects in the pipeline. This list is designed to take off line the nine schools that are between 90 and 100 years old. New Bedford has more schools in the 100 year old vintage than any other city in the state right now. The emphasis now is to take out some of these older schools. Mayor Lang continued that this 2011 proposal tends to do that very quickly. If DeValles is funded, three older schools, which are the DeValles, Dunbar and Congdon, would be taken out. The older Rodman and Kempton would be accommodated with the renovated Hathaway. The overflow from Pulaski and closing the older building, Swift, would be accommodated at Campbell. Either Pacheco or Ashley will be looked at to renovate and renovating Winslow will turn it into a modern facility. Mayor Lang reiterated that the point is to get them into the MSBA pipeline.

On a motion by Dr. Fletcher and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, the Committee voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority Statements of Interest dated January, 2011 with the appropriate priorities and descriptions of the following schools:

1. John B. DeValles School
2. Elwyn G. Campbell School
3. Ellen R. Hathaway School
4. Betsey B. Winslow School
5. E. C. Brooks School

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Lang	Yes	Atty. Clark	Absent
Dr. Finnerty	Yes	Ms. Pollock	Absent
Dr. Fletcher	Yes	Mrs. Ussach	Yes
Mr. Nobrega	Yes		

5 - Yeas                      0 – Nays                      2 – Absent

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, to take item 6B of the agenda out of order.

At this time, Richard Desrosiers, Principal of Keith Middle School, Peter Cabral, Safety Officer and Sgt. Amos Melo of the New Bedford Police Department addressed the Committee regarding a request to run K-9 units through the Middle and High Schools during lock down drills.

A discussion ensued regarding the merits of the request and the procedures that would be used.

On a motion by Mrs. Ussach and seconded by Dr. Finnerty, the Committee voted to utilize K-9 units during lock down drills at the Secondary Schools.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Lang	Yes	Atty. Clark	Absent
Dr. Finnerty	Yes	Ms. Pollock	Absent
Dr. Fletcher	Yes	Mrs. Ussach	Yes
Mr. Nobrega	Yes		

5 - Yeas                      0 – Nays                      2 – Absent

Superintendents Report was as follows:

Dr. Francis thanked the Committee for their confidence and expressed her appreciation for their kind words this evening and after last week's evaluation report. She said she tried very hard to do the very best for the district. Her appreciation went out to the Committee for working with her and for the hard work that they all do for New Bedford Public Schools as it is especially helpful as Superintendent. She thanked her Leadership Team and those around her for their support as it is not a job that can be done alone.

Dr. Francis also expressed her gratitude to the Committee for the additional help that was voted on during the meeting, the Community for their support and to the unions for their willingness to work with her. Moving forward to the next strategic plan, Dr. Francis said she planned to include the community forums as

they will serve NBPS well. She concluded by saying that she looked forward to serving New Bedford Public Schools over the next three years. (Report continues on page 8.)

Several School Committee members gave reports.

The Student Representative gave his report.

At this time, Candida DesJardins from Naval Undersea Warfare Center addressed the Committee with information relative to the educational programs presented by the center in schools throughout the district and voiced her appreciation that there is a strong partnership with New Bedford Public Schools.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Dr. Finnerty and seconded by Dr. Fletcher, to grant approval of a request from Mark Fuller/Business Agent/Miss New Bedford Scholarship Pageant, for permission to use the auditorium, community room and several adjacent rooms at Keith Middle School on Sunday, February 6, 2011 from 8:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M., with a waiver of the rental fee and authorization to sell refreshments (water and candy to be consumed outside of the auditorium). (Supporting document labeled "6C-1")

Renee Dufour addressed the Committee relative to a request from Community Services/City of New Bedford to operate an after school program at Campbell Elementary School.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Dr. Fletcher and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, to grant approval of a request from Cynthia Wallquist/Director of Community Services/City of New Bedford, for permission to use the gymnasium and cafeteria Mondays – Thursdays from January 29 – April 28, 2011 from 2:30 – 5:00 P.M. to operate an after school program for students in Grades 3 – 5 at the school, with a waiver of the rental and custodial fee. (Supporting document labeled "6C-2")

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Dr. Finnerty, to grant approval of a request from Lauren Houle/Community Executive/American Cancer Society/New Bedford Relay for Life, for permission to use the Paul Walsh Athletic Field from 8:00 A.M. June 24 to 11:00 A.M. June 25 and several hours for set up on the evening of June 23, 2011 for the annual Relay for Life event, with a waiver of all fees. (Supporting document labeled "6C-3")

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, to take up and approve the following requests to accept donations together:

- 1) Arthur Dutra/Principal/Hannigan School-Sea Lab – \$2560 grant award from New Bedford Day Nursery Foundation for eight summer Sea Lab scholarships. (Supporting document labeled "6D-1")
- 2) Debra Letendre/Principal/Swift School – One 52" flat screen TV and one 46" projection TV from the McKenna family for the school. (Supporting document labeled "6D-2")
- 3) Bart Lush/Principal/Hathaway School - \$50 in Price Rite gift cards, coats, hats and gloves from the Marion Cooke Lynch Mission for families in need. (Supporting document labeled "6D-3")
- 4) Richard Desrosiers/Principal/Keith Middle School - \$755.45 from Lifetouch National School Studios for the school fund. (Supporting document labeled "6D-4")
- 5) Marcia Faucher/Principal/Pacheco School - \$450 from Box Tops for Education for the school fund; \$428 from Lifetouch National School Studios for the school fund. (Supporting document labeled "6D-5")

- 6) Tammy Morgan/Principal/Pulaski School – One computer from Sharin Marchuck for the school.  
(Supporting document labeled “6D-6”)

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mrs. Ussach and seconded by Dr. Finnerty, to table a request until further information is gathered regarding a request from Pel Industries, Inc. for NBPS to participate in Pel's production of licensed merchandise for schools in the district and to grant Pel a non-exclusive license to print school names or logos on merchandise to be sold to its retail customers. (Supporting document labeled “6E”)

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Dr. Finnerty and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, to table the first reading of New Bedford Public Schools Policy JICFB – Student Bullying Prevention. (Supporting document labeled “6F”)

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Dr. Finnerty to receive and place on file a communication from City Councillor, Joseph Lopes, requesting that the Superintendent meet with Police Chief Ronald Teachman and the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods to discuss policies and procedures for school bus safety, as it relates to dropping off, picking up and dismissal for students at area schools. (Supporting document labeled “7”)

At this time Dr. Francis continued with the Superintendent's report with the following items:

- Innovation Schools Screening Committee
- Visit to Brockton High School
- Anti-Bullying Plan submitted to the DESE on 12/30/10
- More than SAD curriculum
- Invitations regarding a Webinar and Conference in Denver

A motion was made by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Mrs. Ussach, to go into Executive Session for the purpose of:

- o Matters Pertaining to Non-Union Personnel

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Lang	Yes	Atty. Clark	Absent
Dr. Finnerty	Yes	Ms. Pollock	Absent
Dr. Fletcher	Yes	Mrs. Ussach	Yes
Mr. Nobrega	Yes		

5 - Yeas                      0 – Nays                      2 - Absent

At 9:23 P.M., on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Ms. Ussach, the Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to adjourn the Regular Session meeting.

Submitted by,

Scott W. Lang  
Chairman Ex-officio  
New Bedford School Committee

MLF/lpd