

# **CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

## **ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday, May 8, 2012**

**Briggs Building – Reed Conference Room**

**845 Park Avenue**

### **MINUTES**

**A meeting of the Cranston School Committee Sub-Committee for All-Day Kindergarten was held on the above date at 5:00 p.m. Members present were: Janice Ruggieri, Chairperson, Lynne Conca, Judith Lundsten, James Zanfini, Amy Merlino, Gail Jeschke, Stephanie DiChiro and Joseph Balducci.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri began the meeting by reporting that since Mr. Zisseron was not present this evening, we can't continue the discussion regarding renovations and similar projects.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri reported to the sub-committee that, at this time, she is trying to schedule an appointment with the Mayor to discuss buildings and futures of buildings because tomorrow evening is the City Council Meeting and we are being level funded. We know that there is nothing in the budget for next year to really do anything with. Her hope is that she can sit down and have a discussion with the Mayor and go through the process with him and let him know that there is no money coming down from the State for this; she will try to**

get some feed-back from the Mayor as to what they might be willing to do for us.

At this time, Mrs. Ruggieri asked if anyone wanted to report on anything since our last meeting.

Mr. Zanfini reported that he had no further information on other districts at this time.

Mrs. Lundsten reported that they have people working on the Math Common Core. They are looking at some materials to give to teachers to start the year with; they've got a plan and they are working on it. She spoke to Jeff Goldthwaite, the Math Supervisor K-12 on that today and DANA met today and yesterday. She noted that the Kindergarten representation was working diligently; she was there also yesterday. The Science part is being worked on. Jeannine will start on the English Language Arts as far as the common core, in the fall. That is where they are right now. She is going to put out there and suggests it be put out to the Mayor that the Common Core calls for a full day for us to get the work done that we need to get done.

A discussion ensued in regards to a Math Book/Work Book available. Mrs. Lundsten noted that it is supplementary; it's not a program. She stated that they will take the DANA work and they will make binders; they will use the investigations that fit with the Common Core with

**DANA and then use this other material as supplementary. Mrs. Lundsten reported that there is nothing on the market right now; as much as every publisher is telling them and they are putting their stamp on it that it's Common Core; it is not. It is not nearly rigorous enough and it's not meeting the publisher criteria. Everyone who is an expert in the field is saying don't buy anything yet; sit tight.**

**It was noted that all of our kindergarten teachers have their binder. Mrs. Lundsten added that they are aiming to have the binders ready by the last week of school; everybody can take them home (the first quarter). They will then have stipends after the first week before school starts for a meeting by grade level to go over it and then they will meet quarterly on it. A discussion ensued.**

**Mrs. Lundsten added that they got teacher volunteers yesterday at DANA to step up and if anyone knows anybody else who wants to help get this binder ready, Jeff's going to put out something tomorrow with the dates and then we'll run it off here and have it ready to go out to the buildings before everyone leaves for the summer.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri brought up the discussion at the previous meeting regarding the General Assembly funding and she noted that she is not sure what their thinking is because there is no district in the state that can afford to roll it out the way that their asking; they are only offering money for one year and it's only if you do your entire district and you are not allowed to have a half day and a full day program**

running concurrently. Mrs. Ruggieri noted that she may try to get in touch with Senator Gallo and see if they might be willing to make some kind of amendments to how they're offering the funding.

Mrs. Ruggieri noted the discussion at the last meeting about PAL's Assessments and the TA's, etc. and we know that there is no funding for TA's right now. She reported that she was trying to think of other ways that we could get classroom help that would benefit both the teacher and also the person coming in. The only thought that she had was if they somehow tapped into the Early Childhood Program at the Career & Technical Center. They lost some of their capabilities of having that in-school pre-school where they can only have a certain amount of children because they lost their technical assistance. She thought that maybe this would be something that this committee could look to for a certain block of time which would help them in their progression of curriculum and it would help the teacher because there's somebody else in there. This would be a suggestion.

Mrs. Jeschke reported that they used to have students come into her class all the time. It was also noted that Arlington has students from Career & Tech. come in.

A lengthy discussion ensued. Mrs. Lundsten suggested that someone from the committee talk to Charlene Barbieri.

Ms. DiChiro noted that these classrooms that they go into are planned for them. That discussion that came out of if we don't have

**all-day kindergarten, we can beef up what we have. The purpose would be to have the teacher working with the kids and the person that comes in to help; we would have to have something planned for them to do. They will need some direction. Ms. DiChiro reported that the few students that come into her school to help only seem to be making copies. It was noted that if we do something like this, we would be very specific as to what they are looking at for the help and for what the outcome should be.**

**There were several suggestions regarding what these students could be doing.**

**Also discussed was the fact that they can only come in the afternoons. That is an issue too; due to the fact that they have to work according to their schedule.**

**Again, Dr. Lundsten reiterated that someone has to speak to Charlene Barbieri and get her input.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri added to the discussion, the use of VICS (Volunteers in Cranston Schools). They are not utilized and as much as they could be; she is wondering how much of a resource that might be because there are some people that are signed up for that and involved who have skill sets that might match what we're trying to do.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri stated that if you are continuing to build the curriculum but you don't have the support in the classroom, it's almost a waste to say to bring these things back.**

**Mr. Zanfini added that we partnership with a local college where we actively and aggressively cater to their Early Childhood Programs; you've got student teachers. The student teacher placement is starting in 2014; they're going to be doing six month stints now. There will be longer placement levels. If you have veteran kindergarten teachers with a full day kindergarten, you would probably have more veteran teachers; that would also be another set of hands but you actively have to pursue this with the Universities.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri noted that moving forward with this, we shouldn't come back here and spin our wheels in a way that we say, "If this happens, we can do this". We know it's not happening for next school year. If we take this opportunity to use next year to get all of these "if's" and "what if" and focus on getting those things aligned and come back and know that we have our volunteer program that is going to be ....., etc. We can come back with more concrete things to do rather than coming back to the same issues. Hopefully we will have more information on space and we will get some help from the City to move forward on this. She asked if the committee should take the summer to keep moving and getting answers. A lengthy discussion ensued on the sub-committee's next step.**

**Mr. Zanfini asked if anybody has thrown their hat in for the Mayor recently in Cranston. The answer being "no", he noted that it may almost be wise to start courting people to see where they stand at**

**All-Day K and then get the parents behind that because we need somebody on record saying this. A discussion ensued regarding the parents and how they feel at this time.**

**Other items discussed that Mrs. Ruggieri would like the committee to work on:**

- What parents want – All day or ½ day**
- What the concerns will be**
- Frequently asked questions that are going to come up – we will be discussing what we think will be the concerns**
- We know that there will be complaints and concerns**
- How we can avoid a lot of conflict and apprehension**
- How we will handle a presentation to the School Committee and be able to answer questions**
- We will regroup at some point**
- Dr. Lundsten will contact Charlene Barbieri**
- Dr. Lundsten will also contact the Volunteers in Cranston**
- Ms. Merlino stated that she could have the kindergarten teachers send something informal out to the parents saying, “They are looking for concerns/input in regards to All-Day K”.**
- Working with students from Early Childhood classes and how much work they have to do with all the new reform models coming down**
- Poll the committee in regards to the next meeting and if they would like to skip the summer and resume in August or have a meeting over the summer.**

**There being no further business to come before this sub-committee,  
the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Gail Leone**

**Recording Secretary**