

## **REGULAR MEETING OF THE LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

October 7, 2009

The regular meeting of the Lowell School Committee took place in the Council Chambers, City Hall, at 7:00 pm, on the above-mentioned date.

### **ROLL CALL**

On roll call at 7:01 pm, all members were present, namely: Regina M. Faticanti, John J. Leahy, James D. Leary, Connie A. Martin, Mayor/Chairman Edward (Bud) C. Caulfield, David J. Conway and Jacqueline A. Doherty

### **SPECIAL ORDER of BUSINESS**

#### 1. Spotlight on Excellence: Summer Reading

This was the third year of the summer reading program. Jean Franco, Deputy Superintendent stated that the elementary and middle school students were all given the opportunity to participate in the summer reading program. A total of 13,138 books were read. All students participating received a certificate. Tonight the following students were recognized and congratulated by the Mayor, the Superintendent, and members of the Lowell School Committee, and given a **\$25** gift certificate from Barnes and Noble:

**Bailey School:** Juan Carlos Serrano, Jr., Alexa Carolan, James McBreen

**Bartlett School:** Justine Nutt, Anthony Phayso, Danielis Vega

**Butler School:** Jane Le, Ryan Dion, Sherrice Lavigne

**Daley School:** Madeline Pen, David Perez, Rebecca Young

**Greenhalge School:** Ethan Rios, Nicolas Lefebvre, Qian Ren

**Laura Lee Alternative Program:** Jazmin Torres, Luis Feliz, Gabriel Vargas

**Lincoln School:** Selena Chau, Somorntepy Vet, Finn Crueger-Cain

**McAuliffe School:** Alex Reyes, Jasmine Del Llano, Isabella Brito

**McAvinnue School:** Melchizedek Robinson, Aiyanna Rivera, Kyle Reardon

**Moody School:** Giovanna Pereira, Gabryelle Rodrigues, Steve Tavares

**Morey School:** Dillan Pho, Vincent Kim, Parisha Bonn

**Murkland School:** Saomenea Phorn, Amaia Rivera, Gechmy Chhim

**Pawtucketville School:** Cody Beauchesne, Kimberly Mai, Chanda Wallace

**Pyne/Arts School:** Adrianna DeBlois, Josibel Pardo, Jazmyn Johnson

**Reilly School:** Peter Tran, Rey Vasquez, Elayna Hunt

**Robinson School:** Jessica Dupont, Rachel Hunt, Ratana Heng

**Shaughnessy School:** Mykaylah Chanthavong, Mitchell Chan, Emily Johnson

**Stoklosa School:** Zachary Murphy, Votey Luong, Cornell Grinkley

**Sullivan School:** Chanel Quill, Tracy Yang, Grace Carolan

**Wang School:** Brenna Burton, Alexis Martinez, Danielle Riley

**Washington School:** Rowan Galloni, Sophie Price, Mitchell Ou

Mayor Caulfield stated that the K-8 grade students reading a total of 13, 138 books over the summer months should be recognized, praised, and congratulated. The parents and teachers of these students should be recognized, praised, and congratulated for the importance they are placing on the education of these students.

Mr. Leahy moved:

For a five minute recess to allow students and parents to clear the Council Chamber; seconded by Ms. Martin. APPROVED

**For the record**, this regular School Committee meeting recessed at 7:26 pm.

### **ROLL CALL after RECESS**

On roll call after recess all members were present.

### **MINUTES**

1. Regular School Committee Meeting of September 16, 2009

Ms. Martin moved to approve; seconded by Mr. Conway. Minutes APPROVED

**PERMISSION TO ENTER**

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, presented and recommended the following contracts for School Committee approval:

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 S.P. & R. TRANSPORTATON OF N.H. \$ 342,000

210 Donahue Road  
 Dracut, MA 01826

To amend the existing contract to provide for bus monitors per students individual education plans.

Funding provided by the Special Education Transportation Budget

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CHRISTIANSON BUS CO., LLC \$10,400

6 Burning Tree Road  
 Chelmsford, MA 01824

To provide round trip transportation for one (1) special education student from Lowell to Mass Hospital School in Canton, MA.

Funding provided by the Special Education Transportation Budget

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GREATER LAWRENCE EDUCATIONAL \$ 19,400

COLLABORATIVE (GLEC)  
 480 Broadway  
 Methuen, MA 01844

To provide round trip transportation for one (1) special education student from St. Ann’s Group Home in Methuen to SEEM Collaborative’s Hurd School in Melrose, MA

Funding provided by the Special Education Transportation Budget

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SAFEWAY TRAINING AND TRASPORTATION SERVICES, INC. \$ 9,000

62 Newton Junction Road  
 Newton Junction, NH 03859

To provide round trip transportation for one (1) special education student from Haverhill, MA to Solstice Adolescent Center, Rowley, MA

Funding provided by the Special Education Transportation Budget

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THE AMERICAN SCHOOL, AT HARTFORD, FOR THE DEAF \$ 38,500

139 North Main Street

West Hartford, CT 06107

To provide round trip transportation for one (1) special education student from The American School, At Hartford, for the Deaf , West Hartford, CT to Lowell, MA.

Funding provided by the Special Education Transportation Budget

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C. LYNN CHAMBERS \$  
10,000

d/b/a Eden Associates

11 Eden Road

Rockport, MA 01966

To provide staff training which will directly benefit teachers by improving their capacity to utilize specific assistive technology instruments for special education students.

Funding provided by the Special Education Department Budget – Grant Funds

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DOROTHY C. EISNEHAURE M.ED. CCC/SLP \$ 5,005

336 Baker Avenue

Concord, MA 01742

To provide consultation and training to special education teachers working with students with Cochlear implants and to observe these students as needed to make recommendations related to their Individual Education Plans.

Funding provided by the Special Education 240 Grant

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GREATER LAWRENCE EDUCATIONAL \$ 75,000

COLLABORATIVE (GLEC)

480 Broadway

Methuen, MA 01844

To provide home based services, orientation and mobility training and vocational assessments according to students' special education IEP's.

Funding provided by the Special Education Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

HILLCREST EDUCATIONAL CENTERS, INC. \$ 69,005

788 South Street

Pittsfield, MA 02101

To provide for the out-of-district tuition costs for one (1) student enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the Special Education Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

SULLIVAN & ASSOCIATES, INC. \$ 23,918

551 East Columbus Avenue

Springfield, MA 01105

To provide for the out-of-district tuition costs for one (1) student enrolled and receiving services as outlined in their special education IEP.

Funding provided by the Special Education Department Budget – Special Education Tuition Account

MIDDLESEX PARTNERSHIP FOR YOUTH, INC. \$ 5,500

40 Thorndike Street

Cambridge, MA 02141

To provide workshops/trainings to K-12 staff on topics including safety, wellness, bullying prevention, and cyberbullying. Workshops to Social Workers and Guidance Counselor through in-service training sessions will include current trends in school and violence prevention.

Funding provided by the Safe and Drug Free Schools Grant

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTTS AT LOWELL \$ 34,025

TSONGAS INDUSTRIAL HISTORY CENTER

One University Avenue

Lowell, MA 01854

To provide courses to enrich student content understanding and skill development on the American Industrial Revolution in the third, fourth, eighth, and eleventh grades.

Funding provided by the School Department Local Budget – Field Trip Admissions Fees

KEYS TO LITERACY, LLC \$ 36,000

491 Maple Street

Danvers, MA 01923

To provide content teachers in grades five through nine with reading comprehension, writing and study skills that will support adolescent literacy instruction to meet the established benchmarks and outcomes as articulated in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Memorandum of Understanding with the Lowell Public Schools in order to avoid state intervention.

Funding provided by the DESE K-12 Literacy Grant and Local Professional Development Account

TEACHERS FOR TEACHERS INC. \$ 100,000

32 Taft Avenue

Lexington, MA 02421

To provide on-site professional development in literacy instruction and work with our teachers, literacy coaches and administrators at the Morey (\$50,000) and Murkland Elementary Schools (\$50,000) to meet the established benchmarks and outcomes as articulated in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Memorandum of Understanding with the Lowell Public Schools in order to avoid state intervention.

Funding provided by the DESE School Improvement Grant

PUBLIC CONSULTING GROUP, INC. /CRM \$ 62,500

148 State Street

Boston, MA 02109

To provide professional development to teachers and administrators on the use of evaluation tools to assess the impact of key programs and literacy initiatives on instructional practice and student achievement to meet the established benchmarks and outcomes as articulated in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Memorandum of Understanding with the Lowell Public Schools in order to avoid state intervention.

Funding provided by DESE K-12 Literacy and Title IID Grants

Mayor Caulfield requested the total amount of all the contracts approved tonight.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she didn't have the total amount tonight, but she would supply the Committee with that information and would include the total amount of the contracts in the future.

Mayor Caulfield stated that he thought the general public listening would like to know the total amount of the contracts that are supported by grant monies; the Special Education contracts. They are different from the school improvement contracts.

After discussion, Ms. Faticanti moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve all contracts for permission to enter; seconded by Ms. Doherty. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

**MEMORIALS** - The Committee as a Whole stood for a 'Moment of Silence' in memory of the following:

(by Connie A. Martin)

1. Martha McQuade, sister of Ellen Conklin, Shaughnessy School Teacher, daughter of Joan McQuade, retired Shaughnessy School Teacher and the late Hubert McQuade, former Principal of the Pawtucketville Memorial School

(by the Committee as a Whole):

2. Vibol Phim, 2009 Lowell High School Graduate
3. Stella Eliopoulos, Grandmother of LeeAnn Conners, Greenhalge School Principal, Michael DeVincenzi, Lowell High School Social Studies Department Head and Gail Green, Lowell High School Bursar

(by Regina M. Faticanti):

4. Mark S. Umphrey, Brother-in-Law of Sharon Krysiak, Assistant Principal, Bailey School and Dennis Krysiak, Health and Physical Education Teacher at Lowell High School

(by Mayor Edward (Bud) Caulfield)

5. M. Corrine Scannell, a member of a large respected family in Lowell

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. Professional Development Days (1/2 day Early Release)

Ms. Doherty stated that she did not approve March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010 as an early release day for K-12 or Lowell High School. Due to the celebration of St. Patrick's Day, there will be a lot of celebrating going on downtown Lowell. Chaos could follow when the high school students run into people celebrating.

Ms. Faticanti moved:

To convey to Headmaster William Samaras that the Lowell School Committee rejects March 17, 2010 as an early release day due to a safety issue; seconded by Ms. Martin.

APPROVED

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that the Citywide Parent Council voted to approve early-release days.

Ms. Martin stated that she was concerned about the families having to provide babysitting.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she had contacted the Boys and Girls Clubs. They were willing to help parents out during early-release days. She further stated that all students will receive lunches prior to being dismissed on early-release days.

Mr. Leary stated that it was too late to approve October 28<sup>th</sup> as an early-release day. The early-release days should start in 2010. He was willing to approve two early-release days, possibly one in April and one in May of 2010. This year will be an adjustment. Next year the Committee could approve four early-release days if all goes well this year.

Mr. Leary stated that a communication should be sent home to parents well in advance of the early-release days.

Ms. Martin suggested informing parents by telephone, using ConnectED.

Mr. Leary stated that telephone was a great idea but a communication should be sent home also.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she was in favor of Ms. Martin's suggestion of calling parents. She conveyed to the Committee that she would do this first thing tomorrow morning.

After discussion, Mr. Conway moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve two K-8 early-release days in 2010, specific dates to be determined; seconded by Ms. Faticanti. APPROVED

Committee members requested assurance from the Superintendent that they would be part of the discussion determining which days the early-release dates would fall on.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, gave that assurance.

## **MOTIONS**

1. (by John J. Leahy) – The Superintendent send a letter of appreciation to Brenda Costello from the Committee for all the work she has done over the past few years for the Lowell High School Scholarship Foundation; seconded by Ms. Martin.  
APPROVED

2. (by Jacqueline A. Doherty) – Request the Superintendent work with city youth providers to develop ways to collaborate and make use of the Rogers School as a community center; seconded by Mr. Leahy. APPROVED
3. (by Jacqueline A. Doherty) - Request the Superintendent make recommendations regarding the use of biodegradable throwaway materials in our school food program, rather than Styrofoam, as well as the potential benefits and drawbacks of switching back to reusable items wherever possible; seconded by Mr. Leahy. APPROVED

Ms. Doherty suggested going back to using trays that could be washed and reused. She also suggested trays that weren't made of Styrofoam.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that he would have to check on the dishwashers in the cafeteria schools. They haven't been used in years. He also stated that the throw-away trays that were friendlier to the environment were three to four times the cost of the Styrofoam trays. He was having a meeting regarding the cafeterias in October. He would put discuss Ms. Doherty's motion during that meeting.

4. (by James D. Leahy) – Request the Superintendent and the Curriculum Subcommittee to review the School Committee's policy as it relates to the age students start school. The focus reflects students from outside the Lowell Public School entering our system and are forced to repeat kindergarten or any other grade that have already successfully passed due strictly to the existing age policy; seconded by Mr. Leahy. APPROVED

Mayor Caulfield stated that a couple of parents had called him about the same issue. He thanked Mr. Leahy for bringing in the motion.

## **SUBCOMMITTEES**

1. Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on School Building Naming - Report and Approval of the Minutes of September 16, 2009, by Regina M. Faticanti, Chair

Ms. Faticanti stated that at the last School Committee meeting of September 16<sup>th</sup>, the Garden memorial at the Pyne Arts Magnet School was approved. Tonight she wanted approval of the naming of the Administrative Offices at the Rogers School.

When the Central Administrative Offices downtown was named the Henry J. Mroz Central Administration Offices, it was agreed that the Central Administrative Offices would always carry his name. The Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on School Building Naming also thought that it should remain carrying the name of Edith Nourse Rogers. A motion was made by Connie A. Martin; seconded by James D. Leahy and unanimously approved that the new central administration building carry both names.

**For the record and clarification**, Edith Nourse Rogers was born in Lowell, Massachusetts in 1925. She was an American social welfare volunteer and politician who was one of the

first women to serve in the United States Congress; the first elected from Massachusetts. To date she is the longest serving Congresswoman, and in her 35 years in the House of Representatives, she was a powerful voice for veterans. She sponsored seminal legislation, including the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the G. I. Bill, which provided educational and financial benefits for soldiers returning home from World War II.

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on School Building Naming to name the former Rogers Middle School located at 43 Highland Street in Lowell to:

Lowell Public Schools  
Henry J. Mroz Central Administration Offices  
Edith Nourse Rogers School

seconded by Mr. Leary. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on School Building Naming report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Mr. Leahy. APPROVED

2. Joint Curriculum & Lowell High School Subcommittees - Report and Approval of the Minutes of October 5, 2009, by Connie A. Martin Curriculum Subcommittee Chair/Jacqueline A. Doherty, Lowell High School Subcommittee Chair

Ms. Martin gave a detailed analysis of the topics discussed, namely:

- New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC)
- Massachusetts Curriculum and Assessment Standards (MCAS) results
- Health Curriculum Update
- Lowell High School Video Use Policy
- Cambodian Internship

Ms. Doherty stated that Headmaster Samaras announced that there was going to be a meeting on prescription drugs on October 28<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 8 pm at Lowell High School. This is an important meeting and she made a motion at her Lowell High School Subcommittee meeting to change the starting time of the regularly scheduled School Committee meeting of October 28<sup>th</sup> to 8:00 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Martin and unanimously approved.

Ms. Doherty moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Lowell High School Subcommittee and that the Committee as a Whole approve changing the starting time of the October 28<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting to 8:00 pm; seconded by Mr. Leary. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Ms. Faticanti moved:

To accept the Joint Curriculum & Lowell High School Subcommittees report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Mr. Conway. APPROVED

3. Lowell High School Subcommittee - Report and Approval of the Minutes of October 5, 2009, by Jacqueline A. Doherty, Chair

Ms. Doherty gave a detailed analysis of topics discussed, which were:

- Schedule and Number in Classes
  - Some classes have 30 students or more
- Lowell High School Substitute Scheduler

Ms. Doherty stated that Headmaster Samaras has requested future funding of the Lowell High School Substitute Scheduler. Currently the position is being filled by a very capable, skilled individual. Ms. Faticanti made a motion to fund the Lowell High School Substitute Scheduler position. It was seconded by Mr. Conway and unanimously approved.

Mr. Conway moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, Headmaster Samaras, and the Lowell High School Subcommittee, and that the Committee as a Whole approve the funding for the Lowell High School Substitute Scheduler; seconded by Mr. Leary. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

- Scholarship Report of Class of 2009
- Lowell High School Updates:
  - Educational Proficiency Plans
  - PSAT administration
  - Tutoring at Lowell High School

Mr. Leahy stated that another meeting needed to be scheduled with the Headmaster in order to do much more at Lowell High School. Without any additional money different ways need to be discussed to help these students. There needs to be a way to come up with class offerings utilizing computer labs for online courses and more electives to engage students. There are presently 32 students in a math class. Ten percent of the classes at Lowell High School have 30 or more students in them. There has been a lot of money and staff taken out of Lowell High School. The MCAS showed excellent results last year, but there is a reduction of 25 full-time Lowell High School teachers this year.

Mayor Caulfield stated that 8 million dollars has been cut out of the school department budget.

After discussion, Mr. Leahy moved:

To accept the Lowell High School Subcommittee Report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Mr. Leary. APPROVED

## **REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, presented and recommended approval of the following reports:

1. Summary of District Priorities for Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Memorandum of Understanding

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that there are five goals:

- Ongoing evaluation
- Provide Professional Development
- Perfect coaching model
- Improve access to data
- Expand learning time at targeted Commonwealth Priority Schools

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Ms. Faticanti. APPROVED

2. Personnel Report - Pursuant to Chapter 71 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education's Reform Act of 1993, the Personnel Office hereby informs the Committee of the retirements, resignations, and new hires since the last regular School Committee meeting of September 16, 2009.

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Ms. Faticanti. APPROVED

3. List of Eligible Teachers

Ms. Faticanti moved:

To accept the report as a report of progress and to place on file; seconded by Ms. Doherty.  
**APPROVED**

Ms. Faticanti moved:

For a **Suspension of the Rules** in order to bring a document on the floor regarding Headmaster search; seconded by Ms. Martin. **Suspension APPROVED**

Ms. Faticanti stated that the Superintendent put a document in the Committee's packet regarding the Headmaster search at her request.

Mayor Caulfield stated that he did not hear that Headmaster Samaras wanted to retire. Any employee intending on retiring has to notify the Retirement Board. He asked the Superintendent if she received anything from Headmaster Samaras informing her of his retirement.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that Headmaster Samaras has not indicated to her that he wants to retire.

Ms. Faticanti stated that last year Headmaster Samaras asked for a one-year extension which will run out in June. She has not heard that he didn't intend to retire. She didn't want to push him out the door, but his job will be hard to fill and why the Committee should start the search.

Mr. Leahy stated that out of respect for both parties the Committee really needs to know the Headmaster's intent, so we can plan ahead.

Mayor Caulfield stated that Headmaster Samaras has a very capable, knowledgeable staff at Lowell High School. He wasn't going to support a search until notification of the Headmaster's retirement was received.

Mr. Conway moved:

To delay reviewing the document entitled, Headmaster Search; seconded by Ms. Martin.  
**Delay APPROVED**

## **CONVENTION/CONFERENCE REQUESTS**

The Superintendent presented and recommended approval of the following convention/conference requests:

1. Gail Thursby, Greenhalge School Speech and Language Specialist to attend a workshop entitled: *Speech-Language Development & Early Identification & Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders with the Young Child* in Portsmouth, NH on October 16<sup>th</sup>. There are no costs to the School Department budget and no substitute teacher is needed.

2. Lowell High School teacher Dr. Julio De Carvalho to participate on a *New England Association of Schools & Colleges Visiting Team* from Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 in Boston, MA. The cost of \$100 a day for three days for a substitute teacher will be paid by the LHS Individual School funds.
3. Overnight Athletic Request: LHS Track Coaches Philip Maia and Patrick Swett to travel to the *Indoor Track & Field Relays at Dartmouth College* in Hanover, New Hampshire on January 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010. There is no cost to the School Department Budget and no substitute teacher is needed.

Ms. Faticanti moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve all three convention/conference requests; seconded by Mr. Conway. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

## COMMUNICATIONS

1. Liquor License Request for October 21, 2009 from 6 to 9pm at the Cyrus W. Irish Auditorium of Lowell High School for the *Distinguished Alumni Awards Program*

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve; seconded by Mr. Leary. On roll call Ms. Faticanti voted present. All other members voted in the affirmative. Six years; one present. APPROVED

2. Election of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees Official Voting Delegate

Ms. Martin moved:

To elect Jacqueline A. Doherty as the Voting Delegate to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) annual business meeting; seconded by Ms. Faticanti. Unanimously approved on roll call. Jacqueline A. Doherty ELECTED Voting Delegate

Ms. Martin moved:

To elect David J. Conway as the Alternate Voting Delegate to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) annual business meeting; seconded by Ms. Faticanti. Unanimously approved on roll call. David J. Conway ELECTED Alternative Voting Delegate

3. House Bill 481

Ms. Doherty asked the Committee to look at page 3, Proposed Amendment to Resolution 2:  
Special Education Student Assignments

Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) urges the repeal of regulations and advisories of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that allow external agencies to impose student assignments to private special education programs with the burden of their related costs put upon school districts.

Ms. Doherty stated that this was from the Lowell School Committee. The House now has to vote on this bill.

After discussion, Ms. Faticanti moved:

To accept the communication and to place on file; seconded by Ms. Doherty. APPROVED

4. Thank you note from the Family of Mary Ann Crowe  
Ms. Faticanti moved:

To accept the communication and to place on file; seconded by Mr. Conway. APPROVED

**ADJOURNMENT** – Ms. Doherty moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Martin. This meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent and  
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee

CAS: jms

Enclosures