

January 9, 2003

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Rossetti called a Long Range Planning Committee of the Whole Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Auditorium at the East Somerville Community School, at 6:34 p.m., for a Phase II Meeting with New England School Development Council (NESDEC).

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present were Ms. Cardoso, Ms. Harris, Mayor Gay (arrived 6:53 p.m.), Ms. Bauer, Mr. Sullivan, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Murray and Ms. Rossetti.

Alderman O'Donovan was absent.

Also present were Dr. Albert F. Argenziano, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Marie B. Ferrari, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, Dr. Steven F. Jenkins, District Administrator for Student Services and 136 members of the audience. Members from New England School Development Council present were Dr. Donald G. Kennedy, Team Leader, Ms. Ellen W. Kelly and Dr. Lawrence M. Hines, Staff Associates.

**III. Phase II Meeting with New England School Development Council (NESDEC).**

Dr. Argenziano, Superintendent of Schools welcomed the community to this evening's meeting. He informed the audience the purpose of this meeting was for New England School Development Council (NESDEC) to provide the Somerville School Committee and the community with their mid point report on their comprehensive study of the school district. After hearing input from the community members and gathering information from tonight's meeting, a final report will be completed on January 24, 2003. Dr. Argenziano introduced Dr. Donald Kennedy, Team Leader, and Dr. Lawrence Hines and Ms. Ellen Kelley, who were the two people who visited all of our elementary schools.

Dr. Argenziano then turned the meeting over to Chairman Rossetti who called the meeting to order and on behalf of the school committee welcomed everyone. Ms. Rossetti then invited Dr. Kennedy to begin his presentation. Dr. Kennedy thanked everyone for the opportunity to be here this evening and explained he was going to give a power point presentation of the Somerville Public Schools, K – 8 Long Range Facilities Planning. He briefly explained, and in some instances gave a detailed account of each table of information in the handout that was provided to members of the audience. Following his presentation, Ms. Kelley and Dr. Hines gave a report outlining the elementary school facilities for each elementary school, which included:

- Facility Profiles: Grades
- Current Enrollment
- Year Built
- Site Acreage
- Square Footage
- # of K Classrooms
- # of Interchangeable Classrooms
- Current Operating Capacity
- Planned Operating Capacity

**III. Phase II Meeting with New England School Development Council (cont.)**

- School Strengths
- School Deficiencies

When done with their reports, Dr. Kennedy once again addressed the audience. He talked about the preliminary findings, stating that the Somerville Schools are a well-kept urban education “secret” with a high quality of education, small class size and program options; properly managed available resources, day-to-day and long-range; high value is placed on neighborhood schools and partnership with parents and community.

He also talked about the statement of the problem and the options available. He explained 1) the goal of equal education opportunity for all students is limited by the age, design, or condition of certain school facilities, affecting programs which can be offered and 2) a comprehensive long-range plan is needed to make best use of available resources, funding and space. Listed below are four options offered in this mid point report.

Option 1

- Construct a (new) K-8 Brown School as planned in 1997 (approx. \$20M)
- Unidos Two-Way Bilingual Program at Powder House Community School or Lincoln Park Community School
- Edgerly “swing” space to house students (\$400,000)
- Choice program remains at Healey (and add second site?)
- Continue to encourage and support options, in partnership with parents, community and businesses

Option 2

- Construct (new) Cummings School as planned in 1997 (approx. \$20M)
- Plus Option 1 features

Option 3

- Continue Brown and Cummings (Status Quo), until PK-8 enrollment declines, and schools are not needed
- Unidos Two-Way Bilingual Program at Powder House Community School

Option 4

- Move Brown program to nearby schools(s) (Powder House?)...reassign building to other use
- Move Cummings program to nearby schools(s) (Winter Hill? Lincoln Park? JFK?)...reassign building to other use
- Unidos Two-Way Bilingual Program at Edgerly School

Dr. Kennedy then asked the audience for their input, and welcomed any questions, comments and ideas, as this will help in preparing NESDEC’s final report to be complete by January 24<sup>th</sup>. Comment sheets were also provided for any one in the community who would like to share their ideas and concerns with the NESDEC Team. This form can be returned to your child’s school or the superintendent’s office. You can also email comments to NESDEC: [dkennedy@nesdec.org](mailto:dkennedy@nesdec.org).

Twenty-nine members of the community addressed Dr. Kennedy and his associates.

**III. Phase II Meeting with New England School Development Council (cont.)**

In closing, Ms. Rossetti thanked the public for attending this evening's meeting. She assured the community that school committee members as well as the NESDEC Team listened very closely to the comments, questions, and concerns brought here tonight and appreciate this input from the audience.

Dr. Argenziano announced he will be sending additional copies of the NESDEC mid point reports, presented here tonight, to the school buildings along with suggestions sheets for those who may be interested. He also publicly thanked Dr. Kennedy, Ms. Kelley and Dr. Hines for their time this evening and for their presentation.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m. by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano  
Secretary