

**ANDOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
WORKSHOP  
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2014  
School Committee Room – School Administration Building**

**Members in Attendance:** Chair Annie Gilbert, Vice Chair Paula Colby-Clements via teleconference, Joel Blumstein, David Birnbach

**Others in Attendance:** Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendents – Dr. Nancy Duclos, and Paul Szymanski, plus Lyle Kirtman from Future Management Associates.

**I. Regular Meeting**

**A. Call to Order**

Chairman Annie Gilbert called the SC Workshop to order at 8:30AM and began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Gilbert gave the Committee an overview of what the workshop would be about – first starting with guest, Lyle Kirtman, who was here to give us feedback on the SC's and LT Meyers' Briggs and Values Inventories taken over the last few months. She felt that it would be good for the Committee members to see what those results were at this time and so Mr. Kirtman was given the floor.

Mr. Kirtman told the Board that he thought they had a good mix of styles. He explained to the Committee some of their individual results vs. the team results and what the implications were to roles and leadership styles.

At this point, a few representatives from SEPAC requested to speak. Present for the Special Education Parent Advisory Council were Sheena Stack, Jeanne Teichert and Amy Stabile. Ms. Gilbert responded that at the end of the workshop, if there was any time, then they would be given the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Kirtman continued with his presentation describing that the Committee had a good balance just good enough to work well among the members. He explained further what those balances indicated before he finished his presentation.

Next, Dr. McGrath brought the Committee an update on the Programs/Space research at Andover High School and with the Shawsheen Preschool. Dr. McGrath told the Committee that she, Paul Szymanski, Amy Reese, and Moira O'Brien had sat down with Steve Ives, the YMCA CEO to discuss the possibility of coordinating an effort with the Y regarding the preschool program and also a possibility of looking at their Outdoor Educational Opportunities. More to follow, but Mr. Ives promised to get back to our Team with more information and possible meetings to follow up on this first meeting. At the high school, the next space issues meeting would be on January 22, 2015 where a discussion on what was already talked about at the November workshop would be discussed more.

At this point in the workshop, all the Principals were invited to join the Committee so that they could share their current practices occurring in the schools in the context of 4Cs, the APS Instructional Philosophy, Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan so student learning/instruction is rooted in the tenets of project-based learning (PBL). Various principals, beginning with the Elementary Principals – Dr. Colleen McBride talked about promoting critical thinking skills, encouraging different approaches, asking students to explain their thinking, and use of multi-media instruction. Ms. Liz Roos talked about the focus on student learning, giving students a voice and interest-based choosing topic and presentations.

Mr. Birnbach asked the principals what they were doing to reduce the variability between classrooms and schools within the grades and how they are exposing that to the parents. Mr. Forsman responded that there are scheduled common learning planning times with teachers once a week, lots of hours in teamwork so that there is consistency to share good practices between classrooms and grade levels. Ms. Lathrop spoke of the good work that Ms. Jennifer Barresi has done so far at the elementary level. Ms. Wilson and Mr. Bucco spoke for the Middle School level saying that they worked thru some of these issues at early release day workshops and always looking for way to improve on being consistent throughout the system.

Mr. Birnbach asked the Principals if there was something that could be done at the policy level to help them out – perhaps by scheduling, etc. Ms. Duclos added that Early Release Days allow teachers to come together so we need more of that time to create common ways to instruct. She said that in some other districts, some have a student development day every week or every day before school begins.

Next steps is to continue the dialogue started here at the workshop, on how to reduce the variability, on how to share best practices and how to use technology to accelerate this process. Ms. Gilbert summarized that the Committee had learned a lot thru today's dialogue and that it was good to have this discussion as the high school schedule was about to be looked at for next year.

Towards the end of the meeting, a motion was made for the high school library media center renovations.

Annie Gilbert moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve SCH-7 "AHS Library-Media Center Renovations" and the requisite Warrant Article supporting the CIP request. The motion was seconded by Joel Blumstein and voted 4-0-0 to approve.

The Chair asked if there were any comments by the public at that time, as she had stated early on in the Workshop, this would be the opportunity to open the floor. There were no audience members from the community in the SC Room at this time, so there was no public feedback.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:30AM.

Respectfully,  
Alison Phelan, Committee Recorder