

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of September 2, 2010
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chair Dennis Forgue, Annie Gilbert, Richard J. Collins, David Birnbach and Paula Colby-Clements

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Dr. Susan M. Nicholson, Assistant Superintendent, AHS Liaison, Jared Rosen

I. Executive Session

Chairman Forgue opened the meeting at 6:30 P.M. in the School Committee Room in the School Administration Building. On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements with a second by Richard Collins it was voted 4-0 to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy relative to collective bargaining with the AEA. Roll Call vote: D. Forgue-Y, R. Collins-Y, D. Birnbach-Y, and P. Colby-Clemens-Y. Annie Gilbert arrived after the opening of the meeting. At 7:05 P.M. on a motion duly made and seconded it was unanimously voted to return to Open Session and not to return to Executive Session. Roll Call vote: D. Forgue-Y, R. Collins-Y, D. Birnbach-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, and P. Colby=Clemens-Y.

II. Regular Meeting

Call to Order

At 7:10 P.M. Chairman Forgue called the Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order. Chairman Forgue welcomed Dr. McGrath to her first publicly televised School Committee Meeting.

Mr. Forgue gave a summary of the FY10 Budget which was anticipated to have a \$650,000 deficit. A warrant article was approved at the FY-10 Town Meeting to provide supplemental funds to cover the deficit with unused funds to be returned to the Town. Mr. Forgue is pleased to announce that \$384,722.98 was returned to the Town due to reductions in special education anticipated expenses, transportation contracts, and circuit breaker funds received.

Opening Ceremonies

Mr. Collins asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by West Elementary students (Grade 5) Trent Tully, and Grace O'Hara, and Wood Hill Middle (Grade 7) student Emily O'Hara. Mr. Collins presented the students with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the School Committee.

Recognition

Dr. McGrath introduced and welcomed Jared Rosen at senior at AHS who will be the AHS Liaison at the School Committee meetings.

School Opening

Dr. McGrath recognized the school custodians, secretaries, food services employees, and the Leadership Team who were instrumental in the preparations for opening day on September 1st. The teachers attended two days of professional development prior to the students returning. All staff was required to attend an overview of the new Anti-Bullying Laws provided by school counsel.

Dr. McGrath recognized and congratulated twenty teachers who achieved professional status within the system this year. She also formally recognized the teachers at the opening day ceremonies.

Plant and Facilities Interim Director Joe Piantedosi provided an annual tour of the school buildings on August 29th and 30th which Dr. McGrath, David Birnbach and Richard Collins attended. Improvements to the school buildings over the summer were pointed out by Mr. Piantedosi, as well as areas that require future attention. Dr. McGrath gave the School Committee a list of school projects accomplished. She also thanked Cyndi Verda-Abrahams for coordinating the tour and recognized the Plant and Facilities staff and school custodians for the plethora of work completed.

D. Education

Summer Curriculum Projects

Dr. Nicholson reported on the summer curriculum projects teachers participated in over the summer. A list of the projects was provided to the School Committee members. Dr. Nicholson will meet with the Program Advisors at AHS and teachers who worked on specific projects to review the work accomplished.

Dr. Nicholson also reported that staff worked on the elementary electronic progress report this summer with work to continue throughout the new school year. Two surveys were distributed to teachers and parents last year and every question and concern of teachers responded to. They are currently working on responses of questions/concerns submitted by parents and results will be available on the school website. Teachers will be working to unpack the performance indicators this year to provide an enhanced understanding of what they mean for parents and teachers.

AHS Handbook

Principal Jonathan Harris announced that AHS opened the new school year with 1,824 students enrolled as of September 1st. He also stated that 730 AP exams were given at the end of the 2009-2010 school year compared to the prior year in which 650 AP exams were taken. Results showed 84% of the student scores were 3 or higher for the exams taken in 2010. Mr. Harris said Boston Magazine has listed AHS as the 27th best high school in the State. The magazine also profiles AHS teacher Brian Shea.

Assistant Principal Marilyn Jordan reviewed the revisions to the AHS Handbook as provided to the School Committee. She pointed out minor word changes made to some of the items listed in the handbook. The Anti-bullying policy will be linked on-line to the District Plan. The Memorandum of Understanding, which is a coordinated effort for safety issues with the District Attorney's Office and local Police, although not provided in word form is also linked on-line. Parents and students can electronically sign the handbook agreement form.

On a motion by Annie Gilbert with a second by Paula Colby-Clements it was unanimously voted to approve the AHS Student Handbook with revisions noted for 2010-2011.

David Birnbach shared a request received from a parent to excuse students from being tardy if they have a first period study and participated in a school event the evening before. Students would also present a note from parents. The Committee and Administrators discussed the request noting that protocol would be have the request vetted through School Improvement Councils first, and then brought forward to the School Committee for approval.

FY 2011 first day student enrollment report

Dr. McGrath said enrollments will be updated weekly with the official enrollment numbers provided to the DESE on October 1st. A chart outlining the enrollment as of September 1, 2010 was provided. To date, there are 2,869 elementary students, 1,521 Middle School students, and 1,824 AHS Students enrolled for a grand total of 6,214 students; an increase of 18 students from last year. There are 135.5 teachers in the system. AHS is over-capacity and due to reductions in staff, resulting in several classes with 29-33 students. Dr. McGrath will provide a full class size report to the School Committee when the official October 1st numbers are determined.

E. Old Business

Placement – Policy Amendment

Chairman Forgue explained the amendment approved for the Policy for Attendance within Prescribed School Attendance Areas at the August 17th School Committee Meeting. A new section was added to address over/under enrollment in the kindergarten classes across the District. Kindergarten students who registered after June 1st could be assigned to a kindergarten class at another elementary school if their home school kindergarten class(s) were over-enrolled.

Dr. McGrath is requesting the language in the Policy be amended again to include all new K-5 students who register after June 1st. The school system will provide transportation for students assigned to a school outside of their home school district for one year. If parents choose to keep their child(ren) at the school assigned after one year, they would be responsible for transportation.

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements, with a second by Richard Collins it was unanimously voted to approve the amendment to the Policy - for Attendance within Prescribed School Attendance Areas as presented.

F. New Business

Bancroft School Update

Annie Gilbert provided an update of the School Building Committee's activities over the summer. The three major areas the SBC has been working on include: interior schematic, site circulation and access, elevation and building materials. The building will be more contemporary with a lot of "green" features. An overall schematic will be submitted to MSBA by October 1st. The SBC would like to schedule a Tri-board Meeting with the architects to present an overview of where the project stands to date. School Building Committee member Tom Deso said the Green Advisory Group is hosting an event on October 8th at Old Town Hall and have asked the SBC to present information on the Bancroft School project.

Staffing Update

A Summary of Reductions and Reinstatement of Positions relative to the FY-11 Budget was provided to the School Committee members. The chart shows positions slated for reduction in May and positions reinstated from turn-over savings (retirements and leaves of absence). At AHS 6.40 positions were slated for reduction at a cost savings of \$509,687; 2.40 positions were reinstated at a cost of \$100,346 leaving a net reduction of 4 positions at AHS. Two teachers agreed to teach an additional section at AHS. There was also a reduction in stipends for extra-curricular activities at AHS in the amount of \$14,612, which the AHS PAC has agreed to cover. Five positions were slated for reduction at the elementary level at a savings of \$203,755; of that 4 positions were reinstated at a cost of \$163,004.

In total, 6.4 positions were reinstated across the district using revenue made available through the high number of turn-overs. Many of those on leave of absence will return in the 2011-2012 school year providing relief for the school budget this year, but increasing the school budget upon their return.

Interim School Business Administrator

Chairman Forgue provided the history of the School Business Administrator position, which has been filled by Bernie Tuttle as interim, and the recruiting efforts made to date.

Dr. McGrath talked about the available options and ideas pursued by Human Resources Director Candace Hall in the process to find an interim candidate. At this time, Dr. McGrath is recommending the appointment of Peter DeRoeve as the Interim School Business Manager. Dr. McGrath and the Interview Committee have met with Mr. DeRoeve and discussed his qualifications. The search for a permanent hire will formally begin in December.

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and a second by Annie Gilbert it was unanimously voted to approve the appointment of Peter D. DeRoeve as Ad Interim School Business Administrator for the 2010-2011 School Year effective October 1, 2010 at a per diem rate not to exceed \$625.00 and contingent upon receiving a critical shortage waiver from the DESE.

G. Citizen Input

Bob Willard, 76 Tewksbury Street said that although the SBC has done a great job with the Bancroft School Project, he is concerned about the critical funding to be approved by the Town. He urges the School Committee to have a campaign to promote approval of the funding specifically highlighting the solid support of the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

Tom Deso said having MSBA support is an important factor as they reimburse the Town at 40% as the project progresses. Annie Gilbert remarked that Shawsheen School is slated to come off-line resulting in significant savings.

H. Consent Agenda

Warrants: Dr. McGrath said the warrants are in order.
Minutes: Regular Minutes of August 17, 2010

On a motion by Richard Collins with a second by Paula Colby-Clements, it was voted 4-0-1 to approve the Consent Agenda items. Annie Gilbert abstained from voting on the Minutes as she was not present at the meeting of August 17th.

I. Adjournment

On a motion by Richard Collins with a second by Paula Colby-Clements, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the Regular Session of the School Committee at 9:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recorder

Documents attached:

School Project Accomplishments 2010
AHS 2010-2011 Handbook Revisions
2010 Summer Curriculum Project List
Enrollment Chart as of 9/1/2010
Summary of Staff
Amendment to Attendance Policy