

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of September 15, 2011
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chairwoman Annie Gilbert, Paula Colby-Clements, Richard Collins, Dennis Forgue, David Birnbach

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Nancy Duclos, Paul Szymanski

I. **Executive Session** At 6:10 P.M. the School Committee voted to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters relative to Collective Bargaining and to return to Open Session. The Executive Session was adjourned at 6:57 P.M. and the School Committee moved to Open Session.

II. **Regular Meeting**

A. **Call to Order**

The Regular Meeting of the School Committee was opened at 7:05 P.M. by Chairwoman Gilbert.

B. **Opening Ceremonies**

Mr. Collins asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by West Elementary Students (Grade 5), Henry Schmidle, Tripp Needham, Grace Lyons, and Arianna Turner. On behalf of the School Committee Mr. Collins presented the students with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Agenda Amendments:

Annie Gilbert reported that the item under New Business in tonight's agenda will be tabled with no action take at this time. She also stated that AHS teachers Brian Shea and Josephine Golden have voluntarily withdrawn from chaperoning the AHS trip to London in April 2012. An investigation into allegations of a previous field trip to Germany in 2008 has been conducted and the School Committee is confident the defendants will be vindicated once all facts are revealed. The School Committee and School Department recognizes Mr. Shea's and Ms. Golden's time and effort put into preparations for the April trip and commends and supports them on their decision to withdraw.

C. **Recognition**

Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos invited community members, parents, and students to submit a letter of interest to participate in the Foreign Language Task Force. The first meeting will be held on October 4th at 4:00 P.M. The Task Force will look at the role of Foreign Language and its importance on students in our Global Society. She also reported that the Fine Arts Task Force is up and running with a public forum scheduled for Monday, September 19th at AHS in the cafeteria from 7:00-8:00 P.M.

Dennis Forgue said the Andover Soccer Association will give a presentation on playing fields at a future meeting.

D. **Citizen Input**

Bob Pokress, 3 Cherrywood Circle, inquired if the School Department has been approached by the Andover Youth Foundation to utilize the Andover School facilities for a Youth Center, stating the proposed Youth Center building specifications are similar to existing Andover School facilities. In an effort to gain more efficiencies, he suggests funds be applied to existing programs and not replicated.

Annie Gilbert said a number of school buildings are currently being used to support Youth Services Programs but to her knowledge, they have not been formally approached about additional housing.

Paul Szymanski added that an informal discussion was held to discuss use of school buildings during vacation periods for town and school programs. Superintendent McGrath said they are looking at the current policies to determine to what extent the buildings are being used and what, if any, changes can be made. Mr. Szymanski said there are many factors to consider that conflict with scheduling programs in the schools but discussions will be undertaken to review the situation.

Paula Parker, a teacher at Doherty Middle School, spoke on behalf of the Andover Teacher's Association and the anxiety teachers are feeling over the unsettled contract negotiations. She requests the School Committee get on with the business of negotiating a fair contract. Daphne Winders, a Sanborn School teacher, is concerned with the proposed reduction in planning time for elementary teachers and the effect it will have on student learning and achievement. Kate Pina, AHS teacher and a resident of Andover, formally invited School Committee members to spend a whole day with a teacher to get a realistic view of what it means to be a teacher in Andover.

David Birnbach thanked the teachers for their dedication to students and said dialogues with the AEA and School Committee are on-going; they are hopeful that they moving in the right direction and looks forward to a resolution.

E. Education

1. 2011-2014 Strategic Plan (Draft)

Superintendent McGrath presented a draft of the Strategic Plan for the Andover School System. She recognized the many participants for their work on this project that started in July 2009. The Strategic Plan sets a long-term direction for the advancement of the school system, providing accountability, stimulus for change, a framework and the foundation for operational planning. Components of the Strategic Plan include an analysis of existing and future situations, internal and external analysis, mission, vision, and core values. It also focuses on strategic areas of focus, goals, and strategies. The five goals listed under the Strategic Area of Focus include: 1) High academic achievement for all, 2) blended learning and technology, 3) teaching and leading, 4) communication, planning, and partnerships, and 5) educational funding, financial management, and infrastructure. A draft of the Strategic Plan will be posted on the Andover Public School website for viewing with information and a survey for residents. The Strategic Plan Advisory Committee will meet on October 7th and the School Committee will vote on the Plan at their October 20th meeting. A presentation of the Strategic Plan will be given to the members of the Triboard (Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee) along with a financial plan.

AEA President, Kerry Costello stated the Andover Teachers Association will support the Plan to the degree they can, but there are a lot of details to the Strategic Plan, the goals are ambitious and costly, and there is concern on how it will be funded.

F. Old Business

1. Policy: Use of Parent Notification (Alert Now) and Subscriber (Notify Me) Systems

Superintendent McGrath noted that this is the second reading for this policy.

AEA President Kerry Costello said the AEA did have some concerns with the policy, but have again reviewed the language in the policy and have no objections.

F. Old Business (Cont'd)

1. Policy: Use of Parent Notification (Alert Now) and Subscriber (Notify Me) Systems

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements motioned the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Policy entitled "Use of Parent Notification ("Alert Now") and Subscriber System (Notify Me) as presented. The motion was seconded by Dennis Forgue and unanimously approved.

G. New Business

1. Bancroft Property Tabled

H. Consent Agenda

1. Warrants - Assistant Superintendent Szymanski stated the Warrants are in order.

Motion: Dennis Forgue motioned the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Warrants as presented. The motion was seconded by Paula Colby-Clements and unanimously approved.

I. Adjournment

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Dick Collins, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo

Recorder

Documents: 2011-2014 Strategic Plan – Draft
Policy: Use of Parent Notification and Subscriber Systems