

Andover Public Schools

Andover, Massachusetts

School Committee Meeting

Minutes of April 15, 2009

Type of Meeting: **Meeting with Shawsheen School PTO**

Meeting Facilitator: Debra Silberstein, Chair

School Committee Members: Dennis Fogue, Annie Gilbert, Dick Collins

Location: Shawsheen School

Attendees: Claudia Bach, Mark Johnson (Chair, Building Committee), Joe Reilly (Building Committee), Laura Gregory, PTO co-President, Sarah Pendelton, PTO co-President, Moira O'Brien, Principal, Shawsheen School, Francine Goldstein, Principal Bancroft School, various parents and Shawsheen teachers.

This meeting was scheduled among members of the School Committee, Building Committee and the Shawsheen PTO to discuss first the potential of including Shawsheen School in the Bancroft School feasibility study and secondly, the FY09 and FY10 budget situation.

Laura Gregory, PTO co-President opened the meeting inviting all attendees to introduce themselves. Mark Johnson, Chair, Building Committee then provided a review of the Shawsheen and Bancroft building issues and current question facing the School Committee.

Summary- In 2007, following a detailed review of all school buildings by the previous School Facilities Task Force(SFTF) a recommendation was made to the School Committee that a "Statement of Interest" form be submitted to the Mass. School Building Association (MSBA) requesting that Bancroft, Shawsheen and the High School be considered for state funds for replacement and or renovation to address issues of overcrowding, inadequate educational space, lack of building code compliance, significant structural deficiencies and high maintenance costs. When requested by the MSBA to select one building as a priority, the School Committee and School Facilities Task Force identified Bancroft School. This was due to significant structural deficiencies and inadequate educational space.

As part of the new MSBA process, a Building Committee was appointed by the Town Manager to pursue the prospects of renovating or replacing Bancroft in partnership with MSBA. The next phase is a feasibility study that would study all aspects pertaining to renovating or replacing Bancroft School including location, student capacity, design and related issues. As part of this process the MSBA agreed to consider a request to include Shawsheen School as part of the feasibility study. The School Committee must decide whether or not to request that Shawsheen School be included in the Bancroft feasibility study so that the appropriate level of funding can be voted upon at Town Meeting.

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Successful inclusion of Shawsheen in the Bancroft project would result in a new school building being build with the capacity to shift all Shawsheen Students to the new Bancroft building. No decisions have been made regarding the educational configuration of the building or maintaining for the preK-2 format currently at Shawsheen.

A lively discussion ensued with many questions from parents and responses from the Building Committee, School Committee and Dr. Bach. Although parents expressed a strong opinion about maintaining the pre-K to grade 2 format and the culture of the Shawsheen community, there was clear merit seen in the opportunity to include Shawsheen in the Bancroft project and resolve to the significant school building issues in one project.

Budget Discussion:

Dr. Bach provided a brief summary of the budget situation outlining the decrease in state revenues, resulting decrease in local funding from the state, and the currently estimated \$3.2 million FY10 school department deficit. There were a number of question regarding the Superintendent's proposed budget and planned reduction in physical education, health education and classroom assistants. Dennis Fogue and Annie Gilbert reported on a visit this week to Beacon Hill and meeting with the town's state senator and representatives. Again, it was reported that the state revenues continue to decline in unprecedented numbers and the current economic climate is expected to continue for the next several years.

Parents expressed concern regarding the projected reduction in services to the pre-K and elementary students.

9:30 Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Dennis Fogue, Secretary

