

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of June 27, 2013
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chairman Dennis Forgue, Annie Gilbert, Paula Colby-Clements, and Barbara L'Italien. David Birnbach was teleconferenced in for the Field Trip Request under New Business.

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent Finance and Administration

I Executive Session

Chairman Forgue called the meeting to order at 6:15 P.M. On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Annie Gilbert it was voted 3-0 to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy relative to collective bargaining matters and at 6:45 P.M. on a motion by Annie Gilbert and seconded by Paula Colby-Clements it was voted 3-0 to adjourn from Executive Session to return to Open Session not to return to Executive Session.

II. Open Session - Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Salute to the Flag

Chairman Forgue reconvened the meeting of the School Committee at 7:00 P.M. Chairman Forgue called for a Moment of Silence followed by a salute to the flag led by Jack Clements, a student at Bancroft School.

B. Recognition/Communications

1. APS Retiring Teachers and Staff

Superintendent McGrath welcomed and congratulated all staff retiring from the Andover Public Schools this year. Each retiree was personally recognized by their school principal and presented a gift of a glass bowl with an inscription by Leah Becks by Superintendent McGrath on behalf of the Andover Public Schools in celebration of their years of service. The retirees include: Mary Kierstead, Jane Sonntag, Ginny Champagne, Anne Wilde, Maureen Morrison, Tom Delaney, Barbara Munroe, Betsy Wish, Charles Croteau, Susan Schane, Jeanne Normandy, Nancy Daigle, Donna Sunderland, Lori Bellingreri, Ginny Rossini, and Kathy Gilmore. On behalf of the Andover School Committee, Dennis Forgue thanked the retirees and wished them well in their future endeavors.

Dr. McGrath welcomed and congratulated AHS ELA Program Advisor Pat Whalen on being selected as the new Grade 6-12 English Language Arts Curriculum Advisor and introduced and welcomed Beth Delforge who has been selected as the new K-12 Fine Arts Curriculum Advisor.

Dennis Forgue recognized all of the Grade 5 students moving onto middle school, the Grade 8 students moving onto AHS, and the 2nd grade students at Shawsheen moving forward to Grade 3 at their neighborhood schools.

C. Public Input

Brad Weeden, 5 Summer Street, spoke about his concern for the sustainability of the waste management system /recycling program at the school cafeterias which he feels is fragmented. Without a top down ethic from the School Committee or the School Superintendent and a vision in the APS Strategic Plan for sustainability and proper stewardship, he feels that we will slip back to our old ways. Currently volunteers oversee the program at the schools, but when they are not present there is no supervision and the program is not as effective. He would like to see a committee formed to draft a position on waste, water, and recycling.

D. Education

1. Update: Bancroft School Project

Annie Gilbert reported that the staff at Bancroft were given a tour of the new building and were very excited about the progress of the new school. In addition, the people in charge of furnishings met with each subgroup of each grade level at Bancroft School and looked at the layout and furnishing options available.

2. GLEC Quarterly Report

Dennis Forgue reported that GLEC successfully passed a balanced budget for FY-14 and has instituted improved accounting practices. Some fee structures were changed to become more inclusive, they are current on all audits, and will finish FY-13 in the black. Barbara L'Italien will be Andover's liaison with GLEC next year.

E. Old Business

1. AHS Student Handbook Proposed Changes- 3rd Reading

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Annie Gilbert, the Andover School Committee voted 3-0 to approve the 2013-2014 Andover High School Student Handbook as presented.

2. Appointment - School Committee Assignments for 2013-14

The Subcommittee Recommendations for the SC assignments for 2013-2014 were distributed to the members by Dennis Forgue who noted that it is a live document to be changed as needed. Liaisons to the Schools will be discussed at the next School Committee Workshop.

On a motion by Annie Gilbert and seconded by Paula Colby-Clements the Andover School Committee voted 4-0 to approve the 2013-2014 School Committee Assignments as presented.

F. New Business

1. MOA – ASC/AEA Article 28 Educator Evaluation Language

Superintendent McGrath explained that the DESE developed a new Educator Evaluation Model whose language needed to be bargained with the Andover Educators' Association (AEA). The AEA and School Administrators worked collaboratively to come to an agreement to meet our particular objectives. The Team met for five full days to discuss the language, teachers had an informational meeting a week ago, and a ballot vote was taken on June 26th which was approved by a majority vote. The new language model has to be accepted by the School Committee and then forwarded to the Commissioner of Education for

approval to be ready to implement in September.

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Barbara L'Italien, the Andover School Committee voted 4-0 to revise Article 28 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Andover School Committee and the Andover Education Association in accordance with the June 13, 2013 Memorandum of Agreement and that the School Committee authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute this Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of the School Committee.

2. AHS Field Trip Request: Show Choir – Orlando, FL., April 3-6, 2014

David Birnbach was teleconferenced into the meeting to discuss and address the field trip request for Show Choir to go to Orlando, Florida in April of 2014. Annie Gilbert and Barbara L'Italien recused themselves from voting as they both have children who are members of Show Choir.

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by David Birnbach, the Andover School Committee voted 3-0 to approve the proposed extracurricular trip for Andover High School students to Orlando, Florida on April 3-6, 2014 as presented and in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Andover School Committee Policy entitled "APS School-Sponsored Trip and Student Travel Policy". Roll call vote: David Birnbach-Y, Dennis Forgeue-Y, Paula Colby Clements-Y.

3. Superintendent Evaluation 2012-2013

Dennis Forgeue distributed and read the FY-2013 Evaluation of Superintendent McGrath based on input from School Committee members. The evaluation contained six areas of focus: Educational Leadership, Financial Management, Personnel Management, Community Relations, and Personal Qualities. A summary of remarks noted that the School Committee is pleased with Dr. McGrath's overall performance this past year and that they renewed her contract as they are confident in her ability to lead the district and raise the Andover School System to a level we all strive for. The School Committee is committed to working with Dr. McGrath and supporting her as she continues to accelerate the Strategic Plan. The full Evaluation is provided as an attachment to the Minutes.

G. Consent Agenda

1. SC Minutes: March 4 (revised), April 11, April 25, May 16, 2013 & Budget Subcommittee
2. Warrants: Payroll Warrants 13SS16 and 13SO52
Expense Warrants SW1324, and SW1323PC

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Annie Gilbert, the Andover School Committee voted to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

H. Adjournment

At 8:47 P.M. on a motion by Annie Gilbert and seconded by Paula Colby-Clements the Andover School Committee voted 3-0 to adjourn the meeting of June 27, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo

Dee DeLorenzo, Recording Secretary

Documents: Evaluation of Dr. Marinel D. McGrath,
School Committee Assignments for 2013-14

Memo regarding Substantive Modifications for AHS 2013-2014 Student Handbook
School Warrants, and Minutes as presented

**FY13 Superintended Evaluation
Andover School Committee
June 27, 2013**

Relationship with the School Committee

Dr. McGrath is very effective at relating professionally with the School Committee, both as a whole group and with individual members. We appreciate her use of Lyle Kirtman for the benefit of School Committee board development; it has added great value this year. Dr. McGrath has continually supported SC policies and advised the Committee when changes in policy are advantageous.

Suggestions: It was intended this year to bring the SC into school buildings for occasional “walk throughs” that would help us become more familiar with programs and curricula. Hopefully, this idea can come to fruition next year. We believe it would be very helpful in terms of developing the SC’s understanding of the issues/needs/operations of the school district.

Educational Leadership

One of the greatest challenges faced by Dr. McGrath is an educational culture that is heavily invested in the status quo and in some areas resistant to change. Just twelve months ago, we had no contract; little decent technology; could not pass any of the NEASC reports and were therefore at serious risk of losing high school accreditation; had temporary leadership at the high school; had a completely dysfunctional relationship with the AEA; and had a teaching faculty that was deeply embittered by a difficult two-year contract negotiation.

Scroll forward one year, and we have a high school with a dynamic new principal respected by students and parents; we have a renewed sense of school spirit at the high school, as well as a feeling of safety, predictability, and accountability in daily student life; we had a highly successful NEASC visit and an accreditation report that was remarkable, given where we’d been just months prior to the visit; we have successfully overhauled our educator evaluation process with true AEA collaboration; and we continue to roll out a district-wide technology infusion that presented a number of challenges throughout its implementation. This year we’ve also piloted the EdX program at the high school, formed a partnership with the EdLeader 21 network, and revamped our entire curriculum review process, among other initiatives.

Suggestions: The School Committee would like to see continued educational emphasis on Andover High School with particular attention to current curriculum and courses offered; identifying courses that are less relevant in today’s world; and pursue what new courses could be introduced that would better prepare our students for today’s economy.

Financial Management

Marinel has successfully built a team that works to ensure that our district operates in a fiscally responsible manner. From individual building management by the principals, to Joyce Laundre's monitoring of the SPED costs, and to Paul Szymanski's and the Business Offices' implementation of accepted accounting principles including the full implementation of the MUNIS accounting system. For the second year in a row we have seen a reduction in our OOD SPED costs as well an end of year operating surplus.

The Superintendent and School Committee have developed and are continuing to improve upon a budgeting partnership that reflects both the priorities of the School Committee, needs of the students and implementation of the strategic plan.

Suggestion: Critical budget data that allows the School Committee to set priorities could be made earlier in the budgeting process and a "budget book" with more comprehensive data would be helpful in making the School's case for funding. We realize that efforts are underway in both these area.

Personnel Management

Dr. McGrath has had two new principals on staff this year and three new assistant principals, as well as new program heads in digital learning and world languages. In addition to incorporating these new leaders, Dr. McGrath has continued to focus on developing the leadership team with regard to its individual and collective understanding of the budgeting process and its increasing ability to look at budgeting creatively, as opposed to just carrying forward programs year-to-year. We also applaud Dr. McGrath's determination to train the LT to have consistent processes and protocols in place at the building level.

Suggestion: The continued development of the leadership team at AHS is critical to improving the culture and educational experience of all students. The School Committee encourages Dr. McGrath to continue to make her work with that team a priority.

Community Relations

Dr. McGrath is effective with her outreach to groups including the PTOs and PACs, School Councils and other community organizations including various service clubs. Those parent/community leadership structures are not only critical, but had been neglected for quite some time in the past.

Suggestions: The School Committee continues to encourage Dr. McGrath to make the telling of the Andover School's story a priority and realize that there are efforts in place to increase the frequency and effectiveness of communications to the community.

Personal Qualities

Going back to the cultural challenge that exists in our district the School Committee believes that Dr. McGrath's personal integrity, fortitude, and determination have been absolutely critical to the progress the district has made in the aftermath of last year's contract negotiations.

Accountability and a "students first" approach begins at the top, and in this area we believe Dr. McGrath has shown tremendous strength and leadership by example.

One natural challenge that exists in the job of any Superintendent is that of balancing the excessive demands of the position, so it is no surprise that for Dr. McGrath this continues to be an ongoing challenge. The School Committee believes that with the continued development of the LT, Dr. McGrath should hopefully be able to "withdraw" from some of the issues she currently has to deal with on a regular basis and have more opportunity to focus her efforts on the pursuit of educational excellence for the entire district.

Summary

It should be clear, after hearing the evaluations of all areas, that the school committee is pleased with Dr. McGrath's overall performance over the past year. This year, we renewed her contract as we are confident in her ability to continue to lead our district and raise Andover's school system to a level that we all strive for. The SC is committed to working with her and supporting her as she continues to accelerate our strategic plan.