

**Andover School Committee  
Workshop  
Minutes of September 20, 2013**

**School Administration Building - School Committee Room**

**Members in Attendance:** Chair Dennis Forgue Paula Colby-Clements, Annie Gilbert, David Birnbach, and Barbara L'Italien

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

**I. Regular Meeting**

**A. Call to Order**

Chairman Forgue called the Workshop to order at 10:06 A.M.

**II. Overview**

**A. School Calendar:** The School Committee discussed proposed changes to the school calendar and ideas to communicate proposed changes to staff, parents and the community, how to gather feedback and analyzing results. The Sub-Committee members are Barbara L'Italien, David Birnbach, and Dennis Forgue. Superintendent McGrath will work in an advisory role. They talked about establishing the criteria, goals of the proposal, and various calendar options that could include; moving to a Federal Calendar, combining the February and April vacations into one vacation week in March, starting school before Labor Day, and maintaining equity in observing religious holidays. The School Committee went over the proposed timetable and work associated with each date. The goal is to present the information to school staff, the School Councils, and the community by the end of October, and then crafting survey questions. Once the survey is developed and made available for public comment, the subcommittee will gather the data and analyze responses. Going forward from there, calendar options will be developed and presented to the School Committee for a first reading, a public comment period established, and finally a second reading presented to the School Committee and voted.

**B. Redistricting:** Paul Szymanski reported the Business Office is aggressively working to gather data and planning for public input. They are working with a consultant to assist with new software to redraw district lines and project enrollments. There are operational and logistical aspects that are very important in redistricting decisions. David Birnbach said the School Committee should be involved in policy decisions only and leaving operational

matters to school personnel, and should also reinforce the School Committee's previous decision regarding Shawsheen.

**C. Facilities Update:** Paul Szymanski provided an update on the status of the addition to the High School. A request for services is to be submitted by September 24<sup>th</sup> and the Statement of Intent will be provided as an attachment. The School Committee will review the Scope of Services and submit their comments to Paul. Marinel will provide the educational scope to accompany the Scope of Services. An evaluation of the current Shawsheen School building will be conducted and options developed for consideration for the use of the building.

**D. Communications:** Paula Colby-Clements and Annie Gilbert met this week and discussed how to improve communications – how to foster better communications within APS, sharing of ideas, etc. The intern from Merrimack College is assisting with ideas to create a dialogue through use of social media as well as creating an APS app, various ways to share APS information, and how to keep it going. The sub-committee will develop recommendations to be presented to the School Committee.

**E. Budget:** The attendees talked about budget dates and meeting schedules. The Committee suggested scheduling an Executive Session of the Triboard to discuss budget dollars for collective bargaining this year. The School Committee has to decide whether or not to call for a Special Town Meeting to appropriate this year's additional Chapter 70 funds and discussed how best to use the additional funds; perhaps consider using the additional revenue for current facility needs to reduce future bonding. Paula said it should be a public decision to use one-time money for facility needs. Marinel provided ideas for various items the funds could be used towards, (i.e. to springboard ahead for items such as musical instruments, new pianos, retrofitting the schools, etc.). Paul clarified the bonding for painting which was moved to School 2 will be contracted out.

David Birnbach wants to follow-up on the Tony Wagner dialogue, with new initiatives, new priorities that could be accomplished through small dollars.

**F. Bullying:** They are anticipating an extension of the Bullying Plan due to new amendments that have been developed. The State is developing parameters for all staff which could include fingerprinting and background checks.

**G. Legislative:** Paula Colby-Clements, sub-committee member reported the items on the legislative agenda include OPEB and PARCC.

**H. Calendar Criteria:** The School Committee reviewed the draft calendar of their meetings for 2013.2014 and agreed to change the workshop dates to Fridays. The calendar will be revised and distributed after it is reviewed for any conflicting dates.

**I. Other:** Marinel reported that several members of the Administrative Team and Annie Gilbert will be traveling to Chicago on October 2<sup>nd</sup> to attend the EDLeader21 Conference.

Paul Szymanski reminded the School Committee that they directed the Assistant Superintendent of Finance last year to plan on estimating the Circuit Breaker at 70% reimbursement and reduced the operating budget approximately \$125,000 to meet the Town Manager's recommended budget for the schools. The Assistant Superintendent will amend the budget book for FY-14 to reflect those actions.

**J. Adjournment:**

At 12:10 P.M. on a motion by Annie Gilbert and seconded by Paula Colby-Clements the School Committee Workshop was adjourned.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder**