

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of September 18, 2014
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Annie Gilbert, Paula Colby-Clements, Barbara L'Italien, David Birnbach, and Joel Blumstein

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent Finance and Administration, and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, Dr. Nancy A. Duclos and AHS Liaison Jason Gross.

I. Executive Session

The School Committee on a motion duly made and seconded voted to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy relative to Impact Bargaining for the High School Schedule Proposal and to return to Open Session. Roll call: A. Gilbert-Y, B. L'Italien-Y, D. Birnbach-Y, J. Blumstein-Y. At 6:50 P.M. on a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Barbara L'Italien, the School Committee voted to adjourn from Executive Session and return to Open Session, not to return to Executive Session. Roll call: A. Gilbert-Y, B. L'Italien-Y, D. Birnbach-Y, J. Blumstein-Y.

II. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order and Opening Ceremonies

Annie Gilbert called the meeting to order at 7:07 P.M. followed by a Moment of Silence and a Salute to the Flag.

B. Recognition/Communication

Superintendent acknowledged Connor Dawson from Troop 73 who is in attendance tonight observing the meeting as part of his work on a Citizen and Community Badge. Dr. McGrath also recognized twenty-five Andover teachers who have obtained Professional Teacher Status after completing three years of rigorous evaluation.

AEA President Kerry Costello and Advisor to the Student Government at AHS introduced the new AHS School Committee Liaison, Jason Gross to the School Committee. Jason is a senior at AHS and a second year student in the Student Government Board at AHS.

C. Education

1. Presentation: Andover High School Schedule Proposal

Nancy Duclos recognized the members of the AHS Scheduling Committee (Rebecca D'Alise, Peter Hall, Minda Reidy, Renee Drueke, Steve Sanborn, Dr. Christopher Lord, and parent representative, Lucia Krinsky) and welcomed those that were able to attend tonight's presentation with her. The scheduling committee has worked with a facilitator for two years to design a new schedule that meets the needs of students, programs, teachers and the Andover Community. It has been a unique collaboration balancing values of academic success and the 4 C's.

Visits were made to other comparable school districts who have successfully undertaken a schedule design change. Members of the Scheduling Committee collected and analyzed student and teacher data to determine the most current and accurate description of the specific needs of Andover students and teachers. Collectively, they designed a schedule that focuses on and identified student needs and the development of a positive teaching and learning environment for all while being mindful of fiscal and programmatic issues.

The proposed schedule offers seven credits and an eight day rotation cycle with five periods per day. The school day will begin at 7:44 AM with two long blocks of 75-80 minutes and three short blocks of 60 minutes, with the inclusion of an H Block that provides a student personalization program during the school day, and a myriad of opportunities for scheduled professional learning time for teachers. The school day will end at 2:05

P.M. H Block provides many opportunities for students which include participation in the Youth Enrichment Seminar (YES Program), teacher/student support sessions for tiered and differentiated instruction, school wide and grade level assemblies, delivery of developmental guidance curriculum, community service, independent study and senior exhibitions, as well as the flexibility to extended teaching and learning. As well, the schedule provides time for teachers to work collaboratively on development of interdisciplinary units and courses, project-based learning opportunities, development of new strategies, and analyzing assessment data. Samples of student schedules for grades 9-12 were explained. Transition plan will be designed for students. The schedule will meet the requirements of students on IEP's and the intensive Language-based Program will be kept intact. H Block gives case managers the opportunities to meet with their students and for students to receive additional help and support.

The approval process involved includes three options available to the School Committee, to vote to accept, reject, or request a joint committee to consider a modification. The School Committee would make the request for modification only if necessary. Tonight they will hear the proposal, ask questions of the HS Scheduling Committee and take questions from the audience.

The proposal will be available on the Andover Public Schools website under School Committee presentations. Comments should be emailed to School Committee members so they can digest and deliberate thoughts amongst themselves. A School Committee meeting will be held on Monday, September 22nd to allow for discussion and questions and on October 9th the School Committee will meet with the expectation of a vote on the Andover High School Schedule. Impact bargaining with the AEA would begin upon approval of the schedule and completed by the first of December. This will allow time to build the budget and provide transition time for staff to be ready to implement the schedule in September 2015.

Questions from School Committee:

If the school day could be extended how would the additional time be allotted? *If it could be, 2nd and 4th periods would be lengthened and additional passing time provided.*

Are the four lunches an obstacle with this schedule? *Three lunches would gain ½ hour of time and there would be fiscal implications to consider. Less than 4 lunches would cause overcrowding in the cafeteria.*

Can the software support an 8 day rotation schedule? *Yes, Aspen is able to handle it.*

Students, especially seniors, would be transitioning to a new schedule is there an impact plan in place? *The Guidance Counselors will be working with students on transition plans*

There will be no study halls.

Audience questions:

Will students be in designated rooms for H Block and have the opportunity to visit teachers? *Yes, students will be scheduled to the same room and then set the schedule themselves every eight days. H Block does not eliminate after school help but rather is in addition to.*

Would students have the same opportunities they have today in tomorrow's schedule? Are there any scenarios available without dual enrollment and online courses? *Schedules will be run next week on Aspen and school administrators are again visiting the high school in New Hampshire who developed this schedule for more input.*

How will the schedule impact the Performing Arts Department? *Music will be held in A B C or D E F blocks with*

Show Choir and Orchestra held after school as it is now.

Will the schedule eliminate the need for lockers? Lockers will not be eliminated although it will be a little bit more of a challenge to access them with the slight reduction in passing time.

How will Release Days be scheduled? Release days will be comprised of four 47 minute periods.

What about Electives? Students will be able to have the same number of electives they do now.

C. Consent Agenda

1. Warrants: Expense SW15015, Payroll 15S011, and Payroll 15S012

Paula Colby-Clements moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Barbara L'Italien and voted 5-0 to approve.

D. Adjournment

At 9:07 P.M. on a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Joel Blumstein, the Andover School Committee voted to adjourn. Roll call: P. Colby-Clements-Y, J. Blumstein-Y, B. L'Italien-Y. D. Birnbach, A. Gilbert-Y.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Documents: AHS Scheduling Committee Report