

**Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting
Minutes of October 26, 2017**

Members in Attendance: Chair, Susan McCready, Vice-Chair, Shannon Scully, Joel Blumstein, Paul Murphy, and Ted Teichert

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Berman, and Assistant Superintendent Paul Szymanski and AHS Liaison, Noah Colby.

I. Call to Order

Susan McCready called the School Committee to order at 6:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room located on the 2nd floor of the School Administration Building. Present: Paul Murphy-Y, Joel Blumstein-Y, Shannon Scully-Y, Ted Teichert-Y, and Susan McCready-Y.

II. Executive Session

At 6:00 P.M. Paul Murphy moved that the Andover School Committee enter into Executive Session for Purpose 3: To conduct strategy session with respect to collective bargaining (administrators) as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Andover School Committee and will reconvene in Open Session for a Regular Meeting at 7:00 P.M. not to return to Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Joel Blumstein.

Roll call: J. Blumstein-Y, P. Murphy-Y, T. Teichert-Y, S. Scully-Y, and S. McCready-Y. The School Committee adjourned from Executive Session at 7:00 P.M.

III. Regular Meeting

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

Susan McCready reconvened the School Committee to order at 7:05 P.M.

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence and a Salute to the Flag.

B. Recognitions & Communications

Dr. Berman shared information on the status of the Circuit Breaker Fund and the argument to increase the reimbursement back from 65% to 72- 75%, which would require about \$26M (state wide) and should be affordable due to the State's most recent tax revenue collection which is \$124M above projections. A letter will be going to the State House in support of the funding and once Dr. Berman has a copy of the final letter, he will share it with the Committee.

The Demographic Student Enrollment Report will be presented by Jerry McKibben, McKibben Demographics Research, at the October 30th Triboard Meeting in the School Committee Room at 6:00 P.M. There are some modest changes in the preliminary enrollment updates.

Originally a 20% increase in ELL enrollment was projected but actual numbers show an increase of 29%. In the last three years Andover has experienced more than a 20% increase each year in ELL students. Our ELL students have done well with the services we provide; however, that could be a budget item for next year.

Dr. Berman distributed an article published in the October 2017 School Administrator Magazine and written by Heidi Hayes Jacob, on Reimagining Space and Schools.

Shannon Scully and Dr. Berman attended a Housing in Andover Workshop which was very educational, and provided interesting trend information; the community is growing.

Paul Szymanski reported that this year's first ALICE drill took place at West Elementary this week went well. Staff and children are beginning to realize they have options to choose from in case of an emergency. An ALICE drill will occur at all of our schools by the end of November.

Ted Teichert announced that the Andover Vocal Music Group will be in concert on Friday, October 27th and the Annual Cabaret performance is being held at the Collins Center Friday night as well. The AHS National Honor Society Induction Ceremony is scheduled for November 8, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. in the Collins Center. Additionally, Ted reported that SEPAC held a meeting last week which was attended by many new parents. SEPAC Board elections will be coming up soon and they plan to work on the website.

Shannon Scully shared items discussed at this year's first Informal School Committee Forum. Some of the discussion items included: why are the high school/middle school busses dropping students off early and arriving early; adolescent sleep schedules and high school start time; concern that the time allotment for our students has changed from 45 minutes to 30 minutes in Kindergarten to be consistent with other kindergarten classes in the district; kindergarten class size; special education out-of-district expenses; navigating special education; and one new resident from out-of-state did not feel the advanced math at DMS was particularly challenging. Upcoming informal forums are scheduled for Saturday, November 4 at 9:00 A.M. and Tuesday, December 5th at 6:00 PM at Memorial Hall Library.

Joel Blumstein found that in response for Public Requests of Records, the Secretary of State does not characterize who prevailed and who didn't in a decision (as interpreted by Ted at a prior meeting); all they do is attach a PDF of a letter sent by their Office and if you look at all the requests, the last page(s) tell what the school had to do or what they did/did not do, i.e. *"did not provide sufficient detail."* Most subjects of the requests were on procedural issues. As related to transparency, the only request the district didn't provide sufficient information on was the climate survey. People are entitled to make requests, but it comes at a considerable cost to staff and attorney time. Ted said we are not providing information to the people that was requested and therefore, they had to go to the State to get the information. Joel believes we provided the information that was requested, but not everything was to be disclosed. Dr. Berman stated that everything required was provided the first time, except for items that had to be redacted – we did not resist providing any information. Ted disagrees with that.

Susan McCready and Dr. Berman attended a Chairs meeting today to talk about the CIP for FY-18. The discussion included moving three items from SCH- 2 to SCH- 5 reflecting an increase in SCH- 5 for a total of \$722K resulting in a more affordable number for School 1 and 2. The CIP will be released the end of October and discussed at the December 6, 2017 Triboard Meeting. Susan McCready, Shelley Berman and Paul Szymanski also attended last night's Finance Committee meeting which was very productive and included discussion on textbooks,

update on out-of-district costs, enrollment figures, and the CIP. The School Site Improvement and DMS elevator does appear in the CIP but not at the request of the School Committee. The Finance Committee asked to see the class size policy and would suggest that we find available options to manage the numbers around the spikes seen. Shannon asked that any documentation provided by other Boards be shared with the School Committee.

Ted Teichert was alarmed at the comments at the Finance Committee Meeting regarding the length of time (4 years) before the District will see results in dyslexia and language-based issues. He believes that this problem can be solved immediately if experienced Orton-Gillingham teachers were hired, and with the right players on our team we can do this now. We have to get it done. Susan McCready explained that the discussion was about the return on investments, it was not that we were waiting 3-4 years to address anything.

Joel Blumstein has reached out to Claudia Bach for guidance for the School Committee Workshop on the Superintendent's Goals & Objectives scheduled for November 16, 2017 at 5:30 P.M. in the School Committee Room.

C. Public Input - None

D. Response to Public Input - N/A

E. Education

1. Open Meeting Law Changes

Town Clerk Larry Murphy distributed a copy of the updates to the Open Meeting Law and explained how the Attorney General has comprehensively revised the regulations. He shared a memorandum that focuses on the aspect of the School Committee's day-to-day business to refer to for specifics of the new law.

Andover has adopted the Town website as the official posting place. If the website goes down within 48 hours of a given meeting (excluding Sat/Sun) there are 6 business hours to restore website, if it can't be restored within that time frame then the particular meeting would have to be reposted. Another section amends the response to complaints about open meeting law violations; which have to be submitted on the forms supplied on the Attorney General's website. Complaints not submitted on this form and not signed, will not be addressed. The provision on response time has changed, complaints can be resolved with mediation (specific requirements), and the Attorney General can resolve a complaint without a hearing. Reasons for participating remotely at meetings has changed to just one reason, physical attendance would be unreasonably difficult. The Chair is no longer required to declare the reason why a participant is attending remotely. Meeting minutes should be approved by the next three meetings of a public body or within 30 days, whichever is latest. It is acceptable to send the minutes out that are clearly labeled as DRAFT or NOT APPROVED.

2. 2017 MCAS Results

Data Coordinator, Lisa Glickstein, provided an analysis of the 2016.17 MCAS results. This is the new generation MCAS (or MCAS 2.0) test that will hopefully be taken into the future. Since this is the first year of this test for Grades 3-8 this will be the new baseline and should

not compared to results from prior years. All of the test results are predicated on the school curriculum being aligned exactly with the state standards. Administrators will be looking at the item analysis to see where any differences exist.

The Grade 10 MCAS test is referred to as the “Legacy Test” because it is the same test given in the past. All students are doing extremely well in Advanced and Proficient Scores in Math and our ELL students are doing better than the state average, as are our students with disabilities. Students year over year do not necessarily have opportunities to improve – every year the test changes and the students don’t have a time to catch up until high school. Students who meet and exceed expectations in ELA for Grades 3-8 are above state average and in Grade 10 there was an extremely high score for students in advanced and proficient. Science testing is all ‘Legacy’ testing and Andover did well scoring significantly in Grade 5 for Advanced & Proficient, but not as well in our subgroups of students. Students in high school take different science tests so these are aggregated scores. As such, you need to be careful in comparing to other communities as you may not be comparing apples-to-apples.

Trends in 8th grade student scores in Science shows students are not falling below what is required to pass the test, but we are at the state level. The next generation test is to align the test better so you can see progress against time. In Grade 3, the test included problems on geometry which was not previously taught in the third grade until after the MCAS and will be changed going forward.

Dr. Berman has asked all principals to look through the data, schedule faculty meetings, and conduct an item analysis of the test results to determine what questions we did/did not do well on, and to look to see which students are not performing well and in what areas, and bring the information back to the Administrator’s next meeting. The test diagnosis has to be used and teachers need to look at how their students performed and the weaknesses of students they now have. This year the State has reset the levels so we will get accountability levels next year. Presentation of data analysis will be available on the school website.

F. Old Business

1. Discuss Review of Legal Counsel

Ted Teichert has asked to have a review of our legal representation and to compare how the firm Andover uses equates to other firms, and feels it is the fiscally responsible thing to do. Evaluations of firms can be conducted through a request for proposals (RFP). Chelmsford conducted an analysis in 2016 and Ted shared information from their RFP. He is not saying we should change, but we should review what we have.

The Town uses the same legal counsel the School Committee has been using for several years. Other members of the School Committee wonder what the driving force is behind this request and what role Dr. Berman and Dr. Stetson would play in the process. If you are going to launch a process, you need to do it well and thoroughly. Susan McCready reached out to Mike Gilbert from MASC to find out about other communities, he responded that sometimes a change is made when the school administration changes. Both Joel and Susan feel very well served by

the firm Andover uses and are impressed with their expertise and responsiveness. Shannon said it fits more cleanly if there was a reason to drive us to do this. Dr. Berman believes we have very capable counsel, and it is of extraordinary benefit having the Town and School using the same firm especially with the heavy-workload in front of us.

Ted Teichert moved that the School Committee vote to approve a review of the District's Legal Counsel. The motion was not seconded. Motion fails.

G. New Business

1. Policy Manual Chapters D, E, F – (First Reading)

Policy Subcommittee members, Joel Blumstein and Susan McCready reviewed changes made to Chapters D, (Fiscal Management), E (Support Services), and F (Facilities Development) of the Andover School Committee Policy Handbook. Mike Gilbert of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees assisted Joel and Susan in making the appropriate revisions where needed. A summary document was prepared of the major areas where changes were made.

2. Review of FY2019 School Committee Budget Calendar

Paul Szymanski provided a draft version of the Town Budget Calendar for FY-2019. The school specific budget calendar is in process. Paul recommends that the School Committee table this latter item and place on the agenda for the next meeting.

H. Consent Agenda

1. Warrants: Expense SW1809, Payroll 18S017 and 18S016
2. Minutes: September 7, 2017 and September 28, 2017 Regular Meetings

On a motion by Paul Murphy and seconded by Joel Blumstein the School Committee voted 5-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

I. Adjournment

At 10:06 P.M. on a motion by Shannon Scully and seconded by Paul Murphy, the School Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted.

Dee DeLorenzo

Recording Secretary

Documents: October 24 2017 Memo on Revised Open Meeting Law Regulations (Town Clerk)
FY-19 Budget & Town Meeting Planning Calendar
FY-19 APS CIP Requests
Enrollment Comparison Chart
MCAS Presentation
Andover Community Housing Workshop Handout
School Administrator Magazine Article by Heidi Hayes Jacob October 2017