

Andover School Committee
Workshop
June 19, 2018

Members in Attendance:

Chair Shannon Scully, Vice-Chair Paul Murphy; Joel Blumstein, Susan McCready, and Tracey Spruce.

Others in Attendance:

Dr. Sheldon Berman, Athletic Director Bill Martin, AHS Principal Philip Conrad

I. Call to Order

At 8:00 A.M. the Chair called the School Committee to order in the School Committee Room located in the School Administration Building.

II. Open Session

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

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

B. Discussion: Athletics Program Expectations

Attendees discussed program expectations and how guiding principles can be incorporated into the Athletic Policy to ensure expectations are clear and to help the Athletic Director to put together a Coaching Code of Conduct and expectations of athletes.

The School Committee is not involved in day-to-day operations of the Athletic Program but do have a role in setting expectations of the program.

Consideration of a revision in the current philosophy statement in the student handbook to include additional elements of skill and character development, and developmental perspective were discussed. What philosophy is explicitly not included is winning at all costs.

- Ensure the theory of action statements are meshed with the athletic philosophy.
- Developmental perspective of inclusiveness and progress monitoring and rigor, the goal of athletics is to take all students as far as they can go not just selecting the best.
- Athletics should be an enjoyable activity.
- Coming together as a team, supporting each other are, working together are aspects of what will prepare students for the future.

Paul Murphy: there are some interesting differences between the classroom of the field and the classroom of academics, the goal is to win, but not at all costs. You win with everyone's social and emotional health intact. His recommendation is for the School Committee to continue the conversation of what is important and what is not.

Think about how to capture winning as part of the philosophy/goal.

Give thought to the experience we are trying to deliver to our children and how can we set coaching standards to reflect that. Teamwork, positivity, appropriate feedback, respect for the kids. There is a lot of value kids learn by being part of a team, a skill they will use throughout their life.

After a review of the AHS Athletic Handbook, the Committee discussed if the current Athletic Program Objectives Handbook should be revised. Mr. Conrad said they will start with Theory of Action and build out a series of statements. Shelley suggested highlighting inclusiveness and respect into the Athletic Handbook.

APS values should remain steadfast in defense of tolerance and commitment to the values of respect, inclusion and empathy and strive to be a place welcome to all races, religions, creeds, genders, and orientations.

Bill Martin met with the head coaches recently and discussed aspects of expectations, fair and equal treatment, and other items the School Committee has highlighted. Additional meetings with all coaches will be scheduled.

Coach=Teacher: What is a Coach at AHS

- Playing field as classroom
- Equal treatment of all players
- Improve skills of all players
- Feedback to players
- Communication with players and parents
- Model for conflict resolution
- Use language of student athletes
- Notion of failure – being supportive

At times, there can be inherent bias by coaches and there should be a way for a parent to appeal to someone, not just the coach; suggestion is to establish a well understood escalation path that is clear; consider having an Assistant Coach for each team who can provide the social/emotional aspect for students. Foster an atmosphere where students feel free to take issues to their coaches without fear of retribution. Look at communications in the handbook. Coaches should be a role model, make ethical choices, and maintain confidentiality. Parents are not Coaches, and should respect the Coach's on-field decisions and communicate through established procedures.

Next Steps:

Develop a Coach's Handbook in conjunction with coaches outlining core values and expectations that will reinforce AHS Athletic Principles broadly through outreach

with Parents and Athletes, additional teams league-wide, Booster Clubs and other supporters.

Public Comments:

Krystal Solimine, 2 Surrey Lane: Will there be a way parents can provide feedback: Bill Martin replied that they expect to work with coaches, students and parents.

Equal treatment of all players will be problematic at the high school level.

Dan Gillette, 19 Moraine Street, MIAA has voluminous rules we should be aware of and not add additional ruling. Equal attention, include assistant coaches and work on skills and concepts with kids who need more support.

Parents and students sign a statement that they have read all the User Handbook. Consider capturing all into one space so parents will only need to look in one spot.

Bonnie Zahorik, Granli Drive, commented on her kids experiences and observations. She believes a Coach's Handbook is a good idea and an escalation process-should provide a separate path that is made apparent to parents. Could the School Committee include discussion on training for coaches in their policy, what the process is for reporting escalation, investigation and communication. Not every instance reported warrants an investigation with suspension or administrative leave. Phil pointed out that not all investigations lead to suspension or administrative leave.

Phil Conrad: The School Committee's support is needed for the budget items for assistant coaches to maintain an equitable ratio of students to coaches and providing professional development/training for coaches.

C. Consent Agenda

1. Warrants: are in order

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

III. Adjournment

At 9:40 A.M. on a motion by Susan McCready and seconded by Tracey Spruce, the School Committed voted 5-0 to adjourn the workshop of June 19, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Document: AHS Athletic Handbook