

**Andover School Committee**  
**Minutes of August 6, 2020**  
**Virtual Meeting**

---

**Participants from the School Committee:** Shannon Scully, Chair; Susan McCready, Vice Chair; Tracey Spruce, Paul Murphy, and Lauren Conoscenti

**Others participating:** Superintendent Shelley Berman, Assistant Superintendent Sandra Trach, COO-Stephen Nembirkow, Director of Communications-Nicole Kieser, Director of Innovation-Stephen Chinosi, Director of Data-Hannah Tolla, AHS Principal-Caitlin Brown, AHS Asst. Principal-John Norton, WHMS Asst. Principal-Linda Croteau, Director of Nursing-Rita Casper; Former Transportation Director-Mary Lu Walsh and current Transportation Director-Cindy Button

**I. Regular Meeting**

**Call to Order/Moment of Silence**

Shannon Scully called the Andover School Committee meeting of August 6, 2020 to order at 6:00 P.M. and immediately voted to meet in Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. chapter 30A, sec. 21(a) for Purpose 3, to discuss strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining with the Andover Education Association Unit A and AEA Secretaries, AEA Occupational & Physical Therapists, Andover Licensed/Practical Nurses, Andover Assistants, Local SEIU 888 -Food Services, Local SEIU 888-School Custodians, and Andover Administrators Association because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. The Committee will reconvene in regular session at approximately 7PM.

- II.** The Committee reconvened in Open Session for the Regular Meeting through a Virtual Meeting Broadcast by Andover TV and on Comcast Channel 99, Verizon Channel 43 or via streamed: [www.andovertv.org](http://www.andovertv.org) **Public Participation via email: [scremote@andoverma.us](mailto:scremote@andoverma.us)** Susan McCready and Shelley Berman will screen the emails.

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence for Dee DeLorenzo's niece and Sara Stetson's father who recently passed away.

**A. Recognitions & Communications**

Dr. Berman recognized that the West Elementary SBC meeting was held earlier in the day. He reported that the Facility Assessment Subcommittee (FAS) meeting with MSBA had gone well. On August 26<sup>th</sup>, the MSBA subcommittee/staff will present to the entire MSBA Board. Decisions should be made on reductions in some of the program space and also on the flexitorium prior to the MSBA board meeting. A school plan without a flexitorium was presented to the MSBA subcommittee at the FAS, but there will be an updated version on August 26<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. McCready stated that in addition to Dr. Berman's report on the West Elementary SBC meeting, the MSBA encouraged the district to look at other options for a cafetorium during the FAS meeting. She also reported the Town Manager provided a presentation at the West Elementary SBC meeting on a projected tax impact of this project for the taxpayer. The next SBC meeting will be a decision making meeting with presentations by the architects. Enrollment numbers were also brought up as an issue because of the building size/costs.

SMMA indicated that a change to the enrollment at this point would not be a simple thing to do.

Ms. Spruce reported on the SC's negotiations subcommittee work with the AEA on the reopening of schools. Topics have been on safety and health and in particular the HVAC systems in our buildings. The district is doing its best to make sure the HVAC systems are current with the standards issued by the federal government. A report on each building and systems is being compiled and will be issued to everyone when available.

The Chair announced that the AEA was favorable regarding a revised 170 school calendar for 2020-2021. She also reminded the community that they can email the Committee during the meeting at [SCRemote@andoverma.us](mailto:SCRemote@andoverma.us) for Public Input.

#### **D. Public Input**

The Chair reminded the public of Policy BEDH regarding public comment. Susan read public comment in the order received from the [SCRemote@andoverma.us](mailto:SCRemote@andoverma.us) mailbox. Questions were all around the Hybrid and Remote learning models under discussion by the district.

#### **E. Response to Public Input**

The SC and APS Administration responded to questions throughout the reading of Public Input questions sent to [SCRemote](mailto:SCRemote).

#### **F. Education**

##### **1. School Reopening Plans**

Dr. Berman: A tremendous amount of work and research has gone into the reopening plans during the last 4 weeks. This is a task force of 60, quite a herculean task and he wanted to acknowledge and thank everyone involved. Dr. Berman especially thanked Sandy and Sara the co-leaders of the Task Force. He also stated that he learned on the Commissioner's call today that DESE has postponed the date of submission for all districts to August 14<sup>th</sup>. The Chair reminded the public that the Committee has added a meeting for Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup> to make a decision on the reopening plans.

Presentation: APS Return to School – August 6, 2020

Ms. Trach thanked Ms. Stetson and wanted to acknowledge her and all her work. She acknowledged Task Force members who are also on this meeting tonight.

Ms. Tolla reviewed the APS survey preliminary results from Aug. 3-6<sup>th</sup>. The survey was sent to APS parents/guardians with over 5600 primary contacts emailed; 3200 have thus far responded. Some highlights to mention:

62.3% prefer the in person model; 37.7% prefer the remote model  
77.6% select the hybrid model; 22.4% prefer the remote model  
64.5% wouldn't bus transportation and use alternate means;  
27.7% plan on sending their children by bus  
7.9% drive themselves to school

Proposed Hybrid and Remote Models were presented.

Hybrid:

50% in person, 50% remote; AA; Wednesday, BB; Students divided into 2 cohorts; Learning Mgmt System w/blended learning; follows regular schedule; attendance taken; remote days asynchronous with some synchronous learning; feedback and regular grading system.

Similarities between Hybrid and Remote

Remote Learning Academy:

Families have the option to be fully remote in the RLA and the district will be required to move fully remote if the state issues another closure order. LMS with blended learning; similar schedule to remote learning days in hybrid model; attendance taken; direct, live, synchronous instruction w/asynchronous learning opportunities; feedback and regular grading system.

### ***What happens on Wednesdays in the Hybrid model***

AA and BB cohort will be taught synchronously thru the lunch hour. In the afternoon, they will use their LMS, while teachers engage in professional learning and collaboration.

Everyone will stay home to allow deep cleaning at the schools on that day. Some of the specialized programs may need to attend on Wednesdays, but Dr. Stetson will talk further about that on another date.

Hybrid Learning Week Samples at AHS, Middle Schools and Elementary were displayed on the power point presentation. Ms. Trach stated they would work hard to keep schedules very similar so that remote and hybrid are in synchronous interaction with teachers. There will also be breaks provided throughout the day for all students. All families will be asked to pick a model and commit to them so that staff can be assigned accordingly based on the distribution of students. Schoology will be the learning management system used throughout the district.

Ms. Trach further stated per usual school protocols on attendance, we would ask for a note so we know where the student is during any part of the day. If service is being provided as part of their IEP, etc – that will be included in the student’s schedule. Schoology will also have the schedule so students, teachers, parents can see what the lessons are for the day. With specialists, we would like to support synchronous in person opportunities for students. Based on DESE guidance , we will have specialists going to the classroom to limit students crossing pathways, allow them to remain in their own classrooms and using their own materials. May not be possible in all specialist cases. We are looking at modifying instruction so that students may have the same specialist class for 6 weeks in a row to minimize cross-contact and thus less chance of cross contamination.

### **On Transportation, Arrival, Dismissal – Andover High School and Middle School Students**

No bus transportation for Grades 7-12 reason: can only fill buses to 32% capacity, significantly limits capability to bus students. More entrances and exit doors would be assigned for social distancing, managed and supervised by administration.

Any increase in student parking at the high school will be accommodated. Survey results will help in this planning. Proposed school time for AHS: 8:15-2:51pm

### **Elementary and MS Students Start Times/Dismissal**

District looking for bus transportation for K-Grade 6 per policy and the law

2 Tier Model for bus transportation of K-6 attending alternating days – allows 15 min for cleaning between tiers.

*Grades K-2 – 8AM – 2:30PM; Grades 3-6 – 9AM – 3:30PM; Grades 7-8 – 9AM – 3:30PM*

This all depends on the survey results. Every effort will be made to keep siblings together. Transportation department will be working closely with the schools.

Responses on questions after the presentation were addressed. Grouping start times by schools was studied but this resulted in a 3 tier bussing model. Ms. Button said it became very difficult to get more than 2 grades on a school bus -- without adding a tier. Consideration for cleaning in between would make a longer day. Traffic patterns will be monitored closely. Hybrid will reduce the population; also different start times will help here. There will be signage to help guide students/parents. Students will not be dropped off randomly only thru their staged entrance times. Options on how to best serve breakfast depends on the plan the SC will select. The hybrid model will give us a little more space/distance. Ms. Tolla added there is a grant she is working on to replace and add more bike racks and add signage for displaying traffic patterns. At AHS, the principal stated there are 230 seniors who have already responded with interest in parking spots.

Director of Nursing, Rita Casper stated there are lots of protocols which have been considered, masks are most important. Risks can't be eliminated, but can be minimized. Hand sanitizers will be placed in all buildings/classrooms, following social distancing guidelines and requests of staff and parents to complete daily monitoring checklists. The biggest piece is to recognize any symptoms and stay home to prevent illness coming into buildings and thereby reducing any transmission. There will also be a significant amount of training for parents and staff before anyone comes into the building. She has worked closely with the Board of Health and has a very close collaboration/communication with them. Crucial data will be important on a daily basis to monitor closely all during this time.

She also stated it's very important to recognize individuals who will have difficulty in wearing masks. But if not for medical reasons, they will help train those individuals, and manage those who won't follow guidelines similar to dress code. We will ask parents to start training their young children to wear them all day. But grades 2-12 will need to wear masks – we will move swiftly on those individual for non-compliance.

A statement of holding public SC meetings was offered by the Chair. Other Committees who have tried to have in person meetings haven't had much success in communicating thru their masks as people can't always understand what is being said with masks on. This format lends itself to be seen and heard by the public. The SC is hoping to have in person options after Town Meeting for public meetings.

Ms. McCready encourages parents to send in their questions in advance of the Task Force Aug. 13<sup>th</sup> Forum to [Covid-19@andoverma.us](mailto:Covid-19@andoverma.us) or [SCremote@andoverma.us](mailto:SCremote@andoverma.us). The Chair noted her appreciation for all the work done so far. It feels very solid and detailed in all the plans/presentations– she thanked the administrators and task force.

## **2. Transportation Policy (EEAA)**

Dr. Berman stated this was a hard decision but the only way they will be able to transport students is by suspending the current policy for this year. Even after the vote, they will continue to look at the policy to make sure no one is left out especially if there is a hardship.

Ms. Spruce moved that the Andover School Committee vote to suspend SC policy EEAA, Student Transportation, as it is currently written and provide free transportation only for kindergarten through sixth grade (6<sup>th</sup> grade) as required by law for: A) student's whose residence and school exceeds 1.5 miles; b) students who live more than one mile from the nearest bus stop, and (c) students with special needs for whom transportation must be provided. This will apply to the current 2020-2021 school year. The motion was seconded by Mr. Murphy. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, T. Spruce-Y. S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

### **3. School Calendar Policy for 2020-2021 (policy IC/ICA)**

Ms. Scully stated the Commissioner and the MTA met and agreed on a reduced school calendar year. It's within the authority of each school district to determine what those days are for the district. At the onset of the meeting, she mentioned the AEA would be in agreement to a revised policy calendar. The teachers have always worked 184 days; however, 170 of those days will be students. Ms. Trach said they are thankful for the 10 planning days.

Ms. McCready moved that the Andover School Committee vote to suspend SC policy IC/ICA School Year-School Calendar, as it is currently written so that for the 2020-2021 school year the district operates for 170 student school days and provides hours of structured learning time in accordance with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's 2020-2021 Requirements. The motion was seconded by Mr. Murphy. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, T. Spruce-Y. S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

### **4. Revised APS School Calendar 2020-2021**

The SC Chair noted the question of moving Early Release Days from Fridays to Wednesday should the district adopt a hybrid model because it would make the most sense. She hopes the public will allow for this option. The AEA has also been apprised of the proposed calendar. Ms. Spruce moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the revised 2020-2021 school calendar with 170 student learning days and 184 teacher work days, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Murphy. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, T. Spruce-Y. S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

## **G. Continuing Business**

### **1. Field Naming Proposal Update**

The SC Chair worked with the Town Clerk to be sure that this is School Committee land which Town Counsel confirmed. There had been a question about ownership from the Patriotic Holiday Committee that resulted from a 1933 town meeting article. Town Clerk has confirmed through a review of Select Board and SC meeting minutes that the SC maintains authority over this school property.

## **H. Consent Agenda**

Grants/Donations to Andover Public Schools

Regarding a grant on the list, Dr. Berman stated the federal government has released a federal relief fund that is being distributed by the state. When the grant is beyond \$1M, it needs to be

approved by the SC. We have applied for some funding to offset closing this fiscal year and that's why we need approval. Mr. Nembirkow stated this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> in a series of grants which we need to spend -- before we are able to apply for any funding thru FEMA.

Ms. Spruce moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. McCready. Roll call: T. Spruce, P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

**I. Adjournment**

At 10:06 P.M. the School Committee adjourned from Regular Session.

Respectfully submitted,  
Alison Phelan  
Recording Secretary