

Andover School Committee
Minutes of Thursday, May 20, 2021
Virtual Meeting

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

Others participating: Interim Superintendent Dr. Claudia Bach, Assistant Superintendent Sandra Trach, Assistant Superintendent Sara Stetson, Chief Operations Officer Stephen Nembirkow, Director of Innovation Stephen Chinosi, AHS Student Liaison Jeffrey Connors.

I. **Regular Meeting**

Call to Order/Moment of Silence

Chairperson Scully called to order the meeting at 6:00 PM and the Committee immediately voted to meet in Executive Session. The Regular School Committee Meeting will be broadcast by Andover TV and on Comcast Channel 99, Verizon Channel 43 or streamed: www.andovertv.org. *Public Participation via email:* scremote@andoverma.us or through live video comment with advanced WebEx registration.

II. **Executive Session:**

Susan McCready moved to meet in Executive Session pursuant to G.L. chapter 30A, section 21(a), purpose (3) to discuss strategy with respect to bargaining with unionize personnel, namely the Andover Education Association (AEA) Unit A and Andover Assistants' Organization because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Committee. The Committee will reconvene in regular session at approximately 7:00 PM. The motion was seconded by Paul Murphy. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, T. Spruce-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

III. **Regular Meeting Resumes – Moment of Silence**

Shannon Scully reconvened the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.
The meeting began with a Moment of Silence.

A. **Recognitions/Communications**

Dr. Bach acknowledged those who made the opening of AHS possible this past Monday including, Caitlin Brown, Janet Nicosia, Steve Nembirkow and all of the Central Office Administrative Team, AHS PAC, crossing guards, teachers and students. Last night's West EL/Shaw School Bldg. Committee meeting included lots of good information. There are a number of exciting events happening this spring.

Sandy Trach also recognized the AHS Team, Rita Casper and her Nursing Team at AHS. Congratulations to everyone who participated in the Capstone Program and thanks to Dee DeLorenzo for releasing the Summer Professional Development Catalog. The courses are full with teachers eager to continue their professional learning. Thanks also to Jen Pieroni who has done a great job spearheading the summer school programs that we will be getting off the ground soon.

Steve Chinosi thanked SC members Susan, Tracey, and Lauren for participating in last night's Capstone Program. It was a dynamic conference and a real celebration of the student's work. Last night the Global Endorsement Celebration was held with sixty students and their families celebrating their three years of work.

Steve Nembirkow recognized the AHS Administrative Team, Vernon Jones, our new Custodial Supervisor, and the AHS custodial staff, who spent the weekend at AHS preparing for the opening on Monday, May 17th.

Tracey Spruce, Lauren Conoscenti, and Susan McCready attended the Capstone Showcase which was really incredible. They were impressed with the students' presentations and how they spoke and engaged with the folks on the panel and recognized the faculty and staff who have been so supportive of the students in the Capstone Program. Thank you to Steve Chinosi and Rebecca D'Alise.

Lauren Conoscenti congratulated the South Elementary Cooperative Theatre Group on the virtual musical, "We are Monsters". This weekend, DMS is offering a production of "Disney Descendants" which can be streamed online.

Susan McCready said the video of the WESP Bldg. Committee Meeting and Forum is online for viewing. Voting for the School Building Project will be two-fold; one vote at Town Meeting on June 5th and the second vote at the Ballot Box on June 15th. Kudos to the AHS Team for their incredible effort to open AHS to full in-person learning.

Shannon thanked Sandy Trach who has been with AHS Principal Caitlin Brown every step of the way to open AHS. Thank you to Cindy Button for making sure every student who needed transportation to AHS got it. Shannon and Susan led the last SC Informal Forum with only one attendee who wanted to talk about the mask policy which should align with CDC and other guidance that has emerged.

B. Public Input

Kevin Dalton, 69 Shawsheen Road. His primary reason for calling is about masks for kids and to find out what the SC's stance. He feels that as parents, they have the right to make these types of decisions. He is a firm believer that wearing masks is more harmful than good.

Susan McCready reported on the comments that came into SC Remote on masks and some on items that are not on the agenda.

C. Response to Public Input

There has been a proposal from the AEA to revisit the AHS schedule which the SC has responded to. We have not yet reached a contract agreement with the AEA, but negotiations are on-going. Based on conversations this week's guidance from DESE, which were reflective of the most current guidelines from the CDC, Claudia said we will try to keep everyone informed to the changes in the guidelines as we go along.

D. Education

1. Learning Model Updates (high school)

The Superintendent provided an update on the full in-person return at AHS. It seems like everything is like it was before the pandemic. The traffic around AHS will be particularly busy the next few weeks until the seniors leave.

AHS Principal Brown reported that it has been a great four days and the energy is back in the building. It was a total team effort with a lot of people and administrators involved which they very much appreciated. Teachers have been amazing and very flexible and patient with the changes. Food Service created a third lunch room in the Field House and were able to create another food service station. The weather has helped that the students could go outside. Transportation Director, Cindy Button was amazing with organizing the bus routes and staying up all night to make sure each student had transportation. Thank you to everyone for their support.

Jeffrey Connors said everyone at AHS is pleased to be back in their normal routine.

2. Vaccine clinics for students and staff

Rita Casper provided an update on the vaccination clinics being run in schools by APS and the Department of Public Health Staff. They vaccinated about 300 students this week at AHS and the Middle Schools; a significant number of students at AHS had already been vaccinated.

3. Field Trip Approvals

a) WMS Field Trip – Outing Club to Belize on April 16-22, 2022

WMS Social Studies teacher, w/22 yrs. of experience, Michelle Wesley, with the support of Principal, Tim Corkery, would like to provide the opportunity for students to visit the country of Belize on April 16-22, 2022 (Spring vacation week).

Lauren Conoscenti moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the proposed Extracurricular Trip for West Middle School Students to Belize on April 16-22, 2022 as presented and in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Andover School Committee Policy entitled "APS School-sponsored Trip and Student Travel Policy". Motion seconded by Susan McCready. Roll call: T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

4. Chromebook Rental Pilot Program (Steve Chinosi / Paul Puzzanghera)

Paul Puzzanghera, Andover Chief Information Officer, provided an update on the current MS Chromebooks rental program which has been well received by the parents. A review of the MS repair record and help tickets showed only 2 of 160 Chromebook required warranty repair with about 15 other repair tickets addressed by the in-house Tech Team. The proposal expands the current pilot program to high school students for the upcoming school year. Mr. Chinosi said this provides consistency that parents and teachers are excited about. The rental program provides insurance and support from our own School/IT Dept.

Susan McCready moved that the Andover School Committee authorize Andover Information Technology to continue the existing Pilot Rental Program for Chromebooks and expand the Pilot to High School Families so that students may obtain a school owned device for usage at School

and outside of school for a fixed fee not to exceed \$150 per student per year for the 2021-2022 school year. Motion seconded by Paul Murphy.

Discussion: Paul Puzzanghera provided additional information on the devices for AHS. Susan McCready withdrew the motion.

Susan McCready moved that the Andover School Committee authorize Andover Information Technology to continue the existing Pilot Rental Program for Chromebooks at the middle school level so students may obtain a school age appropriate or Window devices and expand the pilot to High School Families so that students may obtain a school-owned device for usage at school and outside of school for a fixed fee not to exceed \$150 per student per year for the 2021-2022 school year. Motion seconded by Tracey Spruce. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, T. Spruce-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

Susan McCready moved that the Andover School Committee authorize Andover Information Technology to expand the pilot rental program for Chromebooks as well as Window devices to AHS families so that students may obtain a school-owned device for usage at school and outside of school at a fixed fee to be determined for the 2021-2022 school year. Motion seconded by Paul Murphy. Roll call: L. Conoscenti-Y, T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

E. Continuing Business

F. New Business

1. Policy EBCFA, Face Coverings School Improvement Plans

New guidance has emerged from the state around face coverings and the Committee can consider updating district policy in response. The SC moved as quickly as possible on the policy changes; however, they are governed by the Open Meeting Law which they take very seriously in addition to remaining in compliance with the laws. There are many families in favor of making face covering changes and many who oppose making changes. Susan appreciated the opportunity to hear parents input and appreciates the time to make the policy changes.

Susan McCready reviewed the changes being considered by the Andover School Committee on face coverings.

1. Removing the requirement for students to wear face masks outdoors during athletics, as defined by the MA EEA added and adopted by the MIAA;
2. Removing the requirement for students to wear face masks for PE classes held outdoors; Andover PE classes held in-doors have always required face masks.
3. An addition of updated links (removal of links no longer functioning).

Students and adults are still required to wear masks indoors, the only changes are the wearing of masks outdoors. This policy falls into the emergency procedure section of the policies manual, that are Covid related, will stay in place until the end of the emergency. Once the state of emergency is lifted additional changes will be made. The umbrella to the face covering policy terminates at the end of the emergency. We recommend allowing students/adults to maintain the option of mask coverings if they choose to do so. There are no changes to indoor mask wearing.

Shannon recommended they consider putting language in the policy to delegate the authority to the School Superintendent in consultation with the School Committee Chair in order to update the information.

Susan McCready moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve changes to Policy EBCFA-Face Coverings as presented and amended. Motion seconded by Paul Murphy. Roll call: T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

3. Addition of AEA Stipends

Jess Porter, Director of Human Resources summarized the work of the Stipend Committee and for stipended roles and associated pay to be added to the Unit A Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Tracey Spruce moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the stipend Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the AEA as presented and to authorize the Chair to sign the MOA. Motion seconded by Susan McCready. Roll call: L. Conoscenti-Y, P. Murphy-Y, T. Spruce-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

4. School Improvement Plans

Dr. Bach provided a brief update on School Improvement Plans (SIP) for the 2020-21 school year. There is an emphasis on Social-Emotional Learning and Learning Gaps at all levels which have been a major concern all year.

AHS Principal Caitlin Brown presented the AHS SIP which is a 3-year plan with three areas to improve in: Social Emotional support for students; instructional support for educators, and the third is to focus on Curriculum. The committee is made up of parents/teachers and students.

WMS Principal Tim Corkery presented the SIP for the three middle schools which is a multi-year improvement plan. They are working on Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Objective 1: All three middle schools will now have an advisory block.

Objective 4: SEL Goal - all 3 middle schools have increased the number of parent forums for information sharing to discuss race, equity, cyberbullying, etc.

Objective 6: On-going PD on racism and bias. They have developed student clubs with High School advisors supervised by staff from the C-3 Team.

Progress Monitoring Goal: To continue to develop capacity with staff on how to interpret map data and have pre-post conversations with students and families after the tests. They are continuing to develop the capacity to sharing and understanding the data. The most significant change is to renew their focus to design a new Middle School Schedule and implement it into the school year.

Bancroft School Principal Michelle Costa presented the SIP for the five elementary schools. The Elementary Principals have discussed tasks under each of the goals focused on SEL, Curriculum Development, and Student Data. i.e. the Portal that students have enjoyed, Leaders Workshop, children's conferencing, spacing etc. It is important to stay focused around our student data and our Wellness Committee, to continue thinking about the mental health of students, and data on

showing which students are engaged and disengaged. The C-3 Committees at the building levels have been very impactful.

Claudia thanked all the principals who work collaboratively in wonderful ways.

5. High School Start Time

Using a slide presentation, Shannon Scully summarized past progress on efforts to change school start times for APS adolescents. The start time for Andover High School has been 8:15 AM for the current school year. The change is based around scientific and health information on the benefits of extra sleep for adolescents. Overall, delaying school start times has been shown to be an effective counter measure to adolescent sleep loss. The School Start Time Committee studied many of the areas around changing school start times and the effect on students. A lot of community outreach was conducted with parent forums, presentations to PTO/PACs, and parent coffees. A Transportation Study was conducted in the Fall of 2019. A Parent Advisory Group, led by Sandy Trach, met to discuss concerns about this process and to provide feedback. A final report was published in June of 2020.

The School Committee provided comments on changing the AHS Start time to 8:15 AM. What else do they need to know, what are the options? The debate and conversation are critical to helping them make the best decision possible as soon as possible. Impossible goals this year were met and achieved. Logistical issues that seemed unsolvable last year, were resolved. We learned a lot about our own abilities to make changes and make them work. This issue has been examined inside and out and there is a strong understanding of the options before us. What is the School Committee's role as a policy perspective vs an operations perspective? At some point, the Committee could make a policy decision and leave it to the Administrative Team on how to execute an operational decision.

Claudia agrees with the science, but in terms of operational vs policy she needs to think about this. It becomes an operational job to make this change and within that, there will be issues that will be complicated. It would be important to bring the team together to discuss the after-school programs/activities. Teacher and student feedback are important. Caitlin Brown said there are a lot of logistical concerns and equity and access to transportation is a concern too. It would be hard to look at the data for this year because it has been so challenging it would not be a fair assessment.

Members of the School Committee provide comments on making the change to the School Start times. This item will be placed on the next School Committee agenda.

6. Open Meeting Law Complaint

The Committee received an OML complaint from David Matson related to technical issues encountered by Andover TV in the live broadcast of the Committee's April 12, 2021 meeting. The Committee needs to review the complaint and will consider authorizing legal counsel to respond to the complaint as in other complaints, the recommendation will be made that the Committee should refer the matter to VDH.

Shannon consulted with our legal advisor and we did in fact act in full compliance of the Open Meeting Law with the handling of the issue. The meeting was being recorded during the entire

deliberation and posted immediately after so the public could see the meeting and hear the dialogue.

Paul Murphy moved that the Andover School Committee vote to have legal counsel, Valerio, Dominello & Hillman respond to the Open Meeting Law Complaint dated May 12, 2021. Motion seconded by Susan McCready. Roll call: L. Conoscenti-Y, S. McCready-Y, T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

G. Consent Agenda

1. Surplus Textbook/Supply Disposal Inventory Form

IT is now using newer charging containers for these devices, so we have no practical use for these older charging carts.

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

H. Adjournment

At 9:43 P.M. Lauren Conoscenti moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Paul Murphy. Roll call: T. Spruce-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary