

Andover School Committee
Thursday, November 18, 2021
School Committee Room

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

Others participating: Superintendent Dr. Magda Parvey, Asst. Superintendent Dr. Julie Riley, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Sara Stetson, Business Manager Paul Szymanski, and AHS Liaison Justin Jin.

I. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order

Chairperson McCready called to order the meeting of the Andover School Committee at 6:05 PM and the Committee immediately voted to meet in Executive Session.

II. Executive Session:

Tracey Spruce moved for the School Committee to meet in executive session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws chapter 30A, section 21(a) for the following purpose: Purpose (3) to discuss strategy with respect to bargaining with unionized personnel, namely the Andover Administrators Association (AAA) Unit B, Andover Assistants, SEIU Local 888-School Custodians and Andover School Food Service, and (AEA) Unit A, 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 7:00 PM. The motion was seconded by Shannon Scully. The Chair so declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, T. Spruce-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. Scully-Y, S. McCready-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

III. Regular Meeting resumed at 7:18 PM

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

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

B. Recognitions/Communications

Dr. Parvey's Superintendent's Report included the following communications:

- The AHS/NAH Football Game will be held on Tuesday, November 23rd at Fenway Park. She also attended a breakfast for the team this morning.
- School visits: This week she visited Doherty Middle School and Sanborn Elementary.

Administrative updates

- Tom Howard has been hired as Executive Director of Human Resources starting on January 3, 2022;
- Launching of the bi-weekly District Newsletter All Around APS will return on November 19th.
- Town-wide PTO will meet this Friday to discuss PTO Fundraising practices.
- District Organization Study: The consultants have begun interviewing our administrators to learn more about our organization, roles and responsibilities in an

effort to develop an organization chart and make recommendations about our current structure.

- Friday November 12th was a Professional Learning Day for all staff across the district which included the Yale Survey for all teaching staff for SEI supports for students in Grade 6-12 to develop a district wide SEL approach. The Principles of Learning Analysis and Debrief included professional learning opportunities, curriculum and framework review at grade levels, and DESE'S Acceleration Roadmap around a sense of belonging and addressing learning loss for our students.
- Dr. Parvey will renew her Office Hours starting on Wednesday, December 1st from 6:00-7:30 PM in the School Committee Room.

Paul Szymanski provided a brief update on the unannounced ALICE drills that have not been held over since COVID began; we are now back on track and the trainings that have taken place at all grade levels have been very successful.

Shannon Scully provided a brief update on negotiations with the Andover Instructional Assistants that included a productive meeting with the fact-finder from the State. The School Committee Negotiation Subcommittee members (Shannon Scully and Lauren Conoscenti) provided a comprehensive presentation that detailed the offer presented to the Instructional Assistant Unit. Both sides are to provide briefs to the fact-finder on December 20th after which the fact-finder will write a report outlining conclusions and recommendations which we should expect to receive at the end of January. Following receipt of the fact-finder's report, the parties will have 10 days to bargain again and have scheduled three dates in early February to do so.

Tracey Spruce and Lauren Conoscenti held the first informal Forum of the School Committee on Friday, November 9th with six parents in attendance. Topics presented by parents included the following: Curriculum and the School Committee's role in the curriculum process, health education and how we are teaching sex education, concern about AHS teachers talking about their personal political views that some students find distressing, the absentee rate for the observance of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, concern about social emotional learning and anxiety and how we can better address this issue at the elementary schools. One parent asked about negotiations with the IA's and suggested we increase the starting wage. An elementary parent expressed concern about consistency across the classrooms and grades with respect to how much information is shared with families. Lauren reported the next forum is Saturday December 11th at 9:30 am- 11:00 am at Memorial Hall Library.

Paul Murphy, liaison to SEPAC, reported that the members are eager to get as many folks involved as possible. This fall SEPAC members staffed a table at the Andover Thrives Event, hosted the Federation for Special Needs Workshop on Basic Rights and Information on the IEP Process. Last week they hosted Dr. Parvey, Dr. Stetson and the Student Services Team for a Q & A session. In December, APS Director of Social Work Services, Joe Yarid will present at their next meeting on a discussion on student anxiety. They hope to present the results of the survey to the School Committee that they sent to parents across the district, and will host a workshop in January for ADHD and Executive Functioning. SEPAC is open for anyone to attend and the meetings have continued to be online.

Justin Jin read a statement from students regarding an issue with a Pearson textbook. APS strives to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment but recently, a section of the US History text book currently in use regarding slavery was found to be offensive and hurtful and politically incorrect. They implore the ASC to stand with AHS students and take a stand against such wording. In addition, AHS will host a pep rally on Lovely Field weather permitting, on Tuesday during H-Block.

Susan McCready reported that the school budget meetings for FY-2023 have been scheduled that will include presentations by principals at all levels on January 11th starting at 6:00 PM and with Department Heads on January 16th also starting at 6:00 PM. The Triboard will meet on December 8th for a presentation on the CIP at 7:00 PM at Memorial Hall Library.

The West Elementary/Shawsheen School Building Committee met last night via Web-Ex and was broadcast by AndoverTV. The next meeting is December 17th at 7:00 PM. The Design Development package was submitted to MSBA on October 11th and we are expecting comments back next week. The committee also had a very good value engineering discussion on ways to proactively address project changes if the supply chain challenges begin to affect the project.. Thank you to Joel Blumstein, Nicole Kieser and Dr. Parvey for putting together a communication to keep the community updated. There will be another communication forthcoming.

Susan McCready wished the cast of “Mama Mia” well. The AHS Musical opens tonight and shows continue throughout the weekend. She also wished the Andover Varsity Football Team the best of luck on their game next Tuesday against North Andover High School that will be held in Fenway Park. Special thanks to all of our students and staff who have been holding community service drives collecting clothing and food drives.

C. Public Input

Thyra Sherman, 362 Salem Street and Angela Gordon, 13 Pine Street, spoke in support of the Instructional Assistants and to publicly ask the School Committee to commit to a meeting in person with them to present an amended proposal next week.

Kerry Costello, former AEA President, also supports the Instructional Assistants and as the Advisor to AHS Student Government, she is very proud of the student government on taking up the cause on correcting on wording in a textbook that is a difficult topic.

D. Response to Public Input

E. Education

1. NEASC Update Presentation (Caitlin Brown, AHS Principal)

AHS Principal Caitlin provided an update on NEASC which is a multi-year accreditation process. The key components include: a self-reflection completed by the school; a collaborative conference held with a small team of peer educators; development and implementation of a school growth plan; a reflective summary; and a personalized decennial accreditation visit.

Portrait of a Student: A Vision of the Graduate:

This is the first step in framing the vision for the school with the goal to develop a vision of a graduate with the assistance of community members, parents, teachers, staff members, and students to ensure that students have the skills they need to be successful upon graduation. Portrait of the graduate emphasizes a holistic view of expectations of students.

Action Steps: Attended Portrait of the Graduate Workshop with building leadership and Central Office Staff; collaborate with teacher leaders for the 2021.22 school year on the process. Teachers, Central Office Staff, and building leadership will attend the Vision of the Graduate Training in December 2021. Meetings will be held with stakeholders they will create portrait of the graduate working group.

2. Schoology Update Presentation

Director of Strategic Innovation, Steve Chinosi, accompanied Instructional Application Specialist, Matt Hall and Program Advisor for Digital Learning, Shelagh St. Laurent provided a presentation on how the schools are using Schoology. The pandemic was the impetus for exploring LMS options to support remote learning. Schoology provides equity and access for all students and staff. Matt Hall provided information on launches and sessions and student/staff engagement. Active engagement is higher now than it was at the height of Covid. The use of Schoology has far outpaced the use of Google Classroom.

Shelagh St. Laurent provided information on challenges and solutions to the challenges. They have created grade-level content teams that provide support to educators in person and online. . They also have Schoology tutorials through the APS YouTube Channel, a link to APS Resources, and self-paced learning modules for educators as well as a Parent Schoology Course.

Next Steps:

Supporting all stakeholders for continued rollout, adapting our grade level rubric, and collaboratively develop expectations and professional development for all and identifying exemplary teachers and building ideas together.

The Committee thanked Steve Chinosi, Shelagh St. Laurent, and Matt Hall for the presentation and appreciate all the work that has been done and progress made across the system.

3. AHS Student Petition

AHS faculty member, Katie Reusch, and her students presented before the Committee their work on a class project which is aligned with the Social Studies standards. The unit on Reconstruction and Changes in the South showed a paragraph that was problematic. The students sent off a petition with corrected wording to the publisher requesting to change the wording. A video of the petition was read by a student. Words have meaning, especially in school where it is important that information be shared correctly and changes made if incorrect.

The Committee thanked the students for bringing this information forward and taking action. The School Committee is proud of their equity policies; this is a small but important step to take.

Lauren Conoscenti moved that the Andover School Committee vote to sign the AHS Student Petition as presented. Motion seconded by Paul Murphy. Motion passes 5-0.

F. Continuing Business

1. FY23 Budget Assumption Guidelines 2nd Reading

Paul Szymanski presented the FY-23 Budget Assumption Guidelines at a previous meeting and has incorporated all edits for the final document review approval by the School Committee.

Shannon Scully moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the FY-23 Budget Assumption Guidelines as amended. Motion seconded by Tracey Spruce. Motion passes 5-0.

2. FY-23 Budget Planning Calendar

Mr. Szymanski reported on the revised version of the final version of the FY-23 Budget Planning Calendar has been provided to the School Committee. Budget presentations will be held in January. This is a dynamic document and subject to change.

The date for when the School Committee is expected to give the Town the budget for FY-23 is January 21st as requested by the Town Manager. Shannon Scully pointed out that the Governor is issuing his budget on January 26th which is after the date when the budget information has to be submitted to the Town.

G. New Business

1. Financials

Paul Szymanski has posted a copy of the current Financials for the Committee to review. He credits Janet Wright, School Accountant, for her assistance in helping with the financials and conducting an internal audit. It has been challenging on how to meet the projections for the cost of transportation because of not knowing what the actual number of children in need of transportation will be and also due to the different contractors.

Sara Stetson reported on the day to day activities of children and how they are being supported. We have had an unprecedented explosion in the new students in the Bridge Program and there are more students taking transportation.

H. Consent Agenda: Grants/Donations to District; Minutes

1. Grants/Donations to District

2. SC Meeting Minutes: October 21, Nov. 4th SC Meeting Minutes.

Paul Murphy moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Shannon Scully.

Motion passes 5-0

I. Adjournment

At 9:23 P.M. on a motion by Shannon Scully and seconded by Paul Murphy, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting of Thursday, November 18, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,
Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary