

Andover School Committee
Thursday, January 6, 2022
School Committee Room

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

Others participating: Superintendent Dr. Magda Parvey, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Julie Riley, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Sara Stetson, Business Manager Paul Szymanski.

I. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order

Chairperson McCready called to order the meeting of the Andover School Committee at 6:00 PM in the School Committee Room and the Committee immediately voted to meet in Executive Session.

II. Executive Session

Tracey Spruce moved to enter into Executive Session for Purpose (3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with unionized personnel, namely Andover Assistants, SEIU Local 888-School Custodians, Andover 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 open session at approximately 7:00 P.M. The motion was seconded by Shannon Scully. Roll call: L. Conoscenti-Y, T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y, S. Scully-Y, S. McCready-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

III. Regular Meeting resumed at 7:04 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.

Recognitions/Communications

Dr. Parvey recognized Rita Casper and staff who worked on Sunday to distribute Covid kits provided by DESE to school staff. Dr. Parvey visited every school before they went off for the holidays. Yesterday, she attended the Advisory Meeting at WMS to address Social-Emotional Learning with their students.

Administrative Updates:

- Attended AHS Facility Study Committee meeting.
- Welcomed Tom Howard, the School Human Resources Director, who officially started on January 3rd.
- Welcome to Greg Hurley, K-12 Social Studies Coordinator, who will start on January 12th.
- Attended Superintendent's Administrative Team meeting on Covid -19 Test Kits for staff.
- Participated in DESE Conference Call on January 5th regarding mask mandates and extending Access Testing. DESE is encouraging school districts to use their snow days for COVID 19th challenges. There has been an increase in the number of positive COVID cases since the return from winter break with 355 positive cases on the dashboard.

Cleaning protocols have been changed and enhanced cleaning includes using the Clorox 360 spray machines at hot spots during the day to minimize spread.

- Quarantine and isolation protocols have been amended from 10 days to 5 days. The return from winter break was met with an insufficient number of bus drivers causing some morning and afternoon route delays.

Dr. Riley said it was great to see our administrators jump in and help coordinate the distribution of Covid kits this weekend and that we were able to effect how school could open.

Dr. Stetson thanked Rita Casper who worked her entire weekend to separate test kits and plan for the return of students and staff.

Paul Murphy reported that Andover SEPAC has an event scheduled for Tuesday, January 11th from 7:00-8:30 PM via a Zoom meeting with a guest speaker. More information and sign up is available via the SEPAC Website www.andoversepac.org.

Shannon Scully is also appreciative of everyone who worked this weekend. The CDC is now offering boosters for kids 12 and over. Thank you to everyone on the Town-side and in our community who were involved in Andover's 375th Frist Night Celebration. It was well organized and attended.

All of the School Committee members thanked the APS Staff who stepped up once again to help organize our schools to be ready to re-open and those who spent their time off over the holiday weekend helping with the distribution of the testing kits.

Justin Jin said the AHS Student Government has expressed their concern about Covid cases since winter break. In regard to the change to the COVID schoolwork policy, that persons who contact Covid must quarantine for 5-days before returning to school, we ask for the policy to be looked at again to provide students with clear direction on how to make-up school work after a lengthy absence.

The School Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 11th and Wednesday, January 13th for budget presentations starting at 6:00 PM in the School Committee Room. There will be no public input at these meetings.

Lauren Conoscenti thanked the staff for stepping up this weekend on such short notice and gave a shout out to everyone who worked to keep the doors open at our schools. She also shared that January 17th (Martin Luther King Day) is APS Service Day.

B. Public Input

C. Response to Public Input

D. Education

1. **Update: COVID Protocols -Rita Casper, APS Director of Nursing**

Rita Casper provided an update on the status of the District COVID protocols that included discussion on testing, mandatory masks wearing, with no remote learning-per DESE. She also provided an update on protocols for isolation and quarantining.

Additional Highlights:

DESE Goal: 'in-person' learning for students.

Contact tracing will continue in schools to allow for test and stay option.

Parents to assist in notifying close contacts.

Testing: all tests are acceptable, although PCR is more accurate and preferred.

Dashboard: The volume of cases still requires individual calls, causing delays.

Rita Casper responded to the following questions:

- When does an individual who tests positive return to school? The day of the test or start of the symptoms is considered Day 0 and the individual must stay out 5 days, returning to school on day 6. Proof of testing negative is not required to return to school.
- When someone tests positive and returns to school after the 5th day, how do we manage lunch when masks have to be removed? DESE said that whenever possible we should try to maintain a 6' distance and only take mask off as the students are about to take a bite to eat and put the mask back on immediately. Alternate places for eating are offered.
- There are no changes for athletics or after-school programs; but we are looking at our venues to provide distancing and continue to require face masks.
- How might we handle activities where a mask may be removed? Specific type of masks is used for instrument playing and we encourage people to use those. Consider providing alternative activities where they don't have to use masks.
- Question: How parents are notified of a close contact: A letter from Aspen will be sent out to ask parents to monitor their student (they are trying to look at other options to distinguish when there is more than one student in a family in the same school). Guidelines are to monitor one's child.

Julie Riley spoke about academic supports for students in quarantine.

APS guidelines for student quarantine align with what the District's educators have consistently provided for our students who have been absent due to injury or illness. APS staff members will be used to support student learning while the student is in quarantine. Each school has created a support team who will address academic support for students and will include:

Quarantined Students in Grades PK-2 will receive take home packets, and have a minimum of 2 touch points with APS staff member daily, touch points with students via Google Meet and establishment of expectations from APS staff to parents along with assignments and materials.

Quarantined Students in Grades 6-8 will have assignments provided in Schoology by APS Staff, contact from an APS staff member using Google Meet for assistance with learning tasks and/or instruction. Google Meet will be for 30-minutes after school starting at 2:50 PM.

Quarantined Students in Grades 9-12 Assignments provided in Schoology by APS staff. Google Meet contact from APS staff to establish expectations and opportunities to meet with students. APS staff will assist students during H-Block or Transitions, and opportunities to meet with APS staff using Google Meet to address their needs.

E. Continuing Business

1. Substitute Nurse Pay for 2021-2022 School Year

Dr. Parvey and Asst. Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, after discussions with Nursing Director Rita Casper, are requesting an increase to the Substitute Nurse Pay rate so that the district can be market competitive in attempts to fill these much-needed positions. APS has been unsuccessful to date as our rate of \$200 is not market competitive. The APS nursing staff is in need of additional support to fulfill the substantial work required as a result of COVID-19 requirements while also fulfilling the regular daily duties of the nursing staff. The recommendation is to increase the pay from \$200 to a new rate of \$400 for the remainder of this school year.

Lauren Conoscenti moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Superintendent’s recommendation to increase the Substitute Nurse daily pay rate to \$400 per day effective January 10, 2022 for the remainder of the 2021.2022 school year. Motion seconded by Tracey Spruce: Roll Call: Shannon Scully-Y, Tracey Spruce-Y, Lauren Conoscenti-Y, Paul Murphy-Y, and Susan McCready-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

2. Update: FY23 Budget

The Superintendent and Paul Szymanski provided a high-level review of the budget for the upcoming budget meetings next week.

Personnel (82%)	\$78,636,969
General Expense (18%)	<u>\$17,428,717</u>
Total	<u>\$96,065,706</u>
Town Manager’s Recommendation	\$96,065,706
Increase of 3.75% over FY-2022	

They have reviewed different aspects of the budget to determine and our needs as a district. In addition, they have analyzed current staff, current enrollment, and the learning gap caused by the pandemic to ensure that we prioritize the needs of the classroom. Professional learning and curriculum development should be part of the budget and to provide opportunities for curriculum writing after school and over the summer, compensating teachers.

They have also analyzed the current performance data to strategically allocate staff and maximize efficiencies to address the learning gap and to provide targeted support to schools based on identified needs. Many districts have a dedicated person for this work. Structures will be provided to promote continuous professional learning and curriculum development, and to support social emotional learning for students.

Major initiatives for the current school year and beyond shows a need for support in mathematics. Therefore, the initiative includes expanding coaching and instructional support for K-8 Math, initiating the curriculum development process across all grades and content areas,

implementing a new middle school schedule to enable increased core academic time with additional focus on social-emotional learning, and expanding supports for students with social-emotional and behavioral needs.

Major initiatives for FY 23

- Automation – improve back-office effectiveness and efficiency.
- Implementation of electronic requisition and purchase orders.
- Business Manager (School Accountant position plus additional responsibilities).
- Transportation support (vendor and family communications) to provide better support and efficiencies.
- Business Office Generalist to provide assistance for checks and balances and support for the Transportation Director.

<u>Budget Drivers:</u> Track & Step Changes:	\$1,629,131
<u>Transportation</u> for Special Ed and General Ed	\$1,350,064
<u>K-8 Math Curriculum</u> Review, materials and professional development (cost TBD)	
Transition of remaining kindergarten staff to the general fund:	\$354,000

Dr. Parvey reviewed the additional budget considerations (Staffing Priorities, Service Improvements, and Revenue Adjustments) that will be reported on at next week’s budget presentations. The School Committee would like after school activities to be more inclusive with a reduction or elimination of fees.

F. New Business

1. Update: Traffic Analysis

Asst. Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, updated the Committee on the traffic analysis meetings specifically for issues with the AHS / WMS traffic pattern. An on-site meeting at AHS was held with Trombly Bros, Andover Police Department, the Town Planner and Asst. Principal Scott Darlington attending. Andover Police Dept. organized drones to fly over the area for two days to look at the traffic pattern. A traffic consultant from DCI was invited to visit the site and provided a quote of \$11,000 to re-access the traffic pattern. It was decided to not pursue this option.

It is the opinion of Chief Keefe that the pattern that is setup is the best considering the restraints. Scott Darlington said enforcement is a problem and crossing guards are needed for a longer period of time. Operationally, traffic is following the pattern instituted in 2019; but the exiting onto Shawsheen Road from the main entry to take a left-hand turn has been a problem. They will explore having a detailed officer at the site, but due to staffing shortages they do not have anyone currently available. They will implement enforcement to reduce motorists taking U-turns. The School Committee provided commentary on the traffic patterns and suggestions to be considered.

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

1. Grants/Donations to District – as listed in the School Committee Dropbox.
2. SC Meeting Minutes - N/A

Lauren Conoscenti moved to approve that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Tracey Spruce. Roll call vote: P. Murphy-Y, T. Spruce-Y, S. L. Conoscenti-Y, McCready-Y. Motion passes 4-0-1. Shannon Scully abstained.

H. Adjournment

At 8:47 PM on a motion by Tracey Spruce and seconded by Lauren Conoscenti, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting of Thursday, January 6, 2022.

Roll call: T. Spruce-Y, S. Scully-Y, P. Murphy-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. McCready-Y.

Motion passes 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary