

Andover School Committee
Minutes of Tuesday, January 13, 2022

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

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

I. Budget Presentations

A. The Chair called the School Committee to order at 6:00 P.M. The meeting began with a moment of Silence and a Salute to the Flag.

B. AHS Budget Presentation:

AHS Principal, Caitlin Brown, presented the AHS Budget for FY-2023. She began with the need for building-based substitutes and what they value about them. Their consistency, knowledge of school routines and schedules, relationships with students and staff, and their understanding of curriculum strategies are an integral part of the school. They provide consistent coverage for staff absence.

In addition, Principal Brown said they need a 0.5 Engineering Teacher for the expanded and redesigned engineering classes. Steve Chinosi spoke about the collaborative effort between the AHS Science Team and the Digital Learning Innovation Team that led to a partnership with NuVu Studio in Cambridge. APS would like to make engineering and design accessible to all students through the appropriate scope and sequence.

Science Program Coordinator Steve Sanborn and Steve Chinosi have been working diligently to build out the Engineering classes. The goal of the redesign is to facilitate more opportunities and access for students with design starting in the 6th grade. They reimagined the scope and sequence so students could build on this for the next four years. NuVu is a spinout of MIT in the media lab and based on a studio model. Our teachers are getting year-round professional development and a week-long 'boot camp' which is a deep dive. The student demand is greater than capacity for 2021-2022 and they are projecting an even greater demand in 2022-2023.

Questions:

Is it possible to reorganize the services that are being delivered to optimize the headcount; is there a 0.5 that can be re-purposed for this opportunity? How many building-based subs does AHS currently have and how many more do you envision needing?

AHS has three building-based subs and some per diem subs, who cover the classrooms. They would like to retain these three subs, who have been helpful due to the higher level of staff absences as Covid has expanded. They try to use the subs for not one class, but for different classes; sometimes covering for 2-3 teachers in one day. Building based subs are benefit eligible. Justin Jin said the long-term building based subs are an asset to the students and a critical part of the school.

Athletics: Bill Martin, Athletic Director presented two proposals; one to add team uniforms to the Athletic Budget and the other to add 21 Assistant Coaches.

Uniforms: Andover is fortunate that our Booster Programs do quite a bit of fundraising for Andover to purchase athletic uniforms which are not covered in the Athletic Budget. They also need Marching Band uniforms to replace uniforms that are close to 10 years old. Mr. Martin is proposing they create a 5-year rotation plan that would cost an average of between \$35-\$40K per year to replace uniforms.

They have been fortunate for the help of the Booster Organization who previously, at times, funded the cost of assistant coaches, which is not legal. Mr. Martin presented three options for consideration to fund the assistant coaches. 1. The Athletic Dept. budget will be funded to add additional coaches. 2. Allow booster groups to donate money for assistant coaches at a pre-determined amount. 3. Combination of booster groups donating money and the athletic budget adding funding for additional coaches.

The Athletic Department has 74 teams consisting of 500+ student athletes per season. They would like to fund 21 assistant coaches to have on hand for safety and instructional purposes. The 21 Assistant Coaches for the 13 sports programs who currently have volunteer coaches include: nine assistant coaches for female programs, eight assistant coaches for male programs, and four assistant coaches for the Co-Ed Programs (track/cross country).

Questions:

Which of the items is the higher priority? Mr. Martin said uniforms would be the higher priority at this time. All but two districts provide uniforms for their students through their school budgets. If the Boosters Organization would like to donate money, we would work with them to do so through the proper channels and process.

C. Middle School: Doherty Middle, West Middle, and Wood Hill Middle

Presentation for the three Middle Schools was provided by Doherty Principal Robin Wilson and Wood Hill Principal Patrick Bucco.

The Middle Schools are continuing with their requests for guidance counselors at each of the schools. They spoke about the role distinction between guidance counselors and social workers. They have been diligently working to look at where efficiencies and opportunities arise that would allow them to fund these positions. They would like to use ESSER Funds for two years and at the end of the grant funding, to continue funding guidance counselors through the operating budget by repurposing funds through retirement, resignations, etc. They see the guidance counselors as a value to the middle schools.

There will be some overlap with social workers and guidance counselors. The struggle now is to be proactive instead of reactive to help support our students to make sure their needs are being met and assisting the parents and families through the development changes of students and the increased need for social emotional and academic supports.

Guidance counselors would provide support to students and families to understand what to expect as they transition from 5th grade to middle school and transitioning from middle school to the high school. They will look at student achievement, attendance, and behavior to prepare students to have the right skills as they go forward including exploration for career counseling and working closely with the guidance counselors at the high school.

The counselors will be looking at support students with personal and social development and to educate our families on the value of Andover middle schools vs private schools. The Guidance counselors would be working more in the classroom and consulting with teachers and families providing collaborative opportunities, and skill-based development and being able to refer to outside organizations, whatever that needs to be.

Question: Would we be able to find guidance counselors if it is just for a two-year position? Dr. Riley said there are so few guidance counselor positions available, many would take the opportunity to work with students to get the experience.

Math Interventionists:

Target Tier 2 Academic support, provide small group instruction, monitor student progress and serve as a liaison to teachers.

Building Based Substitutes. Robin and Patrick shared the importance of the knowledge building-based substitutes have of school routines and schedules, relationships with students and staff, providing additional classroom team support, an understanding of curriculum strategies, and provide consistent coverage for staff absence. They currently have two at each middle school and want to keep them.

D. Elementary /Preschool level

Principals Pam Lathrop (High Plain Elementary) and Jason DiCarlo (Sanborn School) presented the elementary and preschool requests.

Currently, Andover has a Math Program Coordinator for PreK-12 and two math coaches shared with the five elementary schools. The math curriculum 'Math in Focus' was adopted in 2013. They are going through the process of focusing on a new curriculum and their assessment data indicates the need for math support at the elementary level.

A Math Coordinator for PK-5 would provide targeted support, alignment of the curriculum, analyze and respond to district and school data.

The PK-5 Math Coordinator would work with principals, coaches and teachers to develop a shared vision for mathematics and to support new math curriculum. They would collaborate and support coaches and teachers to deepen pedagogy and provide targeted supervision for coaches and teachers.

Math coaches would strengthen a culture where teaching math is student centered and developmentally appropriate with emphasis on the MA Standards for Mathematics. Coaches would provide increased momentum with math teaching and learning and collaborate with

support staff including Special Education. They would develop action steps in response to district and school data and collaborate with teachers and teams to deliver PD to address student needs. They would be familiar with the schools, students, curriculum, procedures, and provide consistency in learning for students and develop strong relationships with both staff and students.

The Elementary and Preschool principals are also requesting retaining the building based substitutes (currently have 2 per school). Shawsheen School has one building-based substitute that they would like to retain.

Discussion

The Principals are asking for 20 building-based substitutes across the District, what would be the cost, what would that look like, and are there any benefits included? What is the process for hiring Assistant Coaches, do they have to go through the Collective Bargaining Agreement process? What will be the cost for each request? Clarify positions that are re-purposed. Helpful to see the costs associated for each request.

E. FY 2023 School Department Additional Budget Considerations

Preliminary Budget Totals for Personnel and General Expense: \$96,065,706

The Committee discussed additional budget considerations including the reduction of student fees for: Transportation, High School Athletics, High School parking fees, and Middle School Extra-Curricular Fees.

They also discussed Capital Needs for Plant & Facilities that included:

Andover High School Design: \$1,700,000 Town Project vs \$2,500,000 MSBA Project

DMS Improvements: Currently there is \$8,000,000 in the CIP (School 5)

Improvements needed include but not limited to: installation of an elevator, reuse of ramp area outside of the gymnasium; construction of new, accessible single-user restrooms; installation of HVAC system; and installation of sprinklers throughout the building.

School-wide Site Paving Work: \$5,000,000 in CIP for School 5 in FY2025

Improve or replace crumbling or failing pavement surfaces throughout the district.

Air-Conditioning: \$10,700,000 in the CIP in in FY2025

(Sanborn, South, West Middle) to provide comfortable learning environment and extend year-round building use.

Technology:

At the Chair's Meeting yesterday, Paul Puzanghera presented information on the CIP Projects for Information Technology: IT-1, IT-2, and IT-3.

IT-2 Provides for leasing student devices (iPads / Chromebooks) used for daily learning and annual MCAS testing (\$436,477 for FY-23). The Town Manager asked if the School Dept. would move \$150,000-\$200,000 for FY-2023 (student devices) to the School Operating Budget.

Susan McCready provided the list of items in the FY-2023 Budget Framework that includes Obligations, Improvements, and Capital Projects.

The Superintendent is conducting a district-wide assessment of areas of strength and areas for investment.

Next Steps

Consider requests and priorities, on-going refinement of costs by Dr. Parvey and Administration Team.

Work with the Town Manager to define potential package of CIP Investments for consideration and terms based on projects and estimated rates.

Annual cost for Student Refresh Loan.

Superintendent FY-23 budget recommendations

Submit School Dept. Budget to Town Manager

The Chair asked the School Committee and the Administration Team to review the budget and budget requests prior to the next Chair's Meeting two weeks from Friday. (January 28th).

F. Adjournment

At 7:49 PM on a motion by Lauren Conoscenti and seconded by Paul Murphy, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary