

Andover School Committee
Thursday, May 5, 2022
School Committee Room

- I. The Chair of the Andover School Committee, Susan McCready, opened the Regular Meeting at 6:15 PM and the Committee moved immediately into Executive Session.

Participants from the School Committee: Chair Susan McCready, Vice Chair Lauren Conoscenti. Members: Tracey Spruce, Sandis Wright and Emily DiCesaro, who participated remotely.

Others participating: Superintendent Dr. Magda Parvey, School Business Administrator Paul Szymanski, Asst. Superintendent Dr. Julie Riley, and AHS Student Government, Justin Jin.

II. Executive Session

Tracey Spruce moved to vote to meet in executive session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws chapter 30A, section 21(a) for the following purposes: Purpose (7) to review and approve minutes of the following executive session meetings: June 21, 2021; June 24, 2021. The Committee will reconvene in regular session at approximately 7:00 PM. Motion seconded by Lauren Conoscenti. Roll call: E. DiCesaro-Y, S. Wright-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, T. Spruce-Y, S. McCready-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

III. Regular Meeting Resumed at 7:00 PM

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

A. Recognitions/Communications

Dr. Parvey shared her Superintendent's report on school visits and other activities she participated in across the school district some of which included attending High Five Friday at Bancroft Elementary, the AHS Global Summit and speaking to the students about their work, participating in the West Elementary Faculty Meeting, and also participating in a math discussion that centered around a book Katherine Richards shared on how we should look at numbers differently and teaching students to look at math concepts and number sense differently. On Wednesday May 4th she attended the APS Art Show held at the Robb Center.

Administrative Updates:

Dr. Parvey attended the Town-wide PTO meeting on Friday, April 29th with the focus on the Mental Health Workshop. She and the HR Director Tom Howard met with the SEPAC Focus Group on May 2nd to gather information on what they are looking for in the next Student Services Administrator. The Superintendent's Administrative Team (SAT) met with Dr. Parvey on May 4th to discuss the end of the school year and what the needs are for the next school year. Dr. Parvey also participated in several school personnel interviews, and announced that Wayne Puglisi has been selected as then APS Athletic Director effective July 1, 2022.

The Release Day on Friday will provide an opportunity for professional development for educators. The high school and elementary school personnel will participate in School-based professional development, while the Middle School staff will participate in the Institute for Learning for Math and ELA. Instructional Assistants in the middle and high school be reviewing the documentary “Like” on the dangers of social media.

This being Teacher Appreciation Week, Dr. Riley recognized and thanked all of our educators for the work they do, day in and day out and after school across the district. She spoke about the student work they witnessed at the AHS Global Summit; the student’s presentation skills and knowledge of a wide range of products was impressive. Today, they worked with Elementary Principals on developing a Vision for Literacy with classroom walk-thru at West Elementary and South School to see the students’ work. Dr. Riley thanked the teachers for opening their doors and inviting them in, and for all of the work they did to help support them in this effort.

On invitation from AHS teacher Mary Robb, Sandis Wright reported that he attended the Class on Democracy and Media Literacy taught by Mary Robb. The students discussed their perspectives on social media and digital innovation and how it impacts our lives, tackling a complex topic. Thank you for inviting the School Committee to join the session.

Tracey Spruce also attended Mary Robb’s Class on Democracy and Media Literacy and was fortunate to sit through two sessions. She watched the Social Dilemma and saw some discussion with the students which was really great; she is grateful for the opportunity. Monday, May 16 is the Annual Student Capstone Showcase that will be held at the Cormier Center. Tracey encourages everyone to stop by and see what the students have been working on.

As the School Committee Liaison to SEPAC, Emily DiCesaro is looking forward to working with them and continuing to support the relationship. She said she was fortunate to give out appreciation cards from the School Committee to school staff at the different schools during Teacher Appreciation Week.

As we celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week, Lauren Conoscenti thanked all of our school staff for the support they provide our students; we are grateful for all they do. The next informal School Committee Forum will be held on Saturday May 14th at 9:30 AM at MHL (3rd floor meeting room). Lauren also announced that the WMS Drama Club is performing “Oliver Jr” this week at 7:00 PM on Friday and on Saturday at 2:00 PM. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased at the door or at the Andover Bookstore.

Susan McCready announced that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on May 17 and May 18, 2022 in the AHS Collins Field House starting at 7:00 PM. A Special Town Meeting will be held within the Annual Town Meeting. This is the opportunity for the community to vote on the Town and School budgets and she urges residents to come out and do their part. Susan also had the opportunity to sit in on Ms. Robb’s class which was a great example of how we can talk about difficult subjects respectfully even if we don’t agree. She was thrilled to have the opportunity to be there and appreciated the respect Ms. Robb shows to her students as well. Susan also shared her appreciation of all staff in our schools and Central Office who support our kids each and every day.

B. Public Input - None

C. Response to Public Input N/A

D. Education

1. SEPAC Presentation

SEPAC leaders Georgeann Keer, Melissa Irvin, and Tara Bodine, shared the results of the 2020.2021 SEPAC survey with the School Committee and provided a brief overview of the main data and feedback received from the community. Their goal is to obtain as much feedback from the community as possible and to support Andover's Special Education Community. They received 155 responses to the survey which included some of the following suggestions:

- SEPAC Operations- change meeting times to a Monday/Tuesday starting at 7 PM.
- Increase outreach to the Andover Community with informal discussions and networking opportunities.
- Offer different training on topics of interest such as executive functioning and anxiety.
- Offer ability to have support groups based on certain areas of interest such as Language-based learning disability, ADHD, Autism, and available services and accommodations.

The most important part of their goal is to improve the community partnership with the schools and School Committee. They were pleased that they were able to have a focus group with Dr. Parvey.

SEPAC has had several opportunities to connect with the community over the past year on a wide-range of topics. The community feels value with regular contact with case managers and increased guardian accessibility to curriculum and services. Suggestions for opportunities for improvement included:

- ⇒ Regular, timely communication with case managers.
- ⇒ Parent training in technology.
- ⇒ Educate SEPAC on available services and resources.
- ⇒ Help connect guardians with SEPAC at the beginning of the school year and at IEP annual report meetings.
- ⇒ Increase partnership with guardians to reinforce student skills and improve success.
- ⇒ Consistency in communication and delivery across schools, levels, and year.

Additional feedback included the following:

- Academic support teachers, counselors, school social workers and Special Ed assistants are critical in improving success in General Education Classrooms.
- Daily journals from the SpecEd teacher helps families understand what is being taught.
- Transition between Elementary/Middle/High School should be better coordinated.
- Greater Executive Function skills/study skills training for all students at the elementary and middle level improve independence at the high school level.
- Variability in team coordination, communications highlighted as critical.
- Better use of and timely updates on Schoology/Aspen were recommended.

Survey respondents also suggested/requested:

- A tour of Student Services to educate parents/students about available programming and services.
- Help with promoting SEPAC i.e. create a brochure that includes IEP forms and the Notice of Procedural Safeguards.
- Share SEPAC meetings and event information with entire APS Community.
- More frequent check-ins between teachers and parents/guardians via monthly mini progress reports and daily journals from Special Ed Teachers.
- Hosting annual workshops on transitions, understanding the IEP, 504 Plans, etc.
- Standardize method and frequency of communication from teachers.

Emily DiCesaro is excited to work with the SEPAC members and to be involved as much as she can to bring back information to share with the School Committee.

Tracey Spruce said it is important that we get the word out about what services are available and having a tour sounds great and should be made available to the broader community. Hearing about all of the available programs and where to find the information would be helpful to all the families.

Lauren Conoscenti commented on SEPAC's social media presence, which is amazing and which provides an opportunity to share information and to get involved.

Melissa Irving said SEPAC also has a private group on Facebook that allows one to post and ask questions and connect with each other and ask questions anonymously. There is definitely a seasonality to the interest in what services are offered.

The School Committee thanked the SEPAC leaders for their presentation.

E. New Business

1. Job Descriptions:

The job descriptions for the Elementary Literacy Coaches and the Social Emotional Program Coordinator were made available to the School Committee in drop-box.

Dr. Parvey, who previously discussed the positions with the School Committee, explained how these positions will help support the Literacy Program at the elementary level and how the SEL Coordinator will support our efforts as a District. The SEL Coordinator position is a 2-year position and falls under the ESSER Grant. SEL is not new to Andover, the district has done work in this area and our teachers have been asking for something more district-wide. The SEL Coordinator will be working with the Student Services Department and making sure everyone works together.

Tracey Spruce moved the Andover School Committee vote to approve the job descriptions for Pre-K Literacy Coach and Social Emotional Coordinator as presented. Motion seconded by Lauren Conoscenti. Roll call: Emily DiCesaro-Y, Sandis Wright-Y, Tracey Spruce-Y, Lauren Conoscenti-Y, and Susan McCready-Y. Motion passes on a vote of 5-0.

2. Annual Town Meeting Article 5: Annual Public Posting of Every No-Bid Contract

This private warrant article states that the Town Manager shall annually and prominently,

post on the official and of republic website, a page entitled public posting of every no bid contract or agreement. The School Committee feels that because the Town already posts the agreements and contracts and the article is broadly worded, they are not inclined to recommend approval. Mr. Szymanski confirmed that the Town Purchasing Department is given a copy of all agreements and contracts which are then posted on their website.

Tracey Spruce moved that the Andover School Committee vote to recommend disapproval of the Special Town Meeting Warrant Article 5 Annual Public Posting of Every No-bid Contract as presented. Motion seconded by Lauren Conoscenti. Roll call: E. DiCesaro-Y, S. Wright-Y, T. Spruce-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. McCready-Y. Motion voted 5-0 to recommend disapproval.

3. Private School Tuition Prepayment

Paul Szymanski reported that the pre-payment request is not new to the Committee and is in accordance with MGL Chapter 71 Section 71D allowing the Committee to approve a request to prepay Out-of-District tuitions (up to 3 months) for an upcoming school year using current year funds. After reviewing the March financials, Mr. Szymanski said they are in a good position to do this at this time and it would be prudent to prepay the tuitions.

Lauren Conoscenti moved that the Andover School Committee in accordance with MGL Chapter 71 Section 71D, authorize the prepayment of tuition for a period not to exceed three months, to any approved private school or approved program source in which an Andover Public Schools student is enrolled under the provisions of MGL Chapter 71B using funds from the FY-2022 Budget. Motion seconded by Tracey Spruce.

Roll call: S. Wright-Y, E. DiCesaro-Y, T. Sprue-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. McCready-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

4. Financials

Mr. Szymanski provided a review of the March 2022 financials which shows the total fund balance of \$92M which is broken down into expenses, salaries and the like. The operating budget gives us a determination in what direction we are going and what the final financial balance is, which is challenging as we try to close out the year. There are many purchase orders that are encumbered early in the year and, it is important, to unencumber those remaining dollars to be used to the best of our advantage. Paul also explained the revolving fund accounts that are reported showing the status of the initial appropriation and which balances are carried forward.

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

Grants/Donations: (1) AHS Robotics FTC Challenge Qualifier Expenses donated by First Technical Challenge in the amount of \$2,898.00; and (2) \$1,500 donated to the WHMS Community from the Andona Society for supplies for a community art project.

Lauren Conoscenti moved to approve the Grant Donations as presented. Motion seconded by Tracey Spruce. Roll call: S. Wright-Y, T. Spruce-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, E. DiCesaro-Y, S. McCready-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

1. SC Minutes: Triboard Meeting

2. April 21, 2022

Tracey Spruce moved to approve the April 21, 2022 Triboard Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Lauren Conoscenti. Roll call: T. Spruce-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. McCready-Y. Motion passes 3-0-2. Emily DeCesare and Sandis Wright abstained.

G. Adjourn

At 8:16 P.M. on a motion by Lauren Conoscenti and seconded by Sandis Wright, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting of Thursday, May 5, 2022. S. Wright-Y, T. Spruce-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, E. DiCesaro-Y, S. McCready-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary