

**Andover School Committee**  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 9, 2009**  
**School Administration Building - School Committee Room**

**Members in Attendance:** Chair Debra Rahmin Silberstein, Richard J. Collins, Dennis Forgue, Annie Gilbert, David Birnbach and AHS Liaisons, Alex Macheras and Charlie Smith.

**Others in Attendance:** Dr. Claudia L. Bach, Superintendent, Dr. Susan Nicholson, Assistant Superintendent and David Keniston, Business Manager.

**I. Executive Session**

Chair Deb Silberstein called the School Committee Meeting to order at 6:03 P.M. in the School Committee Meeting Room in the School Offices. Present were: Chair Deb Silberstein, and Committee Members Richard Collins, Dennis Forgue, Annie Gilbert and David Birnbach.

On a motion by Dennis Forgue and a second by Richard Collins it was voted to go into Executive Session to discuss contractual issues and other related matters and to return to Open Session. Roll Call Vote: Chair Silberstein-Y, Members, D. Forgue-Y, R. Collins-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, and D. Birnbach-Y. At 7:14 P.M. on a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to adjourn the Executive Session, return to Open Session and at the conclusion of Open Session, to return to Executive Session.. Roll Call Vote: Chair Silberstein-Y, Members, D. Birnbach-Y, R. Collins, D. Forgue-Y, and A.Gilbert-Y.

Also present in Executive Session: Superintendent Dr. Claudia Bach, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Susan Nicholson, Candace Hall, Director of Human Resources, Business Administrator David Keniston, and AHS Principal Peter Anderson.

**II. Regular meeting in the School Committee Room**

**A. Salute to the Flag**

Chair Deb Silberstein reconvened to Open Session at 7:19 P.M. Mr. Collins asked for a Moment of Silence in memory of Laurie O'Connor, Administrative Assistant at West Middle School who passed away on Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Doherty Middle School Student Gina Sawaya. Mr. Collins presented Gina with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the School Committee.

**B. Recognition of Achievement**

Dr. Bach congratulated the 401 members of the Class of 2009 on their graduation from Andover High School and said the ceremony held on Monday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at the Tsongas Arena in Lowell went well.

Dr. Bach welcomed the AHS Destination Imagination Team to tonight's meeting and congratulated them on their remarkable achievement for placing first in the world's leading creativity program in which over 10,000 students from more than 40 countries competed with their presentation of "Instinct Messaging".

Dr. Bach also congratulated the AHS Boys' Track Team who won the State Track Championship this past weekend. She recognized Coach Peter Comeau and all the students for this outstanding achievement. Mr. Collins said the last team to achieve this goal was in 1984 when Coach Comeau was a member of the track team.

**D. Communications**

1. Town/School IT Update                      Tabled

## 2. AHS / MS Summer Reading Program

Dr. Bach said the School Budget of \$60.4M requires layoffs of 45 FTE's. Human Resources has stepped up to the reach out to all personnel who will have reduced hours or job eliminations and is offering several employee assistance workshops. Dr. Bach also received a letter from the Town Manager with information about the possibility of a Special Town Meeting to be held this Fall (late September or early October) and that a letter will be forthcoming from the Chair of the Board of Selectmen alerting all departments to make no financial commitments that will keep the budget unbalanced.

AHS Social Studies Teacher Mary Robb has invited the School Committee to share a viewing of the film "Consuming Kids". Dr. Bach would like to invite Ms. Robb to show the film at an upcoming School Committee Meeting. Deb Silberstein suggested inviting the PTO Presidents to attend the viewing.

Dr. Nicholson welcomed AHS English Language Arts Program Advisor, Pat Whalen and ELA Curriculum Council Member Joan Veznaian who presented information on the selection and guidelines for the Summer 2009 Reading Program (included in the School Committee Packet) for Middle and High School students. The lists and letters will be sent home to parents and are available on the Andover Public School Website at [www.aps1.net](http://www.aps1.net). The teachers are excited about the list of books selected and have developed reading guides, which will be available to students on-line. Joan Veznaian said the Middle School students would read one book over the summer and in the fall complete a writing assignment that will serve as a baseline for each student. The reading lists can be found on the APS website. Deb Silberstein would like to invite the new High School Principal, Jonathan Harris to attend a School Committee meeting in the fall and give a review of new courses offered and courses that have been dropped due to low enrollment and/or reduction in staff.

Dennis Forgue on behalf of the School Committee is pleased to announce that a contract agreement has been successfully completed with the School Custodians. The School Committee greatly appreciates the collaborative effort and creativity put forth by the custodians. Deb Silberstein thanked Annie Gilbert and Dennis Forgue, who acted as the sub-committee for negotiations with the custodians. Mr. Forgue offered to attend meetings and to work with Dave Geaslen for additional fundraising for the Athletic Department.

Mr. Forgue also offered to gather best practices and data from other towns that have accomplished combining departments such as Human Resources and Plant and Facilities and bring the information back to the Committee.

Annie Gilbert said the School Building Task Force will meet on Wednesday at 8:00 A.M. in the Selectmen's Conference Room to discuss the Feasibility Study for Bancroft and to establish a timeline for creating a vision for an educational plan, gather input from Shawsheen and Bancroft parents and teachers, and configure grade level, enrollment, and capacity for the school. Dr. Nicholson said a Strategic Plan would act as a guide for an elementary school on the cutting edge of technology will look like.

Charlie Smith said the National Honor Society could be a resource for the Town to gather opinions on issues that impact the schools. Deb Silberstein suggested a School Committee member work with the student group.

Dr. Nicholson suggested AP Foreign Language students teach a foreign language class to elementary students for credits which would assist with coverage for planning time for elementary teachers.

Deb Silberstein recognized Mr. Collins on the 50<sup>th</sup> AHS Graduation Ceremony he has attended. Deb Silberstein would also like to begin discussions on the Strategic Plan at the next meeting. She also said the Superintendent's current evaluation model needs to be replaced and suggested a mini-review of performance goals for the Superintendent's review for this year and tying the goals into the Strategic Plan for next year.

## **E. Communications (Cont'd)**

### **3. Early Release Day Proposal for 2009-2010**

Dr. Nicholson said there are six Early Release Days planned for the 2009-2010 School Year. The Release Days will be used to engage teachers in professional development on a number of topics beginning with a focus on the new electronic elementary report card. Release Days will be posted on the Andover Public School website.

### **4. Update on High Plain Elementary Principal Search**

Dr. Bach announced the selection of Pamela Lathrop as the new Principal of High Plain Elementary School. Ms. Lathrop has worked with a number of initiatives that parallel a lot of the work we do in Andover and has also been an Assistant Principal of a Pre-K to Grade 5 School in North Andover for several years. Dr. Bach thanked the members of the Search Committee, especially the Co-Chairs Candace Hall and Patrick Bucco, for their efforts in bringing good leadership candidates forward.

## **D. Education**

### **1. Grade 7 & 8 Math Program Review**

Dr. Nicholson prefaced the presentation of the Middle School Math Program Curriculum Review by reminding the Committee of the Program Review Cycle presented last June in which three programs were put forth for review for this year: Middle School Math, K-3 Balanced Literacy, and Expeditionary Learning. The review is an examination of the Middle School Math CMP Program not an examination of leveling. Dr. Nicholson thanked the many teachers and members of the Math Curriculum Council who participated in the Program Review and recognized Marge Andreson for her input.

Donna Pappalardo, AHS and Middle School Math Program Advisor and Mary Ellen Iannabelli, DMS Assistant Principal and members of the Math Curriculum Council explained the Grade 7 & 8 Benchmarks and Learning Standards used at each level to frame the Andover Benchmarks and the standards assessed on the Spring MCAS tests. Donna Pappalardo spoke about the valuable conversations with math teachers in grades 6, 7, and 8, high school teachers, and with the math curriculum council that have been enormously helpful in communicating expectations.

The presentation showed a comparison of Andover to other districts similar to Andover using CMP Math, such as Marblehead, Wellesley, Westford; as well as MCAS Scores for Brookline who does not use CMP Math.

Dr. Nicholson provided a review of Professional Development initiatives for teachers for CMP training, differentiated instruction; teacher led professional development, technology, collaboration and lots of supplemental activities that are provided to teachers for support was offered. All units in Grades 7 & 8 have been differentiated, and pacing charts used by teachers were significant in bringing teachers on board. Donna Pappalardo said that although they are at a good point, teachers would like to investigate other math programs. Next steps for September for secondary math include establishing criteria to look at other math programs by middle school teachers.

## **D. Education (Cont'd)**

### **2. 2010 District Goals & Objectives**

The Superintendent's District Goals and Objects include two goals. Goal #1 is to Improve 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills for all students. Objectives under this goal include providing curriculum, instruction and assessment that develops 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills in all students, commitment to improving teacher quality, continuing to provide well-maintained facilities, commitment to and promotion of respect and civility among students, staff, parents, elected officials and the community, to enhance communications among all constituents, and to teach students to celebrate and appreciate diversity. Goal #2 states that during the FY208-09 School Year, in collaboration with all constituents, develop a comprehensive 3-5 year Strategic Goal.

The Committee discussed changes and additions to the District Goals and Objectives submitted by Dr. Bach. It was suggested new objectives be added to tie Professional Development into the District Goals and to change the phrase "commit to" to "to improve" across the document, and to add a retooling and cost statistic reduction statement. Adding the Strategic Plan to the goals was discussed as well as tying the Superintendent's evaluation to the Strategic Plan. Dr. Bach will provide a draft of updated Goals and Objectives and bring back to the Committee for review.

## **E. Citizen Input**

Marge Andresen said Massachusetts has one of the most rigorous and robust set of Math Frameworks and credits Donna Pappalardo and the teachers with the progress that has been accomplished in aligning the Andover Benchmarks with the Massachusetts frameworks and the supplemental materials provided to students.

## **F. Finance**

### **1. User Fee Proposal**

Dave Keniston reported on the user views included in the School Committee packet and requested approval of fees for Athletics and parking at AHS as presented.

Dennis Forgue motioned to approve the Athletic User fee as presented for \$350.00 for a single user, \$700 family cap with standard waivers based on free and reduced lunch participation. The fee is an increase of \$100 for single user and \$200 for family cap. The motion was seconded by Annie Gilbert, voted 5-0-0 and approved.

Annie Gilbert motioned to approve the increase in the High School Student Parking fee from \$100 to \$200 with the expected revenue increase to be used to offset crossing guard expenses. The motion was seconded by David Birnbach, voted 5-0-0 and approved.

Approval for the Middle School Extra Curricular Fee, Transportation fee, Pre-School Tuition, School Lunch Prices, and Full Day Kindergarten were not required, as they remain the same. Mr. Keniston said the Full Day Kindergarten revolving account balance as of June 9, 209 shows a balance of \$302,105, FY2010 with payments received as of June 9, 2009 \$109,000, leaving an estimated net of \$193,105. He also notes that up to \$150,000 of this balance may be need to apply to kindergarten expenses to help balance accounts at year end if FY2009 budget holdbacks are not sufficient to cover the FY2009 deficit.

## F. Finance (Cont'd)

### 2. Amended Regular Bus Transportation Bid Award

Mr. Keniston explained that to resolve the bid protest from First Student he is asking for approval of an amendment to the Bid #023 for Regular School Bus Transportation for FY 2010-12 awarded to Trombly Motor Coach.

David Birnbach motioned to approve the amendment for Bid Award #023 Regular School Bus Transportation for FY2010 to FY2012 to Trombly Motor Coach of Dracut, Massachusetts, dated May 21, 2009 revised *nunc pro tunc* to expunge from the record the finding that First Student, Inc. is "non-responsible bidder". The Committee makes no finding as to whether First Student is or is not a responsible bidder. In order to avoid a prolonged dispute over the responsiveness of the RFP submitted by First Student, the Committee acknowledges that First Student has withdrawn its bid and the subject contract is hereby awarded to Trombly Motor Coach as the low bidder under Chapter 30B. The motion was seconded by Mr. Collins, and voted 5-0-0 to approve.

### 3. Year to Date Financials

Dave Keniston explained the Year-to-Date Financials noting that as of May 31, 2009 a shortfall in the School Dept O & M Salary expense budgets is \$37,659; Non-salary accounts has an estimated shortfall in the expense budget of \$424,088. The O & M FY2009 deficit is estimated at \$461,7474. A combination of budget holdbacks, reclassification of some FY2009 expenses he expects to finish FY2010 with no School Department O & M budget deficit at year end. He said Revolving Accounts are on track for revenue and expenses. He is requesting approval of the General Fund Transfers presented.

Mr. Forgue motioned to approve the Budget Transfers as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Collins, and voted 5-0-0 to approve.

## G. Consent Agenda

**Warrant:** Dave Keniston said the Warrants are in order.

**Minutes:** Regular Session Minutes of April 22, 2009, May 5, 2009, May 12, 2009 and May 20, 2009.

**Motion:** Mr. Birnbach motioned to approve the consent agenda items, which include the Warrant, and Regular Session Minutes of April 22, 2009, May 5, 2009, May 12, 2009 and May 20, 2009. The motion was seconded by Mr. Collins and unanimously approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Forgue, voted 5-0-0 and approved.

## H. Policy

### 1. Anti-Fraud Policy

Mr. Keniston is requesting approval of the Anti-Fraud Policy as presented (third reading). Attorney Stonberg has added additional features to the Policy and Mr. Keniston stated approval of the Policy is important to the Audit Committee.

Mr. Forgue motioned to approve the Anti-Fraud Policy as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Collins, and voted 5-0-0 to approve.

## I. Motion to Adjourn

Mr. Forgue motioned to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the School Committee to enter into Executive Session to discuss the proposal on Early Retirement and not to return to Regular Session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Collins, and voted 5-0 -0 to approve. The meeting adjourned at 10:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted  
Dec DeLorenzo, Recorder