

**Andover School Committee**  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting of October 27, 2009**  
**School Administration Building - School Committee Room**

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

**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 6:10 P.M. in the School Committee Meeting Room in the School Offices. Present were: Chair Deb Silberstein, and Committee Members Richard Collins, Dennis Forgue, and Annie Gilbert.

On a motion by Dennis Forgue and a second by Richard Collins it was voted to go into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining issues, non-union and union contract matters and to return to Open Session. Roll Call Vote: Chair Silberstein-Y, Members, D. Forgue-Y, R. Collins-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, and David Birnbach-Y. At 6:58 P.M. on a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to adjourn the Executive Session and to return to Open Session. Roll Call Vote: Chair Silberstein-Y, Members, D. Birnbach-Y, R. Collins, D. Forgue-Y, and A. Gilbert-Y.

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

**A. Opening Ceremonies**

Chair Deb Silberstein reconvened to Open Session at 7:10 P.M. Mr. Collins asked for a Moment of Silence in memory of Theodore Sizer, Sr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Zachary Vitale, a second grade student from High Plain Elementary School. Mr. Collins presented Zachary with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the School Committee.

**B. Recognition of Achievement**

**1. Best Practices – National Board Certified Teachers**

Dr. Susan Nicholson introduced the Steve Sanborn, Deb Casey, Meghan Reilly, who have attained National Certification; and Sarah Fisher, and Chris Farina who have just begun the journey. Steve Sanborn has been instrumental in guiding teachers through this arduous process. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Steve Sanborn led the School Committee through the steps of this superior professional development experience and the history of the NBPT. The NBPT recognizes accomplished teaching, advanced certification and voluntary assessment based on national standards. National Board certification is good for ten years followed by a recertification process. Deb Casey and Meghan Reilly discussed their experiences with the certification and assessment process, which includes four portfolio entries, six-assessment center exercises and a final exam, and shared their portfolios with the School Committee. Sarah Fisher and Chris Farina who are just beginning the process, talked about their motivation to become a National Board Certified Teacher.

## **B. Recognition of Achievement (Cont'd)**

Dr. Bach recognized and thanked West Elementary Principal Liz Roos, and staff who held their yearly past a night in conjunction with National Grid's "Power to Save" Program sharing many energy saving ideas with the West Elementary Community.

Dr. Bach recognized Brian McNally, Director of Physical Education & Health for arranging the Grade 4/Grade 5 Mile Fun Run and the Cross-Country Run for middle school students.

Dr. Nicholson congratulated the AHS Band and Color Guard who were awarded the silver medal at the State Band Competition held in Lowell at McCauley Stadium on Sunday.

## **C. Communications**

### **1. Update on IT Integration Study**

Ray Tode reported that the consulting firm of BlumShapiro has been retained by the Town to conduct the assessment of the town and school technology departments. Recommendations for improvements and a five-year strategic implementation plan will be developed based on their findings. The IT Committee process and the Strategic Plan process will be close in nature, but the IT Committee will be looking at the organizational processes, and is not an educational study. David Birnbach said the review of technology for the Strategic Plan should include an in-depth exploration of the technology infrastructure, investments to make inside the classroom, and the tools students will require. Len D'Innocenzo, Chair of the IT Committee, told the School Committee they should expect to be contacted by consultants of BlumShapiro.

### **2. Update on Bancroft School Feasibility Study**

Dr. Bach is preparing a refreshed statement of interest to submit to MSBA and will be submitting information on AHS as a reminder of their continued need. Annie Gilbert gave a recap of last week's meetings with Symmes, Maini & McKee, and their presentation to the community on the educational configuration for the Bancroft project (available on the Andover School website). The next steps include meetings at Bancroft, Shawsheen, and with Bancroft neighbors and the community to dialogue about building a new school and to capture their vision of the educational, enrollment, and building configurations. Information of upcoming meetings can be found on the website at [www.aps1.net](http://www.aps1.net). The Committee is also scheduling visits to view other school sites for ideas.

### **3. Update on Strategic Plan**

Annie Gilbert said the School Committee met with Future Management Systems on October 15th to discuss procedures on moving forward with the Strategic Plan. These measures include a retrospective of the school system, internal collection of data, and two pin-point areas; Technology and Revenue Generating Ideas. To move the Strategic Plan forward the Committee will be soliciting broad based participation for public forums and panels. The Technology Committee will be co-chaired by David Birnbach and Ray Tode, with the Revenue Generating Committee Co-chaired by Dr. Bach and Dennis Forgue. Notices regarding participation in the two pin-point groups will be placed in the Andover Townsman. The Pin-point Committee Chairs will meet with Lyle Kirtman, FMS on November 6th, and the Steering Committee on November 30th.

### **3. Update on Strategic Plan (Cont'd)**

Deb Silberstein, who attended a presentation by Alan November at the educational summit at MIT on Saturday, has invited him to speak to the community on the digital divide and how students are learning today.

#### **D. Education**

##### **1. MCAS Preliminary Report**

Dr. Nicholson presented the general impressions and trends of the spring 2009 MCAS results and the new growth model from the DESE. Teams at the schools will be working to unpack the data and more information will unfold from that process. Dr. Nicholson is pleased to report that student achievement in Math and English Language Arts for Grade 10 is excellent. There has been a 99% passing rate in English Language Arts and a 98% passing rate in math at AHS with a steady increase in the number of special education students scoring in the advanced/proficient range in these two subjects. In Physics, 92% of students at AHS scored in the Advanced/above proficient range which is slightly higher than last year. In Biology only a handful of students sat for the exam.

At the middle school level, Grade 6 students showed excellent achievement in English Language Arts and made a positive direction in math. In Grade 7, students scored 89% in the advanced and proficient range in English Language Arts, up 1% from the previous year although they had a slight decrease in this year's math scores. We see a positive trend in English Language Arts for Grade 8 with 95% of students scoring in the advanced and proficient range; with no change in the advanced and proficient range for math.

At the elementary level, there was an overall increase in the percentage of Grade 3 and grade 4 students in the advanced and proficient range for English Language Arts and in Math which shows a positive trend. Grade 5 students show a slight decrease in the overall percentage of students in advanced and proficient for English Language Arts, Math, and Science.

Dr. Nicholson explained the steps the schools will be taking as the data analysis teams move forward with unpacking the test scores. They will continue to focus on the district initiatives to support student achievement in the following areas: Elementary - K-5 Writing Scope and Sequence, mid-year and end of year math assessments; Middle School - math program reviews, composition writing and review of MCAS extensions; Andover High School - learning disabilities in the classroom, and rubrics and common assessments.

Dr. Nicholson explained the new MCAS Growth Model which will illustrate how each student is achieving relative to state standards, measure change in an individual student's performance over time, and the rate of change expressed as a percentile. This new growth model is a much more useful model and may replace AYP and is a way to measure progress for students at all performance levels.

**E. Personnel**

**1. Superintendent's Professional Goals for FY2010**

The motion was seconded by Dennis Forgue, voted 5-0 and approved. Annie Gilbert motioned to approve the Superintendent's Goals for FY2010 as presented.

Dr. Bach announced she will be stepping down as Superintendent at the end of this year. On Wednesday a notice will be going home to parents via the listserv and an email sent to all staff. Dr. Bach said she is not retiring but looking to serve in a meaningful way somewhere else and will continue to be an outspoken advocate for Andover. Dr. Bach is honored to have led a community of talented students, exceptional teachers, and extraordinary administrators, who have all been so supportive, and thanked the parents and the community as well for the opportunity to serve as the Superintendent for the past eleven (almost twelve) years. She is proud of what has been achieved together and is aware that there is much more to do given the future challenges students will confront.

Chair Deb Silberstein followed Dr. Bach's announcement with a statement commending her for being an innovative and decisive educator who has always acted in the best interests of the children of Andover. Dr. Bach has provided strong leadership and developed leadership teams that are collaborative, highly effective and efficient problem solvers, which are a model for other communities. She stabilized school building leadership and made outstanding hiring decisions. She has been a strong advocate for equitable funding, increasing our per pupil expenditure above state average. Andover has award winning and innovative programs in every school. Dr. Bach initiated sustainable and creative non-tax revenue opportunities and through aggressive cost savings and good management, and has spent taxpayer dollars wisely; strategically targeting student achievement. Chair Silberstein thanked Dr. Bach for providing a strong and stable leadership to the Andover Community.

The School Committee has accepted the Superintendent's resignation.

**F. Citizen Input**

Diane Costagliola, Belknap Drive is surprised that Dr. Bach is stepping down and although they may have disagreed at times, she thanked Dr. Bach for everything she has done for the Andover Schools. John Zipeto commended Dr. Bach on her commitment to bringing the school system up another level and for staying the course. Andrea Zaines, Williams Street also thanked Dr. Bach her dedication and support to the Andover Public Schools.

Dr. David Samuels, a former School Committee member, said there are hundreds of success stories of students who have gone through the Andover Public Schools under Dr. Bach's tenure. Dr. Bach has held steadfast in her convictions, many of which do not get recognized. We all thank her for many years of service to the Andover Public Schools and the Town.

## **F. Citizen Input (Cont'd)**

Mike Rivet said he was disappointed with the way the meeting for Ken Maglio was handled on Monday and the process the School Committee followed. Annie Gilbert stated the Committee followed the process under the Collective Bargaining Agreement to hear a labor grievance and resolve any violation in Executive Session. Unfortunately, neither Mr. Maglio nor the union wanted to be heard under these terms. Mr. Maglio was offered an opportunity to meet with the Superintendent on August 4th and September 30<sup>th</sup> but did not.

## **G. Consent Agenda**

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

Dennis Forgue motioned to approve the warrant as presented. The motion was seconded by David Birnbach and voted 4-0 to approve.

2. Field Trips: WHMS /Grades 6-8 Canobie Lake Park –October 30, 2009;  
DMS /Grade 8 Mt. Major, Alton Bay-NH, Nov 20 & 23,2009;  
WMS /Grades 6-8 - Rockingham Park Mall, Salem, NH December 8, 2009;  
WMS /Grades 7-8 -Quebec City, Canada, June 5-7, 2010

Dennis Forgue motioned to approve the field trips as listed. The motion was seconded by David Birnbach and voted 4-0 to approve.

3. Minutes: Regular Session Minutes of August 17, 2009, September 9, 2009;  
September 29, 2009, October 13, 2009, October 15, 2009 and Triboard Meeting Minutes of September 17 and October 1, 2009;  
Work Session Minutes of August 25, 2009 and Tri-board Minutes of August 17, 2009 and October 1, 2009 and PTO Minutes of April 15 (Shawsheen), April 16 (West Middle) and the April 14 Minutes of the meeting with the State Legislature.

Annie Gilbert motioned to approve the School Committee Minutes as listed above. The motion was seconded by Dennis Forgue and voted 5-0 to approve.

4. Executive Session Dennis Forgue motioned to approve the Executive Session Minutes of April 7, 14, 14, 22, and 27; May 12, 20, 26, and 28; June 9, 17, 23, and July 1, 2009. The motion was seconded by Annie Gilbert and voted 5-0 to approve.

## **H. Finance**

### **1. Consolidation Study of Town/School Finance/Business Functions**

Dennis Forgue motioned to approve the proposal presented by the Town Manager and the School Superintendent for assistance from the Local Revenue Department in the consolidation study of the Town and School Department business functions. The motion was seconded by David Birnbach, voted 5-0 and approved.

## **H. Finance (Cont'd)**

### **2. Closing of Schools After School**

Dr. Bach said the course of action has been to schedule all after school and evening activities at either Andover High or West Middle from December through April, with other school buildings open for special occasions that occur 3-4 times per year. The school principals would like to try to continue to accommodate the 3-4 events per school each year unless it becomes a burden on the custodial staff which has been reduced and may find it difficult. Chair Silberstein will draft a letter for the School Committee to sign and send to the Board of Selectmen and then will schedule a meeting to discuss the use of the school facilities.

### **3. Expenditure of the Remaining FY2010 School Dept CIP Allocation**

Mr. Tode, Director of Information and Technology is requesting approval from the School Committee to use the remaining funds in the FY2010 CIP for technology to bring the middle and elementary schools up to par by leasing 180 student laptops for Wood Hill Middle and High Plain Elementary at a cost of \$38,000 and to replace twenty-two network switches that are more than seven years old. This investment would complete the technology initiative at the middle and elementary schools and provide equity across the district with the exception of AHS which would be their next focus. Dr. Bach said High Plain and Wood Hill have the inability of performing basic functions because the computers and internet connections are so slow. These dollars would be used to complete the mobile lab upgrades even though we are on the cusp of a new shift in technology, the shift has not taken place and in the meantime, students are lacking in the basic functions.

David Birnbach disagrees with spending the funds as presented and wants the technology dollars shifted to Andover High School. He motioned to recommend soliciting new and creative proposals and initiatives from the High School and Middle Schools in the next thirty days and to shift the investment to the future using the monies to begin that journey. The use of the funds to lease laptops is counterproductive to everything out there and the funds should be invested in new initiatives and he proposes holding on technology investments until the spring. The motion was not seconded.

Deb Silberstein said the administrative team is being sent in two many directions. The focus should be on integrating technology initiative with the Strategic Plan and is not in favor of supporting Mr. Birnbach's motion.

Dr. Nicholson said on December 9th teachers will begin the journey of investigating new technology initiatives through a staff development course she will be facilitating.

Mr. Fogue asked if the Smartboards currently located in the classrooms have laptops to run them. This proposal does not address that. Mr. Tode said the dollars are for student laptops for the mobile lab. Deb Silberstein asked if there was some other way to address the inequity between the schools. David Birnbach feels the biggest inequity is at Andover High and until there is a plan for AHS we should not go forward.

## **H. Finance (Cont'd)**

### **3. Expenditure of the Remaining FY2010 School Dept CIP Allocation (Cont'd)**

Mr. Tode explained that there are 33 LCD projectors and tablets at AHS and repeated requests for laptops have been systematically cut because the directive from the School Committee has been to maintain what we have. Mr. Tode wants to complete the update at the middle and elementary levels before shifting their concentration to Andover High.

Dennis Forgue motioned to not approve the proposed plan submitted by the Technology Director as presented, and to continue the dialogue on an alternative proposal. The motion was seconded by David Birnbach, voted 3-2 and approved.

### **4. FY2009 End of Year Financial Report**

Business Administrator David Keniston said the end of year report the Committee has been provided is the State Report to be submitted. Deb Silberstein said it is a very informative report because it shows actual spending, not proposed.

## **I. Motion to Adjourn**

Mr. Collins motioned to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the School Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Forgue, and voted 5-0 -0 to approve. The meeting adjourned at 10:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder*