

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of October 16, 2014
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Annie Gilbert, Paula Colby-Clements, Barbara L'Italien, David Birnbach, and Joel Blumstein

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent Finance and Administration, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Dr. Nancy A. Duclos, and AHS Liaison Jason Gross.

I. Call to Order

Annie Gilbert called the School Committee Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

II. Executive Session

At 6:01 P.M. the School Committee on a motion duly made and seconded voted to meet in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy relative to impact bargaining for the Andover High School schedule with the Andover Education Association and to return to Open Session. Roll call: A. Gilbert-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, B. L'Italien-Y, J. Blumstein-Y. At 7:01 P.M. on a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Barbara L'Italien, the School Committee voted to adjourn from Executive Session and return to Open Session, not to return to Executive Session. Roll call: A. Gilbert-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, B. L'Italien-Y, D. Birnbach-Y, and J. Blumstein-Y. David Birnbach arrived at 6:20 P.M.

III. Regular Meeting

1. Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Salute to the Flag

Annie Gilbert reconvened the meeting to order at 7:14 P.M. followed by a Moment of Silence. Jason Gross introduced Aiden Foley a 6th Grade Student from West Middle School who led the meeting in a Salute to the Flag. A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Aiden on behalf of the School Committee.

2. Recognition/Communications

A. US Dept. of Ed (USDOE) Grant Award: "New England Arts & Literacy"

Dr. McGrath introduced Lisa Glickstein, APS Grant Writer, and Beth Delforge, PK-12 Fine Arts Coordinator, who worked in conjunction with Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos to ascertain the Grant Awarded from the US Department of Education in the amount of \$2 million over a four year period (FY-2014-2017). The "New England Arts & Literacy" Grant will help art educators grow and improve arts instruction, share effective models of arts in education that support student achievement in the arts and other areas. The award presents exciting and challenging opportunities to have mixed school districts working together. Andover will partnership with a rural school district (Quabbin) and an urban school district (Salem) and also work in conjunction with three museums; Addison Art Gallery, Peabody Essex Museum, and an art museum in the Quabbin area yet to be named to host summer initiatives. The NE Arts & Literacy Grant Award will bring together 120 teachers across all disciplines from the three districts to build a collaborative culture, utilize project based learning, and put the 4C's into instructional practices. Teachers will be expected to use technology as a communication tool (Andover will model), and a Technologist will be in place to work solely on this project so teachers can share resources. This grant award will link Arts and Literacy and improve student growth.

Joel Blumstein moved that the Andover School Committee vote to accept the U.S. Department of Education Arts in Education Grant "New England Arts & Literacy" for the period awarded FY-2014 through FY-2017. The motion was seconded by Paul Colby-Clements and voted 5-0 to approve.

3. Recognition/Communications (Cont'd)

B. Tri-board Meeting – 7:00 pm - October 22, 2014

The Chairs of the three Boards (School Committee, Selectmen, and Finance Committee) along with the Town Manager and School Superintendent, met last week to construct the agenda for the Triboard Meeting to be held on Wednesday, October 22, 2014 in the School Committee Room at 7:00 P.M. The informational meeting will include a report by the OPEB Sub-committee and a review of available revenue for the exempt debt and non-exempt debt capital projects coming forward.

4. Public Input – None

5. Education

A. APS Educators Report on Ed Leader 21 Atlanta Conference

The members of the team from the Andover Public Schools, Mal Forsman, Colleen McBride, Moira O'Brien, Liz Roos, Steve Murray, Kerry Costello, Nancy Duclos, Joel Blumstein and Dr. McGrath, who attended the Ed Leader21 Conference in Atlanta in early October shared the basis of the work at the conference which was focused on the implementation of the 4C's, Project-based Learning, Performance-based Assessments, and the use of creative space for flexible thinking for students. The changing role of the school principals was a very interesting concept. They learned how principals should think about their model of innovation and creativity to provide leadership for their teachers and opportunities for dialogue – very different viewpoints. The focus on the 4C's is central to preparing for 21st Century Learning. It was emphasized that the 4C's should be a conscious mindset when planning to develop instruction. Spaces should be provided to develop visual thing providing community collaboration on thinking and communication skills that allow teachers and students the opportunity to create situations for student learning.

Three categories to improve a student's sense of belonging and accomplishment include self-work, engagement, and purpose. Students must believe their voice is being heard and valued. If we want students to accelerate and move into deeper learning, we must focus on self-worth, engagement, and purpose, and it is important for students to know someone is listening to them which in turn makes them feel worthwhile and motives them to improve. Ideas that generate these learning environments include, 'Passion Projects', self-directed learning, ten talks – no grade, process and resource grade only, genius hour-an opportunity to create open thinking environment, and projects with a purpose – students determine what they want to deliver using a concept they can relate to their own life and through a public audience show how it has affected their performance/life.

Joel Blumstein said that if members of the Andover Community fully understood the concept of the 4C's they would wholly support it. We need to educate and engage the larger Andover Community in order to build public support for the strategic direction the Andover Public School District is headed and the programs necessary to achieve to get there. AEA President Kerry Costello hopes the Town will support these efforts to imbed the concept of the 4C's into the new Andover High School schedule. The Town needs to embrace what we are trying to do and work together to move the district to the next level.

Superintendent McGrath volunteered to send a project-based learning team from Andover to participate in next year's Conference to be held in Dallas, Texas on September 30th, October 1, and 2.

5. Education (Cont'd)

B. 1:1 Laptop Initiative Update

A great deal of input has been received from conversations with eighth grade teachers and from parent meetings on the 1:1 Laptop Initiative. These discussions led to a decision to make course corrections before proceeding with the implementation of the 1:1 Initiative. Director of Digital Learning Joanne Najarian, Dan Downs, Program Coordinator for Digital Learning, and IT CIO Paul Puzanghera gave a presentation to the School Committee on a smaller pilot that would encompass not the whole 8th grade team but just one team with students bringing their own approved device from home. The Team talked about requirements of the approved devices, learning application(s) to be used, rational of measures and focus areas which include: student learning, teacher practice, parent role, professional development, infrastructure and tech support of a 1:1 environment which will evolve as the implementation grows. The pilot program will determine if the network will support the 1:1 environment, the wireless tools for teachers to control, the role of content and collaboration, and what the content will be and where that will come from. Starting with a smaller group of students with a slower rollout will allow for quicker and deeper understanding of any areas that need improving. The rollout timeline has been adjusted with the launch of the pilot program beginning in February 2015 followed by a progress report in the spring.

C. 2014 MCAS Report

Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos presented the preliminary 2014 MCAS results and provided information relative to the Level 2 accountability designation, which is due to the fact that Andover's high needs students are not making achievement gains required through the accountability formula. Twelve classrooms did not participate in the MCAS testing but instead participated in the PARCC pilot testing. Teachers and administrators will conduct a comparative analysis against the MCAS assessment results to determine what students are learning in the classroom and where the need for improvement lies; Andover students are scoring almost level with last year's group. Viewing the results of cohort groups provides a better picture of how Andover students are doing as they move through grade levels. Math and ELA is totally dedicated to the new standards that map to the Common Core and we are very pleased with those results.

The seven core indicators showed a narrowing in proficiency groups in Math, ELA, and Science, growth in ELA and Math, and the Cohort graduation rates and Cohort dropout rates are on or above target. Dr. Duclos explained the State's scoring process and why there is a disproportionate swing in the growth and proficiency gap because all are part of the performance indicator that determines which level schools we are at. She reviewed and explained data through use of charts, graphics and visuals, and provided comparisons by grades by all students.

The next steps include analyzing student results in the early grades for ELA, monitoring the implementation of the new Math-in-Focus Program for Grades K-8, and utilizing science results as one data point in the Science Program. District Initiatives include the appointment this year of a Pre-K-5 Literacy Coordinator, Year One of the implementation of the Math-in-Focus Program, and State required RETELL Courses for teachers and administrators. Year 2 includes a review of the Science Program, development of strong assessment practices to include an analysis of student

5. Education (Cont'd)

data at all levels, professional development through the Early Release Day Program, and an expanded Title I program to include both Reading and Math. The MCAS measures are not geared to higher scoring districts and we need to communicate to residents that where Andover is, doesn't always portray the actual results. New models of flexible schedules at middle school level and power blocks at the elementary are in their infancy stages.

6. Old Business

A. Calendar Subcommittee Update

The Calendar Subcommittee members (Joel Blumstein, David Birnbach, and Barbara L'Italien) provided information derived from the survey data received on a new school year calendar. There were 1,195 responses received with 48 pages of comments and more than 800 individual comments from the survey sent out last spring to AEA teachers and parents. The Sub-Committee reached consensus on the criteria and some decisions will be subject to impact bargaining.

Two-Year Calendar: The results showed that the majority of responses were in favor of a two year calendar rather than a one year calendar.

Start of School: Two strongly divided comments depending upon when Labor Day falls on the calendar emerged: a) If Labor Day falls between September 1 and 5 the first day of school for students should be the Tuesday after Labor Day. Teachers would report two days during the previous week. b) If Labor Days falls on September 6 or 7, the first day of school for students would fall on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before Labor Day with teachers reporting on Monday and Tuesday before Labor Day.

School Vacations: The majority of responses favored a one week vacation (preferably in March) eliminating the February and April vacations. President's Day and Patriot's Day will still be observed. School vacations changes would not go into effect until the 2016-2017 school year.

Religious Holidays: Numerous comments were received on changes to Religious Holidays observed and due to the practicality of maintain a critical mass of students and staff, the Sub-Committee proposes to continue to observe Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Christmas Eve, and Good Friday as non-school days and students who observe other Religious Holidays not listed above by taking the day off of school will not be marked absent (they would be marked present).

These proposed changes to the School Calendar provides a gain of 5 to 8 school days per year.

Dr. McGrath will prepare a draft of school calendars for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years using the proposed recommendations of the Calendar Sub-Committee for the School Committee to review as a first reading at the November 6th School Committee Meeting followed by a vote on the Calendars at the second reading at the December 4th School Committee Meeting. The proposed calendars will be posted on the Andover Public School website at www.aps1.net for public comment from November 7th through December 1st 2014. Comments should be emailed to the Sub-Committee at schoolcalendar@aps1.net.

6 Old Business (Cont'd)

B. FY 16 Capital Improvement Plan Informational Technology Requests Hold

C. Successor Contract: Andover Secretaries' Association 2014-2017

Barbara L'Italien provided an update on the agreement reached with the Andover Secretaries Association on their contract which included minor changes in COLA (1.5% for 2014.2015; 2% for 2015.2016; and 2% for 2016.2017), a shift in longevity to years of service, adjustment in personal leave language, and an incentive bonus of \$100 (in place of a Step increase) between 10 and 20 years of service. The Bargaining Sub-Committee will meet to revise and review job descriptions to reflect work being done as well as the evaluation process and form.

Barbara L'Italien moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the contract agreement between the Andover School Committee and the Andover Secretaries Association as presented. The motion was seconded by David Birnbach and voted 4-0 to approve. Paul Colby-Clements was not at the meeting at the time of discussion and vote.

7. New Business

A. FY16 Budget Development Timeline & Assumptions

Annie Gilbert said the Budget Assumption is the starting point for the budget process and will be posted along with the frameworks on the Andover Public School website.

Joel Blumstein moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the FY-16 Budget Development Guidelines and Assumptions as presented. The motion was seconded by Barbara L'Italien and voted 4-0 to approve.

8. Consent Agenda

~Warrants: Payroll Warrant #15S016
~Minutes: Dec. 13, Jan 24, Aug 26, September 4th and 18th
~Surplus Inventory Inventory list provided

Joel Blumstein moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Barbara L'Italien and voted 4-0 to approve.

IV. Adjournment

At 9:59 P.M. on a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Barbara L'Italien, the Andover School Committee voted to adjourn. Roll call: J. Blumstein-Y, B. L'Italien-Y, D. Birnbach, and A. Gilbert-Y.

Respectfully submitted,
Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Documents: Warrants
Surplus Textbook/Supply Disposal Inventory Form
2014 MCAS Presentation