

**Andover School Committee
Minutes of June 23, 2016**

Members in Attendance: Chair, Joel Blumstein, Vice-Chair, Susan McCready, Ted Teichert, Shannon Scully, and Paul Murphy

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Dr. Sheldon Berman, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Administration, Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Nancy Duclos, and Tim Chen AHS Student Government Liaison to the Andover School Committee.

1. Regular Meeting:

A. Call to Order – Opening Ceremonies

Chair Blumstein called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. The meeting began with a moment of silence followed by a salute to the flag.

B. Recognitions/Communications/Highlights from the District

Dr. Berman said the last week of school has been wonderful but hectic week with all the celebrations and graduations at the schools this week.

- Results of the MGT study was received last week and the report, which is an accurate document that we can use for planning, is posted on the APS website.
- The report on the Language-Based Program (LEAP) has been received and posted on the APS website. The recommendations are concrete and doable, and will have a significant impact for our students.
- The entire school staff attended an end-of-year ceremony at the Collins Center celebrating the achievements of the 2015-2016 school year and recognition of retirees.
- In recognition of his leadership skills, Steve Chinosi, Director of Strategic Innovation, was chosen to be President of the National Capstone Consortium.

Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos provided an update on the math acceleration program. A summer work packet is being created and will be setup in Google Classrooms and all work imbedded in Goggle Documents. Students who qualify will be invited in via Google Documents.

Paul Murphy attended the end of year celebrations at Shawsheen and High Plain Elementary Schools this week, and Shannon Scully said it was a great week of end of year events and excellent school activities. Susan McCready thanked Steve Chinosi, Joanne Najarian, and Dan Brennan for their work to make the end of year event so wonderful.

Susan McCready reported that approximately 20 parents attended the first informal School Committee Open Forum Session on June 15th. Parents were happy to have the opportunity to interact with her and Joel Blumstein to discuss issues and concerns in an informal setting.

Ted Teichert congratulated all students as they move up their next grade level. He also asked what the timeline is for completion of teacher evaluations (Dr. Berman said they are

done in May), and reported that SEPAC elected a new Board at their meeting the other night.

Chairman Blumstein thanked Tim Chen for his valuable input over the last year as the Student Government Liaison to the School Committee and recognized him on the many diverse activities he is involved in, and on the outstanding speech he gave at the AHS Graduation.

Dr. Jorge Allen, World Language Program Coordinator, and Maria Hernandez, Spanish teacher at WHMS (and who was born in Ecuador) came before the Board to share how her 8th grade students supported the people in Ecuador after the April 16th earthquake. They researched what the needs were, organized a community meeting with grades 6 and 7 students, and filled twelve very large boxes of much-needed items and donations.

C. Public Input

Paula Colby-Clements highlighted the professional, calm, manner shown by Dr. Berman throughout his first year in Andover noting that he was open to criticism and showed great character through the face of difficult situations, and she has been very pleased with his leadership. Joel Blumstein explained that this is the start of the conversation on the evaluation of Dr. Berman.

D. Response to Public Input: None

E. Education

1. Start Times for AHS

Ms. Mary Lou Walsh, Transportation Coordinator, spoke about the bussing implications of reversing the start times at the schools and the suggestion to having the elementary schools start first. As a public school system, we are mandated to pay for bussing Andover students to the three private schools in town and switching start times would be costly. In addition, reversing the start schedules creates problems for families with younger students arriving home prior to their older sibling(s). Elementary students would be waiting for the bus and walking to school in the dark if the times are flipped. Dr. Berman said it would take two years to make a change and there would be budget implications to consider. It would be valuable to look at data from other communities who have implemented this change and compare it to Andover. The School Committee would like to continue gathering information concerning this option.

2. All Day Kindergarten

The School Committee received an inquiry on the financial cost of moving to a free all-day Kindergarten Program across the district. In response, Paul Szymanski conducted an analysis of program expenses and provided information on the costs of adding three full day programs to what we currently have. There would be a savings of \$511,000 from the elimination of mid-day bussing, but a net and added expense of \$1.5M annually from the operating budget to convert. Dr. Berman would like to see a list of services parents are

paying for and how they compare with services offered by other communities and what the Chapter 70 funding base is for Andover.

Karen Zimmerman thanked the Superintendent and the School Committee for looking into her request to offer a free full day kindergarten program and read a statement on the benefits for children. She noted that many of Andover's full day classes have twice the enrollment of the half-day classes, and urges the School to consider this option.

F. New Business

1. School Committee Representative to Green Schools Initiative

The School Committee has been asked by Wendy Donahue from the Zero Waste Group to appoint a School Committee liaison to the Green School Initiative. They have a parent representative from every school in the district, and would like a School Committee member as a communication link. Ted Teichert volunteered to be the liaison.

2. MASC School Vacation Resolution:

Shannon Scully provided information on the resolution solicited at the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) at their 2016 Conference to "establish a working group to study a single spring vacation". The Andover School Committee has an opportunity to adopt this resolution, showing support for the proposed study. For clarity, this resolution does not take a position on whether or not there should be only one weeklong spring vacation, instead it asks MASC to study the issue on behalf of its school committee membership. It only takes the request of five communities to have an item placed on the agenda. Dr. Berman thinks one of the prime reasons that schools in New England have two vacations is to save on energy and to protect a district from whatever snow days might happen in the winter. To be successful it has to be a larger, area wide initiative.

Shannon Scully moved that the Andover Public School Committee vote to accept the resolution requesting the Massachusetts Association of School Committees to establish a working group to study the issue of a single spring vacation. Susan McCready seconded the motion and the motion was voted 5-0 to approve.

G. Old Business

1. Language Based Program Update

Dr. Duclos shared recommendations for the Language Based Program for regular education students. Recommendations include monitoring students three times a year vs. twice a year, implementing a tool similar to DIBELS for grades K-6, providing professional development to teachers on use of the new tool and how to analyze the data. Implementing focused classroom observation of Foundations in K-3 to identify gaps in instruction. Improve how we align within the tiers across the grade levels, and initiate a communication protocol for parents to inform them about benchmark progress on a more continual basis. It is important to have quality monitoring, quality assessment, and early intervention to resolve issues earlier.

Amy Reese and Valarie Flynn provided information on the recommendations for students in Special Education which include entering into a Partnership with the Landmark Outreach Program, providing district-wide professional development workshop across all levels on Dyslexia so that there are similarities in strategies at the three levels, building collaboration between Speech & Language Teachers, LEAP teachers, and classroom teachers to help facilitate the transference of what was learned in the workshops, and to continue training Special Education and Reading Teachers in Lindamood Bell Phoneme Sequencing. A report on the accomplishments of the Department of Student Services this past year was distributed. Accomplishments included organizational work for more cohesiveness, reallocation of staff to serve students in their home school, extensive professional development for staff, and expanding programs at Shawsheen Pre-school.

2. Superintendent Evaluation Process

Chair Blumstein explained the evaluation process of the Superintendent beginning with the open public session as required by law. He then read an overall evaluation of Dr. Berman by the School Committee which he compiled from their individual evaluations.

Communication has greatly improved within the district, and Dr. Berman has been a regular presence within the Community attending a variety of events. He is very data driven providing an analysis of student performance data. Dr. Berman has significantly upgraded the budget process and book. He identified early on the need for a facility study and has developed a good working relationship with the town manager, improved relationships with Student Services and Special Education parents, staff and programs. Although the AHS schedule was delayed by a year, Dr. Berman took steps to ensure it would be a smooth transition for 2017. He realized early on the need to adjust the middle school math curriculum, and the tone set by Dr. Berman throughout the district is one of respect, two-way dialogue, inclusivity and compassion.

Members of the School Committee shared their personal recognitions on Dr. Barman's performance this past year and the Chair read statements received from a parent and former school committee member and Chair, Annie Gilbert. The Committee talked about the four available rankings, provided by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which are unsatisfactory proficient, needs improvement and exemplary.

Susan McCready moved to approve an overall rank of exemplary for Dr. Sheldon Berman for the 2015-2016 year. Paul Murphy seconded the motion and the School Committee voted 4-1 to approve the ranking of Exemplary. Ted Teichert opposed.

3. Charter Schools Resolution

The School Committee discussed the resolution on the Charter Schools at their June 9th meeting and can now vote to accept or reject the resolution as presented.

Bob Pokress, Cherrywood Circle, said Charter Schools are public schools, and if the cap is lifted, kids in parts of the state where a better education is needed will benefit. The School

Committee should embrace it as Charter Schools are good for the overall quality of schools in the state.

Kerry Costello, AEA President, doesn't believe Charter Schools are all they are purported to be. They don't handle the issues that come with students who end up returning to public schools for assistance, while the funding remains with the Charter School. Charter Schools do not have to have certified teachers, or provide special services, they don't have to play by the same rules as public schools, and they can make a profit. She suggests we work together on the funding formula and keep local control.

Ted Teichert is opposed to the funding mechanism for Charter Schools. Joel Blumstein agrees that we should care about all kids, but from his perspective there is much discussion about kids on the waiting list for Charter Schools but no discussion on what the impact will be on the other kids who, due to the funding formula, will get a lesser education than what they would have due to loss of funding.

Shannon Scully moved that the Andover School Committee vote to accept the Charter Schools resolution as presented. The motion was seconded by Susan McCready and voted 4-1 to approve. Ted Teichert opposed.

4. Next Meeting

The School Committee scheduled a workshop on Thursday July 28th to discuss the facilities plan.

H. Consent Agenda

1. Warrants: Expense Warrants: SW1626PC, SW1626A, SW1626
Payroll Warrants: 16S052, 16SS09, and 16S051
2. Minutes: School Committee Minutes of May 26, 2016

On a motion by Paul Murphy and seconded by Susan McCready the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to approve the consent agenda as presented.

I. Adjournment

At 10:35 P.M. on a motion by Paul Murphy and seconded by Susan McCready the School Committee voted to adjourn the meeting of June 23, 2016. Roll call: S. Scully-Y, P. Murphy-Y, T. Teichert-Y, S. McCready-Y, and J. Blumstein-Y.

Respectfully submitted,
Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Documents: Department of Student Services Accomplishments
Copy of statement read by Paula Colby-Clements