

**Andover School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes of November 10, 2016**

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

**Others in Attendance:** Superintendent Dr. Sheldon Berman, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Administration, Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent Teaching & Learning, Nancy Duclos, Ph.D. and Vish Vay, AHS Student Liaison.

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Blumstein called the meeting to order at 6:15 P.M. in the School Committee Meeting Room.

**1. Executive Session**

On a motion by Susan McCready and seconded by Paul Murphy, the Andover School Committee voted to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with AEA Unit A pursuant to MGL C.30A Sec 21 (A) (3), as an open session may have a detrimental effect on the committee's bargaining position. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, S. Scully-Y, S. McCready-Y, and J. Blumstein-Y. At 7:02 P.M. on a motion duly made and seconded the School Committee adjourned from Executive Session. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, S. Scully-Y, S. McCready-Y, and J. Blumstein-Y.

**II. Regular Meeting**

**A. Opening Ceremonies**

Chair Blumstein reconvened the School Committee meeting to order at 7:05 P.M. from Executive Session to Open Session. The meeting began with a moment of silence followed by a salute to the flag.

**B. Recognitions/Communications**

Dr. Berman reported that the letter on civility and respect, written by AHS Principal Phil Conrad and sent to the AHS Community, was shared with all school administrators today.

Dr. Duclos provide information on the use of heart monitors in the middle school Physical Education classes and the benefits of the program. The monitors allow students to check their heart rate and gauge how much effort they need to exert to exercise in their targeted heart rate zone to provide an effective measure. The data collected is secure and only accessible to the student and teacher. In addition, they have reached out to the school attorneys to ensure that HIPPA laws were not involved.

In preparation for the development of the FY-18 Operating Budget, the budget assumptions, development guidelines, and budget calendar are in the Dropbox. The School Committee will vote on the budget assumptions and guidelines at the November 17<sup>th</sup> School Committee Meeting.

Paul Murphy, Sue McCready, and Ted Teichert attended the speaker series on dyslexia with Dr. Nadine Gaab from Harvard University who provided an informative presentation attended by a number of parents.

Ted Teichert requested clarification of the teacher contract allowing Andover teachers, who live out of district, to request permission to enroll their children in Andover Schools requiring a vote by the School Committee. Dr. Berman said it is his understanding that when Ed Reform went into effect the approval by the School Committee was removed. The approval is dependent upon space, and the current 46 students are spread across the district making it difficult to say that they cost more than just the incremental costs.

Joel Blumstein announced that a facilities discussion is listed on the Board of Selectmen's November 15<sup>th</sup> agenda. In addition, the Town Manager released his FY2018-FY2022 Capital Improvement Program this week. School Committee members should check the CIP to make sure all items that should be included are there. Warrant Articles are due in by December 9<sup>th</sup> and the date for the School Committee to decide on which school will be submitted to the MSBA through a Statement of Interest is December 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **C. Opportunity for Public Comment**

Mr. Roli, 2 College Circle, feels that the School Committee, unlike other Boards, does not like to carry on a dialogue with the public and this makes residents feel that they do not care about what they have to say. He also commented on the cost of having children of teachers who live out of district attend Andover schools free of charge.

Brad Weeden, Summer Street, asked when the 2017.2018 school calendar would be available. Dr. Berman said they are working on that now and expect to have the calendar approved in January.

### **D. Response to Public Input**

The Chair responded to Mr. Roli's comments regarding dialogue. Members of the School Committee listen very carefully to comments made at meetings. However, for the efficiency of getting through the agenda, an extended dialogue is not possible. If it is an issue to discuss at length, the item is put on a future School Committee agenda so that others can attend. The budget is not increased or decreased each time a student enters or leaves the district; we work with the budget approved at Town Meeting. Dr. Berman said the budget was increased last year to fund 5 teachers to cover the incoming one-hundred students.

### **E. Education**

1. **ACE Presentation:** Executive Director, Jennifer Srivastava and Lenore Price, President of Andover Coalition for Education (ACE) jointly explained how ACE wants to provide another outlet to highlight all the successful happenings in our schools through a better dialogue. To begin the dialogue, ACE is hosting a screening of excerpts from the NOVA production, "The School of the Future" on Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup> from 7:30-8:30 P.M. at the Cormier Youth Center. They will show pieces of the documentary on what is cutting edge in

education today and focusing on how the brain of a child develops. The event is free and open to the public with the second installment scheduled in January.

2. Energy Analytics Summer Boot Camp:

Steve Chinosi, Anil Navkal, and the Schneider Electric Team shared the results of the work the AHS students accomplished this past summer using AHS facilities as an energy lab. The students worked in a collaborative environment with Town, School, and corporate partners to support and create the Energize Andover Program. The students used electrical mapping and created a database of electrical panels, which they updated and labeled at AHS and accessed from anywhere. At the end of the project, students produced an analysis of how to significantly reduce electricity usage at AHS and presented their findings to the Schneider Team. Schneider would like to collaborate with Andover Schools to make this part of Andover's curriculum throughout the year, not just 6-8 weeks throughout the summer. Dr. Berman said this is a perfect illustration of Authentic Learning – engaging students in real life situations.

3. Global Leaders' Summit-Student Trip Report:

AHS English Teacher, Brian Shea and eighteen of the AHS students who attended the Global Leaders' Summit in The Hague in the Netherlands last year shared their experiences with the School Committee. The overall theme of the Global Summit centered on "Education is a Human Right". The next summit sponsored by EF will be on Technology in Italy and Berlin in the summer of 2018.

4. Report on New Elementary Progress Report:

Nancy Duclos reported on the New Elementary Progress Report Card and provided samples from different grade levels. The Elementary Assistant Principals, Program Coordinators, and Literacy Program Coordinator took the initiative to manage this process, and they participated in the Informational Sessions held for parents and the school community. The new version aligns with state standards, provides much more detail of what children are learning, and helps parents understand what students have to learn. The academic indicators changed to the following: the student meets the standard and applies the concepts/skills with independence; the student is developing an understanding of the concepts/skills, and the student is beginning to understand the concepts/skills with frequent support.

**F. New Business**

1. School Committee Policy Manual:

Subcommittee members Joel Blumstein and Susan McCready updated the Committee on the process and the status of updating the School Committee Policy Handbook. Mike Gilbert of MASC provided the Committee an updated version of Section A along with a comparison version for the first reading. Susan McCready pointed out additional edits, and said School Committee members should send their changes to her and Joel for the second reading. The Superintendent asked for more time to design the policy on education philosophy.

2. AHS Field Trip: EF Educational Tour Global Leadership Summit 2018 to Italy, Germany, July 4 – July 16, 2018

AHS English Teacher, Brian Shea, with the support of Principal Phil Conrad has proposed an EF trip to Germany and Italy for the dates of July 4-16, 2018. The trip is open for AHS Juniors and seniors (current 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade) and is part of the Global Student Leaders Summit.

Susan McCready moved to approve the proposed extracurricular trip for Andover High School students to Italy, Germany on July-4 through July 16, 2018 as presented and in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Andover School Committee Policy entitled “APS School-sponsored trip and Student Travel Policy”. Ted Teichert seconded the motion and the Committee voted 5-0 to approve.

**G. Old Business**

1. Feedback from Facility Planning Forums

Several Facility Planning Forums were held throughout the month of October and comments from the public were submitted to the School Committee. Many of the comments were in favor of AHS and/or West Elementary School as the first priority for replacement/renovation. Future discussions on Facility Planning will be held on the following dates: Board of Selectmen’s Meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>, the December 1<sup>st</sup> School Committee Workshop, and the December 8<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting at which time they will vote on which facility to submit as the first priority. MSBA is assessing all of our school facilities in early December, which they do once every ten years, and will be issuing a rating on the facilities based on these assessments.

2. SPED Settlement Agreements:

Ted Teichert read from a prepared statement the reasons why he is asking for a review of all SPED settlement agreements. He wants to ensure that all of the laws are being followed and feels that the School Committee should have the right to read all of the agreements. Others on the Committee expressed the view that the basic question is whether the School Committee would benefit from a review of all SPED settlement agreements

Dr. Berman provided background and clarification around treating all students equally. There are three ways a student enters into an out-of-district placement beginning with an IEP meeting, followed by a recommendation of the team that the child be placed in an out-of-district (OOD) placement, and Andover pays for all expenses because it is our placement. The other way is if the School district feels the needs of the student can be addressed within the District, the parent disagrees and there are several alternatives at that point; and the third way is to enter into a discussion to determine the right solution for the student, and if that is the case, a settlement agreement is reached and may be similar or different from other agreements depending upon the needs of the child. There could also be an inability to reach a decision, and then a mediator is brought in, and by that point there is usually an attorney on both sides to help reach an agreement. The District could feel there are sufficient programs in-house to support the child but the parents disagree and appeal the case to the Dept of Education. These are three very different paths and the reason that the agreements look different is

because they are based on different dialogues between the parties. If we were to say that all our agreements had to be consistent, we would probably end up in more hearings. Sara Stedman explained that a unilateral decision is one in which the parent(s) decide they want to have their child placed out-of-district and do so on their own.

Release of information will cost approximately \$6,000-\$7,000 to have an attorney redact the agreements to insure no personal information is included.

Mr. Teichert feels we have to be sure we provide children the assistance and proper educational services to give them the opportunity to be successful. Why are the agreements different and not treated equally?

Pierre Richard talked about the process of negotiation, settlement, and the law of determining out-of-district placements. In his opinion, transportation seems to be an issue in Andover. Dr. Berman said that transportation is one of the elements that are part of the negotiation with parents.

Jeanne Teichert, Dufton Road, said Andover has too many settlement agreements and too much litigation and it will not stop until you look at the big picture and ask why.

Ted Teichert made a motion that the Andover School Committee engage counsel to review Special Education Settlement Agreements entered into between January 1, 2011 and November 10, 2016 relating to placement at private special education schools, to redact any personally identifiable information or confidential information therefrom, and to provide redacted versions of the settlement agreements to the School Committee. The motion was not seconded. The motion does not go forward.

3. Superintendent's Goals: The Committee will review the updated version of Dr. Berman's goal at the November 17, 2016 meeting.

#### **H. Consent Agenda**

1. Warrants: Expense SW1711, Payroll 17SS03, 17S019, and 17S018
2. Minutes: September 22, 2016 SC Workshop, October 6, 2016 Regular Session

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

#### **I. Adjournment**

At 10:45 P.M. on a motion by Susan McCready and seconded by Paul, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn. Roll call: T. Teichert-Y, S. Scully-Y, P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, and J. Blumstein-Y.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dee DeLorenzo  
Recording Secretary

