

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of February 9, 2012
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chairwoman Annie Gilbert, Vice- Chair Paula Colby-Clements, Secretary, Dennis Forgue, David Birnbach, and Richard Collins

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent, Finance & Administration, Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos

I. Executive Session

At 6:25 P.M. the School Committee entered into Executive Session on a motion duly made and seconded for the purpose of discussing matters relative to collective bargaining strategy regarding the teacher contract and to return to Open Session. Roll call vote: A. Gilbert-Y, D. Forgue-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, R. Collins-Y, D. Birnbach-Y. At 6:50 P.M. on a motion by Dennis Forgue and a second by Paula Colby-Clements, it was unanimously voted to adjourn from Executive Session and to move to Open Session. Roll call vote: A. Gilbert-Y, D. Forgue-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, Richard Collins-Y, and David Birnbach-Y.

II. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the School Committee was opened at 7:00 P.M. by Chairwoman Gilbert who declared that an amendment would be added to the agenda under New Business to appoint a School Committee member as liaison to the Triboard Exempt Debt Subcommittee.

B. Opening Ceremonies

Mr. Collins asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by South School students, Gwendolyn Claman, Welsey Claman, Natalie Claman, John Boyle, and Louisa Boyle from Doherty Middle School. On behalf of the School Committee Mr. Collins presented the students with a certificate of appreciation.

C. Recognition

1. Doherty Middle School Students

Superintendent McGrath welcomed the DMS students who under the direction of Sobhan Namvar, our school adjustment counselor, have created a proposal for a project they envision for the DMS.

DMS students, Jordan Burger, Josh Tarricone, Abdoulaye Kamagate, Dan Perrone, Max Bouchard and Charlie Mosher meet in Mr. Namvar's room ((community room), to connect and talk about "What's Going On". Their meetings and discussions led them to the idea to do something unique for the DMS Community; which is to create an area within the school that would be welcoming and safe for all students and one where they would feel connected and just talk about "What's Going On". Through creative art, students will transform the community room into the Community Project Room and the theme of respect and diversity will be displayed throughout the room, and on the walls. The students thanked Mr. Narnvar, Brian Stevens, Wayne Belloir, and Bill Fahey for volunteering their time to help them with this project to make a difference at DMS.

D. Communications

Superintendent McGrath provided an update on the AHS Principal Search. There were twenty-eight applications received and resumes read by the Search Team, with semi-finalists identified and

interviewed this week. The three finalist's names will be announced and site visits arranged, with the goal to make an appointment by mid-March.

AHS Student Liaison Colin Johnson who is also a member of the AHS Student Council said they are in support of the student request to approve the added weighting of the Enriched Math course for students who completed the course prior to September 2011. The Student Council is investigating the viability of an open campus to address the issue of space at the high school, by gathering and analyzing data from schools with an open campus environment; and in addition, students are gathering data and ideas on a solution to the traffic gridlock. Dr. McGrath said the traffic situation is currently being addressed by consultants and the students should provide their ideas to Mr. Szymanski or her as soon as possible.

Annie Gilbert reported on the status of negotiations with the AEA. The School Committee was notified last week the mediation process was not leading to a resolution and has been certified for fact-finding, which means it will be passed onto a State Labor Board who will assign a neutral party, each side will present their position, and a hearing will be held resulting in a fact-finding report which is then bargained. The School Committee and the AEA can continue to meet to resolve the remaining issues.

E. Citizen Input

Many teachers were once again present at the meeting to express their displeasure of the status of the contract negotiations. Chairwoman Annie Gilbert asked for a show of hands to see how many teachers would be coming forward to speak and three hands went up; it was established that fifteen minutes would be allotted for the three speakers and then the School Committee would move on from Citizen Input to allow students from AHS time to give their presentation. After the third speaker finished their statement, a fourth teacher approached the microphone and began to speak without being recognized by the Chair. When informed Citizen Input had ended, she continued. The Chair called for a recess at which time the School Committee members left the meeting room for a brief period before resuming the meeting.

Frank McCall, Grade 5 West Elementary School teacher and resident is looking for the sense of urgency from the two sides (SC and AEA) to reach an agreement. It is embarrassing that, as a community, we have come to this point. The current environment is not conducive to conducting education and he urges the AEA and School Committee to please move the process along.

AHS Science Teacher Bob Marx said the working conditions being proposed will have a direct negative effect on teaching. Andover takes great pride in their schools and values education, and the community should stand behind their teachers.

AEA President Kerry Costello said the scheduling of the High School Scheduling Task Force Meetings was delayed due to the timing of the end of the first semester testing, and the beginning of the second semester. The teachers proposed the first meeting which was held on February 9th with the second meeting scheduled for February 16th. Members of the Task Force include: Teachers ~ Renee Druke, Scott Armstrong, Rebecca D'Alise, Fred Hopkins, Ed Parker and Sarah Fisher, and Administrators ~ Dr. Sharkey, Nancy Duclos, Katherine Richards, Aixa DeKelley, and Patricia Whalen. The group will combine data with real world experience by gathering information, and visiting high schools with alternate schedules; with March as the target date for completing the work.

F. Old Business

1. Update on Bancroft School Project

The School Building Committee has arrived at a plan to begin construction of the Bancroft School despite the appeals filed. The SBC met with members of MSBA and are waiting for their response.

G. New Business

1. AHS Weighting Reconsiderations: Enriched Math

Students from Andover High School who previously took the Enriched Math Course, which was approved for added weighting of .2 over the weight for Level 1 Math classes beginning September 2011, came forward and explained their request to have the decision be declared retro-active based on the fact that their Enriched Math Class was equally as rigorous as the current Enriched Math Class.

Dr. McGrath agrees with Dr. Sharkey that the request should be reconsidered and added weighting for the Enriched Math Class retro-active.

Motion: Paula Colby Clements motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the proposal as stated in Dr. Sharkey's proposal on retroactive additional weighting for Enriched Math. The motion was seconded by Dennis Forgue and voted 5-0 to approve.

2. FY-13 Special Education Expansion Programs

Joyce Laundre', Director of Student Services, reviewed the framework for the proposal to continue services for students from kindergarten through age 22 in an effort to help students stay within their community and to build capacity of non-disabled students. Programs currently in existence include the EXCEL Program for students with developmental and intellectual disabilities at High Plain, West Middle and Andover High School, the Bridges Program for students with autism at West Elementary, Wood Hill, and Andover High School, the Social Thinking Program for students with high functioning autism and Asperser's Syndrome at WHMS and AHS, and the LEAP Program for students with significant language based disabilities at DMS and AHS. They are hoping to fund the expansion of the following three programs for FY-13:

Grade 3-5 language-based program (LEAP): An elementary version of the language enriched academic program to identify students and provide intervention earlier than middle school.

AHS Grade 9-12 Excel Program: Expand current program to include Phase 2 for students currently attending this program at AHS and to accommodate students moving into the Excel program at AHS from our middle schools.

TOPS: A Joint Andover/North Andover/Northern Essex Community College 18-22 year old Excel Transition Program for students who finish with a non-traditional high school degree to continue with us until they are age 22 by providing different experiences and to continue to work on life and vocational skills, with the hope of finding job opportunities at home in Andover where their families are. Students would be afforded the opportunity of classes and campus life, and staff from Andover/North Andover will accompany the students. Classes will be held on the third floor of the School Administration Building. A Regionalization Grant has been applied for to cover startup costs of the program (i.e. van to transport students).

A summary of the proposed costs of the In-House Program vs. Out-of-District Placement costs was reviewed and discussed. The costs shown do not include transportation expenses so the savings would be significantly higher. Proposed budgets for the three additional programs are included in the School FY-13 budget. It was suggested by Jon Stumpf, Chair of the Finance Committee, a more inclusive look at the cost beyond salary (i.e. benefits, OPEB, developmental costs) be provided. He also encouraged a tuition rate be set for students coming from other districts.

3. Student Travel Request: March 8-10, 2012 overnight to DECA Conference in Boston, MA (AHS)

Dr. McGrath explained the trip request from Karen Stevens, DECA AHS Advisor, to accompany qualified AHS students to the DECA State Conference to be held at the Marriott Copley in Boston, Massachusetts on: March 8-10, 2012. Students will leave after school on Thursday, March 8 and return on Saturday, March 10, 2012. All deadlines and refund policies for the trip will be clearly and prominently written on all distributed literature, and open to DECA Club Members only. Since the trip is not part of the school curriculum and it is an optional extracurricular trip, and students are expected to finance their trip costs.

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the proposed extracurricular trip for AHS DECA Club to attend State DECA Conference to be held on March 8-10, 2012 as presented and in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Andover School Committee Policy, entitled "School-sponsored Trip and Student Travel Policy". The motion was seconded by Richard Collins, and unanimously approved.

4. FY-2013 Budget Update

Dr. McGrath reported that the budget sub-committee met and are working with the principals and assistant principals on line item budget reductions. The Administrative Team will continue their budget workshop on Monday and Tuesday if needed. The School Budget will be presented on the School Committee meeting on March 1st and at the March 7th Triboard Meeting.

5. Triboard Exempt Debt Sub-Committee

School Committee member Richard Collins motioned to appoint Dennis Forgue as the School Committee Liaison to the Triboard Exempt-Debt Sub-Committee. The motion was seconded by Paula Colby-Clement and unanimously approved.

G. Consent Agenda

1. Minutes: School Committee –Special Meeting Minutes of January 18, 2012, and Triboard Meeting Minutes of January 4, 2012
2. Warrants: Paul Szymanski said the Warrants are in order and provided the information for Expense Warrant SW1214 and Payroll Warrants 12S031 and 12S032.

Motion: On a motion by Dennis Forgue and seconded by Richard Collins, the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the Consent Agenda Items as presented.

H. Adjournment

At 8:52 P.M. on a motion by Dennis Forgue seconded by Richard Collins, the School Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder

Documents:

Enriched Math Letter from Dr. Sharkey
In-house Special Education Program Review
DMS Community Project Room
School Warrants
Minutes of January 4, 2012 and January 12, 2012