

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of May 24, 2012
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

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

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos, and Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent, Finance & Administration, AHS Liaison Colin Johnson

I. Executive Session

At 6:20 P.M. the School Committee entered into Executive Session on a motion by Richard Collins and seconded by Annie Gilbert for the purpose of discussing matters relative to collective bargaining and to return to Open Session. Roll call vote: A. Gilbert-Y, R. Collins, D. Forgue-Y, and P. Colby-Clements-Y. David Birnbach arrived after the meeting opened. At 6:59 P.M. on a motion by Dennis Forgue and seconded by Annie Gilbert, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn from Executive Session to move to Open Session and not to return to Executive 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

Chairwoman Colby-Clements opened the Regular Meeting of the School Committee at 7:05 P.M. Mr. Collins asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by High Plain Elementary students Alistair McBreen, Grade 4, Aaron Hubler and Abigail Redinton, of Grade 2. On behalf of the School Committee Mr. Collins presented the students with a certificate of appreciation.

B. Recognition/Communications

Superintendent McGrath attended the High School Academic Scholar's Luncheon which recognizes graduating seniors who have distinguished themselves during their high school careers. The luncheon was attended by the Commission of Education, Chester A. Mitchell.

Congratulations to the Town and School employees who were recognized for their years of service at the Founders Day celebration held on Thursday, May 17th at the Indian Ridge Country Club. Dr. Tom Sharkey, Interim Principal at Andover High School was presented with the Unsung Hero Award.

Congratulations to Jane Baldwin, DMS Special Education Teacher on receiving the Rotary Club's Educator of the Year Award and to School Committee Vice Chair, Dennis Forgue who was awarded the designation as an Andover Citizen Who Cares.

Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos announced that two of the Destination Imagination Teams were chosen to move forward to the Finals being held in Tennessee this week. The Grade 7 Team from WMS and Grade 5 Team were recognized for their accomplishments. Three Andover High School Seniors were awarded scholarships and Robert Hsu was chosen as Valedictorian.

West Elementary students on the Math Olympiad Team and in attendance at the School Committee Meeting were recognized by Superintendent McGrath and West Elementary Principal Liz Roos for their outstanding scores and accomplishments in the competition.

Annie Gilbert congratulated the AHS students who participated in the Senior Exhibition Project and recognized AHS School Committee Liaison Colin Johnson on his exhibition.

Paula Colby-Clements provided a status of the fact-finding regarding the AEA teacher contract. The hearing was held on April 23rd with the report from the fact-finder expected to be issued by May 15th. Unfortunately, the fact-finder suffered an injury and the report has been delayed so the ten day period for bargaining did not begin. Until the fact-finder issues their recommendation, the report cannot be made public. The School Committee and AEA Bargaining Teams met last Friday, however the AEA cancelled the second meeting; another meeting is scheduled for May 30th.

The AEA contract language requires teachers be notified of their work status for the upcoming school year by May 15th. The pink-slipping of non-professional status teachers was therefore required even though an extension was requested which the AEA denied. It is anticipated that most of the pink slips will be rescinded.

Paul Szymanski reported on the impact study the 40B developments at Windsor Green and 30 Shattuck Road will have on student enrollment. They expect at least ninety students requiring three busses for transportation to school from Windsor Green. The developer listened to our concerns for student safety crossing over Lowell Street to Lovejoy Road. The discussion included crosswalks, walking paths, and street lights. Due to the potential increase in growth, the Transportation Office is looking at purchasing bus transportation software.

David Birnbach received input from teachers who participated an in-service course led by Assistant Superintendent Duclos which they said was stellar and one of the best academic courses attended.

C. Citizen Input

An abundant number of Andover teachers were in attendance and several raised their hands when asked by the School Committee Chair who wanted to speak. The Chair noted that she would allow fifteen minutes for input.

Bob Goldsmith, a resident of Bayberry Lane expressed his concern about the elimination of the Computer Science class at AHS. Dr. McGrath reported that due to the retirement of a teacher the class was initially eliminated. However, AHS Math Teacher Minda Reidy has stepped forward to offer to teach the class and it is now available for students.

An AHS student read a statement on the importance of the Environmental Science classes to the future of sciences and suggested combining Environmental Science with the new English classes by teaching technical writing skills.

AHS Math teacher and Andover resident, Cory Chapman said he and his wife (who is also a teacher at AHS) will be leaving the District as they no longer feel Andover is what it was when he began teaching here. Class sizes have grown, programs cut and staff reduced. Asking AHS teachers to change to a 3 x 3 schedule (teaching 6 classes per year) would further decline the quality of the system in his estimation. Special Education funding has decimated classes, and reducing prep time will have a far-reaching negative effect. He feels the School Committee is interested in the bottom line, and not in the quality of education.

Mindy Connelly, AHS Math teacher said she received a pink slip; therefore applied for positions at other schools and has accepted a position elsewhere.

Josephine Golden, AHS teacher and resident, spoke about the degree of volunteerism that happens every day by teachers at AHS and is one of Andover's best kept secrets. Adding 20% more class time requires a thoughtful amount of time on the part of a teacher and will decrease or eliminate the time a teacher has to volunteer. She invites the School Committee to come to AHS and see how teachers spend their day.

Dr. McGrath said the reduction in Environmental Science was a difficult decision to come to, but the concern is for the lack of continuity in writing in ELA which is a critical foundation skill. Environmental Science will be available as an elective. The data reviewed by AHS teachers was clear; student's writing progress was degrading and not on par with students in other districts. They are not reviewing just the high school, but looking at writing across grades K-8 as well. Elementary and Middle School show growth percentiles but 10th Grade shows a decrease in the rate of growth. In the 2010 SAT scores, Andover was ranked 10th out of 16 comparable communities. In response to the data, a proposal was submitted to add a writing course to include a full year for 9th Grade students to include comprehension and writing in the first semester and a study of literature in the second semester providing a foundation for further study; the writing in the content area (i.e. Environmental Science) will come afterwards. The article in the Andover Townsman was incorrect; it is not the 8th Grade Writing Program that is declining but the 9th and 10th Grade Programs.

D. Education

1. Update on Bancroft School Project

An update on the status of the Bancroft School Project was provided by Annie Gilbert who said construction activity for the temporary parking and play areas has begun, as well as the construction for the temporary access extension through West Knoll Road. A meeting was held with residents in the neighborhood and the goal is to complete the access extension by the start of school in September. While we were on budget prior to the delay, estimates on the project are now over budget as material and site work costs have increased due to the increase in petroleum prices, and the construction market has grown. They cannot move forward to the main building project until they are on budget. Hopefully, the actual bids received will be better than the estimates. Currently, they are undergoing a value management review to look at where savings can be found and the impact of choices to be made. They are committed to not reducing anything that will change the educational impact of the project. The School Building Committee will meet again on Tuesday at 6:00 P.M. to continue the process.

Bob Willard, 76 Tewksbury Street asked if there is an option to get back on budget and if funding can be increased. Mrs. Gilbert said increased funding would require a Special Town Meeting and they don't want to do that.

2. Strategic Plan and FY13 Goal Focus

The School Committee met to review prior year goals and re-establish goals for the current year. The discussed how to improve communication and focusing on more educational workshops. The School Committee will meet on the afternoon of May 31st to establish goals for the upcoming year.

3. Bancroft School Principal Search Update

Superintendent McGrath said the process of choosing a new principal for Bancroft School is on track. The deadline for applications was Friday, May 11th, a parent, faculty, and children's focus group sessions were held and the search team will conduct resume reading is this week. Twenty-four resumes were received with eight candidates moving forward to the interview process. Currently, they are in the process of determining the final candidates, after which site visits will be scheduled, references checked, with the anticipation of announcing the new Bancroft School Principal by June 15th, with a start date of August 1st.

With the retirement of Bill Fleischmann, Assistant Principal at Wood Hill Middle School, they have reorganized the time of the Program Head. Linda Croteau will assume the role of Assistant Principal for .5 of her time and .5 as Program Head.

E. Old Business

1. 2011-2012 School Year Calendar: Last Day of School

Andover Schools had two storm days this past fall, followed by a mild winter. The last day of school, barring any unforeseen circumstances, will be Wednesday, June 20th and is a half day. The last full day for teachers will be June 21st, except for some of the elementary teachers who worked a half day on November 1st (they will work only a half day on June 21). The School Committee is required to vote on the last day of school.

Dennis Forgue motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve Wednesday, June 20, 2012 as the last day of school for students and Thursday, June 21, 2012 as the last day for teachers in the 2011-2012 school year barring any unforeseen emergencies or inclement weather. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins and voted 4-0 to approve. David Birnbach was not in the room at the time of the vote.

2. Financials: Monthly Financial Report

Paul Szymanski reported on the Monthly Finance Report dated May 15th. He noted that the unencumbered balance under page one of the Salary Report was covered by the vote at Town Meeting. There are a number of other negative balances that will be balanced by the end of the fiscal year. On the Expense Report, it is noted that the Legal Expenses of \$222,000+ is still increasing due to collective bargaining. Year-to-Date Special Needs Transportation costs are in good standing but May and June are projected out and there may be an over-expenditure; however the Circuit Breaker funds have yet to be posted so they expect to have a favorable unencumbered balance. The Collins Center Revolving Account shows outstanding balances but will end with a sufficient balance.

F. New Business

1. SC 2012-2013 Liaison and Subcommittee Assignments

The Committee's liaison and sub-committee assignments for the upcoming school year are as follows;

School Liaison Assignments:

Bancroft Annie Gilbert
Sanborn Dennis Forgue
South School Paula Colby-Clements
High Plain David Birnbach

West Elementary David Birnbach & Richard Collins
Shawsheen Richard Collins
Doherty Middle School Annie Gilbert
West Middle School David Birnbach
Wood Hill Middle School Dennis Forgue
Andover High School Richard Collins & Dennis Forgue

Sub-Committee Assignments:

Negotiations Sub-Committees:

- o Teachers: Dennis Forgue & Paula Colby-Clements
- o Food Services: Paula Colby-Clements & Paul Szymanski
- o Administrators: Paula Colby-Clements, Candace Hall, & Marinel McGrath
- o LPNs: Annie Gilbert & Candace Hall
- o Secretary: Annie Gilbert & Candace Hall
- o Instructional Assistants: Annie Gilbert & Candace Hall
- o Custodians: Dennis Forgue and Paul Szymanski

Budget Sub-Committee: Paula Colby-Clements, David Birnbach, Dennis Forgue

Communications: Annie Gilbert & Paula Colby-Clements

Policy: Paula Colby-Clements & David Birnbach

Liaison Assignments:

SPED Quarterly Review: Dennis Forgue
GLEC Representative: Dennis Forgue
Bancroft Bldg. Committee: Annie Gilbert
Legislative: Paula Colby-Clements
Tri-Board Debt Service: Dennis Forgue
SEPAC: Annie Gilbert

Annie Gilbert motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the 2012-2013 Liaison and Sub-Committee assignments as presented. The motion was seconded by Dennis Forgue and unanimously voted to approve.

2. School Choice 2012-2013

Each year schools are required to vote to participate or not to participate in School Choice and the minutes notating the vote are to be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Dennis Forgue motioned for the Andover School Committee to vote to not participate in the Massachusetts School Choice Program for Grades Pre-K through Grade 12 for the 2012-2013 School Year, due to the enrollment projects expected from 40B developments and the Bancroft School Building Project. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins and voted 5-0 to not participate.

3. FY-2013 Appointment of Representative for Gr. Lawrence Educational Collaborative

Annie Gilbert motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to appoint School Committee member Dennis Forge as the Andover Representative to the Greater Lawrence Education Collaborative (GLEC) for the 2012-2013 School Year. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins and voted 5-0 to approve.

4. Middle School Travel Request

A request for a Middle School trip to Spain during the School Vacation Week of April 12-21, 2013 has been submitted by Tom Keane and John Givens, DMS Teachers & Outing Club Advisors, with the support of Robin Wilson. Students will not miss any school time since they will leave after school on Friday, April 12 and return on Sunday, April 21. All deadlines and refund policies for the trip will be clearly and prominently written on all distributed literature regarding this trip. The trip is not a part of the school curriculum and it is open to 7 & 8th graders in the DMS Outing Club. This is an extracurricular trip, and therefore optional, so students will be expected to finance their trip costs; scholarships are not available.

On a motion by Annie Gilbert and seconded by Dennis Forgue, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to approve the Middle School travel request to Spain during the school vacation week of April 12 through April 21, 2013 as presented.

5. FY-13 Bus Contracts – Extracurricular and Field Trips

Paul Szymanski provided an overview of the FY-13 Bus Contracts requiring a vote by the Andover School Committee. There are three votes required for the bus contracts.

Motion #1

Dennis Forgue motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve a one year contract extension for regular school bus transportation town-wide, to Trombly Motor Coach Services, Inc. of Dracut, Massachusetts for a total estimated costs of \$1,460,700 for the period commencing September 6, 2012 through June 30, 2013. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins and voted 5-0 to approve.

Motion #2

Annie Gilbert motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve a one-year contract extension for Mid-day Kindergarten Transportation to Trombly Motor Coach Services, Inc., of Dracut, Massachusetts for a total estimated cost of \$157,080 for the period commencing September 6, 2013 through June 30, 2013. The motion was seconded by Dennis Forgue and voted 5-0 to approve.

Motion #3

Annie Gilbert motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve a one-year contract extension for extra-curricular, field trips, and athletic transportation to North Reading Lynnfield Taxi, Inc., of Methuen, Massachusetts for the period commencing September 6, 2012 through June 30, 2013. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins and voted 5-0 to approve.

6. Proposal to Increase School Lunch Prices for FY-13

Paul Szymanski explained the request of Gail Koutroubas, our Food Services Director, who is proposing an increase in price of school lunches for the 2012-2013 school year based upon rising costs. The online fee for pr-payment charges has been increased to \$2.00. Presently, each transaction costs the parent or guardian \$1.50/transaction. Disposable lunch trays will be changed to bio-

degradable trays in all the schools costing additional .08 (eight) cents per tray. Mrs. Koutroubas is recommending an increase of .10 (ten) cents per lunch to absorb these costs.

As this is a first reading of the proposal to increase school lunch prices for the 2012-2013, no action was taken.

G. Consent Agenda

1. Minutes: April 30, 2012
2. Warrants: Expense Warrants: #SW1221 in the amount of \$686,294.57 and #SW1221 in the amount of \$111,620.14; Payroll Warrants #12S046 for \$2,051,280.70 and P#12S047 for \$102,164.23.

Dennis Forgue motioned the Andover School Committee vote to approve the minutes of April 30, 2012 with revisions, and the warrants as presented. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins and unanimously voted to approve.

H. Adjournment

At 8:53 P.M. on a motion by Richard Collins and seconded by Dennis Forgue, the Andover School Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of May 24, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder

Documents: Monthly Financial Report
Regular School Bus Transportation Town-wide – One Year Contract Extension
Mid-Day Kindergarten Transportation-One Year Contract Extension
Extra-Curricular, Field Trips, and Athletic Transportation-One Year Contract Extension
Warrants
School Committee Minutes – April 30, 2012