

**Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting
Minutes of February 4, 2016**

Members in Attendance: Annie Gilbert, Paula Colby-Clements, Joel Blumstein, Susan McCready, and Ted Teichert

Others in Attendance: Interim Superintendent Sheldon Berman, Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Nancy Duclos, Assistant Superintendent of Administration and Finance Paul Szymanski, and AHS Liaison, Tim Chen

I. Regular Meeting

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

Annie Gilbert called the Regular Meeting of the Andover School Committee to order at 7:00 P.M.

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Olivia Lu, a Grade 6 student at West Middle School. On behalf of the School Committee, Olivia was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation.

B. Recognition/Communications

1. Highlights around the District

Dr. Berman invited AHS Principal Conrad to offer the recognition from the Intel Foundation Society for Science Talent Search for 2016, Think Beyond to Victor Zhang, who is one of 300 semi-finalists across the country and one of 12 in Massachusetts. Victor was awarded \$1,000 for himself, and \$1,000 for Andover High School, and he is working with Science Program Coordinator Steve Sanborn to determine how best to use the award for the Science Department. Victor explained briefly his science project. Chair Annie Gilbert congratulated Victor and his parents on this outstanding achievement.

Principal Conrad reported on the upcoming trial run of the H-Block to be conducted next week to check the student software and in March a mock schedule of Day 4 and Day 6 will be run. The High School Faculty, especially the Scheduling Committee, have been working very hard and are investigating how to group students for next year and polling teachers on what their preferences would be.

Paul Szymanski reported that the MGT team has been on site at the schools collecting data and have been fully engaged with the school principals sharing particular interests and concerns. As this endeavor is a Town and School initiative, a Facilities Assessment Community Forum on Town and School Buildings will be held on Wednesday, February 24th, at the Cormier Youth Center from 6:30-10:00 P.M. The community will have an opportunity to participate in the discussion, collaborate on ideas for future town and school facility needs, and to listen to the proposal for a 10-year facility master plan.

Dr. Berman recognized the students from West Middle School whose artwork is displayed in the hallways of the School Administration Building and in the School Committee Room. The student's work is wonderful and quite well done.

Dr. Duclos reported that Joanne Najarian and Tina Kelly are presenting at the Ed Tech Teacher's

Innovation Summit in San Diego this week. In addition, Joanne was invited to be on the Conference Committee to present Leading Teacher Learning, Leadership in Social Media at Holy Cross College in March.

Joel Blumstein is very disappointed in the amount of education support provided in the Governor's recently released Budget for FY-17 and he suggested that the School Committee should contact the local legislature to discuss our concerns. Annie Gilbert said the increase in Chapter 70 and in unrestricted government aid is a small increase but once you factor in the assessments being put on the Town, it is actually a decrease for Andover.

Susan McCready asked that the January 7th Minutes be revised to reflect that she was not in attendance at that meeting.

Ted Teichert reported that the Andover Business Association is holding a Meet the Candidates Night on March 15th from 6-7:30 at the Andover Historical Society. Annie Gilbert suggested confirming that date as it is her understanding that is the date as the League of Women Voters Candidates Night.

Ted Teichert heard on the news that the Educator Evaluations are out and Andover was on the lower end with only 55% of the teachers were evaluated. Dr. Berman said there was a problem with the software and the steps in the process, virtually all teachers were evaluated. If the box on the software isn't checked as completed, the whole evaluation is considered as incomplete. Dr. Duclos said once the report goes in it cannot be changed, and she is confident that all staff was evaluated (except retiring teachers). Dr. Berman said everyone now understands that this process is much more rigorous than anticipated and believes this year, all boxes will be checked. Ted said the good news is that our teachers are 85% proficient. Joel Blumstein would like to have a discussion on what information we can draw from the data collected.

Ted Teichert has been requesting information on legal expenses and submitted an email requesting information on what is driving the Special Education legal expenses in order to have a better understanding of the expense for the budget. Dr. Berman reported that there were 89 cases requiring legal assistance last year.

Annie Gilbert explained that when a School Committee member asks for a request that will require money to be spent to provide the information the School Committee has to agree to the request. Ted Teichert stated that there have been number of legal cases over the last 5 years, and his request is for information on the cost with breakdowns of all settlements in detail.

Paula Colby-Clements reviewed the financial reports provided to the School Committee and commented that what drives a settlement on what a student needs is not a budgetary issue and is not in the prevue of the School Committee, it is private information and not part of a public record. Joel Blumstein said the information on legal services and trends was in last year's budget book and the fees have been trending downwards in recent years. We rely on our administrators to determine and address the needs of our students.

Dr. Berman said a report of our non-Special Education and Special Education legal fees and settlements and totals year-to-date was provided to the School Committee. In general, we are trying

to minimize legal costs but legal costs tend to be incurred more towards the end of the school year. Ted Teichert asked if more students are going to one particular institution, for one particular reason, could we provide services to keep students in house.

Annie Gilbert said it sounds to her that Ted Teichert has made a request but she is not hearing that the other School Committee members wants to direct staff to produce the information. The discussion will be continued.

Dr. Berman said that in all the situations he has been involved in and the analysis done here, an increase in expenses could be an increase in a particular disability or placement, and if we think we could improve upon that, it is to our benefit to do that. We have launched the evaluation into the Language-based Program and believe there are some other initiatives that will come out of that review. There are three incentives to have In-district Programs: financial, people prefer in-district programs and to have students be part of the community, and it better serves students to be integrated into the regular schools. There are tremendous incentives to help us support the special education program and students.

The chart in the Budget book provides much of the information Mr. Teichert is requesting including long-term information by grade level listing Special Education in-district and information on the students who are out of district.

Annie Gilbert announced that nomination forms for the Virginia Cole Community Service Award are available on the Town website and should be submitted no later than March 15, 2016. Mrs. Gilbert is also requesting to reschedule the March 3, 2016 School Committee Meeting to another date.

Mrs. Gilbert asked for one or two School Committee members to participate in the Communications Task Force with the Town and Schools. Susan McCready and Joel Blumstein both offered to participate.

At the last meeting of the Crest Collaborative their annual report was provided which Annie Gilbert distributed to all of the School Committee members. The annual report provides a good sense of the programing offered at the Collaborative and what the participation is.

Paula Colby-Clements announced that the 5K Run for the Troops, will be held on Sunday, April 3rd, and the Andover Public Schools has a Team. Anyone who wants to register for the APS team can register online.

C. Public Input

Karen Bacchi of 20 Linda Road, said updates on the math program at the Middle Schools have not been received and parents expected to have information about online course offerings by the end of January. Although the Middle School Math Forum was well attended parents still have questions. She asked about the criteria for students taking algebra, when students can start taking the online courses, and that parents are still not happy with the summer school options, other options have not been made available.

Kerry Costello, AEA President, asked for a brief update on the administration of PARCC and for a confirmation that Andover will be using only handwritten testing, not using computers. Dr. Duclos confirmed that Andover will be using 'paper and pencil, no computers for PARCC testing and the DESE website lists testing windows for school systems to test.

D. Response to Public Input

Dr. Berman said quite a few issues have been worked through relative to Middle School Math and they will be offering a Middle School On-team approach for an Algebra accelerated option. There will be a formal proposal at the next School Committee meeting.

Dr. Duclos and Katherine Richard, K-12 Math Coordinator would like to gather as many teachers as possible to create a criteria list because it is important to have teacher input. They expect to have the criteria list finalized the week after February vacation. Teachers will also help create a topic list of what needs to be addressed in summer and online programs and to create two tests to be given in May to determine if students can test out, and plan scheduling. Dr. Duclos has been working with APEX on online courses, working closely on the syllabus, and creating a March start date.

E. Education

1. AHS International Field Trips: (1) Scotland and Ireland; (2) also to Madrid

AHS teacher, Brian Shea, with the support of Program English Language Arts Coordinator, Patricia Whelan and Principal Phil Conrad has proposed an EF trip to Scotland and Ireland in April 2017 for the dates of April 14-23, 2017. The purpose of the summit trip is to offer an all-inclusive international experience and global education to the Grade 11 and 12 students.

Paula Colby-Clements moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the proposed extra-curricular trip for Andover High School Students to Scotland and Ireland on April 14-23, 2017 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. Susan McCready seconded the motion and the School Committee voted 5-0 to approve.

2. AHS International Trip to Madrid, Spain: February 17-25, 2017

AHS Faculty teacher, Thomas Powers, with the support of Program World Language Coordinator, Jorge Allen and Principal Phil Conrad has proposed an EF trip to Madrid, Spain for the dates of February 17-25, 2017. The purpose of this trip is to provide students the opportunity to take language classes with local instructors as well as being able to put their new skills to use in a country where the language is spoken (experiential learning).

Paula Colby-Clements moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the pro-posed extra-curricular trip for Andover High School Students to Madrid, Spain from February 17-25, 2017 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. Susan McCready seconded the motion and the School Committee voted 5-0 to approve.

2. Curriculum Review Social Studies Program Review Update

Adrienne Bock reported on the process of the Social Studies Program Review from 2014-2016 which has been a really good process.

- ✚ Reviewed Social Studies Sequence in Grades 6 through Grade 12. Students get 3rd credit by taking one of the many elective classes offered.
- ✚ Process: Year 1 self-study included survey to teachers, colleagues in other districts, parents, and students.
- ✚ Shared the results of the survey, which showed a desire for curriculum concentration in US, Southwest, Asia, Ancient Mediterranean, and Europe.
- ✚ Less instruction or none at all in Central and South America, Australia, Southeast Asia & Africa.
- ✚ Students' results showed that they want more consistency across the classes and more history electives.
- ✚ Parents results showed that 81.2 agree that the program provides an appropriate academic challenge
- ✚ 76.4% agree the program helps children to develop critical thinking and analytical skills
- ✚ 75.8% agree that the program prepares student to discuss and better understand the world.

Recommendations by the Social Studies Advisory Board

- ✚ Add a 3rd required year of Social Studies (sophomore year/ The Modern World)
- ✚ Move to 20th Century, US in the World to junior year
- ✚ Re-Periodize World History offerings in grades 6, 7, 9, and 10 in an effort to have a precise, relevant historical narrative and more equitable distribution of content across grade levels.

Mrs. Bock showed the new APS Social Studies Sequence for Grades 6-10, and said new programs are planning to be launched next year. Teachers will receive professional development support, and curriculum work will be done over the summer.

3. Goal 1: High academic achievement for all

Dr. Berman gave an update on the accomplishments of the Strategic Plan over the past 5 years and said our Communications Intern will collect the updates and create a summary that will be made available. Goal 1 is divided into four strategies which were explained by Dr. Duclos

Strategy 1:

Program Coordinators have been put in place for Pre-K to 12 programs

Professional development is and will always be in progress

Working to improve Curriculum Mapping

External partnerships create opportunities to engage kids in real world activities.

- Explicit instruction and assessment of the 4C's, adding a 5th day of World Language at the Middle School level, and implementing an Elementary World Language Program, or a PK-12 Social Studies Rollout have not yet been addressed

Strategy 2:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive assessment plan
- Completed a dedicated afterschool time for assessment analysis
- Reading data teams established at the elementary level
- Common assessments developed and implemented at Middle and High School
- Parent portal open on ASPEN at all levels

Items in process: identifying benchmarks and assessments in elementary level in math, defining rubrics used for performance based assessments, and consistent use of protocols and processes for analyzing assessment results.

Not yet met: Identifying benchmarks and assessments in reading writing and science at the elementary level, Standards-based reporting structure aligned to the 2011 Curriculum Frameworks at the Middle and Elementary levels, and explicit instruction and assessment of the critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication.

Strategy 3:

- Ensure students have diverse learning experiences that evidence differentiated instruction, understanding of learning styles, and real world experiences in PK-Grade 12.

Completed: Many of the language enriched academic programs; transition opportunities program (TOPS), Transitions Alternative Program for grades 9-12, ESL Program Plan, Tiered Instruction Handbook, and Spec Ed referral process handbook.

In process: Blended learning options, Makerstudios at Elementary Schools, SEI Professional development, AHS Senior Capstone Project, and developing innovation lab curriculum.

Not yet met: Alternative Program for at-risk kids in Grades 6-8.

Strategy 4:

- Ensure each school has a strong and healthy culture, sense of participation; wellness, safety and security so that students develop social emotional and wellness competencies that will enable them to be self-aware and self manage to make responsible decisions.

Completed: Open Circle Training

In progress: Advisory Program at the Middle School that is consistent with all 3 schools, research & development into Advisory Program at AHS.

F. Old Business

1. FY17 Budget Update

Annie Gilbert reported that the Town Manager's Recommended Budget for FY-17 will be released on Friday, February 5th and will be available on the Town website. Town Manager Flanagan has proposed that the excess levy capacity (\$1.2M) be included in the budget and used as seed money for a special capital fund, and to put into place a mechanism to expand the Town's borrowing capacity to allow for projects to be completed with non-exempt debt. Negotiations have begun with the Public Employee Committee (PEC) on health insurance which could result in significant savings to the Town, but the assumption on savings is not included in the budget presentation. Dr. Berman said the Town Manager is refining Chapter 70 and Revenue resources helping to close the school budget gap with additional funds so our gap is less. The Town Manager recommendation for the School Department Budget for FY-17 is now \$75,480,829.

Kerry Costello, President of the AEA, spoke about the work being done with the AEA, Dr. Berman and

the Administrative Staff who have been reworking job descriptions, looking at special needs issues at AHS, as well as some compliance issues related to Special Education. Changes to the health plan design will have to be bargained and she hopes the schools receive some of the savings. At today's AEA Board meeting, it was made quite clear that the priority of the AEA is implementation of the Andover High School schedule this year and doing it correctly with the resources and personnel needed.

2. Warrant Article: AHS Library/Media Center Design Phase-School VII

Paul Szymanski said the bank routing numbers have been provided to the State to transmit the funds but to date, the funds have not yet been received.

G. Consent Agenda

1. Warrants: Expense SW1615 and SW1615A; Payroll 16S032, 16S031, 16SS05
2. Minutes December 3, 2015, December 17, 2015, January 7, 2016

Paula Colby-Clements moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented with revisions to Minutes of Dec 17, 2015 and January 7, 2016. The motion was seconded by Ted Teichert and voted 5-0 to approve.

II. Adjournment

At 9:25 P.M. on a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Joel Blumstein the Andover School Committee voted to adjourn. Roll call: A. Gilbert-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, J. Blumstein-Y, S. McCready-Y, and T. Teichert-Y.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Documents: Chart of School Committee Recommended Budgets from FY 2012-2017
Strategic Plan Updates – Goal 1