

**Andover School Committee
Workshop Session
Monday, March 14, 2016**

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

Others in Attendance: Interim Superintendent Dr. Sheldon Berman, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, Dr. Nancy Duclos, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Administration, Paul Szymanski

I. Regular Workshop

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

Chair Annie Gilbert called the School Committee to order at 8:30 A.M. The meeting began with a Moment of Silence and a Salute to the Flag.

B. Old Business

1. School Committee Policy Manual Update

The Subcommittee on Policy, Joel Blumstein and Paula Colby-Clements, met with Mike Gilbert of the Massachusetts Association for School Committees (MASC) and Dr. Berman regarding updates to the School Committee Policy Handbook.

The contract with MASC includes the policy manual review, updates, and putting it on our website in a user-friendly, easily accessible format, is for 3 years and upon approval by the School Committee a purchase order will be processed in the amount of \$3600 per year. MASC will let us know of any changes in law and come back to us with any questions or suggested changes and recommendations. The School Committee is not conceding any of their authority over approving policies.

Joel Blumstein moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the contract with Massachusetts Association for School Committees to update and publish the Andover School Policy Manual. The motion was seconded by Susan McCready and voted 5-0 to approve.

2. Budget for FY-17

It is unlikely that the School Department will get the current budget request of \$77,299,074 from the Town. Options available to the School Committee were discussed and included setting priorities between elementary enrollment and the high school schedule. They also talked about splitting the difference between the High School and Elementary Schools, or cutting other positions.

Major implications of the budget choices for 2107 discussed include:

Elementary Enrollment

Reduces class sizes in 16 classrooms impacting 418 students across 4 schools

Better enables prevention & intervention in the classroom
Enables the district to resolve APS Math dilemma without Summer or online courses

Provides more time to bring AHS Faculty together

Allows time for planning for virtual courses and further Progress on 1:1 at AHS

May compromise faculty morale at AHS

AHS Schedule

Enables personalization

Allows all year courses
May result in better overall student performance

Meets a contractual interest

Does not meet contractual obligation

Maintains current overall Class size ratio at the elementary level with some large classes.

AHS Principal, Phil Conrad talked about the high school faculty and bringing them together no matter what the decision is. Some staff will be relieved, some will be upset, but either way it will affect all the people in the building because they have been planning for this schedule for so long. The other unfortunate piece of the schedule is that it came out of a failed labor negotiation and has some residual effect towards making relationships, trust, and to feel they have a relationship with the Town. This is a much more complex relationship and a decision for people that goes to their core values. Everyone wants a sense of direction, and the piece that gets lost is what's best for kids. The new schedule is good for kids, and meets gaps that exist in the current schedule. The majority of faculty wants to see the schedule move forward. There is a lack of fundamental trust on follow through from management. However, once a decision is made the faculty will be ready to move forward.

Nancy Duclos explained the process used in selecting a schedule, which included a representation of teachers so not all faculty were involved. If the process is delayed how do we confirm that the schedule will be a #1 priority for next year. This year the departments have done extensive work on their curriculum and will continue to make sure all maps and programs are outlined for teachers. They are planning on moving forward with teachers working throughout the summer in order to be ready for September.

The three Chairs have discussed in depth elementary enrollment and the AHS schedule in-depth. The entire community as represented by the other three Boards needs to know this it is a priority.

The School Committee and Administration discussed options and scenarios if the funds

were divided between elementary enrollment and the high school schedule.

- Three additional teachers at the elementary level and two special education teachers at AHS will take care of some of the problem, but only 2 teachers at the elementary level would be challenging. Some of the courses at AHS would not run due to over enrollment and implications of fewer positions on the schedule would take away from teaching time
- The high school schedule shouldn't be implemented without the full resources requested. This would feed into the lack of trust of being asked to do more with less. Any reductions or elimination of the smaller courses because we can't fund the schedule would be detrimental.
- Elementary enrollment is important and is always a struggle. What would it look like if we waited one more year before addressing it, what would that look like?
- Research conducted by the Scheduling Committee found strong similarities between districts we compare ourselves to, and Lexington is just now starting to think about personalization. This schedule would allow for more flexibility for students and teachers.
- The Budget gap is \$1.8M and there are Circuit Breaker reserves available and other mechanisms the Town could do to provide a backstop to the Circuit Breaker Fund, and we know there are certain items in play on the revenue side, i.e. health insurance savings and possibly additional Chapter 70 revenue. The difficulty with reducing the Circuit Breaker Reserves you are spending almost 2 years of reserves in one
- New developments have impacted elementary enrollment and one of the difficulties confronting us is a result of the decline in teachers in 2008 from 109 to 101 teachers at the elementary level, which is significant, and the School Department is trying to bring these lost positions back. Additional teachers at the elementary level bring personalization, prevention, and intervention, with the curriculum and interactions with students. Through an analysis and projection of enrollment we are planning for what looks logical.
- By committing now to purchasing the textbooks and some online materials for the new high school schedule would send a message that we are investing in the schedule and expect it to happen.
- Delaying the schedule another year will give us time to prepare students for Algebra I and provide the opportunity to take two math courses in one year. Try to free up an FTE in math to offer both Algebra and Geometry in their freshman year.

Thursday, March 17th, is the Public Hearing on the proposed budget for FY-17. When the hearing is completed the Chair will close the hearing and move on with the regular budget and talk to see if we are ready to make a decision.

D. Adjournment

At 9:59 A.M. on a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Ted Teichert, the School Committee moved 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
Recorder