

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of January 5, 2010
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chair Debra Rahmin Silberstein, Richard J. Collins, Dennis Forgue, Annie Gilbert, and David Birnbach.

Others in Attendance: Dr. Claudia L. Bach, Superintendent, Dr. Susan M. Nicholson, Assistant Superintendent

I. Regular meeting in the School Committee Room

A. Salute to the Flag

Chair Deb Silberstein called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Mr. Collins asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by West Elementary students Emma Kelly (Grade 5) and Joe Rockwell (Grade 5). Mr. Collins presented the students with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the School Committee.

B. Recognition of Achievement

1. Fall Athletic Teams

Dr. Bach welcomed the 2009 Fall Athletic Teams and their coaches and congratulated them on their outstanding accomplishments. Dr. Bach introduced Chris Bergeron, Athletic Director who also congratulated the teams and recognized the accomplishments of the Boys' Golf Team, Girls' Field Hockey Team, Boys Cross-Country Team, and the Girls' Swim Team.

Dr. Bach thanked the school principals and facilities coordinator, Lisa Campbell for coming to the aid of SHED who experienced major water sprinkler break and needed to relocate their afternoon programs for two weeks.

David Birnbach congratulated Rick Collins, AHS Class of 1978 who is the track coach at Simsbury High School in Connecticut and was named Track Coach of the Year. Mr. Birnbach congratulated Mr. Collins and his family on receiving this honor.

Charlie Smith said the Boys' Gymnastic Team is now one of the largest in the State of Massachusetts and they are off to a good start.

C. Communication

1. Strategic Plan Kickoff – Dr. Willard Daggett

Dr. Willard Daggett, a well known international educational leader will kick-off our Strategic Plan by speaking at the Collins Center on Wednesday, January 6th from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. The presentation will be televised live. Dr. Bach said this is a joint effort with Andover, North Andover, Methuen, and Hamilton-Wenham School Districts. Dr. Daggett will meet with all School Administrators and School Committee members before and after his public presentation. The Andover School Committee will hold a workshop on Monday January 11th from 6:00-8:00 P.M. to discuss the message delivered by Dr. Daggett, how it relates to the Strategic Plan mission, and how it ties into the budget process. Dr. Nicholson said the second meeting of the Steering Committee is scheduled for Friday, January 15th at 8:00 A.M.

2. Superintendent Search Update

Human Resource Director Candace Hall and Michael Gilbert, MASC updated the School Committee on the status of the Superintendent Search. The Preliminary Screening Committee has been chosen and consists of the following: Administrators - Moira O'Brien, and Jonathan Harris; Staff - Debra O'Connor (High Plain Elementary), Laura Stella (Wood Hill Middle), and Dr. Mary Jo Carabatsos (Andover High School); Parents - Kyungseok Choo, Dr. Lisa Johnson, Barbara Wait, and Cyndi Webber; Community Representatives - Marjorie Dennis, and William Gibson ; and Town Manager Buzz Stapczynski will be the Town Official Representative. On January 21st the Preliminary Screening Committee will be introduced to the School Committee, receive training on the Open Meeting Laws and the Interview Process and be provided with the names of the Semi-finalists.

On a motion by Dennis Fogue, with a second by Annie Gilbert, the School Committee unanimously approved the appointed slate of participants for the Superintendent Preliminary Screening Committee as presented by Michael Gilbert, MASC.

3. Bancroft Feasibility Study Updates

Annie Gilbert said the School Building Committee and Bancroft neighbors met with the representatives from the Traffic Analysis Committee. The Traffic Analysis Committee will look at the existing traffic conditions, collect data, assign a grade to every intersection and analyze the impact of a school with up to 700 students. They will also look at potential access roads and make recommendations.

The SBC were shown four different site concepts by the architects. If the Feasibility Study shows a school of 700 cannot be built on the site, the School Committee will look at how to reduce the enrollment. Deb Silberstein will schedule an in-depth discussion on elementary school capacities across the district if needed. The members agreed the school principals would have the most knowledge on how space is used educationally within their building.

4. IT Consolidation Study Update

The first round of focus groups for the IT Consolidation Study has been completed. The community survey has been released and is available on the Town and School Department websites. Residents are encouraged to log on and complete the IT Survey by January 20, 2010. A survey directed to the Town and School employees is also available on-line and has been emailed to employees. The next meeting of the IT Committee is January 14th in the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room.

Dr. Bach reported on the Education Reform Act and the number of changes the Senate has made that the School Committee should be concerned with such as, regional transportation, and charter school funds. It is important that our representatives be alerted to urge them to not agree to these amendments.

D. Citizen Input

Bob Willard, 76 Tewksbury Street suggested as an evaluation of the quality of Andover educators, the School Department determine the number of AHS graduates who enroll in college and are required to take remedial courses. He also asked about sharing the technology reports MIT created with the Bancroft architects.

E. Consent Agendas

1. Warrants: Dr. Bach reported that the warrants are in order.

Motion: On a motion by Dennis Forgue with a second by Annie Gilbert, it was voted 5-0-0 to approve the warrants as presented.

2. Field Trips: AHS trip to Washington, D.C. Grades 9-12, February 4-8 to attend Jr. State of American Winter Congress, requested by Robert Michaud.

On a motion by Dennis Forgue with a second by Mr. Collins, it was voted 5-0-0 to approve the AHS trip to Washington, D.C. Grades 9-12, February 4-8, 2010 and if a non-disclosure form is needed it be brought forward for approval by the School Committee.

3. Minutes: On a motion by Annie Gilbert and a second by Richard Collins, it was voted 5-0-0 to approve the Regular Session Minutes of December 1, 2009.

F. Education:

1. FY2009-2010 Strategic Improvement Plan

Dr. Bach said the work for the Federal Race to the Top Grant and the Bancroft School Project would be added to the Strategic Improvement Plan provided to the School Committee. Deb Silberstein commented on the SIP and asked that the School Committee receive updates on the action items listed under Student Achievement Objective 1, that the action item for Student Writing be expanded to include all kinds of literacy, initiatives under achievements not be limited to their relationship to the High School, and to include a report on college acceptances under timelines and reports. Under Objective 2-Teacher Quality she asked how to raise the bar and improve teacher quality if almost all of Andover's teachers are highly qualified.

Dennis Forgue motioned to approve the updated FY2009-2010 Strategic Improvement Plan subject to the slight modifications. The motion was seconded by Annie Gilbert, and voted 5-0-0 to approve.

2. Discuss DESE Race to the Top Memorandum of Agreement

Dr. Bach reported on the Memorandum of Understanding the School Committee, Superintendent, and AEA President are required to sign and submit by January 13th in order to be considered for the Federal funds associated with the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant. The RTTT assurance form includes improving teacher and principal effectiveness, having teacher/leaders in every classroom, effective ways to improve the schools with the lowest achieving scores, and effective ways to improve education through data collected. Dr. Bach reported that the leadership of the Andover Teacher's Association has declined to sign the form and have declined the invitation to send a representative to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to an Information Session.

2. Discuss DESE Race to the Top Memorandum of Agreement (Cont'd)

The Committee discussed the requirements and the process for receiving the funds from the RTTT which includes partnering with lowering performing districts on proposals. Mike Gilbert of MASC advised the School Committee on the collective bargaining requirements related to the RTTP requirements. He reported that the Mass Teachers Association is advising local Teacher Associations to be cautious about signing the MOU.

On a motion by Dennis Forgue with a second by Annie Gilbert it was voted 5-0-0 to authorize the Chair of the School Committee, Deb Silberstein, to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for the Race to the Top funds.

G. Policy

1. Field Trip Policy

Dr. Bach distributed the Andover Field Trip Policy and additional information required to be submitted to the School Committee. She reported that Attorney Stonberg suggested the language in the Parent Consent Form used in Newton be used in Andover's Liability Waiver, as this is the most recent court-tested language. In addition, the Committee and Mike Gilbert talked about the legal requirements of the Ethic Laws and how it affects the travel vouchers teachers receive, and the liability of third party providers (travel agencies). The Committee also discussed the educational value and costs of field trips especially for students.

Dennis Forgue motioned to authorize the School Committee to accept the disclosure form for Andover School employees who have submitted a Field Trip proposal that involves the employee receiving remuneration of \$50 or more to require two votes; one for approval of the field trip and the other for approval of the disclosure form. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins, voted 5-0-0 and approved.

H. Adjournment

On a motion to adjourn by Mr. Collins with a second by Dennis Forgue, it was voted to 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder