

Andover School Committee

Minutes of June 8, 2017

Members in Attendance: Chair, Susan McCready, Vice-Chair, Shannon Scully, Joel Blumstein, Ted Teichert, and Paul Murphy

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Dr. Sheldon Berman, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Administration, Paul Szymanski.

I. Call to Order

Susan McCready called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M. in the School Committee Meeting Room located in the School Administration Building.

II. Executive Session

At 5:01 P.M. Joel Blumstein moved that the Andover School Committee enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the School Committee and to reconvene in Open Session. The motion was seconded by Paul Murphy. Roll call: Paul Murphy-Y, Joel Blumstein-Y, Shannon Scully-Y, Ted Teichert-Y, Susan McCready-Y. At 6:30 P.M. on a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Shannon Scully, the School Committee voted to adjourn from Executive Session to return to Open Session at 7:00 P.M. not to return to Executive Session. Roll call: Paul Murphy-Y, Joel Blumstein-Y, Shannon Scully-Y, Susan McCready-Y. Ted Teichert left the Executive Session at 5:18 P.M.

III. Regular Meeting

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

At 7:00 P.M. Susan McCready reconvened the Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order. The meeting began with a Moment of Silence followed by a Salute to the Flag led by Grade 5 students from West Elementary.

Susan McCready thanked the School and faculty at West Elementary School, especially the Art teachers Shannon Laitala and Hannah Robbins for the wonderful artwork on display in the School Committee Room and School Administration Offices.

B. Recognitions/Communications

1. Highlights from around the District

Congratulations to the AHS Girls' Track Team on winning the State Championship for the third year in a row. Coach Peter Comeau and members of the Track Team were present for a recognition by the School Committee. Peter Comeau said the support from the Town and School Administrators is what makes the team feel comfortable to be all they can be. Some of the girls on the Track Team will be headed to the Nationals Competition this year.

Dr. Berman welcomed the new hires in the District. Nancy Duclos introduced Donna Ruseckas, our new Program Coordinator for Health and Physical Education, who brings an impressive background of leadership and achievements in health and physical education. AHS Principal Phil Conrad introduced Bill Martin, the new Athletic Director, who also brings with him a list of significant achievements and teaching experience. Bill has a broad

range of coaching experience and is a member of MIAA Unified Advisory Board and a Nationally Certified Soccer Coach and National Scholastic Coach.

Donna and Bill are successors to the positions respectively held by Brian McNally and Don Doucette both of whom are retiring this year.

Dr. Berman invited the School Committee to attend the Superhero Training on Thursday, June 15th, at 10:30 A.M. at the Cormier Youth Center where one-hundred and twelve 4th grade students from Bancroft will be trained to mentor younger children, providing leadership and mentoring skills.

Dr. Duclos announced that Andover was the first place winner in the Massachusetts Foreign Language Contest, as well as receiving an Honorable Mention, and a 1st grade was the winner for the video contest. The programs Dr. Allen is doing with his staff are being translated into the classroom.

Paul Szymanski recognized Janet Wright, School Accountant and other members of the Business Office, for the compilation of information in the Fiscal Year 2018 Andover Public Schools Approved Budget Book. Mr. Szymanski provided a brief overview of this year's ALICE safety training. ALICE Training will be provided to all staff beginning in September, and includes a new emergency response program tailored for each school. Andover is very serious about ensuring our schools are safe and he works closely with Detective Mark Higgenbottom from APD on providing safety training and protocols.

Shannon congratulated the students from West Elementary who participated in the Math Olympiad. Students who participated actually put in an extra week of school by doing an math as extra enrichment.

Ted Teichert congratulated the 2017 Senior Class who graduated on Monday, June 5th and also congratulated all the recipients of awards at the Awards Breakfast. Congratulations to Diane Costagliola for coordinating all of the events.

Ted Teichert will be filing a complaint tomorrow on an Open Meeting Law Violation by the School Committee. He is also requesting an update on the Bullying Policy which he believes has to be reviewed every two years to make sure the process and protocols are being followed by the administrators of our schools, and asked for details on complaints received by email. Susan McCready pointed out that it is the Bullying Plan that has to be reviewed and updated if needed every two years, not the Policy. Dr. Berman has read through the Plan and believes we are following the Policy and Plan closely and in terms of the issue raised about the email, there is no determination in the plan or policy that says a parent should be involved in an investigation. The investigation referred to is still in process.

Dr. Berman gave a brief update on the many events, progress, curriculum, culture, hiring, improvements, and accomplishments that occurred across the District this past school year.

Susan McCreedy said Dr. Berman has asked to bank ten of his remaining eighteen vacation days and to carry-over eight days which will be used in August. The School Committee will vote on this request at the next School Committee Meeting.

Paul Murphy proposed the School Committee members present a short reflection at the next meeting on what has transpired over the past year; a State of the Schools from the School Committee. The Committee agreed.

2. Public Input - None

3. Response to Public Input - None

C. Education

1. AHS Student and AHS Athletic Handbooks for 2017-2018 School Year

The School Committee is required to vote to approve the School Handbooks for the next school year. There are some substantive changes in the handbooks this year partially due to the new schedule at the high school.

Principal Conrad provided a list of summary of changes to the 2017-2018 Student Handbook. The Handbooks were reviewed by the School Council as required and the changes reflect the 2017-18 calendars. The MCAS test dates for 2018 will be updated when DESE provides the information. The Athletic Handbook includes date changes, student academic eligibility which is a calculation done by the MIAA to bring the policy in line with new AHS schedule, new opioid information, athletic dates (last page), syntax and grammar changes.

On a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Paul Murphy, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to approve the 2017-2018 Andover High School Student Handbook as presented.

Principal Conrad also explained the two AHS Field Trip requests below.

2a. AHS Field Trip to France, April 14-22, 2018

Peter Hall, French teacher from our World Language AHS Department, has a group of French students traveling to France during April vacation in 2018. We have had a relationship with our sister school, Le Lycee Kleber in Strasbourgh, France for over 10 years. Andover recently hosted 23 students and 2 teachers from Strasbourgh for the 4th time, so now it's our turn to return to Strasbourgh to promote cultural understanding. This is an extracurricular trip, and therefore optional, so students will be expected to finance their trip costs.

On a motion by Shannon Scully and seconded by Ted Teichert, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to approve the proposed extracurricular trip for Andover High School students to France from April 14-22, 2018 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."

2b. AHS Field Trip to China, April 14-22, 2018

Lin Wu, Chinese teacher from our World Language AHS Department, has a group of 7 & 8 graders from the Middle Schools, plus AHS Chinese language students traveling to China during April vacation in 2018. This trip will give students the opportunity to explore China's most famous sites, which will allow them to make connections with other content areas, such as social studies. Students will experience authentic culture through food, art, dance and visiting a school which will enrich their knowledge of the language and culture. This is an extracurricular trip, and therefore optional, so students will be expected to finance their trip costs.

On a motion by Paul Murphy and seconded by Joel Blumstein the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to approve the proposed extracurricular trip for Andover Middle and High students to China from April 14-22, 2018 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".

Paul Murphy requested a presentation on the standards for these trips, and information on precautions for safety, liability, etc.

3. Zero Waste in Cafeteria

Paul Murphy and Ted Teichert met with the parent organizers and volunteers of the Zero Waste Programs and as part of the Green School Team they have requested the Zero Waste Program become a part of school operations to sustain the program going forward. Dr. Berman said the custodians have taken on a lot of the tasks, and upper grade students at some of the schools have taken on an instructional role for other students to follow. The gap is how to monitor the actual disposal of food to ensure it is done correctly and how to manage the composting taken out and delivered. Paul Szymanski commented on the funds provided by Food Services and Municipal Services for containers and standard operating procedures that have been established.

4. Research Pilot Program – Carroll School

The School Committee discussed the June 1st presentation by the Carroll School and the possibility of partnering with them. Dr. Berman said preliminary logistics show that we can make it work starting with a limited group of students and as a collaboration, we can always pull out if it becomes problematic. The initiative they will be working with has been proven over a six-year study and the Carroll School wants to validate the work in a public school setting. Sara Stetson said this initiative would be in addition to current programs.

Dr. Berman said the initiative will be covered through federal funding and benefits our staff by engaging them with key resources and in cutting edge work that gives us an opportunity to look at and study the influence of fluency in a deeper way. You don't cure a disability, you mitigate it.

Shannon Scully was impressed with the data shown at the presentation by the Carroll School and appreciates Sara's work to collaborate with outside agencies that have shown effective strategies. Paul Murphy and Susan McCready were also both impressed with

the Carroll School presentation and the opportunities it can provide that could benefit students. Ted Teichert questioned why we would consider this if we know that Orton-Gillingham works.

On a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Shannon Scully, the Andover School Committee voted 4-1 to recommend a partnership with the Carroll School on targeted cognitive interventions and other areas of support for students with language based learning disabilities. Ted Teichert would like to have the linguistics and data information before he votes.

D. Old Business

1. Bancroft Soccer Field

On a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Ted Teichert, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to authorize construction of a soccer field on the Bancroft School property on the land currently known as The Meadow located next to the Bancroft Road entrance as presented.

2. Whether to Review Legal Counsel

Ted Teichert requested a review of school counsel to determine effectiveness, billable hours, performance, and for comparisons to other legal organizations. Joel Blumstein said a good search for a law firm is a major undertaking and the timing to pursue this is not now. The other members are not clear on why we would want to do this if there aren't any objections to the legal counsel currently used. Dr. Berman checked with Attorney Michael Long, Counsel to the Superintendents Association, who said there isn't any consistent process to review legal firms; change seems to occur if the firm isn't a good match for the district.

Paul Szymanski reported that an update on billable hours and fees was provided last year. Dr. Berman suggest that a review of our legal representation be conducted in 2018.

3. Superintendent Evaluation Date

It is in the School Committee's purview to have a Memo of Understanding between the School Committee and the Superintendent to postpone their evaluation to August 2, 2017. Susan McCready distributed a draft of the Memo of Understanding to the School Committee members and publicly read the prepared draft.

On a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Paul Murphy the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to postpone the Superintendent's Evaluation until the first School Committee Meeting following June 30, 2017.

4. May Financials

Paul Szymanski updated the Committee on the May financials and based on the FY-17 approved budget of \$77M, there is an approximate balance of \$62,000. All department heads and principals were asked to pay due diligence to what they requested and what their needs are and we have used the balance to support some needs that could not be addressed.

E. Consent Agenda

1. Warrants: Expense Warrant SW1732 Payroll Warrant #17S049

2. Minutes: None

On a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Paul Murphy, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0- to approve the consent agenda as presented.

F. Adjournment

At 9:50 P.M. on a motion by Joel Blumstein and seconded by Shannon Scully, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0- to adjourn the June 8, 2017 School Committee Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo, Recording Secretary

Documents: May Financials
 School Warrants
 AHS Student Handbook Revisions