

School Committee Meeting
Minutes of Monday, August 20, 2018

Members in Attendance: Joel Blumstein, Susan McCready, and Tracey Spruce. Vice-Chair, Paul Murphy, teleconferenced in from a remote location.

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Berman, and Assistant Superintendents Paul Szymanski, Sandy Trach, and Sara Stetson

A. Call to Order

Joel Blumstein called the School Committee to order at 6:00 P.M. in the School Committee Meeting Room in the School Administration Building.

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence followed by a Salute to the Flag.

Joel welcomed Nicole Keizer, Director of Communications and Sandy Trach, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, to their first meeting of the School Committee.

B. New Business

1. Hiring Additional Staff due to Enrollment Request

Joel provided background information on the hiring of additional staff noting that we must stay within the constraints of the budget voted at Town Meeting. Changes are often necessary and may be made during the course of the year within the approved budget. Hiring additional personnel requires School Committee approval if an entirely new position is to be created or if funds are to be moved between the salary and expense accounts. It is important to have complete transparency on what the staffing need is and why, and where the funds will be coming from to cover the expense.

Dr. Berman reported enrollment projections received last year, which were in-line with a more conservative but reasonable approach, were used. However, as of today, we are 110 students above our projections and expect the enrollment number will change again as school starts next week. Several of the school enrollments are impacted by changes with new apartment developments. The recommendation is for an additional Grade 1 Teacher for High Plain Elementary to maintain class size of 24-25.

Additional resources to cover the cost will come from savings due to changes in personnel over the summer and the expectation of a modest relief in our budget from additional circuit breaker funds. They are reluctant to move a teacher from elsewhere to High Plain, due to the volatility of incoming students to the district.

The School Committee discussed the West Elementary 1st grade numbers (low) but which are expected to increase. Of all the grades where the actuals are above projections, First Grade was projected to have less students than projected. Had they not moved a teacher last spring, they would not have needed to add a teacher. Each Kindergarten class has a full time Instructional Assistant, whereas First Grade does not.

Lynn Anderson, liaison to the Finance Committee requested an updated enrollment report. Shelley will provide that data once the numbers are locked in, with the disclaimers i.e. subject to change.

In order to stay in compliance and service student needs, an additional position (Special Education) will be added to the LEAP Program housed at Bancroft School. Funding is also within the range of what is available within the current budget.

The School Committee does not need to vote on the hiring of these additional staff because they are within the parameters noted above. The Committee thanked Dr. Berman for his briefing on the reasons for the additional teachers and being transparent.

C. Public Input – None

D. Response to Public Input - N/A

H. Consent Agenda

1. Warrants: in order

On a motion by Susan McCready and seconded by Tracey Spruce, the Andover School Committee voted 4-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Roll call: S. McCready-Y, J. Blumstein-Y, S. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y.

I. Adjournment

At 6:58 P.M. on a motion by Tracey Spruce and seconded by Susan McCready, the Andover School Committee adjourned the meeting of August 20, 2018. Roll call: S. McCready-Y, J. Blumstein-Y, S. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Documents: Enrollment Projection Chart