

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of February 23, 2010
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

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

Others in Attendance: Dr. Claudia L. Bach, Superintendent, Bernie Tuttle, Interim Business Manager

I. Regular meeting in the School Committee Room

A. Salute to the Flag

Chair Deb Silberstein called the meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:03 P.M. Mr. Collins asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Recognition of Achievement

Dr. Bach recognized school personnel at Doherty Middle School and the employees at Plant & Facilities on the installation of solar panels on the school roof over school vacation.

Dr. Bach congratulated the middle and high school science teachers who were the recipients of the Peggy Corbett Mini-Science Grants recognized at a reception held today.

Dr. Bach congratulated all members of the Winter Athletic Teams at Andover High and recognized Coach Tidsley's 300th win with the Girls Basketball Team.

C. Communications

1. Strategic Plan Update

Facilitators for the March 11th Community Focus Group have been lined up, and will attend a two hour training session this Thursday. Letters have been sent to local businesses and town officials inviting them to participate with members of the community in the Community Focus Group which will be held in the cafeteria at Andover High School from 7:00-9:30 P.M.

2. Bancroft Feasibility Study

The School Building Committee held a procedural meeting last week and will meet again on Wednesday, February 24th to receive the Traffic Impact Report.

3. Budget Advisory Committee

The BAC met before school vacation week and discussed how to better articulate budget information to the community, and what information would be helpful to the community. The next meeting is scheduled for March 15th.

4. Superintendent Search Update

The Superintendent Search is ongoing with site visits of the finalists scheduled for this week. The community is invited to attend the community receptions to be held each afternoon from 3:00-4:00 P.M. in the Sun Room at the Senior Citizen Center. Each candidate will have an Andover site visit, the interviews are open to the public, and they will be taped and aired on the school cable channel after all interviews are completed.

Dr. Bach reported that Jon Zipeto was nominated as the School Liaison to the Cable/TV Advisory Board.

Nominations for the Virginia Cole Community Service Awards should be sent to the Town Manager by March 26th. The Award is given to the resident who has given their time, effort and devotion to the Community.

Deb Silberstein received a letter from Carol Mitchell who is an Instructional Assistant at West Elementary which stated the Instructional Assistants did not have an opportunity to speak at the last meeting after the presentation. Deb has invited the Instructional Assistants to come back to another meeting if they want to address the School Committee with their concerns.

D. Facilities

Dr. Bach said the School Committee is to consider a proposal to name the new high-tech Foreign Language Lab after the Andover Coalition for Education (ACE) who was responsible for raising the funds to purchase the new lab. Tina Girdwood, President of ACE and Tony James, Vice-President said ACE was able to fund the lab through the generous support of Andover citizens, and the Horne Family Foundation. Annie Gilbert said the magnitude of this gift will significantly change the face of the Foreign Language Lab; it is an incredible transformation and merits recognition in a permanent way.

Annie Gilbert motioned to create a policy naming rooms and for the Board to consider naming the Foreign Language Lab in honor of the Andover Coalition for Education. The motion was seconded by Dennis Fogue, voted 5-0 and approved.

Annie Gilbert suggested they look to determine the wording for the plaque that would recognize the major donors who made this gift possible along with the hundreds of people who sent in donations. She also recognized the integral role Dr. Bach played in establishing ACE and visioning of the partnership of ACE with the School Department.

E. Citizen Input

Bob Willard, 76 Tewksbury Street, asked about the cost and/or potential savings of the new Special Education Class, and what the School Committee expects to see in the way of reduced salaries with negotiations with the AEA.

F. Consent Agenda Dennis Fogue motioned to accept the consent agenda items as presented. The motion was seconded by Annie Gilbert, voted 5-0 and approved.

Warrants: Mr. Tuttle reported that the warrants are in order.
Minutes: Regular Session Minutes of February 2, 2010 and February 10, 2010.

Disclosures: Disclosure forms for Ann Levinson, David Hughes, Cheryl Barry, and Erin Manship for SKI 93.

G. Education

1. Wrestling Club

Athletic Director Chris Bergeron distributed a breakdown of costs associated with the Wrestling Club and key aspects covered by the Friends of Andover Wrestling. Dr. Bach reported that the costs associated with the Wrestling Club would be in addition to the current budget. She remarked that they have worked out a cost sharing agreement with the Friends of Andover Wrestling and she supports this proposal. Transportation costs of \$5,000 would be paid for by the Friends of Andover Wrestling and the Andover Youth Services vans would be used to transport; with logistics to offset this cost worked out with Chris Bergeron. Reasonable expenses incurred over the net expenses of the program will also be covered by the Friends of Andover Wrestling.

Discussion:

Mr. Birnbach recognized the group effort to bring the Wrestling Club forward; however he feels we should focus on the importance of balancing efforts in sports and the academic arena to build momentum to make Andover High School the top high school in Massachusetts within the next three years and one of the top ten high schools in the country in five years. He would like to see the School Department investigate ideas to encourage a broader context and invest in academic initiatives, i.e. Robotics Club, Debate Team etc.

Mr. Collins proposed the School Committee accept the agreement as presented in the proposal for the Andover High School Wrestling Club and in accordance with the aspects of the agreement with the Friends of Andover Wrestling. The motion was seconded by Dennis Forgue, voted 4-0-1 and approved. David Birnbach abstained.

H. Policy First Pass

Dr. Bach stated that the School Committee needs to review the policies in place and decide what changes need to be made and what needs to be added. A first pass at changes and/or additions to the following policies

<u>JBA – Student to Student Harassment</u>	Review current policy.
<u>JICFB-Bullying</u>	There are items in this policy that are critical.
<u>IIB – Classroom Staffing</u>	Review the current staffing level.
<u>EEAJ-Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds</u>	The Committee determined that this was not an issue and did not need to be brought forward for further consideration.

BUDGET WORKSHOP – FY2011 Preliminary Budget

The interim business administrator, Bernie Tuttle provided an update on the FY-2011 Preliminary Budget stating that a savings of a few thousand dollars has been realized from the budget freeze in effect. The budget deficit is in excess of \$800,000 due to the amount budgeted from the Circuit Breaker anticipated at 75% when only 42% was actually received. Mr. Tuttle distributed additional information on the budget explaining line item adjustments that added an increase of \$46,194 to the deficit. In addition, areas of major increases in the Special Education Budget include legal fees (\$30,000), requirements for the new in-house program at AHS (\$20,000 supplies and \$153,892 for personnel, \$25,000 consulting, and \$403,934 contractual), transportation (\$30,700), and Other

BUDGET WORKSHOP – FY2011 Preliminary Budget (Cont'd)

Programs (\$1,688,121) for a total of \$2,270,177. If the Circuit Breaker for FY-2011 is funded at 72%, Other Programs expense would be \$922,500 less than presented.

Deb Silberstein asked Mr. Tuttle to email the Chairs of the three Boards an explanation of the deficit. Mr. Fogue inquired about the IDEA funds and if the monies received was used to offset FY-2010. Mr. Tuttle said revenue from IDEA was applied against the deficit and he will provide an accounting of the funds to clarify any confusion.

The School CIP will be presented to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee on March 22nd. Dr. Bach said Dr. Nicholson will present information to the Committee on the status of the CIP funds earmarked for the technology pilot program, how it fits into the Strategic Plan, and the Technology Plan. She will also ask Dr. Nicholson to report on the status of the Wellness Grant.

The School Department will review cost saving benefits associated with moving from a block schedule to a 5x7 schedule at AHS, elimination of one or more departments at the middle schools, and increasing class size at the elementary schools.

The Committee discussed Special Education in-district programs and their commitment to continue to build in-district capacity to reduce out-of-district tuitions. The School Committee will participate in a Special Education field trip to have a first-hand look at Andover's in-district programs.

David Birnbach would like to examine the potential of having one teacher lead two classrooms and increasing instructional assistants to help deliver the instruction. Annie Gilbert suggested investigating a cost-benefit analysis first because for FY-2011 this type of change would have significant contractual issues, bumping rights, etc.

Annie Gilbert inquired if there was any discussion with ACE to continue funding some portion of the Grant Administrator's salary. Dr. Bach stated that funds from other grants the Grant Administrator is overseeing have covered some of the position and they are looking at other avenues of covering this salary.

Dr. Bach will put together a list of new initiatives, programs, and services that have been reorganized or eliminated. They are looking at Daggett's model and working with interdisciplinary teams, and every administrator is committed to moving forward and adopting the beliefs of Daggett's model. Deb Silberstein suggested the School Committee and Administration have a high-level discussion on the direction of education at the next meeting.

I. Adjournment

At 9:45 P.M. on a motion by Dennis Fogue and a second by Annie Gilbert, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo

Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder