

Andover School Committee
Minutes of Planning Session of January 13, 2009
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chair Debra Rahmin Silberstein, Secretary, Tony James Arthur H. Barber, Ed.D, Richard J. Collins, and Dennis Fergie

Others in Attendance: Dr. Claudia Bach, Superintendent, Dr. Susan M. Nicholson, Assistant Superintendent, Dave Keniston, Business Administrator, and Candace Hall, Human Resources Director, Michael Gilbert, M.A.S.C.

The Planning Session was called to order by Chair Deb Silberstein at 4:25 P.M.

1. **Budget Development**

Dr. Bach updated the School Committee on the recent developments of the budget stating that although the budget number for FY10 is still unknown, she has been in discussions with the Town Manager and Joanne Marden, who are both aware we need to add at least one million to the base this year. Dr. Bach shared a copy of an Allocation Alternative grid showing various models of budget numbers. Deb Silberstein talked about the budget meetings held with the Town Manager, Board of Selectman Chair, and Finance Committee Chair and shared some ideas discussed on how to increase the base number. Dr. Bach said she explained to the Town Manager the outcomes of her meetings with the principals and what the budget number before touching staff would look like. She also stressed the importance of equity in terms of allocations on the Town side. Deb also had conversations with Ted Teichert and Joanne Marden on what possible town cuts in staff would look like.

Mike Gilbert said towns are waiting out the week to see what the possible 9C cuts from the Governor will be. He has heard that the cuts in education will not be as much as thought. He suggested we contact State Senator Susan Tucker to assist with acquiring funds for education. Deb Silberstein talked about the conference call with Congresswoman Nikki Tsongas arranged by Susan Tucker in which they discussed the timeframe for the Stimulus Package from Washington, D.C. and the number of core pieces in it. Congress will regulate half of the package to Medicaid and the other half in block grants to states. We will try to get some legislation into block grants for education. Superintendent Christine McGrath from Tewksbury was also present during the conference call and talked about Special Education issues, especially autism.

Dr. Bach met with the other members of the five district coalition today (Lynnfield, Reading, North Reading, and Wilmington), and they produced a list of items of possible shared resources to explore and focus on. A few items on the list include: Before/After School Programs used as profit centers, all five communities using the same curriculum and shared resources, magnet schools that focus on one area of curriculum, under-enrolled staff development courses offered to the other communities and/or collaboration to offer courses, school calendar changes, sharing of professional development resources and ideas, etc.

1. **Budget Development (Cont'd)**

Candace Hall, since she works for both sides (town and school), was instrumental in providing information on possible shared resources between Towns and Schools. The group discussed a regional town/school provider for health insurance, would it make any sense, would it be feasible, etc., an idea that is being discussed in other districts. Mike Gilbert said the Health Insurance Plan in his community is looking into a Health Trust. The discussion on the budget update ended at 5:05 P.M.

2. **Roles and Responsibilities – Michael Gilbert, Part II**

The Committee continued discussions with Michael Gilbert regarding the roles and responsibilities of School Committee members. The discussion centered on budget and communication issues. The meeting adjourned at 6:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary