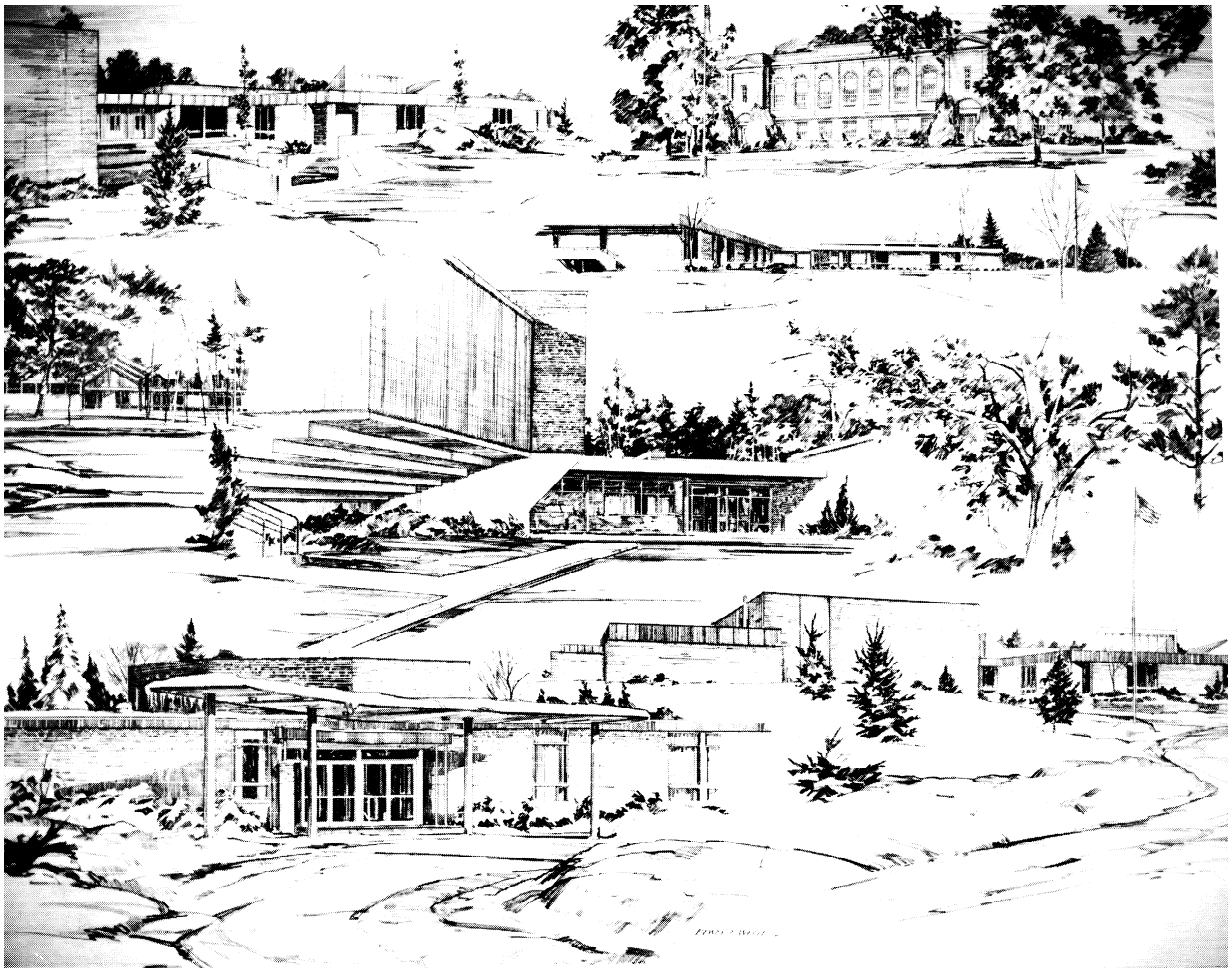

Acton Public
School Committee Meeting

<u>October 20, 2011</u>
7:30 p.m.

at the
McCarthy-Towne School Library

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Cafeteria **October 20, 2011**
McCarthy-Towne School **7:30 p.m.**

AGENDA with addendum

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. STATEMENT OF WARRANT

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
   3.1 9/15/11 APS Meeting
   3.2 5/19/11 APS Meeting *(addendum)*

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

5. EDUCATION REPORT - David Krane, Principal, McCarthy-Towne School *(7:45)*

6. SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS
   6.1 MCAS Update – *Deb Bookis (8:00)*
   6.2 Funding of Classroom Assistants – *Steve Mills (8:15) (additional memo& chart in addendum)*
   6.3 Recommendation to Accept Gift from Conant School PTO – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills (9:15) (revision in addendum)*
   6.4 Recommendation to Accept Gift from Douglas School PTO – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
   6.5 Recommendation to Accept Douglas at Dawn and Dusk Program Funding –**VOTE** – *S.Mills*
   6.6 Recommendation to Accept Gift from Gates School PTO – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
   6.7 Recommendation to Accept Gift from McCarthy-Towne School PTO - **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
   6.8 Recommendation to Accept Gift from Merriam School PTO and Merriam Mornings/After Hours Program Funding - **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
   6.9 Policy Subcommittee Updates *(9:30)*
      6.9.1 Revised: Use of School Facilities (File: KF) – **FIRST READING** – *Kim McOsker*
         6.9.1.1 Proposed Policy Revision
         6.9.1.2 Current Policy
         6.9.1.3 Draft Use of School Facilities Procedures & Fees (File: KF-R)
      6.9.2 New: Advertising in Schools (File: KHB) – **FIRST READING** – *Marie Altieri*

7. FOR YOUR INFORMATION *(9:40)*
   7.1 School Improvement Plans (revised): Conant, McCarthy-Towne
   7.2 Enrollment Report, October 2011
   7.3 ELL Student Population Report
   7.4 2012-2013 Kindergarten Registration Schedule *(addendum)*
   7.5 Monthly APS Object Summary and SPED Reports
   7.6 Food Service Update – *Marie Altieri (oral)*
   7.7 School Newsletters
      Conant Crier: http://conant.ab.mec.edu/pto/newsletter.html
      Douglas Digest: http://douglas.ab.mec.edu/pto/digest.html
      Gates Gazette: http://gatesschoolpto.org/gazette
      McCarthy-Towne Bulletin: http://www.mctptso.org/bulletin/
      Merriam Comm News: http://www.merriampto.org/Merriam
      Acton Public School Preschool: http://ab.mec.edu/Preschool/index.htm
   7.8 Community Correspondence *(addendum)*

8. NEXT MEETINGS: November 3, 7:00 p.m. in the **ABRHS** Library, Joint APS/ABRSC/Acton Board of Selectmen Meeting followed by ABRSC Meeting ??
   November 17, 7:30 p.m. in the Merriam Library, APS SC Meeting

ADJOURN *(10:00)*

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Draft Minutes

Cafetorium **September 15, 2011**
Douglas School **7:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Dennis Bruce, Mike Coppolino, Kim McOsker, Paul Murphy, John Petersen,
Members Absent: Xuan Kong
Others: Don Aicardi, Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Liza Huber, Steve Mills, Beth Petr

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1. CALL TO ORDER
Chairperson Mike Coppolino called the Acton Public School Committee to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. CHAIRMAN'S INTRO
Mike Coppolino thanked the Douglas PTO co-chairs, Deanne O'Sullivan and Martha Papalia, and Hospitality Chair, Cheryl Witty for the refreshments.

Dr. Mills reported that it was a good opening of school but there were some issues due to the weather and Hurricane Irene. His opening day speech for staff stressed his goals for the year. AEA President Marc Lewis also spoke on opening day and complimented the Superintendent's message. See posted information.

3. STATEMENT OF WARRANT
Warrant #201205 dated 9/6/11 in the amount of $538,504.31 was signed by the Chairperson and circulated to the Committee for signatures.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – to be done at the next meeting

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none

6. EDUCATION REPORTS
6.1 Christopher Whitbeck, Principal, Douglas School
Dr. Whitbeck reported on what is happening in the Douglas School. He explained "Global Education" and said that in K- 6th grade, kids should know that there are children who are much less fortunate than they are and that they can do something do change that. "Free the Children" was started by a young person 12 years ago to help children in India and build them a school. Douglas partnered with this organization and raised $8500 and built a school in Kenya. Throughout the year, the students are involved with many community service projects. Club Penguin awarded them the Big Dreamers award of $5000. Conant and Douglas were the only schools in the US to receive this award. This is in addition to working on reading, writing, and arithmetic.

When asked what he considers his most important School Improvement Plan goal, Dr. Whitbeck said that it is his focus on assessment. Teachers are now coming together for two Thursdays every month to work on formative assessment and finding the best way to assess children. He reported that this is "a very exciting time".

6.2 English Learner Education (ELE) Report
The Superintendent introduced this report by reminding everyone that speaking casual "Friday Night" English is very different from the language used in the English speaking classroom. He said that he is very proud of this part of what our schools do.

Suzanne Szwarcewicz, Liza Huber, Theresa Laquerre and Pat Garrison (7-12) gave an excellent presentation about how English Learner Education is handled in our district. (see slides) They were assisted by Juhi, an AB senior and Igor, an AB graduate now in college, who shared their experiences as young students in our schools who did not speak English when they started. Currently we have 111 students in this category, compared to 90 last year. See posted slides. One difference between ELE and special education services with an IEP, is that all ELE services must be provided by a trained ELE instructor.

John Petersen stated that the school's mission is that every student reach their full potential. He asked how well the staff is doing connecting with students' families, as this is an important support for all students. Suzanne said that they are doing ok but always wish they had more resources. Some schools have buddy programs. Zoila Riccardi has reached out to the ELE program and has been a wonderful help. An annual family night is popular. Acton's Community social worker, Laura Ducharme has been a great resource.

Liza Huber said that the ELE program is woefully understaffed. Suzanne's direct service time has been cut so that .2 of it can be used for coordination at the administrative level. Liza will be advocating for an additional ELE teacher for the elementary schools. Currently, there are two.

7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS

7.1 Budget

Don Aicardi reported that APS ended FY11 with a $497,861.47 positive fund balance. This is slightly higher than the $471,000 reported to the School Committee on August 2nd due to some final transactions completed after the close of the fiscal year. The vast majority of this positive balance was created by a combination of $434,000 of non-recurring, one-time factors including: FY10 ARRA IDEA grant, scheduling of Early Retirement Incentive (ERI) enabling a portion to be paid from FY10 instead of FY11, and an SFSF grant. These kinds of surpluses will not be available in FY12.

Planning has begun for FY13, as we close out FY11 and get into FY12. Internal documents go to department heads next week, asking how much accounts will increase to maintain level service as a start. The month of November will be spent analyzing the requests so thoughtful discussions about budget priorities can take place in December about FY13.

7.2 ALG Update, 9/8/11 meeting

Mike Coppolino read a summary of the meeting submitted by Xuan Kong. Don Aicardi reported that he presented at FinCom on Tuesday night. He said some people feel a stabilization fund should be created for the first time, as well as other options. He is researching this and will get results out in advance of the October School Committee meeting. A new Table 6 may be voted.

7.3 Subcommittee Updates

7.3.1 Long Range Strategic Planning

Steve Mills reported that a survey is being given to the staff for their input on the proposed goals and values. He hopes all staff will participate.

7.4 Initial MCAS Results

Deb Bookis reported that the MCAS results are embargoed until approximately September 19 by the DESE. She said that the APS as a district scored very high.

7.5 Food Service News

Food Services Director, Kirsten Nelson reported on the new Point of Sale payment system being installed in the APS and ABRSD schools. This will be in use next month. There is a lot of effort being spent on informing students, families and staff about how this will work. The website will have complete information. Cafeteria managers, as well as Kirsten, can answer questions. Many schools use the system very successfully.

7.6 Recommendation to Appoint Stephen Mills as APS Rep to CASE

It was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED: to Appoint Stephen Mills as the APS Representative to CASE for 2011-2012

7.7 Recommendation to Appoint Xuan Kong as Acton Rep to EDCO as a voting board member

It was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED: to Appoint Xuan Kong as the Acton Representative to EDCO as a voting board member for 2011-2012

7.8 Recommendation to Accept Gifts from AB Community Education to the Gates and McCarthy-Towne Schools from the surplus generated by the Extended Day/Enrichment programs

It was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED: to Accept Gifts from AB Community Education to the Gates and McCarthy-Towne Schools from the surplus generated by the Extended Day programs run by Community Education and to the Conant School from the surplus generated by the Extended Day program and Enrichment programs run by Community Education at Conant

Steve Mills appreciates that the Community Education Program is sharing these profits with the schools. John Petersen reminded the Committee that although it is great to have this source of revenue, the School Committee must review the way the funds are being generated and be sure it is understood by the public. The Committee agreed.

8. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

8.1 School Improvement Plans

Steve Mills pointed out that while the schools' plans are similar due to district leadership, they are also different due to the different schools. Learning goals and tools to measure are included in all content areas in all grade levels. These will be in the SMART goals at the November meeting. Steve said, "We work toward goals but don't need to always attain them to be successful. If we don't know where we're going, how will we get there?" Mike Coppolino stated that the School Councils are very important. He feels that if they don't meet at least 4 or 5 times a year, they are not really taking their School Council seriously.

9. NEXT MEETINGS: September 21, 7:30 p.m. in the JH Library, ABRSC Meeting (Appointment of Regional Study Committee)
John Peterson said that the purpose of this committee is to see if items can be identified that the community might support regarding regionalization. It is not to prejudge the community.
October 6, 7:30 p.m. in the JH Library, ABRSC Meeting
October 20, 7:30 p.m. in the McCarthy-Towne Library, APS Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

DRAFT

3.2
(A)

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Draft Minutes

Cafetorium **May 19, 2011**
Conant School **7:00 p.m. Acton Public SC Meeting**

Members Present:	Michael Coppolino, Xuan Kong, Kim McOsker, Paul Murphy, John Petersen
Members Absent:	none
Others:	Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Liza Huber, Steve Mills, Beth Petr

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The Acton Public School Committee was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by John Petersen, chair.

GUEST PRESENTATION – Mary Brolin, Boxborough School Committee Chairperson
Mary presented on Boxborough's efforts to address their declining school enrollment. This included discussion of a Job sharing and Regionalization Letter to the APS and ABR School Committees, Boxborough Town Meeting's warrant articles that requested attendees' Sense of the Meeting on the issues, and Blanchard School's decision to allow school choice next year.

Two years ago they began looking at the structure of their Administration. Three ideas under consideration are: continuing the current model, job sharing, and full regionalization with Acton. They envision $58,000 in savings with a job sharing model. It was suggested that the ABRSC could appoint a study group on regionalization. This would be a multi year process. Mary asked the Committee to consider if this is something that the region wants to consider going forward. The Boxborough School Committee will talk about what they want their AB Regional School Committee members to consider going forward.

Steve Mills said that this is a question for the schools, as well as the Acton and Boxborough taxpayers, but from his perspective as Superintendent, it makes a lot of sense to regionalize because there is so much duplication and inefficiency in our current system. He agreed to prepare some preliminary analysis about savings that could potentially be realized.

SUPERINTENDENT'S INTRODUCTION
John Petersen thanked his fellow School Committee members and Steve and his staff for their support this past year while he was Chairperson.

Steve Mills opened the floor for nominations regarding next year's Acton Public School Committee officers.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously:
VOTED: that Michael Coppolino serve as Chairperson of the Acton Public School Committee for the 2011-2012 school year.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously:
VOTED: that Kim McOsker serve as Vice-Chairperson of the Acton Public School Committee for the 2011-2012 school year.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously:
VOTED: that Beth Petr serve as Secretary of the Acton Public School Committee for the 2011-2012 school year.

John Petersen was thanked for his service as chair this year, including his extensive work on the negotiations and health insurance trust subcommittees.

Letter of Resignation
New Chairperson, Mike Coppolino, read Terry Lindgren's resignation letter dated May 12, 2011 for the record. John wished Terry well and thanked him for all of his volunteer efforts for the community. Steve Mills thanked Terry for being such a great supporter in his first 2 years as superintendent. Mike read the policy outlining how to fill an unexpired term. Terry had one more year. Mike spoke to Acton Board of Selectmen Chair, Mike Gowing about holding a joint meeting on June 6. Interested candidates should contact Mike Coppolino. Beth will publicize.

STATEMENT OF WARRANT
Warrant #201123 dated 5/17/11 in the amount of $211,223.54, warrant #201122 dated 5/3/11 in the amount of $96,831.05, warrant #201121 dated 4/19/11 in the amount of $185,684.86 and warrant #201120 dated 4/5/11 in the amount of $131,893.97 were signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The Joint SC minutes of March 24, 2011 were approved as amended. Kim McOsker abstained because she was not there. These were approved with amendments by ABRSC on 5/5/11.
The Joint SC minutes of April 2, 2011 were approved. Kim McOsker and Paul Murphy abstained. These were approved by the ABRSC on 5/5/11.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
Bill Guthlein spoke as a parent of two elementary age children who asked about the process for how students are placed in classes for the next year. He would like it to be more transparent. Steve Mills will bring this up with his Administrative Council. The process varies between schools.

Paul Malchody spoke as a parent and volunteer Community Education basketball coach concerned about the missing lights in the PDB gym. He feels the darkness could be a safety issue. McCarthy Towne Principal David Krane said he is working on this with JD Head.

EDUCATION REPORT – Damian Sugrue, Conant School Principal
Mr. Sugrue presented on Reading Data Collection, the Use and Sharing of Data, the Increased Utilization of PowerSchool and the Value and Accomplishments of having an Assistant Principal.

In Grades 1 and 2, Fountas and Pinnell are used for Reading, while DRA 2 is used for Grades 3 – 6. Both assessments ensure program continuity from year to year. Planned usage of online resources include: attendance, lunch counts, report cards, continued development of curriculum documents and website improvement and expansion. Mr.Sugrue spoke about the importance of investing now in technical resources. Dr. Priscilla Kotyk is the Assistant Principal shared between Conant and Gates Schools. At Conant her primary responsibility is to assist the Principal with day-to-day operations and facilitating the use of technology. This allows the Principal to visit classrooms more often, collaborate with teachers to improve student outcomes and meet with teachers more often to discuss curriculum and teaching practices. The addition of the assistant principals has been extremely valuable this year. Mr. Sugrue concluded by thanking his staff, students and parents, PTO, fellow administrators, Dr. Mills and the School Committee for helping him through his first year at Conant.

The PTO was thanked for the nice refreshments for the meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
7.1 ALG Report - *no meeting*
7.2 Acton Finance Committee Report – Xuan gave an update on the 5/10/11 meeting. Steve Mills will be presenting at FinCom next Tuesday night at the Chair's request.
7.3 BOS Update – School Committee representatives are needed for the FY12 positions.

7.4 FY'11 and FY'12 Budget – *Steve Mills*

7.4.1 Closing out FY'11 Budget and Superintendent's Purchasing Initiative

7.4.1.1 SMARTBoard Survey Results: 1st & 2nd Grade Teachers

7.4.2 5/19/11 Presentation Slides

7.4.3 FY'11 Status Report – 3rd Quarter

Steve Mills asked the School Committee to endorse his decision to use some of the available FY11 budget capacity to address some significant needs beyond his level service budget. Although a vote is not required, he asked for the Committee's support for spending $575,000 for one time expenses for next year, per slide 12:

FY'11 Year End Surpluses – APS	
From Recurring Sources:	$419k
From Non-Recurring Sources:	$702k
Less Amount Used to Balance FY12:	($128k)
Less FY11 One-Time Expenditures:	($575k)

Current FY11 Year End Estimate	$417k

The elementary principals as well as IT Director Amy Bisiewicz and Curriculum Director Deborah Bookis presented supporting data from the staff. The requests for Smart Boards were overwhelming. It was estimated that 3 weeks of additional instruction time per year could be generated by using this technology.

A School Committee member pointed out that it is important to recognize that a key driver in the FY11 budget was that each of the unions were given a 0% COLA for FY11 and these numbers are a result. Steve was complimented on the careful thought and explanations of how the expenditures contribute to learning, not just spending money. Most of these requests were previously outlined in the January 22, 2011 Budget Saturday presentations. The School Committee agreed to make this commitment to technology and emphasized that a plan must be in place to cover repairs and assistance to staff using it. Grade 1 will receive 16 SMARTBoards and Grade 2 will receive 15 for a total cost of $123,000.

They also agreed to the proposed textbook purchase plan, addressing two years of the three-year textbook plan outlined last January.

The Committee agreed with the Superintendent that it is wise not to spend the full amount of excess and that turning some back is key. The remaining FY11 balance of $417,000 will flow back into Free Cash. The Superintendent thanked the School Committee for their support of this plan.

7.5 Health Insurance Trust Report

7.5.1 John Petersen reported on the 4/28/11 meeting. Mike asked if the HIT would consider looking at the Dept of Revenue list of comparable towns that he brought up earlier this year.

7.5.2 Marie Altieri reported on the Health Insurance Open Enrollment results.

7.6 Subcommittee Updates

7.6.1 Policy

7.6.1.1 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan – Liza Huber reported that the revision was accepted by DESE.

7.6.1.2 Consider Need for New Policy re Use of School Buildings & Properties in Community Education – Steve Mills reported that there is some urgency to adding an Acton member to the Policy Subcommittee so that this policy can specifically be addressed. There may be an opportunity to work with Acton Boxborough Youth Soccer to significantly upgrade the lower fields at the High School. A committee member asked for an explanation of how Community Education is legally organized so that the Superintendent and Director of Comm Ed can effectively administer the School Committees' decisions. This information will be provided at a future meeting. The subcommittee will consider revision of Policy KF.

7.6.1.3 Recommendation to Delete *Assignment of Students From Other Schools to Classes* Policy (File: JCAC) FIRST READING

Marie Altieri reported that after revising Kindergarten Entrance Policy: JEB to be stricter about not allowing families to apply for early admission if their child turns 5 in September or October (after the September 1 deadline), the Central Administration and Principals would like to be stricter regarding students transferring from other schools. They would like these students to be placed in the grade level for which they are age appropriate. Because this may be interpreted to be in conflict with Assignment of Students from Other Schools to Classes Policy: JCAC, it is proposed that JCAC be deleted. Three Committee members felt that this request needed more study by the Subcommittee. It was suggested that "In regard to kindergarten and first grade…" could be added to the policy. Xuan referred to Attleboro's specific policy. At the next meeting, an Acton subcommittee member will be chosen so a review can begin.

7.6.2. Long-Range Strategic Planning Forums, May 12 and 23

Steve Mills reported that Public Forums will be held on May 12 and 23.

7.7 Cost Savings Joint SC Task Force Update

Xuan Kong reported that the school has provided lots of input and more is being gathered from the Town and community.

7.8 Class Size Task Force Update

Amy Hedison will present the survey results at the Regional SC meeting.

7.9 2011-2012 School Calendar revision

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to approve the amended 2011-2012 School Calendar to change the Elementary Schools' Early Dismissal Day from Nov 2 to Nov 15 and to add April 30th to the calendar.

7.10 Coordinated Program Review Update

Liza Huber updated the Committee on the DESE's review of our program. Of the 45 categories, we exceeded the requirements in 43 of them. The two small areas of focus involved ELL including making sure that progress reports are done on the same schedule as the usual report cards. John Petersen asked how the schools are helping our non-english speaking families. Liza said we received commendations on our extensive translation services for families. It was also mentioned that families from different cultures often do not know how to be involved and what the expectations are for how families can support their children's education in this country. PTOs have been helpful in this regard. Family dinners and events in the schools have been very popular. Some schools have brochures telling families all the ways they can be involved.

NEW BUSINESS

8.1 Acton 2020

Margaret Wooley Busse and Jim Snyder Grant, the Chair and Vice-Chair of Acton 2020 invited all to their June 23rd public outreach event about creating a Master

Plan for the future of Acton. See www.acton2020.info. Because the schools are involved in so much of what goes on in Acton, the Acton 2020 Committee is anxious to get feedback and maintain close communication with the School Committees.

8.2. Kindergarten Enrollment

Marie Altieri reported that the FY11-12 Kindergarten Enrollment/Lottery resulted in 288 kindergarteners for September 2011. This is as projected, and 40 fewer students than last year. The drop in enrollment that was projected is starting to appear. Conant kindergarten has gone from 46 – 50% Asian students to 59% at this time.

8.3 Recommendation to Approve FY'12 TEC Bid

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to approve the FY'12 TEC Bid

8.4 Recommendation to Accept Gift to Gates School from Math Olympiad

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Gift to Gates School from the Math Olympiad enrichment program surplus with gratitude

8.5 Recommendation to Accept Gift to the APS Preschool

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Gift to the Acton Public Schools Preschool from Rebecca Allen with gratitude

8.6 Recommendation to Accept Gift to the Conant School from the surplus for Sessions I-III of Community Education/Conant Enrichment Programs

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Gift to the Conant School from the surplus for Sessions I-III of Community Education/Conant Enrichment Programs

8.7 Recommendation to Accept Gift to the Acton Public Schools from the projected surplus from the All Day Kindergarten Program for FY'11

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Gift to the Acton Public Schools from the projected surplus from the All Day Kindergarten Program for FY'11 (first disbursement)

ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE

9.1 School Committee Meeting Schedule, 2011-2012

Beth will send a meeting wizard out to confirm dates with the Committee.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

10.1 Monthly APS Financial Reports
10.2 ELL Student Population Report, 5/1/11 and 4/1/11
10.3 OnTeam Newsletter, April-May
10.4 Dismissal Times for Last Day of School
10.5 Open House Dates – Fall 2011
10.6 Enrollment Report – May 1, 2011
10.7 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Presentation, May 11, Dr. Carolyn Imperato
10.8 All-Staff Retirement Party – June 9, 2011, 3:00 – 5:00, Wedgewood Pines, Stow
10.9 Correspondence from the Community
  10.9.1 "Class Sizes Need to be Addressed"
  10.9.2 Public Records Request (M.G.L. Chapter 66, Section 10), 4/27/11, A. Nitschelm and C. Kadlec
  10.9.3 Open Meeting Law Complaints (2), 4/27/11, A. Nitschelm and C. Kadlec
  10.9.4 "Acton FinCom gives incorrect information to Town Meeting"
  10.9.5 Attorney letter re Marcus Lewis Tennis request for use of facilities
10.10 School Newsletters –

10.11 "Students Make Their Mark" exhibit through May 30 at Acton Senior Center

NEXT MEETINGS

June 2, 7:30 p.m. AB Regional SC Meeting, Jr High Library June 6th at BOS meeting
June 16, 7:30 p.m., Acton Public School Committee Meeting, Jr High Library

The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

Documents Used: see agenda attached

DRAFT

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Cafetorium
Conant School

May 19, 2011
7:00 p.m.

AGENDA with addendum

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **GUEST PRESENTATION** – Mary Brolin, Boxborough School Committee Chairperson
   - 2.1 Job sharing and Regionalization Letter to APS and ABR School Committees
   - 2.2 Boxborough Town Meeting warrant articles re Sense of the Meeting
   - 2.3 Boxborough's Blanchard School to allow school choice next year

3. **Acton Public School Committee Meeting:**
   SUPERINTENDENT'S INTRODUCTION
   - 3.1 School Committee Annual Organizational Meeting (File: BDA)
   - 3.2 School Committee Officers (File: BDB)
   - 3.3 Election of School Committee Officers, 2011-12
     - 3.3.1 Chairperson
     - 3.3.2 Vice Chairperson
     - 3.3.3 Secretary
   - 3.4 Letter of Resignation *(addendum)*

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES and STATEMENT OF WARRANT**
   - 4.1 March 24, 2011 (Joint SC, approved with amendments by ABRSC 5/5/11)
   - 4.2 April 2, 2011 (Joint SC, approved by ABRSC 5/5/11)

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

6. **EDUCATION REPORT** – Damian Sugrue, Conant School Principal

7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
   - 7.1 ALG Report – *Xuan Kong (oral)*
   - 7.2 Acton Finance Committee Report – 5/10/11, *Xuan Kong*
   - 7.3 BOS Update – *Xuan Kong (oral)*
   - 7.4 FY'11 and FY'12 Budget – *Steve Mills*
     - 7.4.1 Closing out FY'11 Budget and Superintendent's Purchasing Initiative
       - 7.4.1.1 SMARTBoard Survey Results: 1st & 2nd Grade Teachers *(addendum)*
     - 7.4.2 5/19/11 Presentation Slides
     - 7.4.3 FY'11 Status Report – 3rd Quarter
   - 7.5 Health Insurance Trust Report – *John Petersen*
     - 7.5.1 4/28/11 Meeting
     - 7.5.2 Health Insurance Open Enrollment Update – *Marie Altieri*
   - 7.6 Subcommittee Updates
     - 7.6.1 Policy
       - 7.6.1.1 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan – revision accepted by DESE -. *Liza Huber (no vote needed)*
       - 7.6.1.2 Consider Need for New Policy re Use of School Buildings & Properties in Community Education – *Steve Mills*
       - 7.6.1.3 Recommendation to Delete *Assignment of Students From Other Schools to Classes* Policy (File: JCAC) **FIRST READING** – *Marie Altieri*
     - 7.6.2. Long-Range Strategic Planning Forums, May 12 and 23 – *Steve Mills*
   - 7.7 Cost Savings Joint SC Task Force Update – *Xuan Kong (oral)*
   - 7.8 Class Size Task Force Update – *Amy Hedison*

7.8.1 Survey

7.9 2011-2012 School Calendar revision – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills (addendum)*
(Elem Early Dismissal Day moved from Nov 2 to Nov 15 AND Apr 30 added)

7.10 Coordinated Program Review Update – *Liza Huber (oral)*

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

8.1 Acton 2020 - *John Petersen*

8.2. Kindergarten Enrollment

8.2.1. Update on FY11-12 Kindergarten Enrollment/Lottery – *Marie Altieri*

8.3 Recommendation to Approve FY'12 TEC Bid – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*

8.4 Recommendation to Accept Gift to Gates School from Math Olympiad enrichment program surplus – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*

8.5 Recommendation to Accept Gift to the APS Preschool from Rebecca Allen – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*

8.6 Recommendation to Accept Gift to the Conant School from the surplus for Sessions I-III of Community Education/Conant Enrichment Programs – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*

8.7 Recommendation to Accept Gift to the Acton Public Schools from the projected surplus from the All Day Kindergarten Program for FY'11 (first disbursement) – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*

9. **ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE**

9.1 School Committee Meeting Schedule, 2011-2012

10. **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

10.1 Monthly APS Financial Reports

10.1.1. Budget Status Summary

10.1.2. Budget Status Summary – SPED

10.1.3. Conant School

10.2 ELL Student Population Report, 5/1/11 and 4/1/11

10.3 OnTeam Newsletter, April-May

10.4 Dismissal Times for Last Day of School

10.5 Open House Dates – Fall 2011 *(brought to meeting)*

10.6 Enrollment Report – May 1, 2011

10.7 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Presentation, May 11, Dr. Carolyn Imperato

10.8 All-Staff Retirement Party – June 9, 2011, 3:00 – 5:00, Wedgewood Pines, Stow

10.9 Correspondence from the Community

10.9.1 "Class Sizes Need to be Addressed"

10.9.2 Public Records Request (M.G.L. Chapter 66, Section 10), 4/27/11, A. Nitschelm and C. Kadlec

10.9.3 Open Meeting Law Complaints (2), 4/27/11, A. Nitschelm and C. Kadlec

10.9.4 "Acton FinCom gives incorrect information to Town Meeting"

10.9.5 Attorney letter re Marcus Lewis Tennis request for use of facilities

10.10 School Newsletters –

Acton Public School Preschool: http://ab.mec.edu/Preschool/index.htm
Conant Crier: http://conant.ab.mec.edu/pto/newsletter.html
Douglas Digest: http://douglas.ab.mec.edu/index.html?pto/pto
Gates Gazette: http://gates.ab.mec.edu/gazette.html
McCarthy-Towne Bulletin: http://www.mctptso.org/bulletin/
Merriam Community News: http://merriam.ab.mec.edu/newsletters.html

10.11 "Students Make Their Mark" exhibit through May 30 at Acton Senior Center *(addendum)*

11. **NEXT MEETINGS**

June 2, 7:30 p.m. AB Regional SC Meeting, Jr High Library
June 16, 7:30 p.m., Acton Public School Committee Meeting, Jr High Library

ADJOURN

McCarthy-Towne School

Block Scheduling Model
&
Math Assistant

Block Schedule

- Staff decision to change schedule for 2011-2012 school year
- Allows for three 45 minute Instructional Block periods a week at each grade level, 1-6

Why Block Schedule?

- Benefits:
  - No Special Education Services pull-out during Instructional Block
    - Continuity of instruction for all learners
    - Push-In model of service delivery beneficial to greater number of students
    - Opportunities for flexible groupings for instruction
  - Promotes collaboration
  - Use of math assistant

Incorporation of District Math Coach

- Half of total district requests for support from math coach @ McT (11 of 22)
- Supported our 2 new grade 3 teachers during first round of coaching on EnVision Math program
- Training and support to grade 1 teachers on Smartboard components of EnVision and Investigations math
- Continued coaching & support of teachers to reach all students

Incorporation of Math Assistant

- New 19 hour position supporting mostly grades 3-6
- Support for primary grade remedial learners
- Some small group pull-out for enrichment & remediation

Math Assistant

Provides in-class, small group instruction, usually during instructional block

What does this mean for McT?

- Continuous examination of teaching practice and opportunities to improve instruction to meet the needs of all learners
- Continuous improvement requires a variety of interventions
- Responsive to achieve higher performance levels in different cohort groups

2010-2011

Acton Public Schools

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System *[MCAS]* Report

Deborah Bookis
Report to the Acton Public School Committee
October 20, 2011

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  - Fifth grade ELA, Mathematics, and STE
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  - Fourth grade ELA and Mathematics
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Introduction

Assessment helps us to understand how to improve student learning. As we all learned at this summer's leadership institute, "It's *Still* All About Instruction: How Do We Know Students Are Learning?" In order to do that well, we need to employ different assessments for different purposes. Standardized testing, such as the MCAS, can help us identify strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in curriculum and instruction; fine-tune curriculum alignment with the statewide standards; and at best can be used as a screening to identify students who may be struggling. It is also used, of course, as an accountability system for the district. However, it does not provide the timely, granular information that teachers and principals need to inform instruction. Our 2011-2012 district curriculum goal of learning goals and tools for all disciplines and grades with a focus on answering the question, "How Do We Know Students Are Learning?" will enable us to provide a more balanced assessment program. This approach relies on comparing the same student to the same student during the same year so that teachers and principals can make instructional and programmatic changes when needed. The emphasis on "all disciplines" is purposeful. We value all of our disciplines in the education of our students, not just those tested by MCAS or other standardized measures.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Summarize this year's spring 2011 performance and growth data.
- Report trends and highlights within the data, including district item analyses.
- Outline action items and initiatives to address goals.

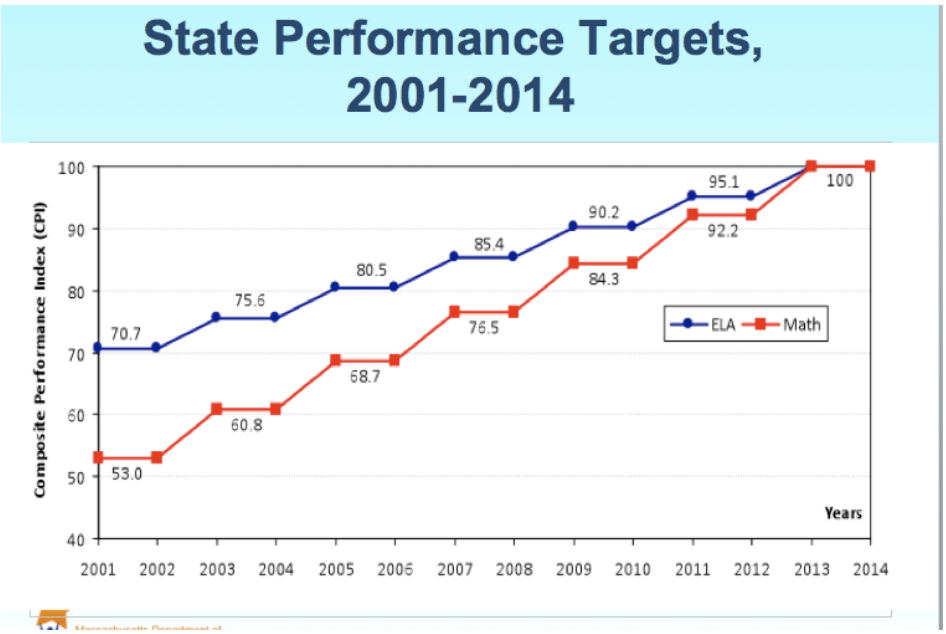
Following the summary, trends and highlights, action items and initiatives, and the conclusion, data is provided in charts and graphs on all tested grades and disciplines.

Performance and Growth Summary

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests all students, grades three through ten, in mathematics and English language arts. In ELA, the long composition is embedded in the total scores for grades four and seven, thereby making comparisons to the previous grades very challenging. Science, Technology and Engineering is tested in grades five, eight, and either nine or ten (the majority of our high students take the Biology test). The state analyzes performance and growth data across aggregates and subgroups and monitors progress through Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). A group must contain at least forty students to be counted as a subgroup.

A district, school, or subgroup achieves AYP by meeting (A) a student participation requirement, either (B) the State's 2011 performance target for that subject known as CPI or Composite Performance Index or (C) the group's own 2011 improvement target, and (D) an additional attendance or graduation requirement. The state's performance targets are displayed in *Figure 1.0*. The 2011 performance target for ELA is 95.1, and the performance target for mathematics is 92.2.

Figure 1.0



Recent State and Federal Statements on AYP and NCLB

Commissioner Chester stated that, "82 percent of all schools and 91 percent of all districts (in the Commonwealth) failed to meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets. That was up from the 67 percent of schools and 79 percent of districts that did not make AYP in 2010." [1] This statement is not surprising given the 2011 state performance targets, which increased in 2011 for the last time before the goal of 100 percent proficiency in 2014. On Friday, September 23, 2011, President Obama, "invited states to reclaim the power to design their own school accountability and improvement systems, upending the centerpiece of the Bush-era No Child Left Behind law, a requirement that all students be proficient in math and reading by 2014."[2] States will have the opportunity to apply for waivers; Massachusetts is in the optimal position to do so given its adoption of the Common Core standards (which have already become the new MA Mathematics and ELA and Literacy Frameworks) and a new teacher and administrator evaluation system.

Class of 2012 Cohort Summary

The 2012 graduating class of Acton-Boxborough Regional High School achieved one of the goals of MCAS testing at a very high level: proficiency in English language arts, mathematics, and science, technology and engineering, as illustrated in *Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.* Ninety-seven percent of our students achieved proficiency in ELA, 96 percent in mathematics, and 97 percent in STE. Less than 3 percent of students in all discipline areas assessed needed intervention and support to achieve proficiency in order to receive an ABRHS diploma. Ninety percent of all students graduating this year achieved advanced

[1] The Associated Press. "MCAS scores up, but yearly progress lags in Mass." *WHDH 7 News.com* 21 Sept. 2011. Web. 26 Sept. 2011.

[2] Dillon, Sam. "Obama Turns Some Powers of Education Back to States." *New York Times* 23 Sept. 2011: Print.

performance in mathematics. Also notable is the shift of performance over time as students progressed from grade four to grade ten. In mathematics the cohort grew from 45 percent in Advanced Performance to 90 percent in tenth grade. Similarly, the cohort grew from 34 percent in Advanced Performance in ELA to 55 percent and from 42 percent in STE to 59 percent. All three disciplines also achieved very small percentages of students in "Needs Improvement" with percentages decreasing significantly over time. This historical data of the 2012 ABRHS graduating class indicates that all students have learned the necessary knowledge and skills throughout their academic careers in both Acton and Acton-Boxborough to achieve proficiency on the MCAS and become eligible for an ABRHS diploma. This information is included in this report, as it illustrates the work of both districts.

Figure 1.1

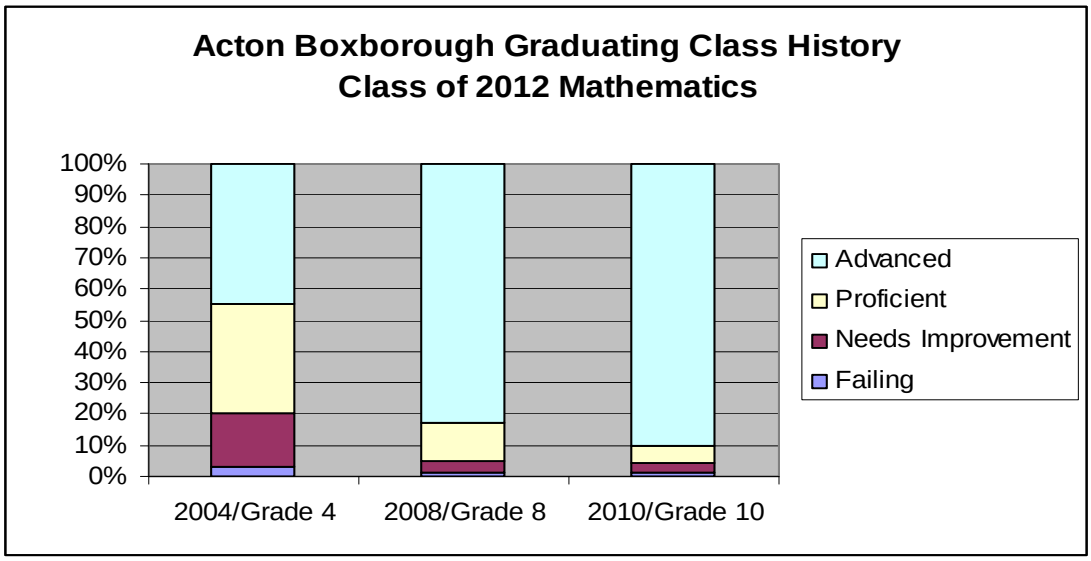


Figure 1.2

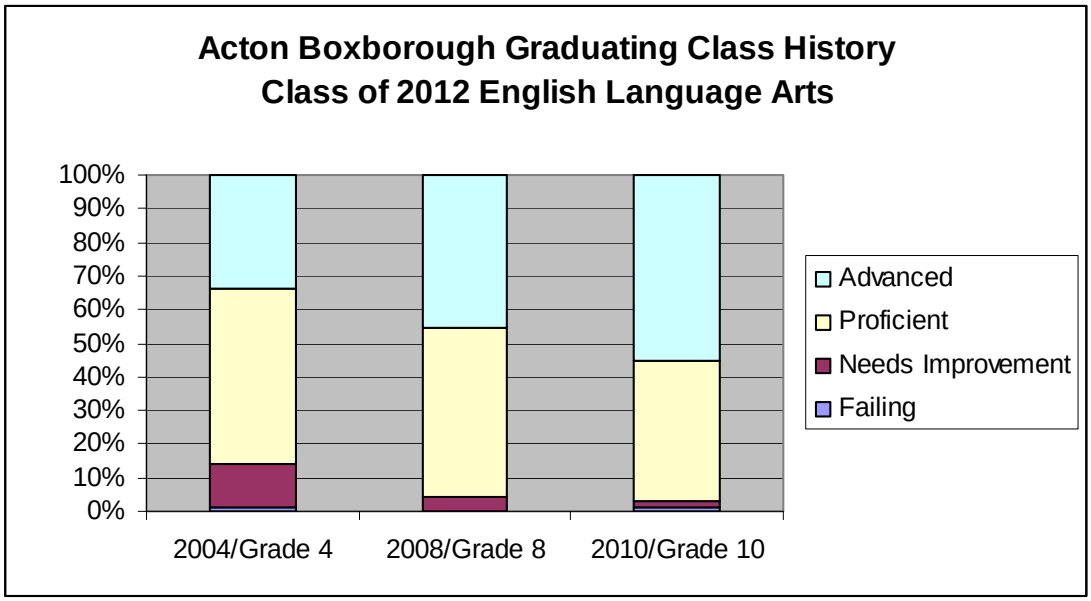
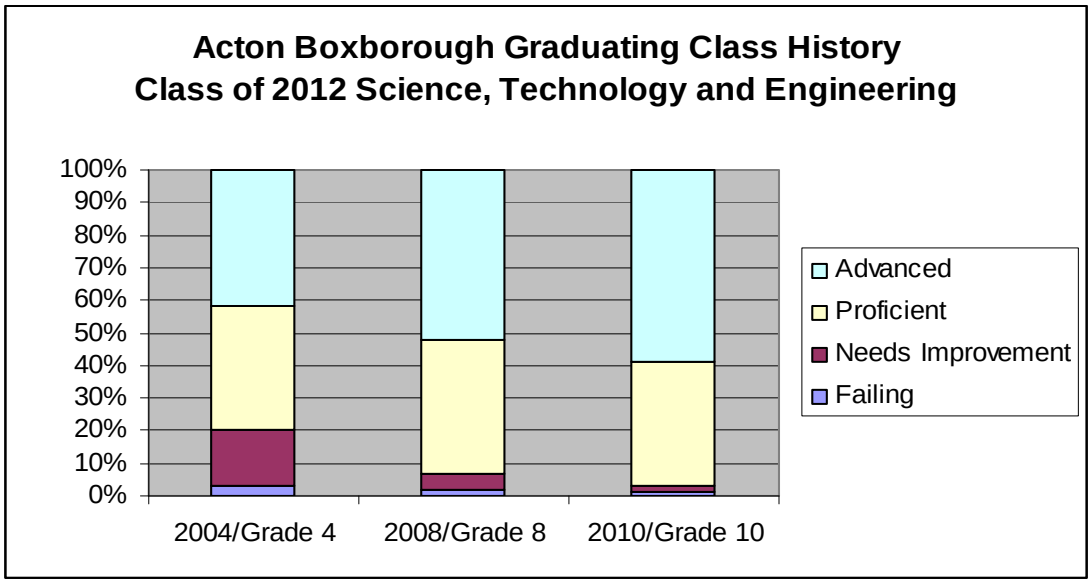


Figure 1.3



Summary of district performance and growth

The Acton Public Schools achieved a Performance Rating of "very high" for both English Language Arts and mathematics, and the NCLB Accountability Status is "no status" for both disciplines. The district as a whole, however, did not achieve AYP in ELA for 2011 as the 3-5 Grade Span missed its Performance Target of 93.0, achieving a CPI of 92.8 (a .1 increase from 2010). This is the first year in three years that the special education subgroup in the 3-5 Grade Span achieved AYP for both disciplines. It is also, however, the first year that the special education subgroup in the 6-8 Grade Span did not achieve AYP for ELA (missing its Performance Target by 1.9) and for mathematics (missing its Performance Target by 4.9).

The 2011 MCAS aggregate scores *(Figure 1.4)* for grades three through six indicate overall solid performances.

Figure 1.4

2011 MCAS Scores of Combined Advanced/Proficient:

Grade	ELA	Mathematics	STE
3rd	83%	84%	--
4th	72%	71%	--
5th	87%	83%	73%
6th	90%	87%	--

Our scores in fourth grade, as in comparable districts, are lower than in the other grades. While only a few districts reached the low eightieth percentile, the majority of them were in the seventieth percentile. Over the years, the EDCO specialists' groups have discussed why continued performance on the fourth grade assessment is lower than in other grades across our communities. Some possibilities have emerged: the fourth grade ELA assessment is the only one that contains the writing portion, which is not a disaggregated score; there are many more open response questions in fourth grade as compared to third grade (short answer questions in third grade compose all but one of the "open" type responses); and the fourth grade mathematics assessment continues to be a challenging assessment for that particular grade. None of our "like communities" had a higher fourth grade mathematics performance score, compared to their district's fourth grade ELA score. Similarly, the STE scores are average for "like communities."

The growth data for the district was strong. This is the third year that districts have received "Student Growth Percentiles" and the second year that parents have received this information. In slide 12 of the DESE PowerPoint, *Measuring Growth in Student Performance on MCAS: The Growth Model,* it states:

> The growth measure is really just a number from 1 to 99, with higher being better. There are no definitions or criteria that tell us definitively how much growth is high or low; it's just our own professional judgment. (This differs from MCAS performance levels, where professional educators have helped us define what it means to be proficient on each test.) That being said, our guidance is that growth percentiles between 40 and 60 are what we would call "typical." Percentiles above 60 suggest high growth; percentiles below 40 suggest low growth.

In addition, DESE documents inform us that growth percentiles and student performance should be used together, as the following two sets of tables and graphs, *Figures 1.5 and 1.6,* indicate. For English Language Arts at grades four, five and six, the growth percentiles fell within the range of typical growth. While grade four had a lower than hoped for performance score, the median growth percentile was fifty-three, indicating typical growth for that grade level. In mathematics, all three grade levels posted "higher growth" student growth percentiles. At grade four the median SGP is 64 percent; at grade five it's 66 percent; and at grade six the SGP is 72 percent. Again, even though the performance score of the fourth grade was lower than the others, the growth percentile indicates high growth.

Figure 1.5

Acton - 2011 MCAS All Grades English Language Arts

	Median SGP	% Proficient or Higher	N Students (SGP)
Grade 04	53.0	72	357
Grade 05	60.0	87	353
Grade 06	53.0	90	380
Grade 07	-	-	1

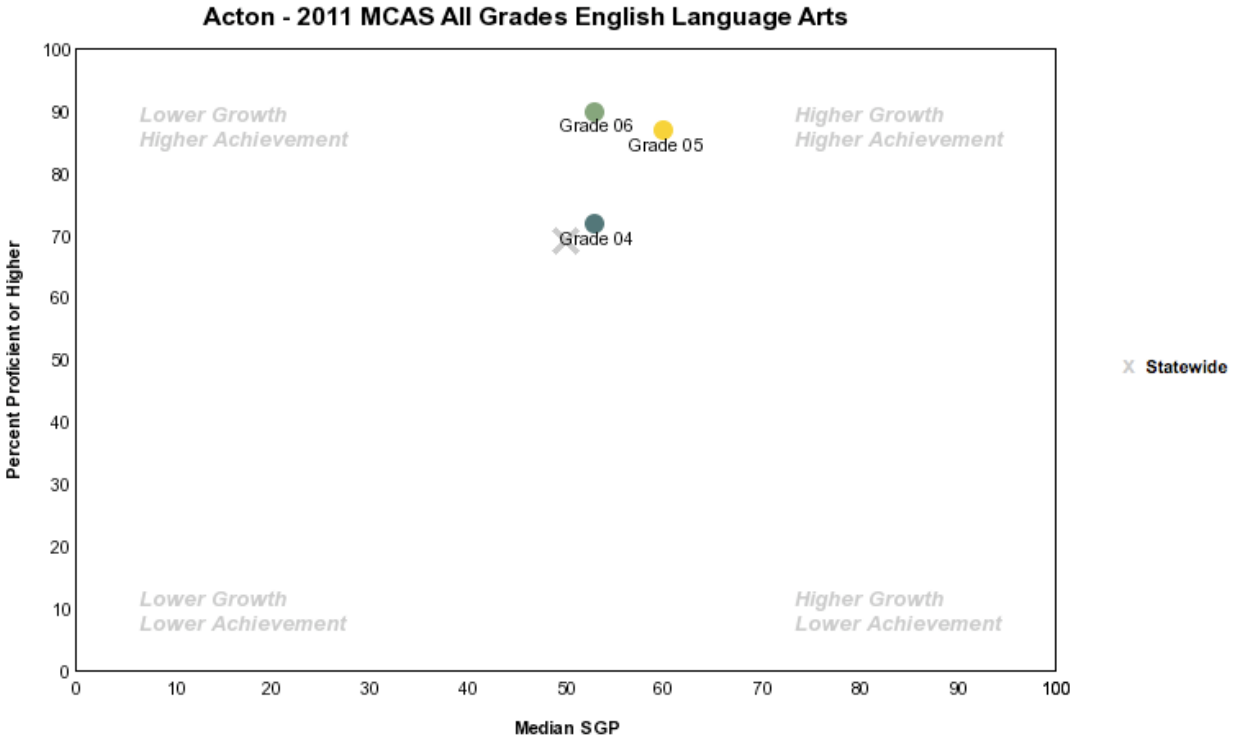
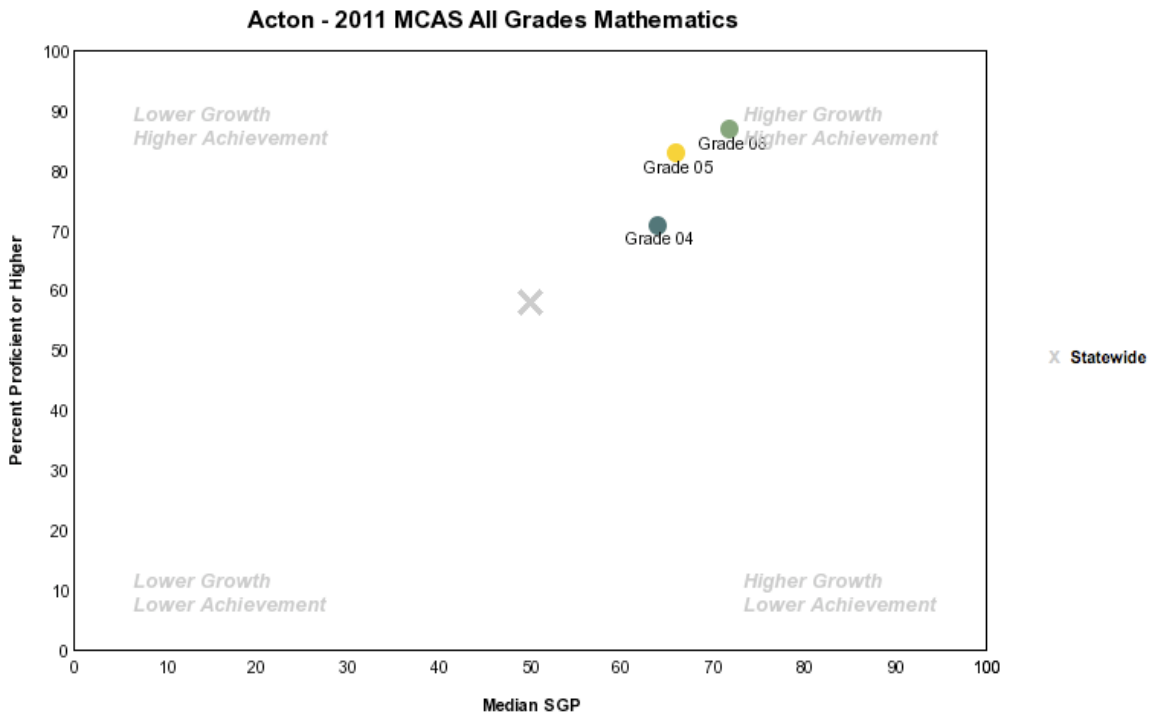


Figure 1.6

Acton - 2011 MCAS All Grades Mathematics

	Median SGP	% Proficient or Higher	N Students (SGP)
Grade 04	64.0	71	356
Grade 05	66.0	83	352
Grade 06	72.0	87	378
Grade 07	-	-	1



APS Schools at a Glance

Conant has a performance rating of very high for both ELA and mathematics. The NCLB accountability status is Improvement Year 2 for both disciplines for subgroups (special education and white).

Douglas has a performance rating of very high for both ELA and mathematics. The NCLB accountability status is "no status" for both disciplines.

Gates has a performance rating of very high for both ELA and mathematics. The NCLB accountability status is "no status" for both disciplines.

McCarthy-Towne has a performance rating of very high for ELA and high for mathematics. The NCLB accountability status is Improvement Year 1 in ELA for the subgroup (white) and "no status" in Mathematics.

Merriam has a performance rating of very high for both ELA and mathematics. The NCLB accountability status is Improvement Year I in ELA for the subgroup (special education) – **even** though AYP was achieved, it takes two years for the removal of the designation – and "no status" for mathematics.

Trends and Highlights

Patterns begin to emerge when we look at four or more years of data. Interestingly, the performance data indicates that small percentages of change in one level are either eliminated by the next year, or after two years of increased or decreased percentages, the original percentage is achieved. The one area of exception is the Advanced Level of the sixth grade ELA performance, which over the last four years has decreased from 44 percent to 35 percent; however, in the same grade and discipline, the Proficient Level has increased from 47 percent to 55 percent (except for last year, when it decreased by one percent to 52 percent).

The growth data over the last four years has also been pretty consistent, with one notable area in sixth grade. In mathematics, the growth percentile is 72 percent, having been 71 percent in 2010, 67.5 percent in 2009 and 63 percent in 2008 – a steady increase of 9 percent.

In addition, the four-year average growth percentiles in mathematics for grades four, five and six have all been above 60 percent – 65.3, 61 and 67.6 respectively. The growth percentiles in ELA for all three grades have been in the higher range for typical growth, averaging 57.5 (gr. 4), 58.1 (gr.5) and 56.6 (gr. 6).

Fifth grade STE has averaged 22 percent in Needs Improvement over the last four years. With new state Science frameworks forthcoming and a review of science materials at all elementary grades, we will soon be able to better align instruction in all science strands in grades kindergarten through grade six.

For the past three years (2008-2010), the gap between the district's performance in ELA open response questions and the state's performance has been decreasing, as illustrated in *Figures 2.1-2.4*. This year, that pattern was broken in grades three and five, with improvements in open response questions as compared to the state's performance.

Figure 2.1

Grade 3	Year	Difference
	2008	8
	2009	4
	2010	2.4
	2011	5.8

Figure 2.2

Grade 4	Year	Difference
	2008	9.5
	2009	8.25
	2010	6
	2011	3.25

Figure 2.3

Grade 5	Year	Difference
	2008	10
	2009	9
	2010	4.5
	2011	6.25

Figure 2.4

Grade 6	Year	Difference
	2008	11
	2009	8.5
	2010	8
	2011	6.25

District Item Analyses

ELA MCAS District Analysis

District Student Performance

Grade Level	% Advanced	% Proficient	% Needs Improvement	% Warning
3	19	64	15	3
4	14	58	23	5
5	34	53	11	2
6	35	55	7	4

District Growth Percentiles

Grade Level	Growth Percentile
3	N/A
4	53
5	60
6	53

District Grade Level Analysis of Test Items with <75% Correct

District Grade 3: 83% Proficient or Advanced (State 61%)
41 Items Total

Item Number	Question Type	Strand	Standard	Percentage Acton / State
13	MC	Literature	Nonfiction	74 / 70
22	MC	Literature	Dramatic Literature	69 / 56
23	MC	Language	Structure and Origins of Modern English	72 / 64

Short Answer responses ranged from 63% to 75%, and the one open response question scored a 2.36 or 59%.

District Grade 4: 72% Proficient or Advanced (State 53%)
42 Items Total

Item Number	Question Type	Strand	Standard	Percentage Acton / State
4	MC	Literature	Fiction	72 / 56
15	MC	Literature	Fiction	66 / 54
26	MC	Literature	Poetry	69 / 59

Open Response questions ranged from 43% to 66%.

District Grade 5: 87% Proficient or Advanced (State 67%)
40 Items Total

Item Number	Question Type	Strand	Standard	Percentage Acton / State
8	MC	Language	Vocabulary and Concept Development	70 / 60
9	MC	Language	Vocabulary and Concept Development	76/ 64
33	MC	Language	Structure and Origins of Modern English	69 / 55
38	MC	Literature	Myth, Traditional Narrative and Classical Literature	68/57

Open Response questions ranged from 48% to 64%.

District Grade 6: 90% Proficient or Advanced (State 68%)
40 Items Total

Item Number	Question Type	Strand	Standard	Percentage Acton / State
37	MC	Literature	Style and Language	74 / 56

Open Response questions ranged from 59% to 70%.

Discussion

Compared to last year's item analysis, our students performed much better on the nonfiction literature and reading questions. This was an area of concern, especially given the preview of the new ELA and Literacy framework from the state. The vocabulary and concept development standards at grade four are noteworthy in that our students typically perform better for that standard. None of the percentages were below 66% in the multiple choice type question, and all percentages were above the state's percentages. The short answer and open response questions continue to be an area in which we can improve. While modest improvements were noted for the region, only two grades reversed the three-year trend of a closing gap between our performance and the state's performance on open response questions.

Mathematics MCAS District Analysis
By Jean Oviatt-Rothman, Elementary Mathematics Specialist/Coach

District Student Performance

Grade Level	% Advanced	% Proficient	% Needs Improvement	% Warning
3	27	57	13	3
4	30	41	26	3
5	49	34	13	4
6	57	30	9	4

District Growth Percentiles

Grade Level	Growth Percentile
3	N/A
4	64
5	66
6	72

District Grade Level Analysis of Test Items with <75% Correct

District Grade 3: 84% Proficient or Advanced (State 66%)
36 Items Total

Item Number	Question Type	Strand	Standard	Percentage Acton / State
3	SA	Geometry	Transformations and Symmetry*	59 / 65
4	SA	Number and Operations	Numbers	63 / 49
7	MC	Geometry	Properties of Shapes	72 / 57
14	SA	Measurement	Measurement Systems*	68 / 55
35	MC	Number and Operations	Numbers	50 / 43

District Grade 4: 71% Proficient or Advanced (State 47%)
42 Items Total

Item Number	Question Type	Strand	Standard	Percentage Acton / State
3	MC	Number and Operations	Computation	61 / 53
4	MC	Number and Operations	Numbers	56 / 37
6	SA	Number and Operations	Computation	61 / 45
16	MC	Number and Operations	Numbers	39 / 31
18	OR	Measurement	Techniques and Tools	54 / 44
19	MC	Patterns, Relations, Algebra	Symbols	63 / 49
20	MC	Patterns, Relations, Algebra	Models	58 / 41
37	SA	Measurement	Techniques and Tools	61 / 50
40	MC	Measurement	Techniques and Tools	70 / 59

* Denotes standard that will no longer be assessed at this grade level in 2012 because it does not align to Common Core Standards.

District Grade 5: 83% Proficient or Advanced (State 59%)
42 Items Total

Item Number	Question Type	Strand	Standard	Percentage Acton / State
12	MC	Numbers and Operations	Numbers*	61 / 46
16	SA	Geometry	Properties of Shapes	71 / 57
20	MC	Patterns, Relations, Algebra	Symbols	70 / 53
25	MC	Patterns, Relations, Algebra	Symbols	63 / 50
30	SA	Measurement	Techniques and Tools*	73 / 57
36	MC	Numbers and Operations	Numbers	68 / 59
37	MC	Measurement	Techniques and Tools*	68 / 56
40	OR	Numbers and Operations	Computation	68 / 51
41	MC	Geometry	Transformations and Symmetry	68 / 60
42	MC	Geometry	Properties of Shapes	62 / 47

District Grade 6: 87% Proficient or Advanced (State 58%)
42 Items Total

Item Number	Question Type	Strand	Standard	Percentage Acton / State
3	MC	Geometry	Properties of Shapes	67 / 62
4	SA	Geometry	Transformations and Symmetry*	63 / 65
5	SA	Data, Statistics, Probability	Statistical Methods	58 / 41
9	MC	Patterns, Relations, and Algebra	Patterns, Relations, and Functions*	72 / 54
10	OR	Measurement	Techniques and Tools	72 / 52
20	MC	Numbers and Operations	Operations	71 / 52
21	MC	Numbers and Operations	Computation	72 / 45
40	MC	Geometry	Properties of Shapes	73 / 64

* Denotes standard that will no longer be assessed at this grade level in 2012 because it does not align to Common Core Standards.

Discussion

Overall, Acton students were successful on the 2011 Mathematics MCAS. The aggregate and nearly all subgroups made Adequate Yearly Progress in mathematics by meeting either the Performance Target, the Improvement Target, or both. Areas for improvement can be identified from the item analysis. It should be noted that the majority of test items with <75% correct in Acton had a much lower percentage correct statewide, indicating that these items were challenging for all students at a particular grade level cohort, not just Acton students. The focus of this analysis is directed toward the strands that appear most frequently in the item analysis: Number and Operations, Geometry, and Patterns, Relations and Algebra.

At grades 3, 5, and 6, several of the specific standards that were difficult for students will not be assessed on the 2012 MCAS because they no longer align with the 2011 Massachusetts/Common Core Mathematics Standards for that grade level. For example, symmetry concepts will no longer be assessed in third or sixth grade. Likewise, measurement of angles will not be assessed in fifth grade. Overall, fewer standards will be assessed in 2012 than in 2011 because the focus will be upon the 2000/2004 mathematics standards that connect to the new standards. Teachers have been provided with the DESE list of standards that could be assessed on the 2012 Mathematics MCAS so that they can adjust their instruction. This will allow for a clearer instructional focus for both teachers and students at each grade level.

One of the goals of the new Common Core Standards is to address the issue of a national math curriculum that is "a mile wide and an inch deep." The new aim is to develop greater depth of student understanding in a few critical areas at each grade level, especially within the domains of Number, Operations, Algebraic Thinking, Measurement and Geometry. Professional development opportunities are planned for elementary teachers to deepen their mathematical understanding, particularly around these critical areas and domains.

The importance of such professional development for teachers is described in the Introduction to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Mathematics (2011):

> The message from the research is clear: having knowledgeable teachers really does matter; teacher expertise in a subject drives student achievement. "Improving teachers' content subject matter knowledge and improving students' mathematics education are thus interwoven and interdependent processes that must occur simultaneously."
>
> Ma, Lipping, *Knowing and Teaching Elementary Mathematics*, Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999, p. 147

Guiding teachers through the transition to the Common Core, providing professional development to increase teachers' content knowledge around the critical areas, and in turn providing more focused instruction will continue to improve the mathematics education and performance of Acton students.

STE MCAS District Analysis
By Eileen Sullivan, Elementary Curriculum Specialist

Highlighted are the questions on which we scored less than 80%. While arbitrary, this is the measure we have been using for the past few years. This year, for the first time, I note questions on which we scored less than 60%. In past years we may have had one or two, but this year the number is significant enough to be of concern. Other than that, there were no significant areas of concern. There are come questions on which we did not do well that cannot be analyzed, since they have not been released. In particular, Question #26 on States of Matter was particularly bad for us and for the state. We received only 45% of possible points; the state average was 39%. This degree of failure, coupled with the state average of 39%, indicates a difficult, poorly worded, or confusing question, or perhaps several possible answers rather than a clear choice of one correct answer. We are attempting to update our science curriculum but are frustrated by the delays on the part of the state revision process. As you know, Massachusetts has signed onto the Next Generation National Science Standards project. We may have a draft to review in the spring of 2012, and final national standards will be ready by the end of 2012. It is unclear when the new Massachusetts Standards will be ready.

Year	# Questions <80% Does not include ORQ	<60% (included in previous)	Open Response Question Avg. Score	% Prof. + Adv.
2011	14	4 (includes 1 ORQ)	2.66	73%
2010	14	1	2.21	74%
2009	12	1	2.62	79%
2008	5	2	2.24	73%

Questions on which we scored <80% for Multiple Choice/ Open Response <2.5

Question #	Strand/Standard #	District	State	Comments
Earth Science				
9 MC	Earth Science: Soil/5 Which of the following statements best describes sandy soils? ✔ A. Sandy soils allow water to drain quickly. **54** B. Sandy soils easily break down into clay sediments. **27** C. Sandy soils hold plant roots tightly in place to prevent erosion. **8** D. Sandy soils have high levels of decomposed plant and animal matter. **11**	54	50	We have enough experiences with sandy soils in our curriculum to enable students to select A as the most logical answer. In their defense, however, since the origins of both sand and clay are from weathering of earth materials such as rock, it is not difficult to see how students might get confused. The origin of clay particles is not part of our curriculum, other than to say that rocks break down through the rock cycle into smaller particles, including gravel, sand and clay.
19 MC	Earth Science: Weather/9 The table below shows averages of temperature and precipitation for the past 20 years in an area in the United States. 20-Year Averages Months / Average Temperature (°F) / Average Precipitation (in.) Jan.–Mar. 52 0.6 Apr.–June 75 0.2 July–Sept. 87 0.4 Oct.–Dec. 56 0.3 For which of the following would these data be most useful? ✔ A. understanding the climate of the area **65** B. showing the effect of weather on climate **16** C. predicting how the weather will change from day to day **13** D. demonstrating the difference between weather and climate **5**	65	46	I believe careful reading of this question would have helped some students avoid the incorrect answers. We have been working on these reading skills for several years, but it's a tough one. that is, learning to read each potential answer thoroughly, and remaining focused on what the question is asking.

5 MC	Earth Science: Earth's History /12 Which of the following can be caused by weathering? ✔ A. cracks forming in a boulder **68** B. rocks melting to form magma **6** C. glaciers forming on a mountainside **18** D. pebbles combining to form a large rock **8**	68	58	This is a weakness of our major Earth Science unit which focuses more on erosion. This is an area in need of strengthening as we revise our science curriculum. Students may be confused by the fact that glaciers *cause* a significant amount of weathering, and misunderstood that to mean that glaciers *are caused by* weathering. Again, careful reading of this question might have helped them.

Life Science

8 OR	Life Science: Adaptations of Living Things 9 Massachusetts is home to many plants and animals, including the organisms in the list below. • maple tree • monarch butterfly • robin • squirrel Each of these organisms responds to seasonal changes with specific behaviors. 1. Identify one organism from the list that migrates. 2. Describe one seasonal change that causes organisms to migrate. 3. Describe two behaviors that allow organisms that stay in Massachusetts all year to survive seasonal changes.	75	63	Our average score on this OR Question (2.99) indicates a fair amount of proficiency, yet 27% of them scored 2 or below.
23 OR	Life Science: Adaptations of Living Things 8 Reporting Category: Life Science Standard: 8 - Describe how organisms meet some of their needs in an environment by using behaviors (patterns of activities) in response to information (stimuli) received from the environment. Recognize that some animal behaviors are instinctive (e.g., turtles burying their eggs), and others are learned (e.g., humans building fires for warmth, chimpanzees learning how to use tools).	75	63	**Question not released.** This is not addressed well in our current curriculum.
40 OR	Life Science: Adaptations of Living Things /10 Standard: 10 - Give examples of how organisms can cause changes in their environment to ensure survival. Explain how some of these changes may affect the ecosystem.	75	58	**Question not released.**
29 MC	Life Science: Characteristics of plants and animals /1 Standard: 1 - Classify plants and animals according to the physical characteristics that they share	69	64	**Question not released -** We have never done well with animal classification. We hope to address this with new materials.

15 MC	Life Science: Energy and Living Things/11 Which of the following organisms would most likely get its food energy only from consumers? A. deer 14% **14** B. grass 9% **9** ✔ C. hawk 65% **65** D. mushroom 12% **12**	62	48	Again, this is a question that requires careful reading. I believe students should have been able to select the correct response. Negatively phrased questions such as this one are a challenge for young scientists.
29 MC	Life Science: Characteristics of plants and animals /1 Standard: 1 - Classify plants and animals according to the physical characteristics that they share	69	64	**Question not released** - We have never done well with animal classification. We hope to address this with new materials.
30 MC	Life Science: Structures and Functions/4 Standard: 4 - Describe the major stages that characterize the life cycle of the frog and butterfly as they go through metamorphosis.	71	59	**Question not released -I**t is hard to believe we didn't do well on this. It may have been a difficult question or perhaps awkwardly phrased.
36 OR	Life Science: Structures and Functions/2 Standard: 2 - Identify the structures in plants (leaves, roots, flowers, stem, bark, wood) that are responsible for food production, support, water transport, reproduction, growth, and protection.	56	47	**Question not released** Again, it is hard to believe we didn't do well on this. It must have been a difficult question or perhaps awkwardly phrased.

Technology Engineering

21 OR	Technology/Engineering: Materials and Tools 1.2 A group of students is building a cart with some of the materials and tools shown below. The cart will be used to move boxes between classrooms. 1. Identify which type of fasteners would be best for attaching the wheels to the steel brackets. 2. Identify two tools that could be used to attach the wheels to the steel brackets with the fasteners you identified in part (a). The students attach the wheels and brackets to the large board. They pull the cart with a piece of rope. When the students use the cart to move a box, however, the box slides off the cart. 3. Describe how the students could improve the cart so that the box stays on the cart when the students move it. Be sure to identify which materials and tools the students should use.	69	60	Not only is this absent from our curriculum, it will probably remain so. Students will get a good program in Jr. High in the Minuteman Tech program. We don't have the tools in place to give this type of curriculum its' due. I wouldn't advocate for setting up wood shops in every classroom. While we intend to increase our emphasis on Engineering in the elementary grades, we will not be starting an industrial arts program. This has long been a criticism of the MCAS Technology questions that they are really taken from Industrial Arts.

Physical Science

1 MC	Physical Science: Electrical Energy/8 Stacie wants to make an electromagnet using a copper wire wrapped around an iron bar, as shown below. To make the bar an electromagnet, what should Stacie do next? A. connect the wire to a bulb **14** B. heat the wire around the bar **4** ✔ C. send a current through the wire **61** D. touch the ends of the wire together **21**	61	44	We do not teach electromagnetism in our third grade Electricity unit. This could change as we review our science curriculum over the next few years.
11 MC	Physical Science: Electrical Energy/7 Which of the following best explains why electrical wires are usually covered with plastic or rubber? ✔ A. to insulate the electrical wire **78** B. to keep the electrical wire warm **4** C. to make the electrical wire stronger **8** D. to make the electrical wire more flexible **10**	78	71	I guess we need more work on insulation. Again, this is covered in third grade, and, since the current curriculum is not based on a progression of these ideas, it is not unusual for students to forget these details.
14 MC	Physical Science: Magnetic Energy/9 Jose has two bar magnets. He pushes the ends of the two magnets together and then he lets go. The magnets move quickly apart. Which of the following statements best explains why this happens? ✔ A. The north poles of the two magnets are facing each other. **75** B. One magnet is a north pole and one magnet is a south pole. **10** C. The ends of magnets repel each other but the centers attract. **6** D. One magnet is storing energy and one magnet is releasing energy. **9**	75	75	We introduce magnets in the very early grades, and, as mentioned previously, the way physical science is taught in Acton, units are discreet, rather than progressive. This will change in our upcoming revisions.
26 MC	Physical Science: States of Matter Standard: 3 - Describe how water can be changed from one state to another by adding or taking away heat.	45	39	**Question not released-** see notes in introduction. There is clearly a problem with this question.
28 MC	Physical Science: Light Energy/12 Standard: 12 - Recognize that light travels in a straight line until it strikes an object or travels from one medium to another, and that light can be reflected, refracted, and absorbed.	77	66	**Question not released** This is not part of the APS curriculum.
31 MC	Physical Science: Forms of Energy/5 Standard: 5 - Give examples of how energy can be transferred from one form to another.	73	63	**Question not released** We address this standard in grade 6.

Action Items and Initiatives

MCAS patterns and trends provide a range of information that schools can use to set goals for specific cohorts and subgroups, often resulting in instructional and curricular modifications. These goals, along with districtwide curricular initiatives and goals, result in continued strong classroom instruction for all students:

- Open response questions at all grades and students
  - ~ Model good questions in the classrooms and continue to teach students how to ask probing questions to improve their own understanding.
  - ~ Continue work that has been started with guiding classroom discussions.
  - ~ Provide students with many opportunities to communicate their understandings through writing and to receive critical feedback on their thoughts.
  - ~ Continue work with teachers on scoring open response questions.
- Grade six special education subgroup for mathematics
  - ~ (Similar to work done at the JH) Create a scope and sequence and pacing guide for the mathematical concepts and question types on the 6th grade MCAS. Add mid-unit assessments to ensure that students are understanding the concepts in time to make instructional changes and provide needed support.
  - ~ Provide "test-taking" strategy sessions for students to familiarize them with the assessment, types of questions asked, and the transitions needed between questions.
- Grade four mathematics
  - ~ Offer opportunities for teachers to deepen their mathematical understanding with courses such as "Mathematical Essentials," based on the book *Math Matters: Understanding the Math You Teach* and offered through EDCO.
  - ~ Guide teachers through the transition to the new MA Mathematics Frameworks and the identification of the learning goals, criteria or rubrics, and assessment tools for grade 4 and all grades.
  - ~ Provide coaching for teachers and actively support their use of online curriculum and technology tools.
- Grade five science
  - ~ *A draft of the new standards from the Next Generation National Science Standards project may be available for review in the spring of 2012, and a final national set of science standards will hopefully be ready by the end of 2012.*
  - ~ Continue work with science literacy, including science notebooks.
- Implementation of the new ELA and Literacy Framework, including identifying learning goals, criteria, rubrics and assessment tools for all grade levels (including reading assessments).

- Provide ELA Professional Development, including work with a reading consultant, graduate course offerings for guided reading, workshops for running records and literacy in grades three through six.
- Look at student work as evidence of learning and as a collaborative tool for instructional planning-training by National School Reform Faculty.

Conclusion

MCAS data provides one snapshot of whether our students are learning the state standards. Years of data illustrate trends and patterns to help us decide where to focus attention and perhaps refine curriculum and instruction.

Areas or groups that need our continued attention are mathematics at grade four, open response questions, and the special education subgroup at grade six. An area that will require our attention in the near future is Science, Technology and Engineering. That time line will be determined by the release of the new state STE Frameworks.

By all indications, students of the Acton Public Schools continue to perform well on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. It is through the hard work and dedication of our teachers, the support of the administration at each school, and the support of the Acton community that our schools and students continue to learn and grow.

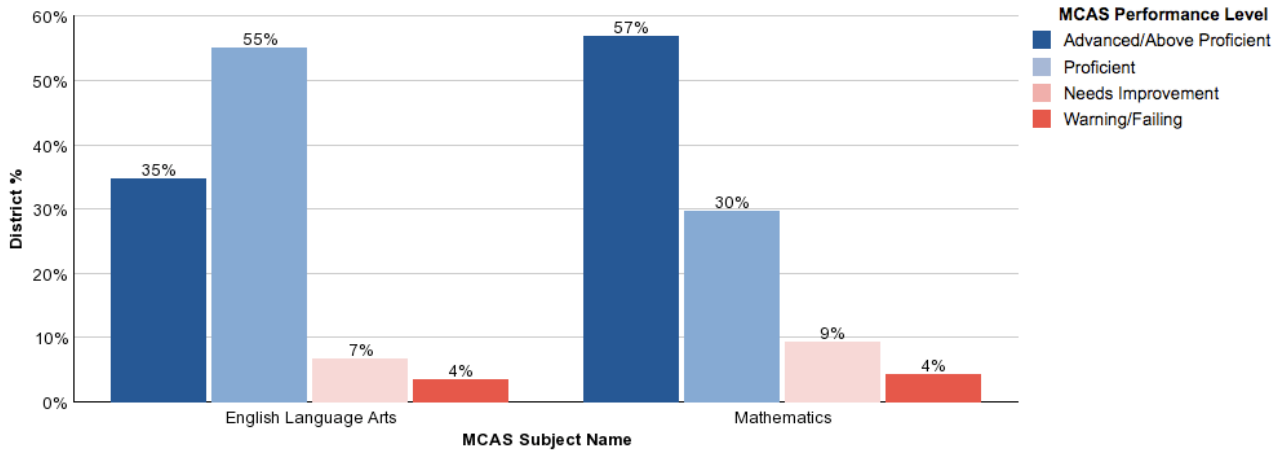
Data Section

District Results 2011: Grade 6

Massachusetts Department of ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

District Performance Distribution
Acton - 2011 MCAS Grade 6 English Language Arts, Mathematics

Students Included: On or after Oct 1



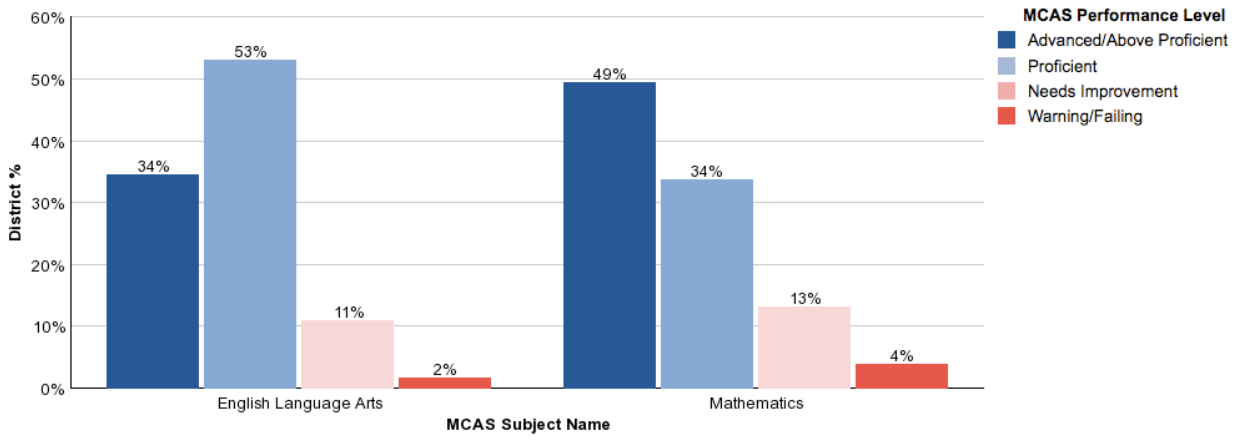
MCAS Subject Name	MCAS Performance Level	District #	District %	State %
English Language Arts	Advanced	139	35%	17%
	Proficient	220	55%	51%
	Needs Improvement	27	7%	23%
	Warning	14	4%	9%
	English Language Arts	**400**		
Mathematics	Advanced	227	57%	26%
	Proficient	118	30%	32%
	Needs Improvement	37	9%	25%
	Warning	17	4%	16%
	Mathematics	**399**		

District Results 2011: Grade 5

Massachusetts Department of ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

District Performance Distribution
Acton - 2011 MCAS Grade 5 English Language Arts, Mathematics

Students Included: On or after Oct 1

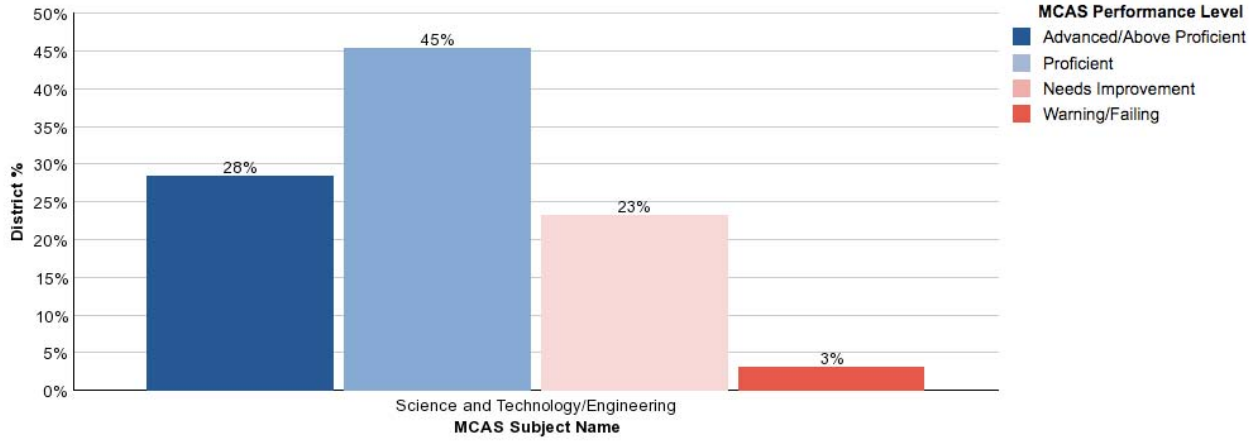


MCAS Subject Name	MCAS Performance Level	District #	District %	State %
English Language Arts	Advanced	126	34%	17%
	Proficient	194	53%	50%
	Needs Improvement	40	11%	24%
	Warning	6	2%	9%
	English Language Arts	**366**		
Mathematics	Advanced	181	49%	25%
	Proficient	123	34%	34%
	Needs Improvement	48	13%	26%
	Warning	14	4%	15%
	Mathematics	**366**		

Massachusetts Department of ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

District Performance Distribution
Acton - 2011 MCAS Grade 5 Science and Technology/Engineering

Students Included: On or after Oct 1



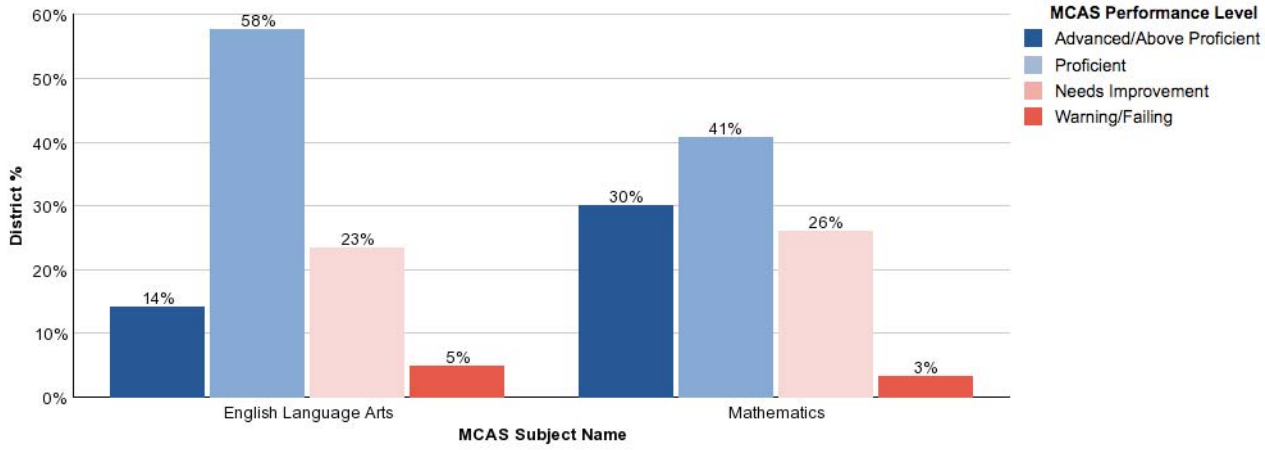
MCAS Subject Name	MCAS Performance Level	District #	District %	State %
Science and Technology/Engineering	Advanced	104	28%	14%
	Proficient	166	45%	36%
	Needs Improvement	85	23%	36%
	Warning	11	3%	15%
Science and Technology/Engineering		**366**		

District Results 2011: Grade 4

Massachusetts Department of ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

District Performance Distribution
Acton - 2011 MCAS Grade 4 English Language Arts, Mathematics

Students Included: On or after Oct 1



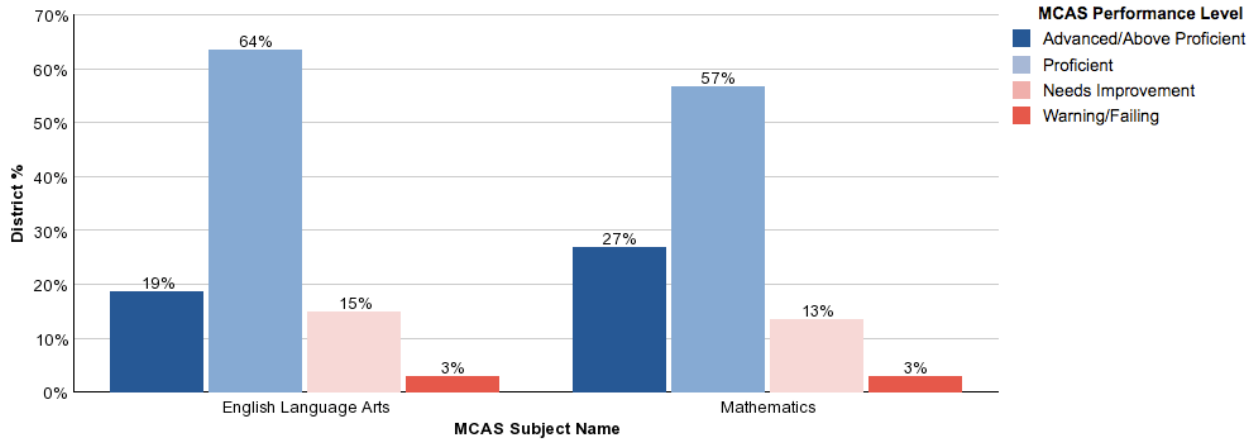
MCAS Subject Name	MCAS Performance Level	District #	District %	State %
English Language Arts	Advanced	53	14%	10%
	Proficient	216	58%	43%
	Needs Improvement	88	23%	35%
	Warning	18	5%	12%
	English Language Arts	**375**		
Mathematics	Advanced	112	30%	15%
	Proficient	152	41%	32%
	Needs Improvement	97	26%	42%
	Warning	12	3%	11%
	Mathematics	**373**		

District Results 2011: Grade 3

Massachusetts Department of ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

District Performance Distribution
Acton - 2011 MCAS Grade 3 English Language Arts, Mathematics

Students Included: On or after Oct 1



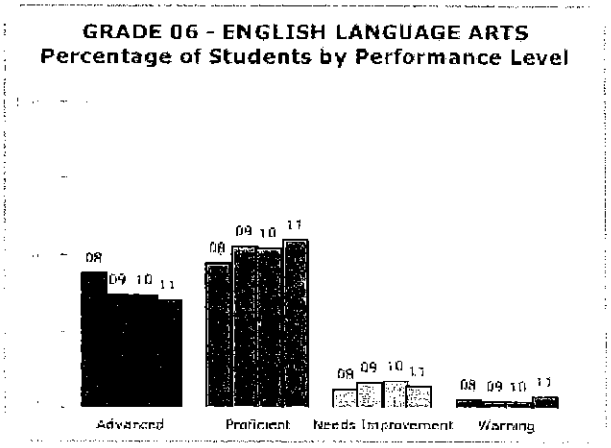
MCAS Subject Name	MCAS Performance Level	District #	District %	State %
English Language Arts	Advanced	65	19%	11%
	Proficient	222	64%	50%
	Needs Improvement	52	15%	30%
	Warning	10	3%	9%
	English Language Arts	**349**		
Mathematics	Advanced	94	27%	14%
	Proficient	198	57%	52%
	Needs Improvement	47	13%	25%
	Warning	10	3%	10%
	Mathematics	**349**		

Massachusetts School and District Profiles
Acton

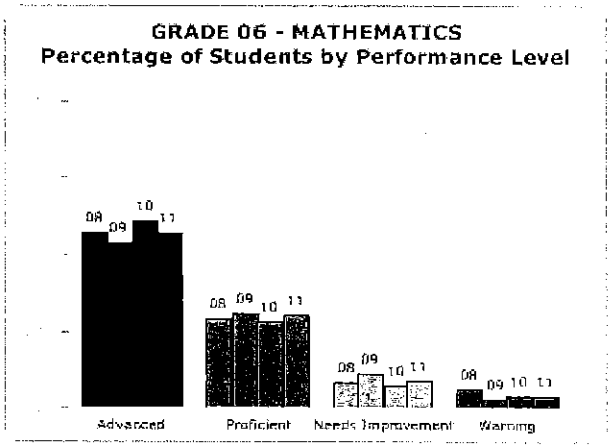
MCAS Annual Comparisons

*** NOTE:** Performance level percentages are not calculated if student group less than 10.
Data Last Updated on September 30, 2011

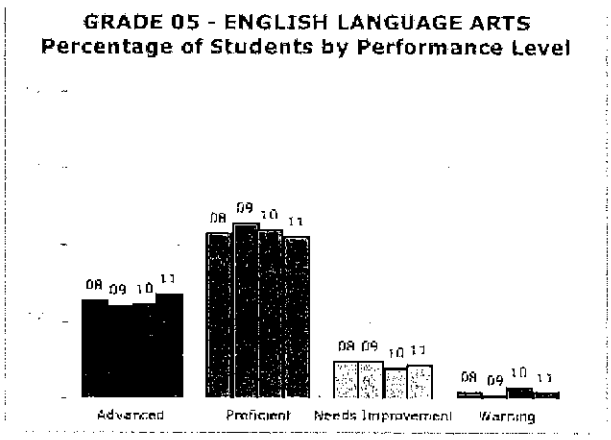
GRADE 06 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	44	37	37	35
PROFICIENT	47	53	52	55
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	6	8	9	7
WARNING	3	2	2	4



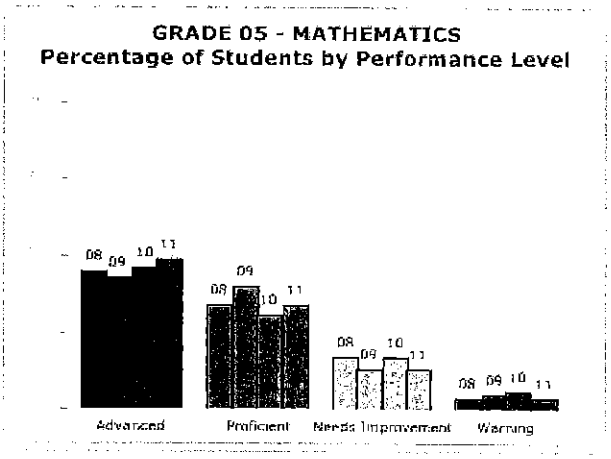
GRADE 06 - MATHEMATICS				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	57	54	61	57
PROFICIENT	29	31	28	30
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	8	11	7	9
WARNING	6	3	4	4



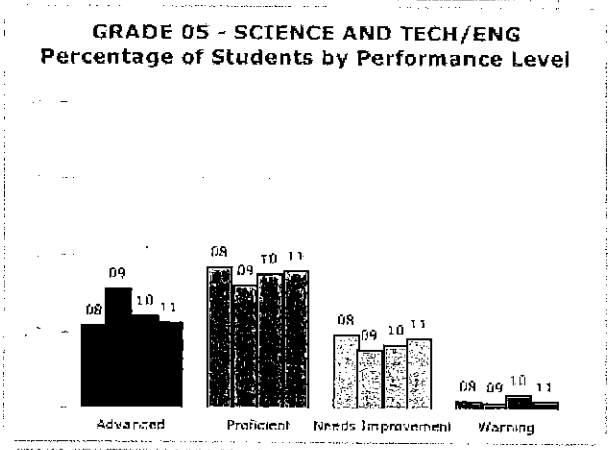
GRADE 05 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	32	30	31	34
PROFICIENT	54	57	55	53
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	12	12	10	11
WARNING	2	1	4	2



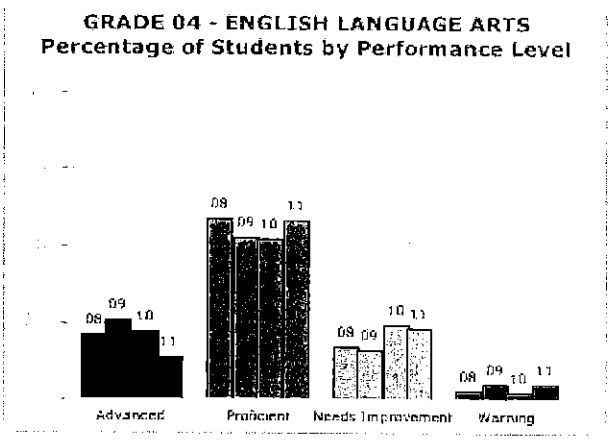
GRADE 05 - MATHEMATICS				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	45	43	46	49
PROFICIENT	34	40	31	34
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	17	13	17	13
WARNING	4	5	6	4



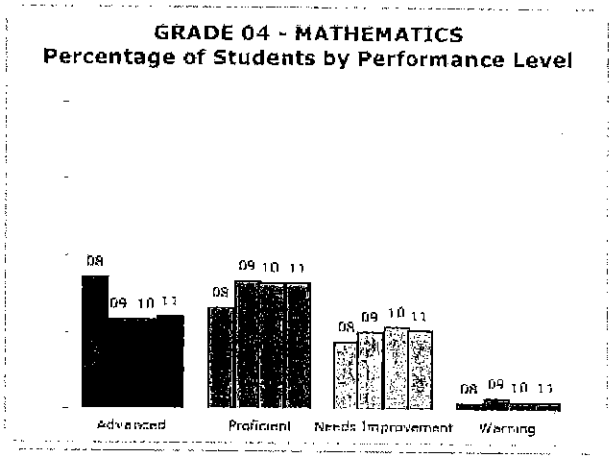
GRADE 05 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	27	39	30	28
PROFICIENT	46	40	44	45
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	24	19	21	23
WARNING	3	2	5	3



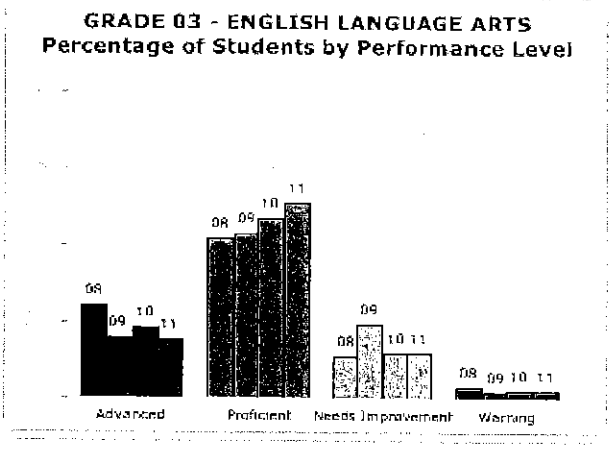
GRADE 04 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	21	26	22	14
PROFICIENT	59	53	52	58
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	17	16	24	23
WARNING	3	5	2	5



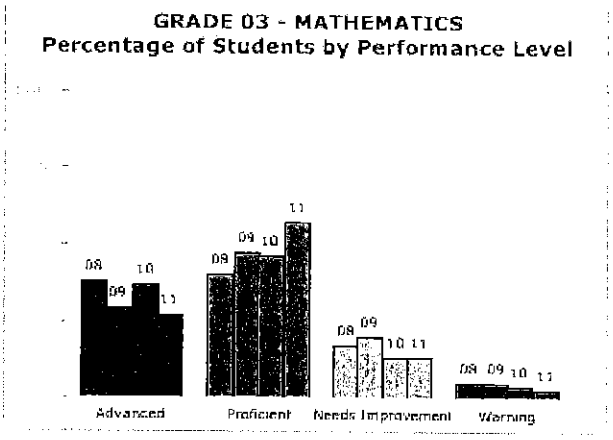
GRADE 04 - MATHEMATICS				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	43	29	29	30
PROFICIENT	33	42	41	41
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	22	25	27	26
WARNING	2	4	3	3



GRADE 03 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	30	20	23	19
PROFICIENT	52	54	59	64
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	14	24	15	15
WARNING	4	2	3	3



GRADE 03 - MATHEMATICS				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2008	2009	2010	2011
ADVANCED	38	29	37	27
PROFICIENT	40	47	46	57
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	17	20	13	13
WARNING	5	5	4	3



Superintendent of Schools
Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools

TO: Acton Public School Committee
DATE: October 20, 2011
FROM: Dr. Stephen Mills
SUBJECT: Recommendations regarding assistant funding

Attached you will find several documents describing school based funding levels from various sources. You will see that funding is divided among three sources: Appropriated budget (28%); PTO Funding (35%) and Before and After School Programs (37%).

We have had a two-pronged approach over the last few years.

1. Increase budgetary support for classroom assistants to reduce the pressure on the PTO's to fund staff and give them more flexibility to fund other items.

2. Build before and after school programs in the three schools that did not have them primarily to meet the needs of families, and secondarily to provide a funding source that does not require as much PTO fundraising.

These two approaches have been very successful in a short period of time.

- The community education extended day programs have provided a total of $125,000 this year to the three schools that did not have programs.

- The appropriated budget share increased from 17% to 28% in just one year with the addition of $108,000 in this year's operating budget. This enabled the PTO share to drop from 41% to 35% this year.

I have had several meetings with the principals and Marie Altieri to discuss the pros and cons to any changes in the current funding mechanisms. One of our primary considerations is that the funding from PTOs and Before/After school programs has given each school community the ability to make some school based choices about staffing priorities. In some cases it is classroom assistants, in others it is technology assistant, a parent community liaison, cultural programs, etc. The principals are unified in their belief that these community decisions are fundamental to school choice and our building based decision making model.

Given all of these factors, I am specifically recommending the following:

1. Increase the appropriated budget by another $108,000 each of the next three years. This increase should be specifically used to decrease the pressure on the PTOs to raise as many funds. The goal would be to continue to increase the percentage of assistants funded through the appropriated budget. This recommendation will be part of the overall 2% solution that I present with the FY '13 budget in December.

2. Erin Bettez and each building principal will continue reviewing the extended day programs, looking at space, capacity, staffing and any other policies to see if the models in the newer programs could possibly grow and if the models in the older programs make sense for Community Ed to explore.

3. Merriam and Douglas will look at year end surpluses from their before and after school programs annually and consider making a donation which Dr. Mills can then reallocate to the other three schools. This year they are able to contribute $30,000 from Merriam and $30,000 from Douglas, which will provide Conant, Gates and McCarthy-Towne with $20,000 each in additional funding that they can use this year or in the future.

4. Cap the total staff funded from the combination of these three sources at 15 FTE. As the appropriated budget grows by 1 FTE per year, and schools receive additional before/after school surpluses of 1 or more FTE per year, this will close the gap between the five schools.

The long term goal is to have a sustainable model that will provide a standard of up to 15 FTE assistants available to all five schools. We believe these changes will help us get there without compromising each school's ability to work as a community and make choices about their fundraising and spending priorities.

School Based Funding for Personnel

2011-2012

	District Funding For Assistants	PTO Funds	Before-After School Funds	Total Funding
Conant	$51,446	$35,000	$73,253	$159,699
Douglas	$51,446	$58,041	$131,872	$241,359
Gates	$51,466	$46,000	$35,215	$132,681
McCarthy-Towne	$51,446	$99,547	$19,786	$170,779
Merriam	$57,526	$96,925	$92,776	$247,227
Totals:	$263,330	$335,513	$352,902	**$951,745**
	28%	35%	37%	

2010-2011

	District Funding For Assistants	PTO Funds	Before-After School Funds	Total Funding
Conant	$26,394	$43,867	$54,000	$124,261
Douglas	$26,394	$49,950	$127,736	$204,080
Gates	$26,394	$44,340	$45,091	$115,825
McCarthy-Towne	$26,394	$88,869	$17,191	$132,454
Merriam	$31,228	$101,188	$83,237	$215,653
Totals:	$136,804	$328,214	$327,255	**$792,273**
	17%	41%	41%	

2009-2010				
	District Funding For Assistants	PTO Funds	Before-After School Funds	Total Funding
Conant	$26,424	$42,242	$20,000	$88,666
Douglas	$25,977	$49,445	$124,647	$200,069
Gates	$25,526	$46,351		$71,877
McCarthy-Towne	$26,131	$88,464		$114,595
Merriam	$31,128	$86,837	$86,474	$204,439
Totals:	$135,186	$313,339	$231,121	**$679,646**
	20%	46%	34%	

2008-2009				
	District Funding For Assistants	PTO Funds	Before-After School Funds	Total Funding
Conant	$25,486	$57,164		$82,650
Douglas	$25,486	$35,660	$109,553	$170,699
Gates	$25,486	$61,291		$86,777
McCarthy-Towne	$25,486	$102,630		$128,116
Merriam	$30,637	$86,599	$81,996	$199,232
Totals:	$132,581	$286,180	$191,549	**$610,310**
	22%	47%	31%	

Staffing Counts by FTE

2011-2012*

	District Funding For Assistants	PTO Funds	Before-After School Funds	Total Funding
Conant	2.67	1.90	2.23	6.80
Gates	2.67	2.59	1.40	6.66
Douglas	2.67	3.20	6.98	12.85
McCarthy-Towne	2.67	4.43	0.00	7.10
Merriam	3.00	5.07	4.87	12.94
Totals:	13.68	17.19	15.48	46.35

*FTE Planned as of October: Some extended day funds not used

2010-2011

	District Funding For Assistants	PTO Funds	Before-After School Funds	Total Funding
Conant	1.47	2.30	1.50	5.27
Gates	1.47	2.19	1.65	5.31
Douglas	1.47	2.69	7.36	11.52
McCarthy-Towne	1.47	4.26	0.73	6.46
Merriam	1.80	5.60	5.04	12.44
Totals:	7.68	17.04	16.28	41.00

2009-2010				
	District Funding For Assistants	PTO Funds	Before-After School Funds	Total Funding
Conant	1.47	2.33		3.80
Gates	1.47	2.55		4.02
Douglas	1.47	2.57	6.43	10.47
McCarthy-Towne	1.47	4.20		5.67
Merriam	1.80	4.83	5.00	11.63
Totals:	7.68	16.48	11.43	35.59

2008-2009				
	District Funding For Assistants	PTO Funds	Before-After School Funds	Total Funding
Conant	1.47	3.30		4.77
Gates	1.47	3.30		4.77
Douglas	1.47	2.06	6.32	9.85
McCarthy-Towne	1.47	5.92		7.39
Merriam	1.80	5.00	4.73	11.52
Totals:	7.68	19.57	11.05	38.29

Acton Public Schools Classroom Assistants FTE Funding History

Fiscal Year	Appropriated	PTO/PTSO	Before/After School	Total	Budget Changes
2012	13.68	17.19	15.48	46.35	Budget increased funding for classroom assistants by $108K
2011	7.68	17.04	16.28	41.00	
2010	7.68	16.48	11.43	35.59	Gates and McCarthy-Towne Before/After School Program Starts
2009	7.68	19.80	11.05	38.53	Conant Before/After School Program Starts
2008	7.68	17.33	10.07	35.08	Budget increased funding for classroom assistants by $50K
2007	5.33	16.20	9.47	31.00	Merriam before/after school starts along with Douglas
2006	5.33	16.50	5.57	27.40	
2005	5.33	16.80	4.43	26.57	Budget reduced funding for classroom assistants
2004	12.67	17.50	3.43	33.60	Budget reduced funding for class assts by $37K; Douglas before/after school starts funding assistants
2003	16.00	17.07		33.07	Budget reduced funding for class assts by $40K but added two new classroom teachers to reduce class size at grades 4 and 5
2002	18.00	16.00		34.00	
2001	18.00	15.83		33.83	
2000	18.00	10.40		28.40	
1999	18.00	7.00		25.00	
1998	18.00	4.20		22.20	Most PTO Funding from Merriam with a small number of hours from Douglas.

Acton Public Schools
FY'12 Assistants

	Approp		#		PTO		#	Before/After			#		Total	Total	Total	Total
School	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost
Conant																
Classroom Assts	80	2.67	3	$51,446	57	1.90	3	$35,000	51	1.70	3	$27,558	188	6.27	9	$114,004
Media Asst									10	0.33	1	$6,809	10	0.33	1	$6,809
L/R Monitor									6	0.20	1	$3,610	6	0.20	1	$3,392
Conant Total	80	2.67	3	$51,446	57	1.90	3	$35,000	67	2.23	5	$37,977	204	6.80	11	$124,205
Gates																
Classroom Assts	80	2.67	6	$51,446	55	1.83	4	$28,314	42	1.40	4	$25,863	177	5.90	14	$105,623
Media Asst					3.75	0.13	1	$3,299					3.75	0.13	1	$3,299
Technology Asst					18.75	0.63	1	$14,387					18.75	0.63	1	$14,387
Gates Total	80	2.67	6	$51,446	77.5	2.59	6	$46,000	42	1.40	4	$25,863	199.5	6.66	16	$123,309
Douglas																
Classroom Asts	80	2.67	5	$51,446	72	2.40	5	$43,931	185.25	6.18	14	$112,798	337.25	11.25	24	$208,175
Media Asst					5	0.17	1	$3,696	5	0.17	1	$4,317	10	0.34	2	$8,013
Technology Asst					19	0.63	1	$10,414					19	0.63	1	$10,414
Japanese Lang									9	0.30	1	$9,450	9	0.30	1	$9,450
Chinese Lang									10	0.33	1	$5,307	10	0.33	1	$5,307
Douglas Total	80	2.67	5	$51,446	96	3.20	7	$58,041	209.25	6.98	17	$131,872	385.25	12.85	29	$241,359
McT																
Classroom Asst	80	2.67	5	$51,446	91	3.00	7	$60,432					171	5.67	12	$111,878
Media Asst					5	0.17	1	$3,786					5	0.17	1	$3,786
Art Int Specialist					19	0.63	1	$20,909					19	0.63	1	$20,909
Parent Vol Coor					19	0.63	1	$14,420					19	0.63	1	$14,420
McT Total	80	2.67	5	$51,446	134	4.43	10	$99,547	0	0.00	0	$0	214	7.10	15	$150,993
Merriam																
Classroom Assts	90	3.00	5	$57,526	152	5.07	9	$96,295	140	4.70	10	$88,458	382	12.77	24	$242,279
Media Asst									5	0.17	1	$4,318	5	0.17	1	$4,318
Merriam Total	90	3.00	5	$57,526	152	5.07	9	$96,295	145	4.87	11	$92,776	387	12.94	25	$246,597
District Totals	410	13.68	24	$263,310	516.5	17.19	35	$334,883	463.25	15.48	37	$288,488	1389.75	46.35	96	$886,463

10/13/2011

Acton Public Schools
FY'11 Assistants

	Approp		#		PTO		#	Before/After			#		Total	Total	Total	Total
School	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost
Conant																
Classroom Assts	44	1.47	3	$26,394	59	1.97	3	$34,021	45	1.50	3	$27,658	148	4.94	9	$88,073
Media Asst					10	0.33	1	$6,454					10	0.33	1	$6,454
L/R Monitor					6	0.20	1	$3,392					6	0.20	1	$3,392
Conant Total	44	1.47	3	$26,394	69	2.30	4	$43,867	45	1.50	3	$27,658	158	5.47	10	$97,919
Gates																
Classroom Assts	44	1.47	4	$26,394	43	1.43	3	$25,105	49.5	1.65	4	$32,684	136.5	4.55	11	$84,183
Media Asst					3.75	0.13	1	$6,063					3.75	0.13	1	$6,063
Technology Asst					18.75	0.63	1	$13,172					18.75	0.63	1	$13,172
Gates Total	44	1.47	4	$26,394	65.5	2.19	5	$44,340	49.5	1.65	4	$32,684	159	5.31	13	$103,418
Douglas																
Classroom Asts	44	1.47	3	$26,394	55	1.83	3	$34,520	199	6.63	16	$111,368	298	9.93	22	$172,282
Media Asst					5	0.17	2	$3,510	5	0.17	1	$4,106	10	0.34	3	$7,616
Technology Asst					19	0.63	1	$9,920					19	0.63	1	$9,920
Japanese Lang					2	0.06	1	$2,000	7	0.23	1	$7,450	9	0.29	2	$9,450
Chinese Lang									10	0.33	1	$4,812	10	0.33	1	$4,812
Douglas Total	44	1.47	3	$26,394	81	2.69	7	$49,950	221	7.36	19	$127,736	346	11.52	29	$204,080
McT																
Classroom Asst	44	1.47	3	$26,394	85	2.83	6	$50,697	22	0.73	2	$12,964	151	5.03	11	$90,055
Media Asst					5	0.17	1	$3,872					5	0.17	1	$3,872
Art Int Specialist					19	0.63	1	$20,300					19	0.63	1	$20,300
Parent Vol Coor					19	0.63	1	$14,000					19	0.63	1	$14,000
McT Total	44	1.47	3	$26,394	128	4.26	9	$88,869	22	0.73	2	$12,964	194	6.46	14	$128,22[illegible]
Merriam																
Classroom Assts	54	1.80	3	$31,228	163	5.43	8	$97,746	146	4.87	8	$79,795	363	12.10	19	$208,769
Media Asst					5	0.17	1	$3,442	5	0.17	1	$3,442	10	0.34	2	$6,884
Merriam Total	54	1.80	3	$31,228	168	5.60	9	$101,188	151	5.04	9	$83,237	373	12.44	21	$215,653
District Totals	230	7.68	16	$136,804	511.5	17.04	34	$328,214	488.5	16.28	37	$284,279	1230.00	41.00	87	$749,297

Acton Public Schools

FY'10 Assistants

					2009-2010											
	Approp		#		PTO		#	Before/After			#		Total	Total	Total	Total
School	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost	Hr/wk	FTE	Staff	Cost
Conant																
Classroom Assts	44	1.47	4	$26,424	60	2.00	5	$35,797					104	3.47	9	$62,221
Media Asst					10	0.33	1	$6,445					10	0.33	1	$6,445
Conant Total	44	1.47	4	$26,424	70	2.33	6	$42,242					114	3.80	10	$68,666
Gates																
Classroom Assts	44	1.47	5	$25,526	54	1.80	5	$30,687					98	3.27	10	$56,213
Media Asst					3.75	0.13	1	$6,063					3.75	0.13	1	$6,063
Technology Asst					18.75	0.63	1	$12,695					18.75	0.63	1	$12,695
Gates Total	44	1.47	5	$25,526	76.5	2.55	7	$49,445					120.5	4.03	12	$74,971
Douglas																
Classroom Asts	44	1.47	3	$25,977	51.5	1.71	3	$30,921	174.75	5.83	14	$109,191	270.25	9.01	20	$166,089
Media Asst					5	0.17	2	$3,510	5	0.17	1	$4,106	10	0.34	3	$7,616
Technology Asst					19	0.63	1	$9,920					19	0.63	1	$9,920
Japanese Lang					2	0.06		$2,000	7	0.23	1	$7,450	9	0.29	1	$9,450
Chinese Lang									6	0.20	2	$3,900	6	0.20	2	$3,900
Douglas Total	44	1.47	3	$25,977	77.5	2.57	6	$46,351	192.75	6.43	18	$124,647	314.25	10.47	27	$196,975
McT																
Classroom Asst	44	1.47	3	$26,131	83	2.77	6	$49,264					127	4.24	9	$75,395
Media Asst					5	0.17	1	$3,872					5	0.17	1	$3,872
Art Int Specialist					19	0.63	1	$20,300					19	0.63	1	$20,300
Parent Vol Coor					19	0.63	1	$15,028					19	0.63	1	$15,028
McT Total	44	1.47	3	$26,131	126	4.20	9	$88,464					170	5.67	12	$114,595
Merriam																
Classroom Assts	54	1.80	3	$31,128	145	4.83	8	$86,837	145	4.83	9	$83,032	344	11.46	20	$200,997
Media Asst									5	0.17	1	$3,442	5	0.17	1	$3,442
Merriam Total	54	1.80	3	$31,128	145	4.83	8	$86,837	150	5.00	10	$86,474	349	11.63	21	$204,439
District Totals	230	7.68	18	$135,186	495	16.48	36	$313,339	342.75	11.43	28	$211,121	1067.75	35.60	82	$659,646

01/15/2010

6.2.
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Office of Curriculum and Assessment
Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
http://ab.mec.edu/curriculum/curriculum.shtml
(978) 264-4700 x 3213

TO: Dr. Stephen Mills, Superintendent
DATE: October 17, 2011
FROM: Deborah Bookis, Director of Curriculum and Assessment
SUBJECT: Classroom Assistants

Effective Use of Classroom Assistants: Research Summary

1. Key to positive effect is professional development and training, assignments and supervision
2. Teacher and assistant collaborative practices also support effectiveness in classrooms
3. Also key is the leadership and management of the building (clear systems for managing classroom assistants and professional development, communication, identification of student needs, and for monitoring classroom assistant impact)
4. Appropriate professional development includes training in: roles and responsibilities (including confidentiality, special education law, inclusive practices, and working with other adults), learner characteristics, cultural diversity, data collection, behavioral strategies, instructional strategies and health-related issues and procedures
5. Classroom assistants should take part in professional development with teacher "as a team"
6. Classroom assistants should be used in *supplementary* roles rather than for primary instruction and should use a research-based (evidence-based) program. Supplementary roles include: pedagogical support, modeling, supporting discussions, promoting positive behavior, observing and assessing and managing resources
7. All classroom assistants should receive ongoing feedback from the teacher; regular daily, weekly and monthly meetings should be held for this purpose and to discuss individual students
8. In addition, classroom assistants impact should be monitored by reviewing student progress
9. Marzano's nine strategies for increasing student achievement closely aligned with the kind of instructional activities classroom assistants support in the classroom (identifying similarities and differences, summarizing and note-taking, reinforcing effort and providing recognition, homework and practice, nonlinguistic representations, cooperative learning, setting objectives and providing feedback, generating and testing hypotheses, questions, cues and advanced organizers)
10. Classroom assistants can play an important key communication connector role in the school
11. Classroom assistants should also be included in evaluation systems so that they set goals related to school and system-wide objectives

References

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Revolving Account Fund Balances

Before and After School Programs

	Cash Balance 06/30/11	FY '11 Extended Day Revenues Donated Sept 2011	Current Available	Commitments for 2011-2012 Staff	Uncommited Balance	
Conant Extended Day	$46,434	$73,253	$119,686	$37,977	$81,709	Program Started 2009
Douglas at Dawn/Dusk	$268,000		$268,000	$131,872	$136,128	Program Started 1994
Gates Extended Day	$16,641	$36,323	$52,964	$25,863	$27,101	Program Started 2010
McT Extended Day	$1,650	$18,988	$20,638		$20,638	Program Started 2010
Merriam Before/After School	$168,000		$168,000	$92,776	$75,224	Program Started 2002
	$500,724.25	$128,564.05	$629,288.30	$288,488.00	$340,800	

The fund balance for Douglas and Merriam is used to pay the expenses of running the after school program this year. The expenses of running the Gates, Conant and McT program are paid for by Community Ed.

PTO Donations

	Cash Balance 06/30/11	PTO Donations Oct-11	Current Available	Commitments for 2011-2012 Staff	Uncommited Balance
Conant PTO	$10,100	$30,000	$40,100	$35,000	$5,100
Douglas PTO	$22,584	$49,845	$72,429	$58,000	$14,429
Gates PTO	$1,170	$44,830	$46,000	$46,000	$0
McCarthy-Towne PTSO	$23,042	$84,000	$107,042	$99,547	$7,495
Merriam PTO	$22,378	$88,000	$110,378	$96,295	$14,083
	$79,274.00	$296,675.00	$375,949.00	$334,842.00	$41,107

10/20/11

6.2 (A)

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revised
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Luther Conant School PTO
80 Taylor Road
Acton, MA 01720

Please note: this letter replaces the Oct. 11 letter sent by Conant Principal Damian Sugrue.

October 17, 2011

Dr. Stephen Mills
Superintendent
Acton Public Schools
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720

Dear Dr. Mills:

On behalf of the Luther Conant Elementary School PTO, please accept this gift of $30,000 to the District for the funding of teaching assistants for the 2011-12 school year. Please combine this gift with $5,000 of unused PTO funds from the 2010-2011 school year, for a total gift of $35,000. The PTO is thankful to the many Conant families and the greater Acton community for their support in raising these funds.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Oddsund
Conant PTO President

Kathleen Little
Conant PTO Treasurer

6.4

CT DOUGLAS PTO

21 Elm Street
Acton, MA 01720
CT Douglas School Phone: 978-266-2560

October 1, 2011

Dr. Stephen Mills
Superintendent
Acton Public Schools
Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720

Dear Dr. Mills,

On behalf of the C.T. Douglas School PTO, we would like to thank you for all the support you have given during the past year.

In June 2011, the Douglas PTO approved our budget for the 2011-2012 school year. As in the past, our main focus is on direct services to the children. This year over 69% of our basic budget will be used to fund classroom support/assistants, technology staff, and library staff. This budget reflects the PTO's commitment to maintaining the same level of staff support.

We would like to present our PTO gift to the C.T. Douglas School for the 2011-2012 school year of $49,845.47. This $49,845.47 will be combined with $8,196 from previous years to fund the staff listed above.

This gift represents funds for expenses that are reimbursed to Central Office for actual hours worked or products purchased and we understand if the funds are not used in their entirety a credit will be issued for use in a subsequent year.

The funds support expenses that we would not be able to continue without the generosity of our parents and the community. We do not take this generosity lightly; given current economic conditions, we feel that our budget is a realistic expectation for the coming year.

Thank you for reviewing this budget for approval for the coming year.

Sincerely,

Deanne O'Sullivan and Martha Papalia
Douglas PTO Co-Chairs, 2010-2011

Cc: Dr. Chris Whitbeck; Sharon Armistead; Corinne Hogseth, PTO Treasurer

6.5.

C.T. Douglas School
21 Elm St. Acton, MA 01720
Tel: (978) 266-2560
Fax: (978) 266-2500
E-mail: cwhitbeck@mail.ab.mec.edu

Dr. Christopher Whitbeck
Principal

October 12, 2011

To: Acton Public School Committee

From: Dr. Christopher Whitbeck

Re: Classroom Assistant Funds

Please accept this request for approval to fund classroom assistants from the Douglas at Dawn & Dusk program. These assistants are an integral part of the educational program throughout the day.

189.25 hours of classroom assistants	$131,872.00

Sincerely,

Christopher Whitbeck

6.6.

September 16, 2011

Stephen E. Mills, Ed.D.
Superintendant of Schools
Acton Public Schools
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720

Dear Dr. Mills,

I would like to request acceptance of the gift of money from the Gates School PTO in the amount of $44,829.74. When combined with the existing balance of $1,170.26 in the Gates PTO Account, the balance should be $46,000. This total amount has been designated for Classroom Assistants, including Computer and Media assistants, for the 2011 – 2012 school year.

I hope you will present this request for acceptance of this year's Gates PTO gift of $44,829.74 to the Acton Public School Committee at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Sincerely,

Lynne Newman

Lynne Newman
Principal
Gates Elementary School
Acton, MA 01720

6.7

McCarthy-Towne School

Eleven Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720
Telephone: 978-264-3377, FAX: 978-264-4098
Email: dkrane@mail.ab.mec.edu

Dr. Stephen Mills
Superintendent of Schools
16 Charter Road
Acton Public Schools
Acton, MA 01720

September 15, 2011

Dear Dr. Mills,

The McCarthy-Towne School PTSO has presented the school with an $84,000 gift to be used for our Contracted Services programs and Classroom and Reading Assistants. Please combine this with the $15,547 of unused funds from last year's donation for a total of $99,547 to support staffing.

The money will be divided among the following programs:

Classroom and Reading Assistants	$60,432.
Art Integration Specialist	$20,909.
Media Assistant (additional hours)	$ 3,786.
Parent Involvement Coordinator	$14,420.
Total	$99,547

Please present this gift to the School Committee for their approval at the next School Committee meeting. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

David Krane
Principal
McCarthy-Towne School

MERRIAM SCHOOL

11 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720 (978) 264-4700, Ext. 3751

To: Dr. Stephen Mills

From: Ed Kaufman

Dianna McNeish, PTO Treasurer

Date: September 26, 2011

Subject: Payment for Assistant Salaries

The Merriam PTO would like to request that the School Committee accept this gift of $88,000 to cover our contribution to fund salaries for classroom assistants (grades 1-6) for eighteen hours per week from September 2011 – June 2012. Please combine this $88,000 with the $8,295 of unused funds from last year's donation to support $96,295 of classroom assistants.

In addition, $92,776 will be used from the Merriam Mornings/Merriam After Hours Programs to fund classroom assistants, assistants for math and reading and for additional hours for our media assistant.

File: KF

Proposed Revision: USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Acton-Boxborough Regional and Acton Public School Districts are the caretakers of the Districts' properties and facilities for the towns of Acton and Boxborough. The School Committees are pleased to have public facilities enjoyed by Acton and Boxborough community members when the property is not in use by the schools.

The Superintendent's office, through Community Education, shall schedule and manage the use of the Districts' properties according to the procedures attached to this policy as they may be amended from time to time.

File: KF

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES
(existing policy)

The provision of well-maintained school buildings and facilities is positive proof of the community's interest and dedication to all aspects of a well-rounded educational program for all of the citizens. While the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools are designed and operated to serve this important function, first consideration must necessarily be given the needs of the school age children. In accordance with this fundamental principle, regular school and related functions rate the highest priority in the extended use of the buildings and facilities. The School Committees have determined three classifications of users with school related organizations (Class 1) usually not being charged for the use of school facilities. Other users will pay predetermined fees for the use of school facilities.

Approval for public use by other groups shall be: 1) consistent with recognized needs and values for their intended use, 2) content neutral, and 3) in conformity with state laws. In this connection, Section 71 of Chapter 71 of Massachusetts General Laws reads in pertinent part as follows:

> "For the purpose of promoting the usefulness of public school property the school committee of any town may conduct such educational and recreational activities in or upon school property under its control, and, subject to such regulations as it may establish, and consistently and without interference with the use of the premises for school purposes shall allow the use thereof by individuals and associations for such educational, recreational, social, civic, philanthropic and like purposes as it deems for the interest of the community. 'The affiliation of any such association with a religious organization shall not disqualify such association from being allowed such a use for such a purpose.' The use of such property as a place of public assemblage for citizens to hear candidates for public office shall be considered a civic purpose within the meaning of this section. A school committee shall award concessions for food at any field under its control only to the highest responsible bidder."

Programs and activities having as their goal cultural, charitable, philanthropic, civic and recreational values of non-commercial or non-personal nature are encouraged and will be given careful consideration by the School Department when requests for school facilities are made.

Community Education is responsible for the supervision of school rentals and the extended use of school facilities. To avoid duplication of efforts and conflicts in scheduling, arrangements for the extended use of school facilities must be made through the Community Education office, which office assumes the responsibility to keep the Superintendent of Schools informed regarding all activities scheduled in school facilities.

School buildings may be made available to community groups except during the regular school day which is generally considered to be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (except for general, primary and special elections.) Should a conflict arise between a school-related or school sponsored activity and an activity of a community group, the school related or school-sponsored group shall take precedence.

A community group which has obtained approval for the use of a school facility on a specific date may consider the arrangements to be a firm commitment unless notified to the contrary by Community Education. This notification will be made as soon as known by Community Education.

Community Education assumes the responsibility for handling all of the details, including the administering of the application, and collection of fees and other charges involved in assigning a school facility to an outside group. Application forms may be obtained from the Community Education office.

Whenever special school equipment such as stage lighting, video cameras or kitchen equipment is to be used by outside groups, they will be required to employ school personnel skilled in the use and maintenance of this special equipment.

Procedures, forms and guidelines are available by contacting the Community Education Director.

Revised: May 1, 2008

6.9.1.3

File: KF-R

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES PROCEDURES
(Revised October 3, 2011)

Deleted: 7/31/09

A variety of school facilities are available for rental by school and community groups and individuals. Acton-Boxborough Community Education will schedule all school facilities week days after 5:00 p.m., on weekends and holidays. Facility usage at other times is based on availability and is at the discretion of the building principal. Applications for facility rental should be made no later than ***two weeks*** in advance of the requested date. Applications for facility rental may be obtained at the Community Education Office in the Administration Building, 15 Charter Road in Acton. The phone number is (978) 266-2525. The application can be downloaded from the A-B Community Ed. website: http://comed.ab.mec.edu.

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All in-school groups will have until July 31st to make requests for the next school year. As of August 1st, non-school groups may request rentals on a first come, first served basis. Rentals of school district grass fields occur two times per year. Tennis Court rentals occur once per year. Please see page 4 for more information.

Please note: School activities supersede all non-school rentals. Renters may be bumped at the last minute if the school needs a space that has been rented. Every effort will be made to find the user a similar space or reschedule the event for another date.

Deleted:

Deleted: • Meetings by official Town groups and boards¶
• Scout groups¶
¶
FEES:

Deleted: Custodial fees (on weekends) and kitchen manager fees will be charges.

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Deleted: Scout groups (Indian Guides, Campfire, etc.) will be charged an annual processing fee of $10.¶
¶
EXCEPTIONS: There may be custodial charges assessed on large, school sponsored fund raisers that generate custodial work. This will be determined on a case by case basis by Community Education.

CLASSIFICATIONS

Rental fees are based on user classification as follows:

CLASS 1 - School Sponsored Groups

- Events authorized and signed by a school faculty member
- Events for varsity sports and parent booster groups
- Community Education programs
- Recognized School related organizations, such as ABSAF, SADD, etc.

Class 1 users do not pay rental fees, only costs of personnel who work at the event (custodian, A/V, kitchen staff).

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CLASS 2 - Community Service Organizations

This class represents Acton-Boxborough groups/individuals whose main purpose is social, educational, cultural or recreational and NOT business related. Examples include social clubs, condo associations and youth and adult sport groups.

FEES: Rental fees will be charged for all events, in accordance with the district's published fees.. A deposit is required at the time of application, and is non-refundable unless the request for school facilities is denied. Class 2 renters will receive an invoice after the event, with the total reduced by the amount of the deposit.

Deleted: Processing fees are due with the

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Deleted: Kitchen manager fees will be charged as applicable. Rental fees will be charged for money raising events.¶
¶

CLASS 3 - Events for Personal or Commercial Benefit of an Organization or Individual

Groups in this category include businesses, private tutors and all others utilizing the buildings for personal or commercial benefit.

FEES: Rental fees will be charged for all events, in accordance with the district's published fees.. A deposit is required at the time of application, and is non-refundable unless the request for school facilities is denied. Class 2 renters will receive an invoice after the event, with the total reduced by the amount of the deposit.

FREQUENT USER DISCOUNT

Rental fees of users who rent school facilities 15-25 times per school year will be reduced by 10%.
Rental fees of users who rent school facilities 26+ times per school year will be reduced by 20%.

There are no discounts for personnel costs (custodial/kitchen/AV) associated with rentals.

Deleted: the renting group will be invoiced for all hourly rental and custodial charges after the event. Kitchen manager charges will be assessed when applicable.¶

FACILITY USE AND REGULATION

IMPORTANT NOTICES:

PARKER DAMON BUILDING: You may not bring latex products of any kind into this building (e.g. latex balloons or gloves).

RAYMOND J. GREY JUNIOR HIGH: You may not bring citrus products of any kind into this building.

In order to reduce the risk of allergic reactions, users are asked to not bring any of the following into the school buildings: peanuts, tree nuts, milk, dairy products, eggs, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish.

Deleted: . Please note: School activities will supersede all non-school rentals. You may be bumped at the last minute if the school needs the space you have reserved. Every effort will be made to find you a similar space or reschedule your event for another date.¶

SUPERVISION

The applicant is held responsible for the preservation of order and the protection of school property. When attendance or other conditions require the use of police, firemen or parking attendants, the user shall assume full responsibility for their assignments and pay for their services.

RESTRICTIONS

Renting groups shall be responsible for enforcing the following restrictions:

a. Smoking: Smoking is NOT permitted in any school building or on school grounds.

b. Intoxicants: Alcoholic beverages are forbidden on school property at all times.

c. Food or Beverage: Food or beverage may not be served in any area outside the cafeteria. Groups of 25 or more serving food in the cafeteria will be required to have a custodian. Community Education, in consultation with Facilities staff, will make the final determination as to the need for a custodian. Groups serving food must obtain a temporary food service permit from the Board of Health

Groups utilizing the kitchen for any reason other than using the sink to draw water, must have a kitchen supervisor.

d. Care of Property/Decorations: The renting organization shall be liable for any damages to school property occurring at the time of rental and as a result of the rental Plans for mounting decorations must be approved in advance by the building principal. Tape may be used as long as it does not damage school property and that it is removed by the user at the completion of the activity. No scenery or props belonging to the users may be stored in school buildings. Wax is not to be applied to floors. Furniture or equipment may not be removed and should be replaced to its original location at the completion of the activity.

e. Fire Prevention: All local and state fire safety regulations will be observed. No open flames may be used. All materials used for decorations must be approved in advanced by school officials and the fire chief. Electric fixtures, line extensions, equipment, and appliances may be connected under the direct supervision of a custodian only.

f. Use of Facilities: Rental use will be limited to the facilities and equipment specified in the usage agreement and will, under no circumstances, extend to other rooms, areas or use of equipment. Groups using the school facilities will not be permitted to promote or manage any form of chance, gambling, lotteries, raffles, bingo or other unlawful activities. Groups of children or minors shall NOT have access or use of facilities unless accompanied by an adult supervisor. The school system will remain impartial toward programs of a political nature and strive to give equal opportunity for use of school property to all political parties. School building will not be available for private functions such as birthday parties, family events, celebrations, individual recitals, dinners, etc.

g. Keys: Keys will not be issued to any group/individual. A custodian will be assigned (minimum 3 hours) to open and secure the building when the building is not usually open.

h. Concessions: The right of concession and sale of food and drink remains with the school and control rests with school officials. Organizations using the school cafeteria and kitchen facilities for the service or sale of food to the general public must receive a temporary food service permit from the Acton Board of Health.

i. Dances: Dances will be limited to the High School lower gym and to the school cafeterias. Proper footwear must be used for all activities in the gym.

All programs, performances and usage of the school buildings must conclude before 11:00 p.m.

LIABILITY FOR INJURY AND RECOVERY OF DAMAGES

- The user agrees to save and hold harmless the Acton Public Schools and/or the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District and agrees to assume responsibility for all liabilities arising from incident to the use, it being understood and agreed that the School District assumes no obligations respecting the use of such premises. *Depending upon the size and scope of a particular event, the renter(s) will be required to provide Certificates of Insurance affording the following coverages:*
  - *General Liability of at least $1,000,000 Bodily Injury and Property Damage Liability, Combined Single Limit with a $3,000,000 Annual Aggregate Limit. The Town should be named as an "Additional Insured*
  - *Workers' Compensation Insurance as required by law.*

Umbrella Liability of at least $2,000,000/ occurrence, $2,000,000/aggregate. The Town should be named as an Additional Insured.

USE OF CAFETERIA/KITCHEN

Groups using the kitchen areas for anything more than the acquisition of water, must employ a kitchen manager at the rate of $40/hour. Kitchen equipment will not be available for use by renting groups.

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USE OF GYMNASIUMS

Groups/individuals renting the gymnasiums must wear sneakers and conduct athletic activities in a safe and supervised manner. Due to liability issues, gyms will not be rented to individuals for children's birthday parties.

USE OF THE SWIMMING POOL

The High School pool may be rented to a group of 15 to 50 people. One currently certified lifeguard will be required for each group of 15-25 people. Two lifeguards will be required for groups of 26-50 people. The names(s) and certification(s) (CPR, first aid and lifeguard training) of the lifeguard(s) must be submitted with the application. A custodian will be required for any group using the High School pool.

USE OF GRASS FIELDS

Field requests are submitted to Community Ed. in January for spring and summer use and in July for fall use.

USE OF ED LEARY FIELD

All requests for Ed Leary Field usage must be approved by the Community Education Director. All approved evening events must conclude by 10:00 p.m. and the sound system turned off. Stadium lights must be turned off by 10:30 p.m. and the parking lot cleared at that time. There is a $30/hour charge for the lights. An event may go beyond that time in the event of overtime.

Deleted: School athletic events have first priority for the use of Ed Leary Field.

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USE OF TENNIS COURTS

Given the heavy use of district courts by our schools and members of the Acton-Boxborough community, a limited number of rental hours are available. These hours occur for 10 weeks in the spring (from April through mid-June) and the fall (September through mid-November). The schedule of available hours will be posted on the A-B Community Ed. website (http://corned.ab/mec/edu). Interested parties should submit a request for use of tennis courts to Community Education by January 15.

USE OF AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT

Renting groups should indicate the need for audiovisual equipment on the application form. For events to be held at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, call Brendan Hearn at (978) 264-4700 x3425. For events to be held at Raymond J. Grey Junior High, call Jeanne Goulet at (978) 264-4700 x 3395 The district charges fees for use of audio visual equipment. Fees range from $10-$50 per event, based upon the type of equipment needed . For more information, contact Brendan Hearn or Jeanne Goulet.

Deleted: information on the availability of AV equipment and any associated charges

CANCELLATION OF EVENTS

In the event that school is canceled due to inclement weather or other emergencies, outside rentals will also be canceled. Renters will be notified by the Community Education office if this has occurred,

Deleted: You

SPECIAL EVENTS

Occasionally, requests for large group activities or activities of an unusual nature may necessitate specific precautionary measures before permission is granted. In order to protect the health and safety of participants as well as protect school property, activities where attendance is expected to exceed 500 are required to hire a police officer. Proof of adequate insurance may also be required. The following procedure will be followed before the use of facility request is approved where extenuating circumstances would cause danger to persons or property:

a. A representative of the renting group will submit an application to Community Education. A meeting may be necessary to clarify the request.

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Deleted: the Director of

b. The reservation is contingent upon:
   1. Written approval from the Acton Board of Selection that the police and fire protection will be adequate.
   2. The Superintendent is satisfied that the insurance coverage is adequate.
   3. The School Committee approves with a majority vote.

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The use of school facilities is a privilege. Acton-Boxborough Community Education, Acton Public Schools and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committees reserve the right to deny or restrict usage of the school facilities.

PAYMENT OF FEES

Class 2 and Class 3 users will pay a deposit at the time of application. All other costs are billed to the user after the event. Checks should be made payable to: "**Acton-Boxborough Community Education**" and sent to:

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Acton-Boxborough Community Education
Administration Building
15 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720

Use of Facilities Fees
Proposed Revision 9/28/2011

Class	Deposit	Classroom	Gym or cafeteria (no kitchen)	Conf. Rm or Library	Ed Leary Field	Tennis Courts	HS Pool	Custodian	Kitchen Staff	A/V Staff	A/V Equip.
1	NONE	No fee	No fee	No fee	No fee	No fee	No fee	$40/hr/ Mon-Sat $50/hr Sun/Holiday	$40/hr supervisor $35/hr staffer	$30/hr supervisor $15/hr student	No Fee
2	$25	$25/use	$50/use	$50/use	$200/use plus $30/hr lights	$8/use	$50/use	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above	Tier 1: $10 Tier 2: $25 Tier 3: $50 per use

Class	Deposit	Classroom	Any Cafeteria (no kitchen)	Elementary Library	Elementary Gym	Elementary Kitchen	JH/HS Library	JH Gym	JH/HS Auditorium	JH/HS Kitchen
3	$50	$25/hr	$75/hr	$50/hr	$100/hour	$75/hr	$75/hr	$100/hr	$200/hr (+ $300 deposit)	$75/hr

Class	HS Lower Gym	HS Upper Gym	Tennis Courts	HS Pool	Ed Leary Field	Custodian	Kitchen Staff	A/V Staff	A/V Equip.
3	$100/hr	$150/hr	$12/hr	$100/hr	$250/hr plus $30/hr lights	$40/hr/ Mon-Sat $50/hr Sun/Holiday	$40/hr supervisor $35/hr staffer	$30/hr supervisor $15/hr student	Tier 1: $10 Tier 2: $25 Tier 3: $50 per use

File: KHB

Advertising in Schools

School-business relationships based on sound principles and community input can contribute to high quality education. However, the school districts must also protect the welfare of students and the integrity of the learning environment. Therefore, when working together, schools and businesses must ensure that educational values are not distorted in the process.

The School Committees will allow limited advertising consistent with the criteria and procedures set forth in the Advertising in Schools Procedures KHB-R. Final approval for specific advertising will be the responsibility of the Superintendent.

DRAFT

Advertising in Schools

The School Committee has a policy KHB which allows advertising in schools and on school properties on a limited basis. Such advertising must meet the criteria outlined below.

a. Advertising is permitted in connection with courses of study which have specific lessons related to advertising. It will be up to each school to decide whether the lessons related to advertising are appropriate.

b. Advertising is permitted in such supplementary classroom and library materials as newspapers, magazines, television, the Internet, and similar media where they are used in a class such as current events, or where they serve as an appropriate research tool.

c. Paid advertising is permitted in yearbooks, school newspapers, theatrical productions, and event programs as long as such advertising meets the criteria listed below.

d. Paid advertising is permitted on athletic fields, scoreboards, tennis courts, the swimming pool, auditoriums and gyms as long as such advertising meets the criteria listed below.

Advertising must meet the following criteria:

1. **Consistency with District and School Academic Standards and Goals.** All corporate support or activity shall be consistent with State, District, and school academic standards and goals. Commercial involvement must also be structured to meet identified educational needs, not commercial motives.

2. **Advertising shall not be used as part of the curriculum.**
   Advertising shall not be included as part of the curriculum, in classrooms or other specific academic settings, unless it is a specific lesson about advertising or in supplemental curricular materials such as magazines, newspapers or the internet.

3. **Consistency with District Policies and Age-Appropriateness.** All corporate support or activity must be consistent with District policies, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, limited English proficient, handicap, or homeless, and must be age-appropriate for the students involved.

4. **Certain Corporate Support or Activity Prohibited.** No corporate support or activity will be permitted in the District or in the schools that:
   a. Promotes the use of illicit drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or firearms.
   b. Promotes hostility, violence or disorder

c. Attacks or demeans any ethnic, racial, or religious group.
d. Is libelous.
e. Promotes any specific religion.
f. Promotes or opposes any particular political view, candidate or ballot question.
g. Inhibits the functioning of any school.

DRAFT

PROVIDING FUNDS FOR THE SCHOOLS
(Outside the appropriated budget)

A. Funds from Friends of the School Systems

Gifts and donations, whether derived from direct contributions or from fundraising activities, are gratefully and generally accepted by the school districts for the benefit of students and of the school systems in their role as providers of educational services.

B. Funds from Friends of Individual Schools

The School Committees hold the position that PTOs and other parents/groups shall not supply funding for certified personnel positions. The same stipulation applies to materials which are considered essential for the health and safety of students.

Funds for other purposes are given to the School Committees which will then purchase or approve those expenditures. The entire amount must be available before the purchase or hire is made. Funds must cover the entire cost as determined by the Superintendent.

C. Other Gifts

An organization may decide to purchase and loan equipment for use by school groups. Such a decision requires prior approval by the Superintendent.

Corporations may give products or services to individual schools or the school districts with prior approval of the Superintendent.

PROCEDURES FOR PROVIDING FUNDS FOR THE SCHOOLS
(Outside the appropriated budget)

Any organization wishing to raise funds for individual schools or the school district under policy DDA must follow these procedures:

1. A representative of the fundraising organization must fill out the attached form and present it to the Principal before any targeted fundraising activity can begin.

2. The Principal must approve the request and submit it to the Superintendent for further approval before any such fundraising can begin.

3. Annual fundraising events for targeted purposes or events must be preceded by receipt of approval of the Principal and the Superintendent regarding projected use of the funds.

4. Any school related organization will submit a budget or financial plan to the appropriate principal in order to identify potential gifts which may need Superintendent approval and/or School Committee(s) acceptance.

5. The Superintendent will inform the School Committee(s) of all gifts and acknowledge receipt of these gifts.

6. Funds must cover the entire cost as determined by the Superintendent.

7. Funds are given to the School Committee(s) who will then direct the purchase or hire of the identified items/personnel.

8. The entire amount must be available before the purchase is made.

In addition, there is presently one mechanism (ABSAF) through which donors, gift-givers and fundraisers can contribute funds to be used by the school systems. All such monies will be disbursed for targets approved by the Superintendent.

Tax Deduction Status: All gifts and donations given to the schools, whether contributed individually or through other mechanisms, are eligible for consideration by the IRS for tax deduction.

Fundraising Activities: The School Committees do not place any restrictions on the nature of appropriate fundraising activities.

School Committee Approval: Any direct gifts or donations valued at more than $500 require acceptance by the School Committee(s). Gifts between $100 and $500 must be documented to the Superintendent.

7.1.1

Conant School Council

School Improvement Plan for the 2011 – 2012 School Year

Luther B. Conant School
Acton, Massachusetts

Principal: Damian Sugrue, M.Ed.
Assistant Principal: Priscilla Kotyk Ph.D.

June 1, 2011

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I. Background and Rationale

A. About the School Council:

The Conant School Council Meets regularly to discuss progress on the School Improvement Plan and share ideas about the school in general. Meetings typically took place on the Third Thursday of the month from 8:00 – 9:00 AM.

Council meetings are structured so that issues or ideas are presented and discussed, with a group approach to problem solving. If a situation requires additional information, a task force may be formed. Task forces, consisting of at least one school council member and Conant parents and staff, are used to research and make recommendations to the Council on specific school improvement goals that are established each year. The task forces, which are not standing committees, report to the Council. This line of communication helps to provide direction and determines when a task force has completed its assigned task. Subcommittees of Council members meet as needed to accomplish tasks, such as the preparation of the School Improvement Plan. The work of subcommittees, like that of task forces, is submitted to the Council as a whole for approval or review.

Meetings focus on monitoring the progress made toward accomplishing the Council's goals and discussing school policy issues which parents, students, or staff have requested be considered and which are not being addressed elsewhere by other groups in the school. In this latter capacity, the Council acts as a sounding board and advisor to the principal.

The Conant School Council, as a state-mandated and elected body representing parents and staff, views itself, in relation to the School Committee, as the appropriate vehicle for communicating the concerns and opinions of the Conant community. It would like the School Committee to continue to seek input from the Councils in each of the elementary schools.

A. 2010 – 2011 Conant School Council Membership:

Our membership for 2010-2011:

Conant School Council	Length of Term
Principal: Damian Sugrue	
Assistant Principal: Priscilla Kotyk	

Parents:	Kristin Grip	2010 - 2013
	Cheryl Petersen	2010 - 2013
Staff:	Mary Cole	2010 - 2013
	Melissa Hayes	2010 - 2013
	Jana Bardsley	2010 - 2010
PTO Leadership:	Rebecca Oddsund	2009 - 2011
Community:	Trish Sullivan	2010 - 2013

II. New Goals for 2011-2012 School Year

New Goal 1: Community: Develop a survey for families to garner a better understanding of the types of social/fundraising activities they prefer.

- Create Survey to distribute electronically.
- Use data assist PTO in planning activities to bring families together and or fundraise.
- Estimated Completion: January 2012
- **Responsible Parties:** Principal, Assistant Principal, School Council Sub-Committee, PTO Chair
- **Estimated Cost:** $0

New Goal 2: Facility: Explore options to increase parking capacity for daily activities and events.

- Work with Facilities and Transportation to develop a plan to increase parking availability.
- Carry out plan.
- **Responsible Parties:** Principal, Assistant Principal, Head of Facilities, and Director of Transportation.
- **Estimated Cost:** TBD by plan.

New Goal 3: Respect/Safety/Health/ Diversity: Study effectiveness of current anti-bullying curricula.

- Meet to discuss current programs and materials.
- Determine needs for additional materials.
- Discuss possibilities of increasing visibility of youth officer.
- Study discipline data to help determine effectiveness of program.
- **Responsible Parties:** Principal, Assistant Principal, Faculty, and Police Department.
- **Estimated Cost:** Negligible (<$500), to be paid from Conant Budget.

New Goal 4: Academic: Literacy: Continue to develop leveled reader library to assist teachers in using reading data collected through assessments to instruct students at appropriate levels.

- Continue to train teachers in use of assessments.
- Train more teachers in the use of Guided Reading as one method of reading instruction.
- Purchase more leveled titles for teachers to use with their classes.
- **Responsible Parties:** Principal, Assistant Principal, Central Office, and Faculty.
- **Cost:** $10,000 for books. Unknown for Training.

New Goal 5: Continued MCAS Improvement

- Students who scored Needs Improvement or Warning who are not on IEP's will see the Reading Specialist twice per week to work on remedial MCAS skills.
- Students who scored Needs Improvement or Warning in Mathematics will receive intervention support from the newly hired Mathematics Assistant to work on remedial Mathematics MCAS skills.
- Students who score in this range who do have IEP's will receive the same types of interventions in their placements.
- MCAS Data will be studied by each grade level to determine what skills/topics require further exploration to ensure success for all students.
- This is the same method used to improve our scores last year.
- Responsible Parties: Conant Staff, Assistant Principal, Principal, Director of Curriculum.

III. Review of goals from 2010-2011 School Improvement Plan

Goal One: A Successful Administrative Transition:

- Supporting the new Principal and Assistant Principal
- Developing parent/community survey to inform new principal
- Adding new membership (staff, parents)
- Responsible parties: School Council, Staff, Principal, Assistant Principal

The transition to a new administration has gone smoothly. The Conant School continues to move in a strong direction developing curriculum and activities that challenge our students yet offer numerous opportunities to succeed. We continue to strengthen our relationship with the community and appreciate the many volunteers that work with us daily as well as the generous financial assistance offered by out PTO. This goal has been fully implemented.

Goal Two: Improve/Enhance School Council Communication

- Put School Improvement Plan on-line--- link on website
- Standing PTO rep to School Council (Chair/Co-Chair)
- Coordinate efforts with PTO--- standing report-out at PTO meetings
- Standing School Council report-out at Staff meetings
- Minutes of School Council meetings on-line/ newsflash
- Responsible parties: School Council, PTO Chair and Co-Chair, Staff reps to School Council and PTO, Principal, Assistant Principal

This goal has not yet been fully implemented and will continue in 2011-2012.

Goal Three: Community

- Conant's 40th Birthday Celebration in 2011
- Holistic view of celebrating community: alumni, community members
- Connect with New Playground Initiative: investigate CPA or grant funds
- Time Capsule opening and celebration: Spring 2011
- Future visions of Conant
- Responsible parties: School Council, PTO, Conant Staff, Principal, Assistant Principal

This goal has been partially implemented. The time capsule was found and replaced with a new one. The school celebrated the 40th anniversary throughout the year. The playground is a work in progress.

Goal Four: Continued MCAS Improvement

- Students who scored Needs Improvement or Warning who are not on IEP's will see the Reading Specialist twice per week to work on remedial MCAS skills.
- Students who score in this range who do have IEP's will receive the same types of interventions in their placements.
- MCAS Data will be studied by each grade level to determine what skills/topics require further exploration to ensure success for all students.
- This is the same method used to improve our scores last year.
- Responsible Parties: Conant Staff, Assistant Principal, Principal, Director of Curriculum.

This goal has been fully implemented and may resurface depending on MCAS results. We are confident that our students did an excellent job on MCAS this year. MCAS results tell us that we must continue to assist students in this manner and this goal will again be implemented in the 2011-2012 school year.

McCarthy-Towne School

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Report for 2010-2011
&
School Improvement Plan for 2011- 2012

I. Background and Rationale

A. School Council Responsibilities

The McT School Council provides three useful functions:
a) It increases communication within the school community;
b) It provides a forum for a small group of faculty, parents, and community representatives to discuss issues, thorny problems, and difficult situations;
c) It provides oversight to certain school wide projects.

The job of the School Council is to decide how student, faculty and parent concerns may be handled and to recommend the appropriate group or individual to do so. It serves as a forum to identify and discuss issues and problems and refer them to the appropriate group or decision maker(s) for final determination. The faculty, PTSO Steering Committee, subcommittees and Student Council provide the mechanisms for accomplishing whatever needs to done.

In some Massachusetts communities the School Councils receive funds directly from the School Committee to help finance projects that will improve the learning of students in their schools. The McCarthy-Towne School Council requests that the APS School Committee set aside $5,000 for each School Council to fund special projects to help each school attain its improvement plan.

B. Current School Council Membership - [All are two year terms except for principal.]

Parent Representatives:	Maureen Jones	2009-2010
	Ann Budner, Co-Chair	2009-2010
	Tracy Smith	2010-2011
	Frank McCammon	2010-2011
Community Representatives:	John Rowse M.D.	2004-2010
Faculty Representatives:	David Krane, Principal	Permanent
	Robin Kynoch	1998-2010
	Kate Fitzmaurice	2007-2010
	Betty Johns, School Nurse	2009-2010

C. School Council Meetings

The McT School Council schedules five regular meetings during each academic year. These meetings usually occur in October, November or December, January or February, March or April, and May or June. Other meetings may be added if necessary.

One part of each meeting is devoted to hearing concerns from the faculty, the parents, and the Student Council. Another part is to hear how work is progressing on the School Improvement Plan. Each meeting usually focuses on one or two of the School Council's goals. A third part of each meeting is set aside for discussion of any other issues.

II. School Improvement Plan Goals for 2010-2011

Goal # 1:

Explore ways in which McT can celebrate its unique qualities in a school-choice community. We will:

- Ensure that McT's values are supported and remain the foundation of the school's programs;
- Enhance and continue communication of McT values and strengths to the school community, including families and students, the APS District, the Administration, and to the greater Acton community.

Goal # 2:

Focus on advancing the mathematical concepts and skills of the students at McT. The faculty will:

- Continue to implement the effective use of the Scott Foresman curriculum materials;
- Reshape grade level discussions and study to refine and increase the understanding of the level of student concept/skill mastery and how these are assessed.

GOAL #2A (In response to DESE sanctions)

School Goal: To increase student achievement in the Proficient and Advanced Performance Categories as measured by Math MCAS.

- As a school we will continue to increase student success in math. At the same time, we have identified areas of concern that will be addressed.

Action Steps: Meeting the Needs of All Students

In an on-going effort to assure that all students at McCarthy-Towne School are achieving at a high level, we are committed to these actions:

- Use of Data Warehouse data to develop item analysis in math content area
- Identify specific standards that need improvement

- Analyze disaggregate Special Education Sub group MCAS scores
- Formation of MCAS/AYP committee
- Study/evaluate math curriculum, especially with respect to pacing and planning
- Hiring of Elementary Mathematics Specialist
- Professional Development Activities to support instruction

Goal # 3:

Incorporate and integrate the District's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy into McCarthy-Towne's current policy regarding behavior. We will:

- Continue to take a pro-active, educational approach to creating a positive social environment that fosters respect and compassion for all;
- Make every effort to have the faculty and staff trained and/or re-trained in the methods and philosophies of the Responsive Classroom social curriculum;
- Engage the entire McCarthy-Towne community (staff, students and families) in the implementation of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy.

III. Assessment of the current year's School Council work:

Goal #1 McCarthy-Towne's Place in a School-Choice Community

We have continued to reach out to the larger Acton community in the same manner as the other four elementary schools in the Acton Public Schools, through School Tours and Kindergarten Information Evenings. McCarthy-Towne, though unique in many ways, has a particular distinction in that we are the only elementary school to have a staff Parent Involvement Co-coordinator. This is a crucial part of our school as the Parent Involvement Coordinator manages all of the community events within our school but takes on a tremendous role in the Kindergarten Tours and the presentation of our school to the families who are entering Kindergarten or who are considering our school as they make a move into Acton. We will ensure that McT's values are supported and remain the foundation of the school's programs and articulate that to the Acton school-going public. We are proud of how we integrate the arts into curriculum and how we consider the academic and social needs of the whole child, and we will continue to welcome children of all abilities to our school.

Goal #2 Math

By not making AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) in a student subgroup in the Mathematics portion of the MCAS in the spring of 2010, a number of state imposed sanctions were put into place in the fall of 2010. The school responded by establishing study groups to perform data analysis and forming professional development goals around the teaching of mathematics, among other approaches to addressing the needs identified by the Massachusetts DESE. The McCarthy-Towne School Council also amended its School Improvement Plan to reflect those actions taken by the school. In January 2011, the DESE "recalculated"

it's scoring of how this student subgroup performed and found that AYP had actually occurred. The sanctions have been lifted, but the School Council believes that it is beneficial to keep the approaches taken in response to the sanctions intact for the next academic year, 2011-2012.

Goal #3 Bullying Prevention and the Responsive Classroom

The McCarthy-Towne School faculty and staff have made a concerted effort to learn more about using the Responsive Classroom model in our classrooms and in our school community. The entire school took part in a site-based professional development day in the fall, directed by a trainer from the Northeast Foundation for Children in an all day workshop. A year-long, teacher-led, study group used this day as the foundation for a careful look at teacher practice using the book *The Power of Our Words.* We explored "teacher language that helps children learn" and help children take responsibility for their academic and social behaviors. The trainer returned for a day in the spring as he observed teacher practice, provided feedback, and spoke about his school-wide observations. There will be five teachers attending a weeklong training workshop this summer in Responsive Classroom techniques. This social competency model will take a pre-emptive and proactive approach to preventing bullying at McCarthy-Towne.

IV. School Improvement Plan Goals for 2011-2012

Goal #1:

Explore ways in which McT can celebrate its unique qualities in a school-choice community. We will:

- Ensure that McT's values are supported and remain the foundation of the school's programs;
- Enhance and continue communication of McT values and strengths to the school community, including families and students, the APS District, the Administration, and to the greater Acton community.
- Underscore the critical importance of the integration of the visual arts into the classroom curriculum.

Goal#2:

Focus on advancing the mathematical concepts and skills of the students at McT. The faculty will:

- Continue grade level discussions and study to refine and increase the understanding of the level of student concept/skill mastery and how these are assessed.
- Participate in professional development activities in order to improve instruction and support curriculum.
- Integrate personnel and resources recently made available by the APS into mathematics instruction and curriculum.

Goal #3:

To incorporate and integrate the District's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy into McCarthy-Towne's current policy regarding behavior. We will continue to:

- Take a pro-active, educational approach to creating a positive social environment that fosters respect and compassion for all.

- Train the faculty and staff in the methods and philosophies of the Responsive Classroom social curriculum using peer-to-peer coaching, in-house and off-site workshops.

Goal #4:

McCarthy-Towne teachers will examine literacy components across the grades and across the curriculum to develop more cohesive instructional strategies to support teaching and learning. The goal is to also encourage collaboration among and between the grade levels in the context of the Fountas & Pinnell leveled books. To this end, we will:

Use the 2011 Professional Day to further the understanding and use of formative assessment in informing instruction.

Continue to explore the use and application of a variety of benchmark literacy assessments across the grade levels.

Continue to do item analysis from MCAS results at appropriate grade levels and between sending and receiving teachers.

Expand the use of the resources provided by the greatly increased capacity of the Leveled Library to now serve the Upper Elementary grades 3-6.

V. Election of School Council members for 2011-2012

Election of new faculty and parent representatives of the McCarthy-Towne School Council for the coming school year usually takes place in June, before the end of the current school year.

The members of the 2010-2011 McCarthy-Towne School Council submit this School Council Report and School Improvement Plan to the Acton Public Schools School Committee.

Oct-11

MONTHLY ENROLLMENT
ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS
2011-2012 ACADEMIC YEAR

	Sept. 1				Oct. 1				Nov. 1				Dec. 1				Jan. 1				Feb. 1				Mar. 1				Apr. 1				May 1				Jun 1			
Levels	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot
K	297	59	5	302	294	59	7	301				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
1	333	53	5	338	333	53	8	341				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
2	355	54	7	362	354	54	7	361				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
3	351	68	2	353	351	68	2	353				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
4	351	66	2	353	351	66	2	353				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
5	370	75	5	375	369	75	5	374				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
6	359	85	4	363	361	84	4	365				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
K-6 Ungr.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
In D.Pre-sch.	37	8	0	37	38	8	0	38				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
O.D. Pre-sch.	2	0	0	2	2	3	0	2				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
O.D. SPED K-6	12	4	0	12	13	4	0	13				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
A.P.S. Total	2467	472	30	2497	2466	474	35	2501	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	391	71	7	469	391	71	7	469				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
8	404	71	9	484	408	71	9	488				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
J.H.S. Total	795	142	16	953	799	142	16	957	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	394	77	8	479	385	78	8	471				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
10	414	108	3	525	415	109	3	527				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
11	387	100	7	494	387	99	7	493				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
12	362	94	9	465	361	96	7	464				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
9-12 Ungr.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
P.G.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0				0
H.S. Total	1557	379	27	1963	1548	382	25	1955	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total JHS & HS	2352	521	43	2916	2347	524	41	2912	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O.D. SPED 7-12	44	13	0	57	44	12	0	56												0				0				0				0				0				0
Reg. Total	2396	534	43	2973	2391	536	41	2968	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A.P.S. Total	2467	472	30	2497	2466	474	35	2501	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reg. Total	2396	534	43	2973	2391	536	41	2968	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	4863	534	73	5470	4857	536	76	5469	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

A = ACTON
B = BOXBOROUGH
C = Choice/Staff/Tuition In

Pre-School = SPED
P.G. = Post Graduates
Ungr. = Ungraded
O.D. = SPED Out of District

In D. = In District

Distribution:
S. Mills
M. Altieri
D. Bookis
L. Huber
D. Aicardi
A. Bisewicz
K. Nelson
E. Weiner
C. Bates
All Principals (2)

Students other than Choice counted under column C:
Staff Students -
Tuition In Students -
Sped Tuition in Students

 # Staff Children
Case [ ]
CAD, DAD, GAD, TAD, and MAD - ALL DAY PROGRAMS

Actual
Acton Public Schools
2011 - 2012
October 1, 2011

10/4/11
3:48 PM

Grade YOG	Conant			Total	Douglas			Total	Gates			Total	McCarthy-Towne			Total	Merriam				Total	#Sec.	Avg. Siz
Rm	CAD	CB	CC		DAD	DB	DC		GAD	GB	GC	2#		TAD	TB	TC	[1]2#		MAD	MB	MC	3#	7#		
													Case +	21	20	21	62								
K-24	20	20	20	60	21	19	20	60	20	21	18	59		20	20	21	61		20	20	21	61	301	15	20.1
Rm	3	4	5		3	4	5		1	3	8	2#		113	311	312	[2]2#	135	231	321	334	4#	8#		
													Case +	23	20	21	64								
Gr. 1-23	22	21	21	64	22	22	22	66	21	22	22	65		21	20	21	62	21	21	21	21	84	341	16	21.3
Rm	6	7	8	1#	6	7	8	1#	5	6	10	1#		114	301	302	[4]3#	224	234	322	323	1#	7#		
													Case +	21	24	24	69								
Gr. 2-22	24	23	23	70	23	22	23	68	23	22	23	68		21	22	22	65	22	23	23	22	90	361	16	22.6
Rm	9	10	17		9	10	11		7	9	17	1#		212	213	314	[2]		230	330	331	1#	2#		
													Case +	26	24	23	73								
Gr. 3-21	24	23	23	70	24	23	24	71	24	24	24	72		24	24	23	71		23	23	23	69	353	15	23.5
Rm	18	19	20		12	13	14		18	19	20			115	210	310	[4]1#		222	233	332	1#	2#		
													Case +	26	24	23	73								
Gr. 4-20	24	23	23	70	24	23	23	70	23	24	24	71		23	23	23	69		24	24	25	73	353	15	23.5
Rm	14	15	16		19	20	21		14	15	16	1#		211	303	313	[4]		232	324	333	4#	5#		
													Case +	27	24	26	77								
Gr. 5-19	25	25	25	75	25	25	25	75	25	25	26	76		25	24	24	73		25	25	25	75	374	15	24.9
Rm	11	12	13		15	16	17	1#	11	12	13			112	214	215			223	235	335	3#	4#		
Gr. 6-18	24	24	24	72	24	25	24	73	25	24	24	73		26	24	25	75		24	24	24	72	365	15	24.3
Total Staff				1#				2#				7#					8#					17#	35#		
													Case+	[17]	Average	23.5	493								
Total	21 Sec.	Average		22.9 481	21 Sec.	Average		23.0 483	21 Sec.	Average		23.0 484		21 Sec.	Average		22.7 476		23 Sec	Averag		22.8 524	2448	107	22.9
Range	20	25			19	25			18	26				20	26					20	25			18	26

October 1, 2011
Column C Breakdown

Grade	*Staff Free*	*Choice*	*Tuition In*	*Sped Tuition*	*Total*
K	7	0	0	0	7
1	8	0	0	0	8
2	7	0	0	0	7
3	2	0	0	0	2
4	2	0	0	0	2
5	5	0	0	0	5
6	4	0	0	0	4
APS Total	35	0	0	0	35
Out District	0	0	0	0	0
Total	35	0	0	0	35
7	2	5	0	0	7
8	3	6	0	0	9
Sub Total	5	11	0	0	16
9	0	8	0	0	8
10	0	3	0	0	3
11	0	6	0	1	7
12	0	6	0	1	7
UG	0	0	0	0	0
Sub Total	0	23	0	2	25
Out District	0	0	0	0	0
Region Total	5	34	0	2	41
					0
Grand Total	40	34	0	2	76

Acton Public School and Blanchard School K-6

October 1, 2011

Grade	Acton	*Non - Residents Acton	Acton SchoolsTotal	Boxborough	*Non - Residents Boxborough	Boxborough SchoolsTotal
K	294	7	301	51	8	59
1	333	8	341	49	4	53
2	354	7	361	53	1	54
3	351	2	353	66	2	68
4	351	2	353	60	6	66
5	369	5	374	72	3	75
6	361	4	365	77	7	84
Ungraded	0	0	0	0	0	0
Post-Grads	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sped Out of District	13	0	13	4	0	4
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2426	35	2461	432	31	463

Acton Enrollment	2426
Boxborough Enrollment	432
Total Acton /Boxborough	2858
Acton %	84.88%
Boxborough %	15.12%
Total Percentage	100.00%

Acton Preschool	40
Boxborough Preschool	8

*Non-Residents include Staff Children & School Choice

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

October 1, 2011

Grade	Acton	Boxborough	*Non-Residents	Total
7	391	71	7	469
8	408	71	9	488
9	385	78	8	471
10	415	109	3	527
11	387	99	7	493
12	361	96	7	464
Ungraded	0	0	0	0
Post-Grads	0	0	0	0
Sped Out of District	44	12	0	56
Other	0	0	0	0
Total	2391	536	41	2968

Acton Enrollment	2391
Boxborough Enrollment	536
Total Acton / Boxborough	2927
Acton %	81.69%
Boxborough %	18.31%
Total Percentage	100.00%

*Non-Residents include: Choice, Staff Children and Sped Tuition-in

Three Year Comparison

Year -->	2009	2010	2011	Total of 3 Yrs	Avg. of 3 Yrs
Acton Enrollment	2343	2381	2391	7115	2371.67
Boxborough Enrollment	593	576	536	1705	568.33
Total	2936	2957	2927	8820	2940.00
Acton %	79.80%	80.52%	81.69%	242.01%	80.67%
Boxborough %	20.20%	19.48%	18.31%	57.99%	19.33%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	300.00%	100.00%

October 1, 2011
Comparison of Enrollment Projections

	*ALL STUDENTS**	*ASHTON'S*	*NESDEC*	*ONLY A & A/B*
Levels	*Actual*	*Projection*	*Projection*	*APS & A/B ACTUAL*
K	301	288	257	294
1	341	341	299	333
2	361	366	388	354
3	353	354	372	351
4	353	351	372	351
5	374	376	374	369
6	365	366	372	361
A.P.S. Total	2448	2442	2434	2413
7	469	473	479	462
8	488	471	494	479
J.H.S. Total	957	944	973	941
9	471	475	474	463
10	527	508	501	524
11	493	492	496	486
12	464	463	465	457
H.S. Total	1955	1938	1936	1930
Reg. Total	2912	2882	2909	2871
Grand Total	5360	5324	5343	5284

*Includes Choice, staff students and tuitioned in students

Count Comparison 2009-2011

	Oct. 1, 2009				Oct. 1, 2010				Oct. 1, 2011				Difference Oct 1, 2011 (-) Oct 1, 2010			
Levels	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Tot	A	B (1)	C	Total
K	334	46	6	340	320	49	8	328	294	59	7	301	-26	10	-1	-27
1	333	61	3	336	347	55	6	353	333	53	8	341	-14	-2	2	-12
2	349	67	2	351	342	68	2	344	354	54	7	361	12	-14	5	17
3	358	69	5	363	344	68	2	346	351	68	2	353	7	0	0	7
4	359	81	2	361	369	71	5	374	351	66	2	353	-18	-5	-3	-21
5	391	79	1	392	360	60	4	364	369	75	5	374	9	15	1	10
6	407	79	1	408	394	75	1	395	361	84	4	365	-33	9	3	-30
K-6 Ungr.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In D.Pre-sch.	49	4	0	49	41	7	0	41	38	8	0	38	-3	1	0	-3
O.D. Pre-sch.	9	4	0	9	5	3	0	5	2	3	0	2	-3	0	0	-3
O.D. SPED K-6	14	5	0	14	13	4	0	13	13	4	0	13	0	0	0	0
A.P.S. Total	2603	495	20	2623	2535	495	28	2563	2466	474	35	2501	-69	-21	7	-62
7	393	77	5	475	395	69	9	473	391	71	7	469	-4	2	-2	-4
8	402	100	2	504	401	75	5	481	408	71	9	488	7	-4	4	7
J.H.S. Total	795	177	7	979	796	144	14	954	799	142	16	957	3	-2	2	3
9	402	97	6	505	402	108	4	514	385	78	8	471	-17	-30	4	-43
10	382	88	7	477	390	101	6	497	415	109	3	527	25	8	-3	30
11	383	116	13	512	370	97	8	475	387	99	7	493	17	2	-1	18
12	337	101	21	459	381	115	12	508	361	96	7	464	-20	-19	-5	-44
9-12 Ungr.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P.G.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H.S. Total	1504	402	47	1953	1543	421	30	1994	1548	382	25	1955	5	-39	-5	-39
Total JHS & HS	2299	579	54	2932	2339	565	44	2948	2347	524	41	2912	8	-41	-3	-36
O.D. SPED 7-12	44	14	0	58	42	11	0	53	44	12	0	56	2	1	0	3
Reg. Total	2343	593	54	2990	2381	576	44	3001	2391	536	41	2968	10	-40	-3	-33
A.P.S. Total	2603	495	20	2623	2535	495	28	2563	2466	474	35	2501	-69	-21	7	-62
Reg. Total	2343	593	54	2990	2381	576	44	3001	2391	536	41	2968	10	-40	-3	-33
Grand Total	4946	593	74	5613	4916	576	72	5564	4857	536	76	5469	-59	-40	4	-95

Enrollment by Race
October 1, 2011

School	Low Income	Asian/Pacific Islander	African-American	Caucasian	Hispanic	American Indian	Minority	Percent Minority	Percent Asian	Total
Conant	14	245	5	230	1	0	251	52.18%	50.94%	481
Douglas	20	140	6	331	6	0	152	31.47%	28.99%	483
Gates	20	180	7	293	1	3	191	39.46%	37.19%	484
McCarthy-Towne	29	60	18	371	27	0	105	22.06%	12.61%	476
Merriam	16	134	7	371	10	2	153	29.20%	25.57%	524
Total	99	759	43	1596	45	5	852	34.80%	31.00%	2448
% of Total APS	4.04%	31.00%	1.76%	65.20%	1.84%	0.20%	34.80%			
JHS	43	245	10	675	25	2	282	29.47%	25.60%	957
SHS	67	456	19	1421	58	1	534	27.31%	23.32%	1955
Total	110	701	29	2096	83	3	816	28.02%	24.07%	2912
% of Total A/B	3.78%	24.07%	1.00%	71.98%	2.85%	0.10%	28.02%			
Grand Total	209	1460	72	3692	128	8	1668	31.12%	27.24%	5360
% of Grand Total	3.90%	27.24%	1.34%	68.88%	2.39%	0.15%	31.12%			

Minuteman School of Applied Arts and Sciences
October 1, 2011

GRADE	10/94	10/95	10/96	10/97	10/98	10/99	10/00	10/01	10/02	10/03	10/04	10/05	10/06	10/07	10/08	10/09	10/10	10/11
9	2	7	4	7	7	8	12	8	9	12	6	11	3	8	7	2	7	10
10	2	4	4	4	11	8	10	8	6	11	11	8	11	4	6	9	2	7
11	9	1	4	3	3	7	11	9	6	7	9	9	10	10	2	7	9	1
12	11	9	2	3	2	3	8	8	13	6	6	9	9	9	9	1	5	7
PG	13	17	7	7	4	7	6	9	4	2	2	0	4	1	4	3	0	0
ACTON TOTAL	37	38	21	24	27	33	47	42	38	38	34	37	37	32	28	22	23	25
9	3	0	1	3	2	1	2	3	1	5	4	2	3	2	6	1	2	0
10	1	2	0	1	2	2	1	4	2	2	6	4	2	3	2	7	1	1
11	4	2	2	0	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	4	4	2	3	2	7	1
12	2	3	2	2	0	0	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	4	2	4	2	5
PG	2	1	1	3	0	3	0	0	2	3	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
BOXBOROUGH TOTAL	12	8	6	9	5	8	6	10	8	14	14	14	12	11	13	14	12	7
GRAND TOTAL	49	46	27	33	32	41	53	52	46	52	48	51	49	43	41	36	35	32

MONTHLY REPORTING OF
ELL STUDENT POPULATION
Acton Public Schools
October 1, 2011

Category	Total as of 9/1/2011	Additions	Subtractions	Total as of 10/1/2011
Conant	29	0	-1	28
Douglas	28	0	0	28
Gates	5	0	-1	4
McCarthy-Towne	21	+1	0	22
Merriam	27	0	-1	26
APS TOTAL	**110**	**+1**	**-3**	**108**

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2012-2013 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION SCHEDULE

The following are important dates for parents/guardians of children who will be entering Kindergarten in September, 2012 **(5 years old on or before September 1, 2012).** See also: http://ab.mec.edu/sturegister.shtml

GENERAL MEETING*

Our Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Director of Personnel, Director of Pupil Services, Principals, Registrar, Kindergarten staff and School Nurse will be on hand to answer questions.

Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 7:00 p.m., R.J. Grey Junior High Auditorium
immediately followed at 8:15 by K-6 Before and After School Programs Overview

SCHOOL TOURS

All schools will be open for tours on the following dates: January 18; January 27, January 31, February 6.
Please call individual schools after January 3, 2012 to reserve tour times. You may reserve more than one tour per day.
If school is canceled or delayed on a tour day, parents should call to reschedule.

Tour hours for Conant, McCarthy-Town & Merriam:. 8:45 – 10:00 a.m. and 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
Tour hours for Douglas & Gates: 9:30 - 10:45 a.m. and 11:00 - 12:15 p.m

Please do not bring young children with you on the tour.

EARLY REGISTRATION for SIBLINGS and WALKERS

Families who are eligible, or who believe they may be eligible for priority admission status (siblings of current students, walkers), are urged to register early. Both sessions will be at the Central Office located in the R.J. Grey Junior High School
You must bring a copy of your child's birth certificate/passport, most recent physical examination & immunization record.

Tuesday, January 17: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Wednesday, January 18: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

PARENT INFORMATION EVENING MEETINGS*

Tuesday, January 24, 7:00 p.m. @ McCarthy-Towne - Cafetorium
Tuesday, January 31, 7:00 p.m. @ Gates - Cafetorium
Tuesday, February 7, 7:00 p.m. @ Merriam - Cafetorium
Tuesday, February 28, 7:00 p.m. @ Douglas - Cafetorium
Tuesday, March 6, 7:00 p.m. @ Conant - Cafetorium

* *In case of snow, ANY postponed evening meeting will be held the next evening (Wednesday)*

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

You must bring a copy of your child's birth certificate/passport, most recent physical examination & immunization record.
Both sessions will be at the Central Office located in the R.J. Grey Junior High School.

Tuesday, March 13: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Wednesday, March 14: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

INFORMATION SESSION for K-6 BEFORE and AFTER SCHOOL CHILDCARE PROGRAMS

Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., R.J. Grey Junior High School Auditorium

If you are interested in K-6 before and after school childcare programs, representatives from Community Education Extended Day and school-based before and after school programs will be available to describe their programs, enrollment process, fee structure, etc. following the General Meeting that begins at 7:00 (see above).

REGISTRATION PROCESS for COMMUNITY ED EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM, K-6

Registration forms for new families will be accepted February 27 – March 7 by mail or walk-in. Lottery will be held on Monday, March 12, at 10:00 a.m. at the Community Education Office, Administration Building, 15 Charter Rd., Acton

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Late April -School Placement & All-Day Kindergarten Lotteries held (as necessary). Notification letters sent out.
May 13 – All Day K non-refundable deposit ($450) due.
May 31 - Parent-released/teacher-completed Pre-K Assessment Form due at Registrar's Office, R.J. Grey Junior High
July 1 - *(Approx. date)* Schools assign students to either AM or PM sessions and notify Transportation Office.
July 31 - Children's medical forms (complete immunization history, physical exam completed after 1/1/12) due at school nurse's office.
August 1 - September tuition for children registered in All-Day K ($450) due at the Community Ed. Office. *10/19/11*

OCTOBER 14, 2011

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ACCOUNTS FOR: 1005 GENERAL FUND SCHOOL	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENDED	ENC/REQ	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
01 SALARIES, TEACHING	12,068,520	0	12,068,520	1,537,453.00	10,483,894.37	47,172.63	99.6%
02 SALARIES, PRINCIPALS	722,790	0	722,790	193,843.65	528,916.35	30.00	100.0%
03 SALARIES, CENTRAL AD	409,758	0	409,758	113,392.50	308,199.37	-11,833.87	102.9%
04 SALARIES, SUPP STAFF	3,058,357	0	3,058,357	452,558.85	2,651,803.27	-46,005.12	101.5%
06 SALARIES, BUILDINGS	254,609	0	254,609	95,333.03	161,714.44	-2,438.47	101.0%
07 SALARIES, CUSTODIAL	636,492	0	636,492	152,674.70	356,905.98	126,911.32	80.1%
08 SALARIES, HOME INSTR	1,019	0	1,019	.00	.00	1,019.00	.0%
09 SALARIES, SUBSTITUTE	375,375	0	375,375	34,003.00	27,510.28	313,861.72	16.4%
10 FRINGES, COURSE REIM	17,000	0	17,000	7,169.00	.00	9,831.00	42.2%
11 FRINGES, HEALTH INSU	3,697,937	0	3,697,937	782,798.20	.00	2,915,138.80	21.2%
16 INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLI	243,860	0	243,860	86,628.08	49,899.60	107,332.32	56.0%
17 INSTRUCTIONAL TEXTBO	81,613	0	81,613	18,454.29	24,487.63	38,671.08	52.6%
18 INSTRUCTIONAL, LIBRA	16,425	0	16,425	5,004.93	826.29	10,593.78	35.5%
19 OTHER, CAPITAL OUTLA	272,850	-5,000	267,850	170,035.24	19,170.71	78,644.05	70.6%
23 OTHER, MAINTENANCE B	212,003	0	212,003	68,022.74	21,736.30	122,243.96	42.3%
24 OTHER, MAINTENANCE O	93,828	0	93,828	41,500.29	9,619.99	42,707.72	54.5%
26 OTHER, LEGAL SERVICE	58,000	0	58,000	8,757.50	5,625.00	43,617.50	24.8%
27 OTHER, ADMIN SUPPLIE	197,464	5,000	202,464	69,091.44	29,216.35	104,156.21	48.6%
29 OTHER, CUSTODIAL SUP	46,700	0	46,700	33,791.85	5,437.88	7,470.27	84.0%
30 OTHER, SPED TRANSPOR	510,715	0	510,715	255,357.50	255,357.50	.00	100.0%
31 OTHER, STUDENT TRANS	349,236	0	349,236	179,890.79	6,923.57	162,421.64	53.5%
32 OTHER, TRAVEL	14,638	0	14,638	6,588.07	226.00	7,823.93	46.6%
33 OTHER, SPED TUITION/	1,920,318	0	1,920,318	331,263.51	1,300,580.13	288,474.36	85.0%
34 OTHER, UTILITIES	854,212	0	854,212	156,197.46	30,722.00	667,292.54	21.9%
TOTAL GENERAL FUND SCHOOL	26,113,719	0	26,113,719	4,799,809.62	16,278,773.01	5,035,136.37	80.7%

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ACCOUNTS FOR: 1005 GENERAL FUND SCHOOL		ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENDED	ENC/REQ	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
05 SW SPECIAL EDUCATION								
05010501 52401	SPED LEGAL SERVICES	38,000	0	38,000	4,375.00	5,625.00	28,000.00	26.3%
11040501 51502	PS:SECRETARY	71,443	0	71,443	18,814.87	52,482.27	145.86	99.8%
14040501 51411	SPED CHAIRPERSON	94,760	0	94,760	25,414.55	69,345.45	.00	100.0%
14040524 51419	COORDINATOR	27,917	0	27,917	7,487.20	20,429.30	.50	100.0%
14050503 51433	SUMMER PROGRAM STIP	65,000	0	65,000	28,648.60	.00	36,351.40	44.1%
14050504 51615	SUMMER SPED ASST	65,000	0	65,000	87,098.46	.00	-22,098.46	134.0%
14050505 52468	TRANSLATION	10,000	0	10,000	.00	10,000.00	.00	100.0%
14050509 54305	SPED TEXTBOOKS	2,371	0	2,371	639.12	1,804.40	-72.52	103.1%
14050510 54302	OCCUPATIONAL THERAP	822	0	822	448.35	374.60	-.95	100.1%
14050511 52409	IN SERVICE CONFEREN	1,152	0	1,152	2,001.50	200.00	-1,049.50	191.1%
14050518 52427	PUBLIC TUITION	0	0	0	4,300.00	.00	-4,300.00	100.0%
14050520 51409	REFERRAL TO SPECIAL	30,000	0	30,000	3,823.00	.00	26,177.00	12.7%
14050521 52443	SPED REFERRAL TO SP	104,586	0	104,586	25,785.98	89,949.02	-11,149.00	110.7%
14050521 52452	SUMMER PROGRAM, CS	25,000	0	25,000	.00	.00	25,000.00	.0%
14050522 52462	PS SEC 504 CONTR SV	996	0	996	.00	.00	996.00	.0%
TOTAL SW SPECIAL EDUCATION		537,047	0	537,047	208,836.63	250,210.04	78,000.33	85.5%
18 SPECIAL EDUCATION								
05051801 52416	SPED INDEP EVALUATI	4,840	0	4,840	.00	761.50	4,078.50	15.7%
05051802 52404	SPED PERIODICALS/SU	780	0	780	.00	.00	780.00	.0%
05051802 52406	SPED POSTAGE	2,614	0	2,614	1,439.98	1,174.02	.00	100.0%
05051802 52407	SPED INSVC CONFEREN	341	0	341	341.00	.00	.00	100.0%
05051802 52408	SPED TRAVEL - LOCAL	176	0	176	.00	.00	176.00	.0%
05051802 52410	SPED DUES & FEES	296	0	296	.00	296.00	.00	100.0%
05051802 52455	SPED MNT COPY EQUIP	3,371	0	3,371	721.93	1,953.07	696.00	79.4%
05051802 52456	SPED MNT OFFICE EQU	275	0	275	.00	.00	275.00	.0%
05051803 54301	SPED OFFICE SUPPLIE	3,402	0	3,402	3,176.49	276.53	-51.02	101.5%
05051804 58708	SPED OUTLAY EQUIP	20,715	0	20,715	4,539.32	1,652.40	14,523.28	29.9%
05051805 52424	MEDICAID SERVICES	1,040	0	1,040	.00	.00	1,040.00	.0%
05051806 52413	SPED MEDICAL SERVIC	2,421	0	2,421	1,097.48	.00	1,323.52	45.3%
05051807 52425	SPED TUITION - CASE	375,715	0	375,715	16,000.00	.00	359,715.00	4.3%
05051808 52426	SPED TUITION PRIVAT	1,052,704	0	1,052,704	100,301.08	784,481.75	167,921.17	84.0%
05051808 52465	CIRCUIT BREAKER TUI	-347,500	0	-347,500	.00	.00	-347,500.00	.0%
05051810 52430	CO: SPED CASE TRANS	510,715	0	510,715	255,357.50	255,357.50	.00	100.0%
06041801 51408	SPED TEACHER	298,055	0	298,055	34,510.71	264,582.29	-1,038.00	100.3%
06041802 51418	SPEECH TEACHER	79,581	0	79,581	9,182.40	70,398.59	.01	100.0%

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ACCOUNTS FOR: 1005	GENERAL FUND SCHOOL	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENDED	ENC/REQ	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
06041803 51624	SPED EDUCATION ASST	186,499	0	186,499	17,485.86	163,696.10	5,317.04	97.1%
06051801 54305	RES TEXTBOOKS	521	0	521	636.74	.00	-115.74	122.2%
06051802 54332	EDUC NEEDS SUPPLIES	575	0	575	384.64	56.47	133.89	76.7%
06051802 54333	SPEECH SUPPLIES	429	0	429	227.85	8.24	192.91	55.0%
07041801 51408	SPED TEACHER	163,901	0	163,901	21,064.35	142,835.65	1.00	100.0%
07041802 51418	SPEECH TEACHER	95,315	0	95,315	10,997.88	84,317.12	.00	100.0%
07041803 51624	SPED EDUCATION ASST	87,754	0	87,754	3,525.89	57,797.07	26,431.04	69.9%
07051801 54305	RES TEXTBOOKS	521	0	521	.00	564.10	-43.10	108.3%
07051801 54334	EDUC NEEDS TEXTS	330	0	330	387.75	232.10	-289.85	187.8%
07051802 54332	EDUC NEEDS SUPPLIES	575	0	575	.00	45.80	529.20	8.0%
07051802 54333	SPEECH SUPPLIES	423	0	423	330.20	.00	92.80	78.1%
08041801 51408	SPED TEACHER	211,774	0	211,774	24,555.00	188,254.94	-1,035.94	100.5%
08041802 51418	SPEECH TEACHER	53,341	0	53,341	6,286.14	48,193.86	-1,139.00	102.1%
08041803 51624	SPED EDUCATION ASST	114,614	0	114,614	16,476.74	127,769.26	-29,632.00	125.9%
08051801 54305	RES TEXTBOOKS	521	0	521	652.50	440.56	-572.06	209.8%
08051802 54332	EDUC NEEDS SUPPLIES	479	0	479	.00	.00	479.00	.0%
08051802 54333	SPEECH SUPPLIES	429	0	429	.00	.00	429.00	.0%
09041801 51408	SPED TEACHER	276,769	0	276,769	32,386.50	248,296.50	-3,914.00	101.4%
09041802 51418	SPEECH TEACHER	89,745	0	89,745	10,756.65	78,988.35	.00	100.0%
09041803 51624	SPED EDUCATION ASST	94,024	0	94,024	10,940.90	90,055.62	-6,972.52	107.4%
09051801 54334	EDUC NEEDS TEXTS	622	0	622	564.74	67.26	-10.00	101.6%
09051802 54330	RESOURCE SUPPLIES	479	0	479	344.19	134.81	.00	100.0%
09051802 54333	SPEECH SUPPLIES	429	0	429	328.23	100.77	.00	100.0%
10041801 51408	SPED TEACHER	306,797	0	306,797	35,399.64	271,397.36	.00	100.0%
10041802 51418	SPEECH TEACHER	79,357	0	79,357	9,156.57	70,200.43	.00	100.0%
10041803 51624	SPED EDUCATION ASST	217,561	0	217,561	21,448.31	193,791.78	2,320.91	98.9%
10051801 54334	EDUC NEEDS TEXTS	622	0	622	440.00	222.00	-40.00	106.4%
10051802 54332	EDUC NEEDS SUPPLIES	571	0	571	239.62	331.38	.00	100.0%
10051802 54333	SPEECH SUPPLIES	429	0	429	298.65	128.12	2.23	99.5%
14041801 51416	SPED OCCUP THERAPIS	219,597	0	219,597	25,002.05	194,122.75	472.20	99.8%
14041801 51417	PHYSICAL THERAPIST	78,784	0	78,784	9,090.57	69,694.43	-1.00	100.0%
14051801 51407	HOME INSTRUCT TEACH	1,019	0	1,019	.00	.00	1,019.00	.0%
14051803 54338	SPED EDUC SUPPLIES	3,104	0	3,104	3,041.35	405.50	-342.85	111.0%
TOTAL SPECIAL EDUCATION		4,297,451	0	4,297,451	689,117.40	3,413,081.98	195,251.62	95.5%

51 AUTISTIC SERVICES

14045101 51436	AUTISTIC COORDINATO	72,100	0	72,100	19,337.15	52,762.85	.00	100.0%
14045102 51616	TRAINER	576,416	0	576,416	58,596.02	442,906.23	74,913.75	87.0%
14055103 52463	AUTISTIC CONTRACT S	1,106	0	1,106	.00	.00	1,106.00	.0%
TOTAL AUTISTIC SERVICES		649,622	0	649,622	77,933.17	495,669.08	76,019.75	88.3%

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ACCOUNTS FOR: 1005 GENERAL FUND SCHOOL	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENDED	ENC/REQ	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
TOTAL GENERAL FUND SCHOOL	5,484,120	0	5,484,120	975,887.20	4,158,961.10	349,271.70	93.6%
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,484,120	0	5,484,120	975,887.20	4,158,961.10	349,271.70	

From: Laurie Taylor-Teran <ltt Mon, Oct 03, 2011 5:15:20 PM

Subject: October 6 Meeting

To: <apsc@acton-ma.gov>

Attachments: Attach0.html 23K

To the Acton Public School Committee Members:

Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the upcoming SchoolCommittee meeting on October 6 because of a prior commitment. As a parent inthe Acton Public Schools, I f strongly that the Acton Public Schools shouldhave at least one K-6 certified library m specialist, preferably one ineach of the five elementary schools.

More than 60 studies have shown a direct connection between increasedstudent achievement -- including better grades and better scoring onstandardized tests -- and t presence of school libraries, particularly thosestaffed with library media specialists wl are trained to collaborate withteachers, support the curriculum, and engage students w a wide variety ofprint and electronic sources of information (see School Libraries Wo Scholastic,2008; and Something to Shout About: New Research Shows That More Librarians MeansHigher Reading Scores, School Library Journal, September 1, 2011)

As technology becomes anincreasing presence in students' lives, and as students begi encounter thevast amounts of information available on the Internet, it is crucial to hav mediaspecialists to help students select, evaluate, and utilize online resourcesappropriately. School library media specialists are trained to dothis. They pl an important role in preparing students to becomecritical thinkers and effective users both print and electronic information.

ActonPublic Schools have always been known for their excellent academicachievements. Having school libraries with certified library mediaspecialists at all grade levels would be a significant step forward inupholding AB's record of academic excellence well into the 21st century.

Thankyou for your time. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me.

Laurie Taylor-Teran

From: [redacted] Tom Wolf <[redacted]> Tuesday, October 18, 2011 11:18:20 PM

Subject: Funding for Assistants

To: [redacted] <apsc@acton-ma.gov>

Attachments: [redacted] Attach0.html 3K

Dear APS School Committee,

I am writing as a parent from Merriam to express my concern over possible changes to PTO funding of staff. Classroom assistants are strong part of the culture at Merriam. The way the school functions would be greatly changed if the classroom assistants were not available for the extra academic and logistic support they provide.

This focus on assistants is a priority of our PTO funding. We are blessed with a strong community that contributes generously through many programs to fund these valuable assistants. One major source of funding is the before school and after school enrichment programs.

I believe most of the money generated from these enrichment programs comes from Merriam families. I also believe that these enrichment programs are mostly staffed by Merriam faculty with the understanding that the time they spend comes back to Merriam in the form of revenue for teaching assistants.

If the revenue goes elsewhere, what is the incentive for the community to organize or participate in these programs?

I understand that the numbers show apparent inequalities in funding, but I'm not sure I understand the cause of the inequality. There are extended day programs run by Community Ed that generate funds for other schools. Can these programs grow into larger funding sources to match that of Merriam enrichment? If not, are the schools able to cut the ties to Community Ed and start their own enrichment programs similar to the Merriam model?

Before considering any plan to re-distribute funds, please consider if all schools are given equal opportunity to raise their own funds to their fullest potential. A community, that works hard to support its values should be rewarded comeasurate with its efforts. This goes for Merriam and all the Acton elementary schools.

Tom Wolf

From: [redacted] Rob and Stephani Hunsinger ;t> 10/19/2011 9:08:5...

Subject: Teaching assistants

To: [redacted] <ekaufman@ab.mec.edu> [redacted] <krychlik@mac.com> [redacted] <neenaarora@aol.com> [redacted] <apsc@acton-ma.gov>

Dear School Committee Members;

My wife and I are in the service, and just transferred in last year, so we're pretty new to the idea of having multiple schools draw students from the same area. However, I'm not sure I totally understand what the problem is here.

Are the different schools not receiving the same amount of money from the district? How the schools spend their money, whether it be for Teachers' Assistants, classroom equipment, books, or whatever else they feel is best should be up to the principal, teachers, and parents at that school. Certainly how the PTO spends its money should be up to the members of the PTO. If some schools are choosing to spend more of their money on teaching assistants and others are choosing to spend more money on other things instead, I don't see that there's a problem to start with, other than those parents impressing upon the principal where they'd prefer school funds be spent.

The only financial disparity that I can see from the email I received may be the before and after school programs. This is a complicated matter and one for which I don't yet have all of the information to make a good suggestion. Why is there a difference? Is it attendance/enrollment? Is Community Ed taking a larger portion of the profit than the administration of Merriam and Douglas? Do Merriam and Douglas just charge more for their programs? I can see pooling the income from these and dividing them equally based on enrollment, BUT if you do choose to do that, you must also pool and divide equally the costs associated with them. These would include administration (as I understand it, two schools pay personnel to adminster their own, while community ed provides administration for the other three, for a 25% fee), personnel, materials, custodial services, and wear and tear on facilities, among others I'm sure. You'd also need to make fees charged equal. I assume that only Merriam students attend Merriam after school programs and only Conant students attend Conant after school programs, etc. If Merriam and Douglas have a higher profit margin because they are charging their parents more, it wouldn't make sense to distribute that extra money to the other schools.

Certainly, however, if parents choose to shell out more of their own

money via the PTO to benefit their child, the PTO should be free to spend that money however it feels best. Capping the number of TAs the PTO can pay for is just silly. If that's how they want to spend their money, that's their business. It's equivalent to me telling my neighbor that he can't send his kid to college because I spent my money on private school, and now can't afford to send mine to college. It just makes no sense. There are 5 schools here and they're all different with different philosophies. They aren't all the same that's the whole point. If you think TAs are the most important thing to have, then either send your child to the school with the most TAs, or get involved with your PTO get them to raise money for TAs instead of whatever else they are currently supporting. If you think having the latest and greatest computers are most important, send your child to the school with those. If you think the lowest student/teacher ratio...you get the idea.

Now, I'm all for increasing the money that goes to the schools. If there's a lack of public TA funding currently, and it sounds like there is, and we need to funnel more money that way, then go for it. I transferred duty stations 7 times in the past 12 years and I spend four times more in property taxes here than in any other house I've lived in. I don't know where all of that money goes, but if increasing funding equally to all the schools is an option, then that's a town matter and I'm all for it.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Very Respectfully,

Robert Hunsinger

From: [redacted] Charles Van Meter Wed, Oct 19, 2011 3:21:30 PM

Subject: Acton Elemenary School Funding Plan

To: [redacted] <apsc@acton-ma.gov>

Cc: [redacted] <ekaufman@ab.mec.edu> [redacted] <krychlik@mac.com> [redacted] <neenaarora@aol.com>

Attachments: [redacted] Attach0.html 16K

Dear School Committee Members,

As a parent of two children in the Merriam School, I would like to express my concerns about the use of PTO funds and the debate surrounding this. Unfortunately, I will be traveling for work and unable to attend the next meeting, so I have included my feedback here about the perception expressed during recent meetings of an underlying inequality in PTO funding and Dr. Mills' recent letter to the School Committee to address these issues.

It is true that the various PTOs for each school raise differing amounts of funds to donate to their respective schools. It is also true that this is a direct result of hard effort by involved parents and the decision by those parents on where they would like to see the funds spent in their school. As one of those parents who have donated money to the Merriam PTO, supported various fundraisers and volunteered in the classroom, I want to make it very clear that pooling of PTO funds among the schools should not be considered in any form. This would only dilute the benefits and involvement of PTO families. Eventually, it would lead to a decline in PTO involvement and a corresponding decline in fundraising. Rather than tear down something that is working, best practices for fundraising should be shared and adopted to the unique objectives of other PTOs. Merriam generally supplies more for FTE teaching assistants than the other PTOs. This is a choice the Merriam parents have made about the money the Merriam PTO raises. Each school has limited funds and makes choices about how to use their funds. If funds are pooled then those choices are taken from the people that worked to raise them.

The second issue is the recent letter from Dr. Mills to the School Committee. This letter lists four parts of a plan Dr. Mills has to address funding for supplementary personnel in each of the schools. The objective is good however, there are some problems with the individual components. Item 1 seeks additional year over year funding and this is a good plan and should be pursued. Unfortunately, it is by no means a certainty in the current economic situation. Item 2 also should be pursued as it is a sound practice to review ongoing operations and seek out areas of improvement. Item 3 is good for this year, but may not be sustainable in the future and certainly should not be part of a main plan, but rather a contingency. The final item, number 4, is very disturbing. Essentially, to reduce the perception of inequality, it would restrict the ways that funds from a PTO (or Continuing Education Program) could be used in the future. This is contrary to the entire premise of the different schools. Each school has a different philosophy and different needs to implement that philosophy. The following table built from Dr. Mills' letter illustrates this difference.

School	Total Funding	FTE	$/FTE
Conant	$159,699	6.80	$23,485
Douglas	$241,359	6.66	$36,240
Gates	$132,681	12.85	$10,325
McCarthy-Towne	$170,779	7.10	$24,053
Merriam	$247,227	12.94	$19,106

The different $/FTE numbers reflect the different type of personnel and other support items being utilized to meet the objectives of the respective school. If Douglas used the same approach as Gates, they would have 23.34 FTE. If Gates uses the same approach as Douglas, they would only have 3.66 FTE. Not only are there different objectives, not all of the schools are the same size. Conant has far fewer classes than some of the others. A cap on FTEs in Conant is less of an issue than with other schools. Since the cap also has no immediate effect on staffing, it provides no benefits while limiting future options. Clearly, the cap is not a good idea.

I urge the members of the School Committee and Dr. Mills to consider plans that directly address the objectives and needs of each school rather than develop a plan based upon perception that will only divide our community and undermine a successful and admired school system.

Sincerely,

Charles Van Meter

From: [redacted] Maryann Shea <[redacted]n> Wed, Oct 19, 2011 8:23:37 PM

Subject: PTO funds

To: [redacted] <apsc@acton-ma.gov> [redacted] smills@mail.ab.mec.edu

Attachments: [redacted] Attach0.html 5K

To Superintendent Mills and the members of the Acton Public Schools School Committee:

I would like to add my voice to the conversation that is ongoing about PTO funds in the elementary schools.

I do **NOT**think PTO funds should stay at the individual elementary schools. Disparity between schools in the resources availble hurts everyone in the community. We have school choice, a wonderful aspect of education in Acton, not to give parents the option of sending their child to the wealthiest school, or the school with the most childcare options, but to give families a choice in the educational focus/philosophy within which the excellent Acton curriculum (same for all schools) will be delivered. We should NOT be allowing the school with the most stay at home parents (who can devote many hours to fundraising) or the school with the wealthiest parents (who can just write a check) to have the most classroom assistants or the most books, or the best childcare. I am disheartened by this lack of community spirit.

My children benefited from the wonderful elementary programs we have in this town, and also from the extended day program that gives working families an affordable way to manage after school and before school care, keeping our children safe and happy. I believe that the best way to manage PTO funding is to have one overarching PTO fundraising organization - the Acton Educational Enrichment Foundation or some such name... that would focus on fundraising and distributing moneys equitably to all schools. Ideally, our tax dollars would fund all staffing. It is extremely disappointing that staffing is inadequate in our schools - especially with the unacceptably large class sizes teachers are expected to manage. Strict rules would have to govern distribution of PTO money to fund classroom assistants. Having some schools with more staffing than others is inequitable and would lead to poorer education for some.

The transition to one single source of PTO funding for all Acton schools would be a change. All tansitions require reframing of expectations and paramenters. But we can do this. We can do what is best for ALL of our children, to make ALL of our schools the best they can be and offer the best education for our children. We should focus on before and after school care in terms of making it affordable and accessible to all, not as a money making endeavor. I have always supported the PTO and the work parents do to make schools a better place to learn. I chose Acton because of the community spirit here. I hope to see that prevail.

Sincerely,
Maryann Shea

From: [redacted] "Jill D. Buonomo" Wed, Oct 19, 2011 8:51:40 PM

Subject: School Committee Meeting - Funding of Acton elementary school classroom assistant

To: [redacted] <apsc@acton-ma.gov>

To Whom It May Concern:

Unfortunately I won't be able to attend tomorrow night's meeting. Therefore I would like to submit a recommendation regarding the funding of classroom assistants at the Acton elementary schools. Sometimes the simplest solution is the best. It seems that if all the schools were allowed to run their own programs (as opposed to requiring them to use Community Ed.), many of the issues could be resolved.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jill Buonomo (parent of an Acton 2nd grader and 4th grader)
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Jill Buonomo
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From: [redacted] Christine Perraud 10/19/2011 9:16:54 PM

Subject: School assistants

To: [redacted] <apsc@acton-ma.gov>

I don't think I will make it to the meeting but I would like to voice my opinion. It seems to me that if certain members of the town find it unfair that Douglas and Merriam have more money to spend on assistants then maybe they should have equivalent in house programs. That would solve the problem without Douglas and Merriam needing to fund the other schools. Instead of penalizing Douglas and Merriam, the town and the school committee should study their 2 obviously successful programs and use their model rather than continue with the current ComEd system.

From: [redacted] Jennifer Coskren 10/20/2011 9:56:49 AM

Subject: RE: Important Information about Teaching Assistant Funding

To: [redacted] <neenaarora@aol.com> [redacted] <ekaufman@ab.mec.edu>
[redacted] <apsc@acton-ma.gov>

Attachments: [redacted] Attach0.html 11K

Hi Neena

My name is Jennifer Coskren and my son Liam is in first grade at the Merriam.

When my husband and I toured the elementary schools back in the Winter of 2010, one of the things that stood out for the both of us was the passion and interest the PTO displayed at the Merriam informational session. We were impressed by the obvious dedication that the PTO had towards ensuring an enriching school environment for both parents and students. This enthusiasm at the information night in February of 2010 was one of the reasons that my husband and I made Merriam our top choice. From this year's Fall Fair to the well attended auction in March, we have not been disappointed.

This email is to stress how disheartened my husband and I are to hear that there would be any risk that money has raised by the PTO for Merriam students would go to other schools. We do understand the frustration some parents at other schools feel about the inequity in PTO fundraising. We've heard from friends at another elementary school in Acton that they were inundated with requests for cash donations by their PTO of at least $100. Hearing this, we feel fortunate that the Merriam has been as successful as it is. However, the Merriam PTO works hard for the funds it generates and we feel VERY strongly that money raised by the organization should stay at our school. Admittedly, we are even disappointed to know that money generated by the before/after school programs could be dispersed to other schools. Again, money raised by the Merriam should stay at the Merriam. Perhaps the School Board would better serve the community by investigating why other schools have not been as successful in fundraising rather than taking away from the schools that are.

My husband will be attending the meeting tonight to hear more about the plans the School Board has and voice these concerns in person if necessary.

Jennifer Coskren

Hello, my name is Kristina Rychlik. I've lived in Acton nearly 17 years, and have been a Merriam parent for seven. Our oldest graduated in June and we have two kids at Merriam now. I have served at Merriam as classroom volunteer, room parent, Hospitality Chair, Graduation Chair, done numerous special curriculum projects, chaired the auction for three years and am now the PTO co-chair with Neena Arora. I have done a good deal of volunteer work in town over the years and last year served as a member of the School Committee's Class Size Subcommittee.

Speaking for myself, I believe that this is truly a school choice issue. Acton has a long history with school choice, and the numbers speak to its success: last year, 97% of Acton families received their first choice school in the Kindergarten choice process. Every school is different, but this fact demonstrates that people are aware of and appreciate those differences. When we went through the Kindergarten choice process, we had a big spreadsheet with the pros and cons of each school; where we could walk, where we could be exposed to a foreign language, etc. We chose Merriam for two reasons: looping and the commitment to classroom assistants. We are not alone in our reasoning, and that is what contributes to the strong commitment to classroom assistants and the work required by parents supporting the PTO and the Merriam Mornings, Merriam After Hours and Merriam Enrichment programs to ensure we have the funds for them. We realize we gave up the opportunity to enjoy such things that the other schools have, such as Japanese, nature programs, and even grass. There will always be inequities, even if school choice were replaced with a system of neighborhood schools.

While the history of classroom assistants at Merriam has its roots in supporting the project-based curriculum, there are many additional benefits. The parents can see how it is useful to have a committed, consistent adult present for a portion of most days, to be present in the classroom, at lunch and on the playground. The kids see it too; in fact when my middle son was in Kindergarten, he was often asked the name of his teacher. He replied to the same question with different answers: Myrna and Donna. Just thinking of the logistics of having too many children per class, and the additional commitment most Merriam teachers make to becoming expert in two years' worth of curriculum, makes me believe strongly that the classroom assistants are a vital part of the Merriam educational experience.

The Merriam PTO works very hard (some say tirelessly but I can vouch there's some fatigue involved). We fundraise for one reason and one reason only: funding our classroom assistants we consider invaluable to supporting our project based curriculum and strong and safe community. It is clear that there is a strong belief in that proposition based on our strong level of parent support. My work with the Class Size

Subcommittee has led me to believe that tonight's issue is a class size issue as well as a school choice issue. The reality of unacceptably large classes fuels parent motivation to fund assistants as they know classes are too big, and they know having assistants helps to deal with some of the issues that arise when there are too many kids in a class, and they want to protect that. This is truly a reflection on the overall funding of the schools from the district.

Regarding tonight's proposal, I appreciate all that Dr. Mills and our principals are doing to try to support the schools, PTOs and preserve what's working. Regarding #1, I think additional district funding is terrific, though I've lived in Acton long enough to know that just because we'd like to pay for something in future years, there is no guarantee that it can happen; the budget process is just too iffy.

Regarding #2, I think all programs should consider a process of continual improvement as times change and this is a great start.

Regarding #3, I'm not comfortable giving money from Merriam to other schools. It's not that I don't want to share. I understand the proposal, I understand the issues and I know the proposed gift money is not PTO money, but it is parent money. Parents choose the Merriam Mornings and Merriam After Hours programs for many reasons, but in part because they know they are supporting their school. And they are told that the money goes to supporting assistants broadly at Merriam. Parents are people, and people don't like it when they spend money they think is going somewhere and then it goes somewhere else. At a joint meeting with the PTO chairs of all the schools, we discussed how contentious it could be across town, with talk that "my school gave my money to your school."

Regarding #4, I'm not comfortable with a personnel cap as such. There's nothing to say that a small increase above what Merriam has now is optimal; our school is smaller this year than last, that's a plug number, and it is based in lots of reasoning including the fact that assistants have to be held to a certain number of hours so we don't have to pay for benefits. But what we have now is not based on what is optimal, or what may be optimal in the future if things change in a myriad of ways. It really goes back to school choice. If we support school choice and building based management then we should not support such a cap.

Regarding other options I've heard, I would like express my opposition to having community ed take over currently successful before/after hours and enrichment programs at Merriam and Douglas. Those programs have been conceived of, developed and tailored to their specific student body and community needs and are currently successful. To change what

works risks having them work less well, make less money and serve their students less well. To address the question of why individual schools are in the business of before and after care, I believe that they are the best positioned to do that; they know the kids and what they need. Though SC members want our B&A programs in community ed, that still means the schools would be in the business of running programs like these as the schools run community ed. I've lived here long enough to understand the politics behind that, but realize that for years the town has wanted to manage comm. ed. and instead we have duplicative efforts with a relatively new rec dept. and comm. ed competing for business.

As I said to Dennis Bruce yesterday, my middle son's former basketball coach, this proposal is a game changer. People don't like it when you change the rules in the middle of the game, and it makes people not want to play. Kim McOsker told the PTO chairs that this process began to relieve the pressure on PTOs to raise funds. However, by putting at risk a large source of funding for Merriam assistants by either gifting money or having community ed run the before/after care programs, you are succeeding in increasing the pressure the Merriam PTO will feel to make up for those losses to maintain our current staffing levels and our commitment to the school. As with any complicated issue, there are likely to be unintended consequences of any action here, and I urge thoughtfulness moving forward.

Thank you.

From: **Beth Petr** "Heather Harer" Thu, Oct 20, 2011 9:20:04 AM

Subject: Fwd: RE: Thursday night meeting

To: APS School Committee Marie Altieri

Attachments: Attach0.html 20K

----- Original Message -----

From: Heather Harer

To: michaelcoppolino COPPOLINO ; Michael Coppolino ; MIKE Coppolino

Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2011 8:49 AM

Subject: Thursday night meeting

Good Morning Mike,

I wanted to thank you for reaching out and having a conversation with me last night prior to the Thursday meeting. I look at this issue as I have over the past 12 years with one group in mind…our students. Every time I've made a decision, whether I was a PTO co-chair or a School Committee member or a parent, I ask myself…"how will this affect the students?".

One thing we can certainly agree on is the need to look at reducing the stress on all PTO's and allow them the opportunity (if they wish) to reduce the funds they gift to SC for personnel. I do believe that if our districts truly supports "school choice" we need to allow each individual PTO to partner with their school Principal and decide how that will work for each of them.

After reading Steve's proposal I just wanted to reiterate a few points and leave you with some thoughts to consider prior to making any decision. Whether it is on Thursday or in the future months. Below I have outlined the major components of Steve's proposal and I have some thoughts on each of these.

. Increase the appropriated budget by another $108,000 each of the next three years. This increase should be specifically used to decrease the pressure on the PTOs to raise as many funds. The goal would be to continue to increase the percentage of assistants funded through the appropriated budget. This recommendation will be part of the overall 2% solution that I present with the FY'13 budget in December.

This is an ideal way to reduce the pressure on the PTO's and seems like a good point to start. After 3 years of this initiative the funding through the district will be much more adequate and help to support all of our students.

2. Erin Bettez and each building principal will continue reviewing the extended day programs, looking at space, capacity, staffing and any other policies to see if the models in the newer programs would possibly grow and if the models in the older programs make sense for community ed to explore.

Over the past 18 years 2 schools have taking the opportunity given to them. They have managed, created and supported a program which provides a service to our parents and students, paid for privately by our parents, utilized by our parents and in turn supports our students (within our individual schools). You call this a "private business", but I would challenge that by calling it a "service" and "resource" supported privately and willing by our community which in turn provides resources that each individual Principal sees appropriate for the needs of the individual community. If each school was given the same opportunity to support their parents and families in this way, what could be better? As I se it, this should be commended, and supported and used as a model for others to be able to provide the same service. You mentioned the fund balance of these programs is what bothers you. I would suggest that you consider what it takes to run these programs from year to year (personnel salaries, materials, etc) and remember that if you end each year wit a zero balance you might not be able to support these families from year to year. Managing a program with a zero balance seems irresponsible and I urge you to take a moment and speak with Ed or Chris to discuss the plan behind it, you'll find that it is a very professional way to run such a program.

I also believe that we are foolish to look at this issue in a vacuum and not look outside the box at ways in which we provide services to our community. Our Before and After School Programs are successful and we have the in-house experience ...why not share it and move

it forward?? Why do I think it is a bad idea to turn it over to Community Ed? Many reaso but the most important one is this....and I'll use Douglas as an example. This program is run by Douglas Personnel who feel passionate about their students and their needs, it is pai for by Douglas families, it is used by the Douglas students, it is managed by the Douglas Principal with the sole purpose and use of supporting Douglas students and their needs. Why on earth, would you take a program such as this and have someone else run it, if truly the students are our first priority??? And this is true with all five of our schools!!!

One suggestion I would be to research each program and their fee structure to assure that each program is running efficiently and if it is determined that some of the more seasoned programs can reduce their fees than we could look at that. It is also an idea to set some parameters around the use of these funds to allow the other schools the change to grow thei programs. Much like they are suggesting the "cap" below.

3. Merriam and Douglas will look at year end surpluses from their before and after school programs annually and consider making a donation which Dr. Mills can then reallocate to the other three schools. This year they are able to contribute $30,000 from Merriam and $30,000 from Douglas, which will provide Conant, Gates and McCarthy-Towne with $20,00 each in additional funding that they can use this year or in the future.

Every good thing takes time. I think this is a very generous gift from these two schools and allows the others the opportunity to grow their own program while supporting the needs of other students in our district. If you give this a 3 year phased in period and readdress this issue after 3 years, you will see very different programs within our district.

4. Cap the total staff funded from the combination of these three sources at 15 FTE. as the appropriate budget grows by 1 FTE per year, and the schools receive additional before/afte school surpluses of 1 or more FTE per year, this will close the gap between the five schools.

I support this cap to allow the district the opportunity to set a ceiling and look at funding personnel in a rational way. This seems very appropriate.

Mike, overall this is a conversation that needs to happen and this could be a great opportunity to look at many of our successes and push them forward. But the idea of taking successful programs and penalizing the schools involved (which is exacly what putting them under Comm Ed will do) is absolutely not doing the right thing. I urge you to think of this openly and to consider building other programs in a thoughtful way that will allow all five

schools to have the same benefits that these programs experience. Putting them under the cap of Community Ed is a huge mistake and will ultimately not serve the students in the same capacity. And isn't that all of our goal?

I look forward to working on this solution together. I will see you on Thursday and hope to you will share these thoughts with others as well.

Have a great day.

Heather