

Acton Public, Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committees

January 8, 2013

**7:30 Joint School Committee Meeting
Followed by AB Regional School Committee Meeting**

at the R.J. Grey Junior High Library

**ACTON PUBLIC AND ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING**

**Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School**

**Tuesday, January 8, 2013
7:30 p.m. Joint School Committee
followed by AB Regional School Committee Meeting**

AGENDA

- 1.0 **CALL TO ORDER**
- 2.0 **CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**
- 3.0 **APPROVAL of MINUTES and STATEMENT of WARRANT**
 - 3.1 Minutes of 12/6/12 Joint/AB School Committee meeting
- 4.0 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 5.0 **EDUCATION REPORT** – Dr. Alixe Callen, Principal, AB Regional High School
- 6.0 **JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS**
 - 6.1 Security Measures in Place in our Schools – *Steve Mills*
 - 6.1.1 Draft letter requested by the APS School Committee – **VOTE** - *Michael Coppolino*
 - 6.2 Regional School District Study Committee (RSDSC) Update – *Peter Ashton*
 - 6.2.1 Regional Assessment Method memo from X. Kong, 1/4/13
 - 6.2.2 Educational Benefits memo from Superintendents, 1/4/13
 - 6.2.3 Regional Assessment Formula proposal from J. Petersen, 12/30/12
 - 6.2.4 Acton FinCom letter to APSC, 12/18/12
 - 6.2.5 Outreach Opportunities
 - 6.3 Acton Leadership Group (ALG) Report – *Xuan Kong, Kim McOsker*
 - 6.3.1 Agenda for 1/10/13 meeting
 - 6.4 Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) Report – *Maria Neyland (oral)*
 - 6.5 Health Insurance Trust (HIT) Report – *Kim McOsker (oral)*
 - 6.6 OPEB Task Force Update – *Dennis Bruce (oral)*
 - 6.7 Acton FinCom Report - *Dennis Bruce (oral)*
 - 6.8 Acton BOS Report - *Paul Murphy (oral)*
 - 6.9 Policy Subcommittee Update – *Brigid Bieber (oral)*

APS SC is adjourned. ABRSC continues.

- 7.0 **ABRSC BUSINESS**
 - 7.1 FY 14 Budget Update- *Steve Mills, Don Aicardi*
 - 7.1.1 ABRSD Prelim Budget by Character Code – Summary and Detail
 - 7.1.2 APS Prelim Budget by Character Code – Summary and Detail (*to be discussed at APS SC meeting on 1/17/13*)
 - 7.1.3 Preliminary Agenda for Budget Presentation Meeting on 1/26/13
 - 7.1.4 Balance of FY14 School Budgets Schedule
 - 7.1.5 ABRSD FY14 Presentation slides
 - 7.2 Lower Fields Update – *Steve Mills*

- 7.3 Recommendation to Accept Gift from the Friends of the Acton Libraries to ABRHS and RJGJHS Libraries – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
- 7.4 Recommendation to Accept Gift from IBM to the ABRHS Science Team and Computer Science Club – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills (addendum)*

8.0 **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

- 8.1 AB Regional High School
- 8.1.1 Discipline Report – December 2012
- 8.1.2 Mathematics Olympiad Competition
- 8.1.3 Donations received for Window Seat (families, Dunkin Donuts, Salerno's Restaurant, Engineering Solutions) and for Academic Decathlon from Oktoberfest Run/Walk
- 8.2 RJ Grey Junior High School
- 8.2.1 Discipline Report – December 2012
- 8.3 Green Ribbon Schools District application (*oral*) – *Steve Mills*
- 8.4 New School Wellness Advisory Committee Meeting, 12/19/12 (*oral*) – *Liza Huber*
- 8.5 Pupil Services
- 8.5.1. ELL Student Population, December 2012
- 8.5.2. OnTeam, Dec 2012
- 8.6 December 1 Enrollment Report
- 8.7 Acton Election Deadlines from Acton Town Clerk
- 8.8 2013-2014 Approved APS/ABRSD School Calendar, 12/28/12
- 8.9 ABUW Community Forum: Chris Herren, former Celtics Basketball player, talks candidly about the substance abuse problems which derailed his professional career. Sober since 2008, Herren is an inspirational speaker, especially reaching out to teens. Wednesday 1/9/13, 7:00 pm, ABRHS

9.0 **NEXT MEETINGS**

- January 17, 7:00 pm. APSC Meeting at RJGJHS Library
- January 26 (Saturday), 9:00 am – 3:00 pm Joint/APS/AB SC Budget Presentations, RJGJHS Library
- February 7, 7:30 pm, AB SC Meeting at RJGJHS Library (Open Budget Hearing)
- February 14, 7:00 pm, APSC Meeting at RJGJHS Library (Open Budget Hearing)

ADJOURN

**ACTON PUBLIC AND ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING Draft Minutes**

**Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School**

**December 6, 2012
7:30 p.m. Joint School Committee
followed by AB Regional School Committee Meeting
followed by Joint SC Executive Session**

<i>Members Present:</i>	Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppolino, Xuan Kong, Paul Murphy, Kim McOsker, Maria Neyland, Deanne O'Sullivan
<i>Members Absent:</i>	None
<i>Others:</i>	Don Aicardi, Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Liza Huber, Steve Mills, Beth Petr

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee was called to order by Chairperson Xuan Kong and the Acton Public School Committee was called to order by Chairperson Kim McOsker at 7:35 p.m.

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Xuan Kong asked members of the public who wished to speak about the school calendar to sign up. Given the full agenda, the large audience and the many emails received, he requested a 2 minute maximum per person.

APPROVAL of MINUTES and STATEMENT of WARRANT

AB warrant #13-011 dated 11/15/12 in the amount of \$1,444,807.74 and warrant #13-012 dated 11/29/12 in the amount of \$2,041,869.12 were signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures. APS warrant #201311 dated 11/27/12 in the amount of \$180,170.76 was signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures.

The minutes of the 10/4/12 Joint/AB/APS School Committee meeting were approved unanimously by the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee, followed by the Acton Public School Committee.

The minutes of the 10/18/12 Joint AB/APS School Committee and Regional School District Study Committee meeting were approved by the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee, followed by the Acton Public School Committee. Dennis Bruce abstained from both votes.

The minutes of the 11/1/12 Joint/AB School Committee meeting were approved unanimously by the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee, followed by the Acton Public School Committee.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.1 ABRSD FY'14 Budget Overview

5.1.1 Governor's Fiscal Stability Measures for FY13, 12/4/12

Dr. Mills introduced the Budget Overview stating that this will be one of the most difficult budgets he has ever done. Don Aicardi discussed the effects of Governor Patrick's recently announced mid-year 9C reductions. At the end of October 2012, the estimated shortfall for the state was \$256 million. At the end of November 2012, the estimated shortfall had increased to \$540 million. \$21.7 million of the cuts that do not require Legislative Approval are expected to come from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for FY13. These are expected to involve reimbursements from: Special Education Circuit Breaker, Charter School Tuition and Regional Transportation.

Don reviewed the use of reserves concluding that the Region is \$63,000 under the 5% cap. His estimated level service figures from FY13 to FY14 show an increase of 4.37% or \$1.7 million. Don stressed slide 22 showing the significant projected increase in the FY14 assessment for the town of Acton (6.4%), compared to no increase for Boxborough's assessment, due to a drop in enrollment of Boxborough students based on three-year average. Competition between funding OPEB and current operating needs has also started.

Chapter 70 state funding increases have been slowed over the years. The loss of the Federal EdJobs funding will be felt on Health Insurance from FY13 to FY14. The Administration will be monitoring many items over the next few weeks and months as state funding becomes clearer. More details will be provided at the January School Committee meetings and on Budget Saturday (1/26/13).

Xuan emphasized that the current ALG plan uses \$1.5 - \$2 million of reserves inclusive of E and D. This would only support approximately 3% of an increase and will be an important point for future discussion.

5.2 Regional School District Study Committee (RSDSC) Update

5.2.1 Draft Position Statement from APS/BPS/ABRSC Chairs – **VOTE**

5.2.2 Merriam School Community emails and Chair's memo

5.2.3 Outreach Opportunities

5.2.4 Douglas School Council Letter

Many public forums have taken place and more are coming up. Excellent feedback and questions are coming in. The first draft of the revised Regional Agreement has come back from the Attorney. Next RSDSC meeting is January 3rd.

ABRSC was asked to vote on the position statement that was already approved by the Acton and Boxborough Public School Committees. Mary Brolin stated that the first item has been raised repeatedly, "Will there be a policy of accepting external funding to offset operating budget expenses (e.g. fundraising for classroom assistants)?" Several members said that any action on this issue is not an issue of regionalization. This funding has been discussed in the Acton schools for a long time and schools are allowed to operate differently. Mary advocated for stating this point more firmly and thanked Kristina Rychlik for her suggested wording.

ABRSC VOTE:

Michael Coppolino moved and it was seconded and unanimously,

VOTED: to revise the answer to Question 1 on the proposed position statement to read:

"Currently the Boxborough School Committee has a specific policy prohibiting the use of external funding such as PTOs to fund any personnel positions. The Acton Public School Committee has a long history of allowing and supporting such funding among all five of their elementary schools. In addition, during the last two budget cycles, they have acted with the intent of relieving pressure on the PTOs by supporting the budgetary addition of approximately \$50,000 per school for this issue. It is our belief moving forward that the future Regional School Committee should work to support these differences in order to allow for unique and individual programs to continue to function at each of the six elementary schools."

ABRSC VOTE:

Kim McOsker moved, Maria Neyland seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the position statement as revised.

APSC VOTE:

Paul Murphy moved, Deanne O'Sullivan seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to revise the answer to Question 1 on the proposed position statement to read:

“Currently the Boxborough School Committee has a specific policy prohibiting the use of external funding such as PTSOs to fund any personnel positions. The Acton Public School Committee has a long history of allowing and supporting such funding among all five of their elementary schools. In addition, during the last two budget cycles, they have acted with the intent of relieving pressure on the PTSOs by supporting the budgetary addition of approximately \$50,000 per school for this issue. It is our belief moving forward that the future Regional School Committee should work to support these differences in order to allow for unique and individual programs to continue to function at each of the six elementary schools.”

APSC VOTE:

It was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the position statement as revised.

5.3 Proposed 2013-2014 School Calendar – SECOND READING

- 5.3.1 Four Proposed Calendar Options: starting before/after Labor Day, Schools closed/open on certain religious holidays, possible March Professional Development Day noted
- 5.3.2 Summary of Community Emails
- 5.3.3 Calendar Discussion memo including 2012 Staff Survey summary
- 5.3.4 Holiday Observances in MA, DESE
- 5.3.5 School Committee memos re school calendar dated 11/2/12, 6/7/12, 4/30/12
- 5.3.6 School Ceremonies and Religious Holiday Observances Policy and Procedures, File: IMD found at <http://ab.mec.edu/about/policies.shtml>
- 5.3.7 School Year/School Calendar Policy, File: IC/ICA

Xuan Kong reviewed the School Committee policy regarding voting the annual school calendar (IC/ICA). Last year’s decision was very close and as a result, the Superintendent asked the Committee to provide guidance for FY14. Xuan referred to the memo and discussion from last May and June. Calendar A was presented at the 11/1/12 Joint SC meeting for the Committees to consider and potentially vote on 12/6/12. Xuan thanked the Acton Education Association (AEA) for signing a side letter agreeing that the Committee may set the FY14 calendar to begin no earlier than the Monday before Labor Day for teachers.

Dr. Mills stated the importance of decoupling the two issues: starting before or after Labor Day and religious observances. He recommends Calendar A (start before Labor Day and hold school on Rosh Hashanah and Good Friday) but acknowledged that there are other calendars to consider. He thanked the public for all the heartfelt feedback provided. All material has been collected and reviewed. (See memo and posting.) Marie Altieri has considered staffing to ensure that appropriate coverage would be available. Dr. Mills is on many local education boards (EDCO, CASE) and of the 13 member communities, none of his colleague superintendents have the religious holidays off, including Boxborough. He was surprised about the strong desire to start after Labor Day. He disagrees with this because, as a very high performing school district, if we start after Labor Day and have a few snow days, some students are at a disadvantage. All students have to attend school for 180 days. High School students who take MCAS, AP, SAT and other significant exams will have issues because they must get through a certain amount of material for these exams. Being behind other students when these tests are taken can create issues.

Michael Coppolino read a statement emphasizing that our community has always respected and celebrated diversity and that the school calendar should reflect our community. Advocating for Calendar B, he believes that starting before Labor Day would provide more high quality school time, and not having school on Rosh Hashanah and Good Friday would avoid a negative impact on the quality of education when substantial numbers of students and staff would be out.

Paul Murphy has “done a 180 on this issue” and is in favor of B. He feels it is not an issue of church and state, but an issue of the community and an act of kindness.

Deanne O'Sullivan advocated for B. She pointed out that Natick and Sharon give 2 days off for Rosh Hashanah because that works for their community. The number of subs needed would be huge if school is held and we would be pulling from all the other communities, not the usual substitute pool.

Kim McOsker asked what has changed since 2010 when the last survey was done. Dr. Mills said he and Marie Altieri could handle the staff being out, and his colleague superintendents all handle the issues.

Brigid Bieber emphasized that the schools have to be respectful of all beliefs, and celebrate diversity, but there has been a significant increase in diversity over the years. She would support all different kinds of holidays in a school calendar, perhaps eliminating a vacation, shortening the day, etc. She advocated for a calendar with either all the holidays our staff and students observe, or none of them. Supporting Calendar A, she stressed that there has to be a practical consideration to show respect to all groups, given that appropriate policies are in place.

Maria Neyland commented on the many emails that referred to stress and students not wanting to take a day off from school. She stated that in her experience, the staff is reasonable and appropriate about children taking religious holidays off. As a public school, she does not believe our schools should close for just two religions' holidays, but asked how it would be decided which religions would be considered. She vowed to work to be sure that all students can practice their religions.

Xuan invited the public to speak, asking those in support of giving students the days off for religious holidays address the Committees first.

Fifteen people spoke, including Rabbi Lewis Mintz from Temple Beth Elohim and Acton Selectwoman Pam Harting Barrat who was on the School Committee 20 years ago when it was decided to have no school on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in Acton and Acton-Boxborough schools. Several people said it was the first School Committee meeting they had ever attended.

Student Representative Jacob Johnson stated that it is not fair to give him the day off because he is Jewish, but it is also not fair to cancel school for all religious holidays. He suggested that the question to ask is, "Does the threshold of the Jewish/Christian population meet the burden that would cause school to not be held?" In his opinion it seems to barely meet that threshold, based on the discussion about no homework or testing and 200 parents that said their children would be out on Jewish holidays and even more out on Good Friday.

There were no comments from the public in support of having school on the two religious holidays next year, or on when to start school regarding Labor Day next year.

Xuan thanked the many members of the community at the meeting and all who expressed their opinions over the past several weeks. He encouraged them to continue their participation in School Committee matters.

ABRSC VOTE:

Brigid Bieber moved **to approve the proposed FY14 Calendar A (start before Labor Day and have school on Rosh Hashanah and Good Friday)**. Maria Neyland seconded.

Kim McOsker spoke against the motion. Emphasizing the importance of spending more time with family, she prefers starting after Labor Day, and has heard from many members of the public who feel the same. Xuan Kong responded that starting after Labor Day 2013, the first day for 8th and 10-12 graders would be one day of the Jewish holiday. This would be a great hardship for them. One member suggested voting on the holidays and start date separately. Xuan replied that the Committees' policy requires a vote on a specific calendar and the Committees asked the Administration to prepare these four proposed calendars.

The motion was VOTED:

YES: Dennis Bruce, Xuan Kong, Maria Neyland, Mary Brolin, Brigid Bieber (7)

NO: Mike Coppolino, Deanne O'Sullivan, Paul Murphy, Kim McOsker (8)

The motion lost 8-7.

ABRSC VOTE:

Mike Coppolino moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was

VOTED: to approve the proposed FY14 Calendar B (start before Labor Day and no school on Rosh Hashanah and Good Friday)

YES: Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Paul Murphy, Deanne O'Sullivan, Mike Coppolino (8)

NO: Maria Neyland, Xuan Kong, Kim McOsker, Dennis Bruce (7)

The motion passed 8 – 7.

Brigid requested that the Superintendent research next year if there are other religious holidays that should be considered for calendar discussion. Mary asked that the community be polled for input including opinions about vacations.

APSC VOTE:

Mike Coppolino moved that the proposed FY14 Calendar B be adopted. Deanne O'Sullivan seconded. The motion was withdrawn.

Xuan Kong moved that the proposed FY14 Calendar A be adopted. There was no second.

Mike Coppolino moved that the proposed FY14 Calendar B be adopted. Deanne O'Sullivan seconded.

The motion was VOTED and resulted in a tie.

YES: Mike Coppolino, Deanne O'Sullivan, Paul Murphy (3)

NO: Dennis Bruce, Xuan Kong, Kim McOsker (3)

Consequently, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District has an FY14 calendar and the Acton Public Schools do not. The Acton Public School Committee will resume their discussion and vote again on a calendar at their meeting on 12/20/12.

5.4 Acton Leadership Group (ALG) Report

Kim McOsker reported on the meeting held on 11/29/12

5.5 Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) Report

Maria Neyland reported.

5.6 Health Insurance Trust (HIT) Report

Kim McOsker reported.

5.7 OPEB Task Force Update

Dennis Bruce reported that the State commission asked if they could include Acton's numbers in their study.

5.8 Acton FinCom Report

Dennis Bruce reported that the FinCom needs more information on Regionalization, specifically the educational benefits quantified. They discussed the Point of View (POV) discussion at the last School Committee meeting. Fincom expects a formal response from the Acton Board of Selectmen and School Committees on their POV document.

The APS SC was suspended at 10:04 p.m. and the ABRSC continued.

ABRSC BUSINESS

6.1 Review of Special Revenue Accounts

Special Revenue Accounts are an integral part of the schools' financial resources. Some of the funding comes from district operated programs such as before/after school programs and the integrated pre-school, donations from community organizations like ABSAF and the PTSOs, and fee-based programs such as elementary school band and athletic activity fees. Generally, these are fees charged for non-mandated services or activities. Per state law, accounts separate from the general operating budget are set up to handle the income/expenses related to each special revenue type. The budgets for these funds are not subject to the annual adoption/approval process required by general fund budgets, although expenditures must be specifically related to the purpose for which the funds were established. Examples of other communities' reports were included as a way to provide more complete budget information. The Finance Department's goal is to ensure that the financial information is in a format that facilitates efficient and effective delivery of services. Don Aicardi plans to improve the reports provided to the Superintendent, Administrators and to the Regional School Committee about these accounts.

Dr. Mills stated that this topic is being brought up now as a matter of transparency, not because of issues. The School Committee should be informed about these account and periodic updates will be given. The Committee appreciated this information. Maria Neyland pointed out that because funds are not raised prior to the year in which they are spent, there could be trouble if money does not come in. She asked for dollar amounts, beyond one month, on this topic on Budget Saturday 1/26/13.

6.2 Establishing OPEB Trust

Don Aicardi reported that this is the final stage to approve the legal agreement to establish the OPEB Trust. The draft was included in the 11/1/12 School Committee meeting packet. A minor revision was made to include "her" in "his/her" on one page. Future appropriation to fund OPEB will appear on regional assessment table (also known as Table 6).

Dennis Bruce moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by role call: *that the Committee adopt the attached vote regarding the OPEB Trust*

***Fund. (YES:* Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppolino, Xuan Kong, Paul Murphy, Kim McOsker, Maria Neyland, Deanne O'Sullivan)**

The Superintendent will appoint an advisory council committee. One member will be an Acton Finance Committee member and one will be a Boxborough Finance Committee member.

6.3 Recommendation to Approve Field Trip to Quebec, Canada

Paul Murphy moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the Field Trip to Quebec, Canada

6.4 Recommendation to Approve Field Trip to Dublin, Ireland

Paul Murphy moved, Brigid Bieber seconded, and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the Field Trip to Dublin, Ireland

6.5 Recommendation to Accept Gift of Nordic ski grooming device

Paul Murphy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the gift of a Nordic ski grooming device with gratitude

7.0 FOR YOUR INFORMATION

7.3 Report on Professional Day, 11/6/12, Deborah Bookis

Dr. Mills highlighted this report. Deborah Bookis added how great it was to have a whole day to focus on student learning with the staff.

7.10 CASE Board of Directors meeting 11/30/12 materials
Xuan Kong asked the Committee to review this information.

APS SC reconvened at 10:46 p.m. and the Joint SC was back in session.

8.0 **JT SCHOOL COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 10:46 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

(YES – Bieber, Brolin, Bruce, Coppolino, Kong, McOsker, Murphy, Neyland, O’Sullivan)

Xuan Kong declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board and the Committee would return to open session for the sole purpose of adjourning.

At 10:46 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton Public School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

(YES - Bruce, Coppolino, Kong, McOsker, Murphy, O’Sullivan)

Kim McOsker declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board and the Committee would return to open session for the sole purpose of adjourning.

At 10:55 p.m., the Committees were polled and voted to go out of Joint Executive Session.

NEXT MEETINGS

- December 20, 7:00 pm, APSC Meeting at RJGJHS Library
- January 8 (Tuesday), 7:30 pm, ABRSC Meeting at RJGJHS Library
- January 17, 7:00 pm. APSC Meeting at RJGJHS Library
- January 26 (Saturday), 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Joint SC Budget Presentations, RJGJHS Library

The Joint School Committee meeting was adjourned at 10:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of documents used: see agenda

To: Dr. Stephen Mills
From: Alixe Callen
Re: New administrative structure at ABRHS
Date: January 3, 2013

With the upcoming retirements of two members of the high school's administrative team (an Assistant Principal and the Principal's Assistant), we have developed a plan to significantly revamp the high school's administrative structure. While the current model has served us very well for the past fourteen years, the new demands placed on us by the state, technology, and simply the changing nature of society, require that we think differently about the kind of support we offer students. With budgetary considerations in mind, the new plan is also designed to save approximately \$15,000 per year.

Currently, the high school's certified administrative staff consists of a principal and three assistant principals. In addition, the decision was made a number of years ago to hire a *Principal's Assistant* to provide support for that team. At the time, the notion was that the Principal's Assistant could take care of some of the more administrative tasks, saving the certified administrators for direct student support. That model has served us well, but with the demands of the new teacher supervision and evaluation system; the increases we are seeing in student mental health and related issues; and the growth in demands for administrative coverage at evening events, our priorities have changed. With additional certified staff, we could better meet those demands.

Instead of moving to a model with four year-round assistant principals, which we believe would be both inefficient and cost-prohibitive, the new model provides for one principal, two associate principals (the two remaining assistant principals whose job titles would change though their salaries would only be subject to the regular cost-of-living increases), and two deans.

These two deans would each work 192-194 days per year, the contract year plus ten extra days. They would each be supervised by one of the associate principals. Together, each pair (dean and associate principal) would be responsible for two classes of students, with the deans overseeing all minor student support, disciplinary, and attendance issues, and the associate principals supporting the deans with more complicated issues. The deans would also take on other tasks, including building oversight, student activity planning, lunch duty, and evening coverage of events. This would provide the associate principals with more time for teacher supervision and evaluation, instructional leadership, alternative programming, master schedule development, school safety and security, and MCAS oversight. It would also provide more coverage within the building each day.

The new model also addresses a well-documented shortcoming in school leadership – the lack of opportunity for growth. Under the old model there was really an 'all-or-nothing' mentality, with new administrators jumping right into the day-to-day demands of the job with limited support. Our new model will provide young administrators with ongoing mentoring and assistance.

We look forward to this new model as a means to save resources and provide increased support to our students and their families.

ABRHS – 2012-2013

What's New,
What's Up and Coming

Increasing Personalization – what we have done

- Advisory
- Student Load
- Student Conferencing
- New Counselor
- Increased hours for drug/alcohol counselor
- Restructured Special Education Learning Centers
- Saturday Night Activities
- Extended library hours

Still to Come...

- Restructured Administration
- Finish English teacher initiative
- Bridges program
- Expansion of Saturday night activities

Administrative Restructuring

- Shortcomings of Current Model
 - 14 years old
 - Designed for 1400 students
 - Increased demands by state
 - Safety – Building Coverage
 - Increase in evening events
 - Not a good use of our human capital
- Retirements = Opportune Time to Restructure

Proposed New Administrative Model

- 1 Principal
- 2 Associate Principals
- 2 Deans

Advantages of New Model

- More support for students
- More mentoring for new administrators
- Better use of human capital
- Cost effective (\$10K-\$20K savings)

English Department Restructuring - 2012-2013

- Student load reduction to 105-110 students
- Positive impact on students
 - More individual conferencing
 - Reduced turn-around time for assessments
 - Allowed introduction of senior English electives
 - More performance-based assessments

English Department Restructuring – 2013-2014

- 2 more teachers
- Each teacher – four classes + directed study
- \$30,000 savings in teacher duty pay
- Slight additional decrease to student load, *slight* increase in class size (for one year)
- Expectation of more individual time with students outside of class

Bridges Program

- Improved services for all special education students
- More time for individualized attention
- Increased efficiency – less repetition of efforts
- Provision of state mandated and educationally appropriate interventions

Saturday Night Activities

- Substance-Free
- Fun
- Social Norms

TO: CASE, EDCO and/or other School Committees in MA
FROM: Acton Public School Committee and AB Regional School Committee
DATE: 1/4/13
RE: Request for U.S. Congress to pass legislation banning attack weapons

Mass tragedies come in many forms and are typically indiscriminate of age, sex, religious belief or color. Many, sadly, are unpreventable.

The most heinous type of tragedy is the result of pre-conceived, purposeful acts by deranged individuals, in order to kill others. These are preventable, if not in their entirety, then at least to some extent. The Federal Government has acted purposefully, particularly since 9/11, to limit mass tragedies due to bombings or other terrorist acts, and it is time that similar limits or restrictions be placed on deaths caused by guns.

School Committees in the State of MA are elected bodies whose primary roles are: 1) to set budgets annually, 2) to set policies, and 3) to hire and fire the Superintendent. However, it is also our inherent responsibility to provide safe learning environments for students and staff. Because the banishment of assault weapons may reduce the future killing of students and staff anywhere in this nation, we urge you to join us in imploring Congress to support (or draft new) legislation that will limit the scope of any possible future attacks in schools by banning the sale, possession and use of attack weapons anywhere in the United States of America.

Please, let's do our share.

Sample Motion:

The _____ School Committee, in order to ensure safe learning environments for students and staff, implore the U.S. Congress to pass legislation banning the sale, possession and use of attack weapons anywhere in the United States of America.

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
From: Xuan Kong
Date: January 4, 2013
Subject: Regional Assessment Method

As a part of discussion at regional school district study committee, Mr. Lenox (attorney for the study committee) offered the following input to the study committee on regional assessment issues. The discussion applies to both current regional agreement (and its assessment formula) and any possible future agreement for an expanded region.

***** Mr. Lenox's Discussion *****

As you know from a prior e-mail, I put my response to Xuan's question below on hold so that I could get more clarity concerning the assessment method that has been used by the Acton Boxborough Region up until now. To that end, I have had conversations with A-B Business Manager Don Aicardi and with Christine Lynch at DESE.

Because I know that you may want to send this e-mail to other members of the Planning Board, allow me to lay a bit of a foundation. All regional agreements in MA necessarily contain "assessment" language (i.e., language which establishes how the funding of the district's expenditures will be apportioned among the member communities). The most common form of assessment language is based upon some variation of student enrollment. As part of the Education Reform Act of 1993, the Legislature created the concept of "minimum local contributions", which are established by the Commissioner of Education using a very complicated formula, to insure that all municipalities will annually contribute at least a certain minimum amount in support of their public schools, whether those school systems are free-standing municipal school systems or regional school systems, or both. Partly in recognition of the fact that assessment language in regional agreements was written and agreed to years before the Education Reform Act, the Legislature created two methods that a district might follow in making their assessments. DESE, through regulations, has more clearly enunciated these options than the Legislature did in its statutory language. Districts are able to choose between the so-called "statutory assessment method" and the so-called "alternative assessment method." At the risk of over-simplifying, under the statutory assessment method each of the member towns pays its "required local contribution" as established by the Commissioner, and then on top of that pays an additional assessment which is allocated pursuant to the assessment provisions in the regional agreement. Under the alternative assessment method, the entire assessment is calculated pursuant to the assessment provisions in the regional agreement. The alternative assessment method may be used so long as the sum of the required local contributions of the member towns as established by the Commissioner is not decreased, and so long as the use of the alternative assessment method is approved for that year by a vote at each of the member's Town Meeting. These two methods can yield distinctly different results.

The Acton Boxborough region has historically utilized the alternative assessment method. That is, the total assessments paid by Acton and by Boxborough have historically been calculated on the basis of the assessment formula that appears in the regional agreement. This has been permissible because both towns have historically appropriated funds well in excess of the

required local contribution, AND because both town meetings have always approved the assessments that have been calculated using the alternative assessment method. What I have clarified with Christine Lynch is that DESE deems a favorable vote on an assessment which has been made via the alternative assessment method as tantamount to a vote to accept the use of the alternative assessment method for that year. Xuan's question, however, is what would happen in a year (either before or after the expansion of the region) in which one or both of the towns fail to appropriate the assessment that has been calculated via the alternative assessment method. The answer to this question, which I have confirmed with Christine Lynch, is as follows.

Chapter 71, Section 16B, is the statute that addresses the approval of regional school budgets. This statute requires that, regardless of whether the statutory assessment method or the alternative assessment method is used, no fewer than 2/3 of the communities that are members of the region must approve the region's budget. A vote to appropriate the member's assessment is taken to be a vote to approve the budget. In a two-member district like A-B, the need for a 2/3 majority in effect means that both communities must appropriate their assessment, or else the budget is not taken to have been approved. If one of the two towns were to fail to appropriate its assessment, Section 16B says that the issue goes back to the regional school committee (the "RSC"). The RSC, following the timelines and process that appears in the sixth paragraph of Section 16B, can either resubmit the same proposed budget using the same assessment method, lower the overall budget and recalculate the assessments, or, if the alternative assessment method is what had been originally used, the RSC could change to the statutory assessment method and recalculate the assessments using that approach. In any event, once the budget is resubmitted, each town must hold another town meeting. If both of the towns appropriate the requested assessments, the budget is passed and the problem is solved. If on the other hand, one or both of the towns fail to appropriate their assessment, the seventh paragraph of Section 16B requires that a "district-wide meeting" open to all registered voters of each town be held. If a majority of the voters at this district-wide meeting vote in favor of the budget, then the budget is passed. If a majority if the voters at the district-wide meeting do not approve the budget, or if this meeting cannot be scheduled before July 1 of the year in question, the Commissioner will establish a 1/12 budget for each of the months between July and the end of November while there still is no approved budget. If there is no approved budget by December 1, DESE will assume control of the district, and funds necessary for the running of the district will be deducted from state aid which would normally be distributed to the towns. A very important point that Christine Lynch emphasized, however, and which is relevant to Xuan's question, is that if a district-wide meeting is held, the budget that is placed before the meeting MUST be calculated using the statutory assessment method.

It may be that my answer above will stimulate other questions. If so, let me know.

Best regards.

Ed Lenox

Edward F. Lenox Jr., Esq.
MURPHY, HESSE, TOOMEY & LEHANE, LLP

TO: Regionalization School District Study Committee members
 FROM: Steve Mills, Superintendent, Acton Public and AB Regional School District
 Curt Bates, Superintendent, Boxborough Public School District
 DATE: 1/4/13
 RE: Educational Benefits of Regionalization

If we regionalize the six elementary schools and maintain the current staffing levels, there are distinct and separate educational advantages for parents and children in both communities.

Advantages for Acton children and families include,

1. Six school choices rather than five
2. A district English Language Arts specialist to support that instruction in all six schools
3. Class size reduction because there are many seats available in the Blanchard School
4. An increase in the available number of All Day Kindergarten openings
5. Additional space for specialized special education programs
6. Increased support for English Language Learner (ELL) students
7. Additional district technology integration support
8. Access to the Blanchard School music and drama program for interested Acton families
9. Full time certified librarian to support the Acton elementary schools

Advantages for Boxborough children and families include,

1. Six school choices rather than one
2. Retention of support staff that otherwise could be eliminated due to Boxborough's sustainability issues
3. Support of Science/Social Studies District Curriculum specialist
4. Additional access to many specialized special education programs
5. Significantly broader professional development offerings and financial savings

These are the major educational benefits to parents and children in our communities, separate from and in addition to the estimated \$800,000 in costs savings if we fully regionalize our schools.

To fully understand the educational benefits of regionalization, however, one first needs to understand the organizational and financial benefits.

Currently, there are three payroll offices, three purchasing offices, two superintendents, two business managers, and two special education directors. There are three separate and distinct school systems. All school districts in Massachusetts are required to submit

approximately 110 reports to the Department of Elementary and Secondary (DESE) annually. To submit these reports once, as opposed to three times, would save a tremendous amount of time and energy that could be used to support the educational programs. Additionally, all three separate districts are occasionally required to participate in extensive financial and educational audits. One example is the Coordinated Program Review (CPR). This audit is extremely labor intensive and requires dozens of hours of work on the part of our staff. Currently, we have to do these audits three times, rather than once. There are also three separate and distinct budgets. Having one budget would provide more flexibility for decision-making. For instance, as we prepare the fiscal '14 budgets, the current AB Regional budget is more challenging than the APS budget. If they were all one budget, the process would be more coordinated, unified and easier to understand. All of this duplication would be eliminated and much more time available to focus on the educational programs.

Memo

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional District Study Committee
From: John Petersen
CC: Steve Mills, Curt Bates, D. Aicardi, C. Jeannotte, ABRSC, APSC, Boxborough PSC
Date: December 30, 2012
Subject: Proposal – K to 12 Acton-Boxborough Regional Assessment Formula

Executive Summary

Acton and Boxborough are in the process of determining whether or not to expand the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District from grades 7-12 to grades K-12, absorbing the K-6 school districts in Acton and Boxborough. One aspect of the merger is to determine how costs will be allocated to the individual towns post-merger (retaining the existing assessment formula or adopting a new formula). The existing assessment formula is completely based on enrollment.

This memorandum proposes that assessments for the new K-12 region be based on a hybrid formula, partly related to enrollment and partly related to property tax values. The hybrid formula has three primary advantages:

- Broader financial support for education: protects ability to continue “level service”
- Fairness: better models the fixed cost element of the school system
- Predictability for town budgets: less volatile than the enrollment based system

Although the subject of this report is school spending, it should be remembered that the function of the school system is to provide excellent education and any changes to our financial or administrative structure must be evaluated in terms of impact on education.

I thank the finance departments in Acton, Boxborough and AB for supplying the school budget data and Peter Ashton who provided data collected by the Regional District Study Committee. Other data comes from either the Massachusetts Department of Education or the Department of Revenue as noted in the text. Any errors in the data contained in this document should be ascribed to the author.

Assessment Formulas – Status Quo

The primary source of K-12 school funding in Massachusetts is the local property tax. The school budget¹ is divided by the total property value (EQV)² and multiplied by the value of each individual property to determine individual tax bills for each property. At the local, K-6, school level, both Acton and Boxborough fund their school systems in this fashion. The formula used to calculate the tax rate to fund K-6 education is shown as equation 1.

Equation 1. EQV Assessment

Acton Net K-6 school spend/Acton EQV*\$1000 = Acton tax rate*

Boxborough Net K-6 school spend/Boxborough EQV*\$1000 = Boxborough tax rate*
*per \$1000 assessed value

Note that equation 1 contains no reference to number of students, only to the total school spending.

At the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD, Gr 7-12), the net school spending is apportioned according to enrollment based on a three year rolling average. See Appendix 2.

Equation 2. Enrollment Assessment

Net ABRSD spend * % Acton enrollment/Acton EQV*\$1000 = Acton Tax Rate*

Net ABRSD spend * % Boxborough enrollment/Boxborough EQV*\$1000 = Boxborough Tax Rate*
*per \$1000 assessed value

¹ budget in this context refers to “net spending”, gross budget minus state and other aid as approved by Town Meeting each spring.

² property value as determined by town assessor. In this memorandum, Equalized Valuation (EQV) a value determined by the Commonwealth will be used in place of the assessed value. The Commonwealth uses EQV in the calculation of state aid. The conclusions in this memorandum would not be effected by the substitution of EQV with the actual assessed valuations.

Discussion of Assessment Formulas

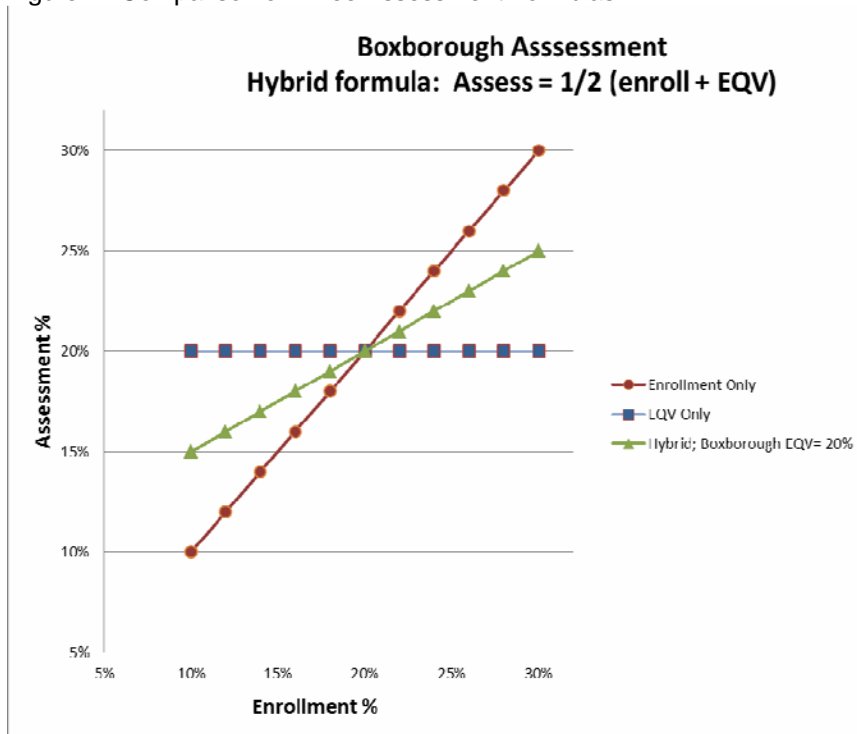
An enrollment based formula fairly distributes cost where all cost is variable (this is a poor assumption as demonstrated in Appendix 2). Since enrollment is constantly changing, enrollment based allocation increases the volatility of the assessment (which is partially mitigated by using a multi-year rolling average).

In reviewing the past twenty years of ABRSD enrollment and assessments, I found that Boxborough enrollment ranged from a high of 21.9% to a low of 16.6%; range 5.4%. This resulted in a tax shift from Acton to Boxborough from FY95 to FY05 and back from Boxborough to Acton since that time. (See Petersen to Regional Study Committee Dec 17, 2012).

An EQV (property value) based formula distributes cost based on property value. Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of taxation based on property ownership, both Acton and Boxborough have funded their local school systems on this basis for more than a century. Since property value changes slowly, the property tax provides a stable, predictable revenue source. An EQV based formula would have provided half the change in the assessment ratio relative to enrollment over the past twenty years (Boxborough EQV high of 22.2% to a low of 18.9%; range 3.3%).

For the purpose of discussion (and easy calculation), I'll assume that Boxborough EQV is fixed at \$1 billion and Acton at \$ 4 billion so that Boxborough's EQV is 20% of the total. On that basis, three assessment formulas may be compared: enrollment only, EQV only and Hybrid (average of enrollment plus EQV). The assessment percentages associated with each formula as a function of enrollment are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Comparison of Three Assessment Formulas



The EQV formula provides an assessment which is invariant as a function of enrollment. The enrollment based formula provides a 1:1 relationship between enrollment and assessment. The hybrid formula literally splits the difference.

At an enrollment of 20% and an EQV of 20%, all three formulas provide the same assessment: 20%. Over the past twenty years, if we had operated at a fixed allocation of 19.5% of the cost to Boxborough, the ABRSD would have achieved exactly the same financial result it achieved by shifting cost back and forth with changing enrollment.

However, the shifting of costs back and forth comes at a real cost to students. As noted in the Southborough regional study (1999):

“Schools are not operated like factories with incentives to produce products at a lower unit cost and therefore with associated economies of scale. Costs in schools are an outcome of a political and budgetary process. Thus, in looking for factors that “explain” differing high school per pupil costs, the Committee’s analysis showed that the strongest factor is the average tax base per capita.”

An EQV based formula always provides the largest tax base per student. Understanding the financial and political dynamics associated with deviation from an EQV based approach provides a strong rationale for including an EQV component in the assessment formula. (See Appendix 3 for a comparison of EQV per capita and per student for various communities.)

Consider the case where Boxborough enrollment drops to 10% and assessment is based solely on enrollment. Ninety percent of the cost of the region (including fixed costs like facilities and central administration) would be born by Acton (80% of the tax base). Since the Acton assessment is limited by the Acton tax base, school services would be cut to meet Acton’s financial capacity. No argument by Boxborough or its representatives is likely to cause Acton to increase capacity via a property tax override. At Town Meeting, the budget is likely to be supported by both towns as it will show significant

fiscal restraint. Since Acton and Boxborough have historically low per pupil spending relative to our peer communities, the result is even lower per pupil spending and reduced educational services.

On the other hand, consider the case where Boxborough enrollment increases to 30%. Now 30% of the schools' cost is supported by 20% of the regional tax base. Boxborough school committee members would argue for drastic cuts to the budget, resulting in highly significant reduction in educational services. If Boxborough was not successful in arguing for a fiscally austere budget at the School Committee level, the school budget/assessment would not likely survive Boxborough town meeting.

The problem in both cases is the same, when the financial consequences of the budget are unevenly distributed, the interests of the towns become misaligned with one town being more incented to improve services and the other town more incented to craft a budget within a fiscal constraint. The school committee loses the ability to have a productive inter-town conversation about the value of incremental or decremental educational services.

Proposal for a Hybrid Assessment Formula

My understanding, is that the Regional Study Committee has proposed shifting the enrollment based formula in favor of Acton to fit the predicted K-12 regional costs so that both Acton and Boxborough receive benefits relative to the status quo. The Regional Study Committee recommends that the shift be 2%. Since Boxborough enrollment is predicted to decrease over the next few years, the benefit ratio will shift over time.

Equation 3: Study Committee Proposed Assessment Formulas

Net ABRSD spend * (% Acton enrollment – 2%)/Acton EQV*\$1000 = Acton Tax Rate*

Net ABRSD spend * (% Boxborough enrollment + 2%)/Boxborough EQV*\$1000 = Boxborough Tax Rate*
*per \$1000 assessed value

I propose that the Regional Study Committee consider a hybrid formula where the percentage contributions are the average of each town's enrollment and EQV shifted in favor of Boxborough so that the formula is predicted to reasonably distribute the five year financial benefits of regionalization.

Equation 4: Petersen Proposed Assessment Formulas

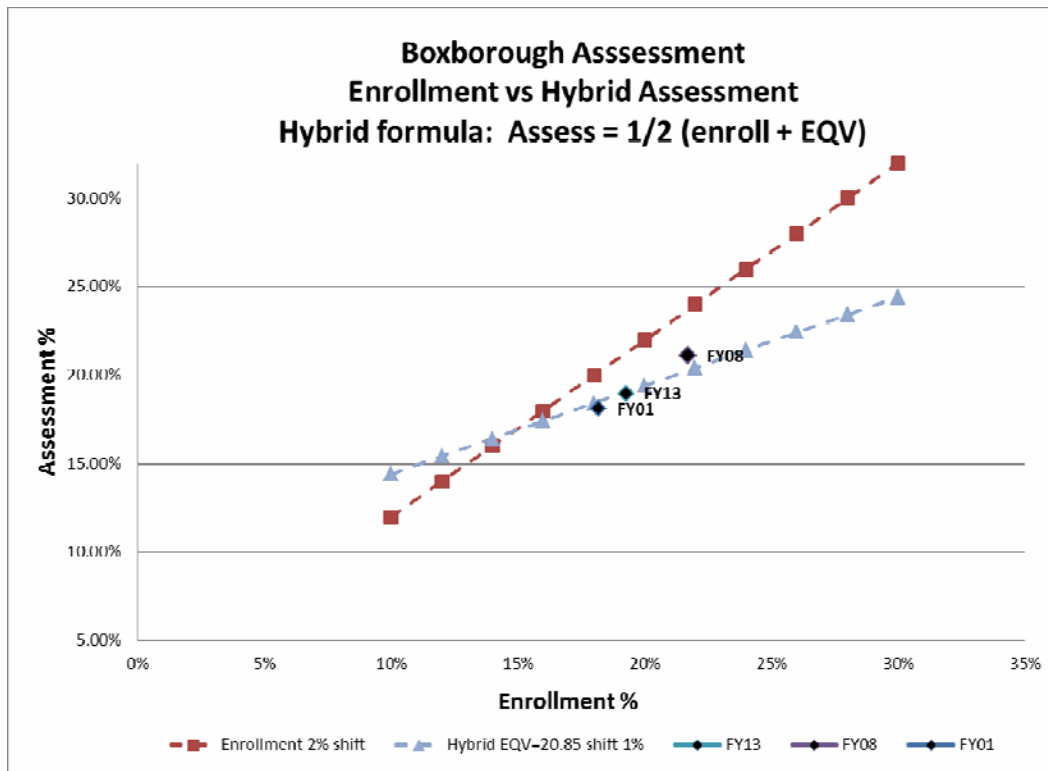
Net ABRSD spend * (% Acton hybrid + 1%)/Acton EQV*\$1000 = Acton Tax Rate*

Net ABRSD spend * (% Boxborough hybrid - 1%)/Boxborough EQV*\$1000 = Boxborough Tax Rate*
*per \$1000 assessed value

Where: % hybrid = $\frac{1}{2}(\% \text{ enrollment} + \% \text{ EQV})$

A comparison of these formulas is shown in Figure 2, where EQV is the average of the two most recent EQVs, 20.85%. The formulas provide the same assessment, 17%, at a Boxborough enrollment of 15%. The actual enrollment and assessment percent (ABRSD Gr7-12) for FY13, FY08 and FY01 are included for reference.

Figure 2. Comparison of Proposed Formulas, Boxborough Assessment as a function of enrollment



Appendix 1. Assessment based on Enrollment

Until recently both Acton and Boxborough have had a sufficiently large population of K-6 students to provide cost-effective primary education through local schools in each town. While Acton still has a large elementary population, Boxborough's primary school population has decreased with the result that Boxborough's per pupil cost has rapidly increased (Table 1). While Acton's student population decreased by 5%, per pupil spending increased by 9%. During the same period, Boxborough's enrollment decreased by 16% while per pupil spending increased by 23%.

Table 1. K-6 Enrollment Changes and per pupil spending in Acton & Boxborough

	Enrollment		Total Budget \$/pupil	
	APS	Blanchard	APS	Blanchard
FY13	2338	392	\$ 11,361	\$ 16,245
FY12	2399	419	\$ 10,885	\$ 14,673
FY11	2413	459	\$ 10,738	\$ 12,824
FY10	2476	466	\$ 10,401	\$ 13,204

If educational costs were primarily variable costs, Blanchard's per pupil spending should have been similar to Acton's spending. The same perspective is gained by looking at the Blanchard school budget over the past few years. The department of education collects data on required and actual school spending:

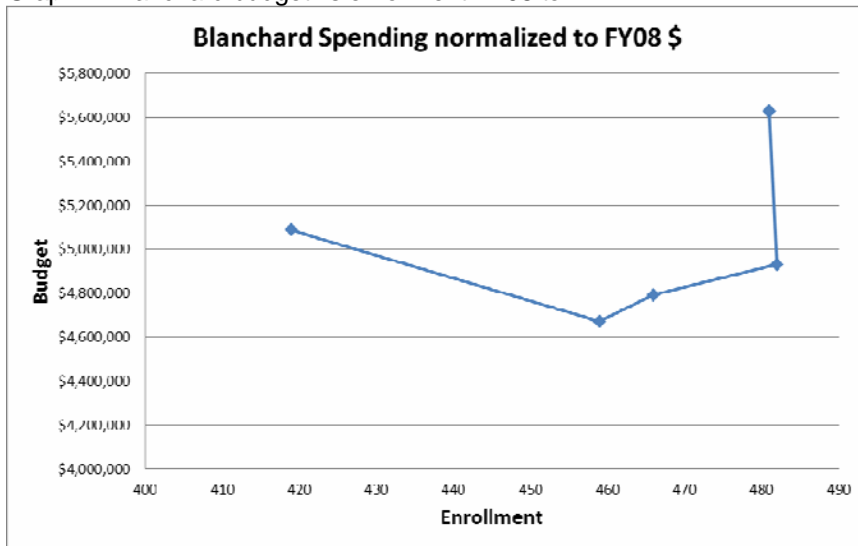
<http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/chapter70/compliance.html>

Table 2. Boxborough Public School Spending (Blanchard)

	required	budgeted
	net school	net school
	spending	spending
FY12	4,331,929	6,073,981
FY11	4,306,671	5,557,558
FY10	4,508,953	5,611,008
FY09	4,517,508	5,602,905
FY08	4,523,666	5,626,542

The relationship between Blanchard School spending and enrollment is shown in Graph 1.

Graph 1. Blanchard budget vs enrollment FY08 to FY12



An enrollment based formula assumes that cost is proportional to number of students. Fundamentally this is a poor assumption. First, changing the size of the regional school district by a small number of students does not change expense. For example, the current school district, about 3000 students is unaffected by the addition or subtraction of 30 students (a 1 % change). The loss of 30 students scattered across grades and disciplines does not allow us to reduce staff (and consumable expenses per student are negligible) nor does the addition of 30 students require the addition of staff. However, if those students come from a single town, that town will see either a lower or higher assessment although no change in school expenses has occurred. The fixed cost behavior of the school system over small changes in student numbers is the reason that both the AB regional system and the Boxborough local school system have accepted choice students. As shown in Table 1, the apparent cost of accepting a choice student would be large yet both the ABRSD (7-12) and the Boxborough Public Schools have accepted choice students. Obviously both school committees recognize that their incremental cost is not their per pupil spending.

Table 1. Comparison of Per Pupil Spending with Choice Revenue

	FY11 per student		
	Spend	Choice	
		Revenue	Net Income
ABRSD			
Grades 7-12	(\$13,182)	\$5,000	(\$8,182)
Acton Public			
Schools	(\$11,480)	\$5,000	(\$6,480)
Boxborough			
Public Schools	(\$14,222)	\$5,000	(\$9,222)

http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/ppx.aspx

Appendix 2. ABRSD 7-12 Current Assessment Formula

The Acton-Boxborough Regional school district was formed to provide both Acton and Boxborough the ability to pool our resources and provide both a better and a more cost-effective secondary education. The assessments to the town are based on student enrollment, the school budget (after reduction due to other funding primarily state aid) is allocated on a percentage basis to each town based on the percentage of its students in the 7-12 regional school district.

The following text is excerpted from the ABRSD regional agreement as amended

SECTION 5. APPORTIONMENT AND PAYMENT OF COSTS INCURRED BY THE DISTRICT

A. For the purpose of apportioning assessments levied by the District against Acton and Boxborough, costs shall be divided into three categories: construction costs, capital costs and operating costs.

1. "Construction costs" shall include the costs of creating or acquiring new and/or additional educational, administrative or other permanent or temporary District building space and/or substantial renovation of existing permanent or temporary District building space or sites therefore, including but not limited to costs of plans, original equipment and furnishings, architect's fees, consultant's fees, site work, and start up operations, and also the payment of principal of and interest on bonds or other financial obligations issued by the Regional School District to finance construction costs. The intent is to include such costs as would be part of an approved school project which are or would have been eligible for a school building assistance grant for a capital construction project, major reconstruction project and/or emergency reconstruction project as those terms are defined in the School Building Assistance Program established by St. 1987, c. 746, s. 2, as amended (M.G.L. c. 70, App_ s. 1-1 through s. 1-21) and the Department of Education, School Construction Regulations, Title 603, Chapter 38 of the Massachusetts Code of Regulations.

2. "Capital costs" shall include all costs for equipment and/or extraordinary expenses which are not "construction costs" as defined in the preceding subsection, and are not "operating costs" as defined in the following subsection, whether financed by the issuance of bonds, or other financial obligations, or paid for out of a single annual assessment to the member towns. In the event such costs are financed by the issuance of bonds or other financial obligations, the periodic payments of the necessary interest, as well as the repayment of principal, shall be included in "capital costs."

3. "Operating costs" shall include salaries and benefits paid to personnel; pension costs; periodic lease payments for building space owned by others which may be used for Regional School District activities; payments for contracted services; costs of ordinary maintenance and repairs of the District's buildings, grounds and equipment; payments for materials and supplies; costs of textbooks and learning materials; utility expenses; costs of recruitment, evaluation, training and administration of personnel; necessary insurances; and other costs related to the provision of organized instruction to students; including interest on temporary notes issued by the District in anticipation of revenue, but excluding transportation expenses as provided in Section 6.

B. The construction, capital and operating costs of the District and payments of principal of and interest on its bonds, notes and other obligations, net of Federal and/or State financial aid and any other income received by the District, shall be apportioned between Acton and Boxborough towns as set out below.

C. Providing such is not contrary to applicable law, each member town's share of capital and operating costs for each fiscal year shall be determined by computing, to the nearest 1/100 of 1%, the ratio which the sum of its pupil enrollments in the Regional School District on October 1 of the three years next preceding the start of such fiscal year bears to the sum of the pupil enrollments in the Regional School District of all member towns on October 1 of the same three years. These ratios shall be known as the base percentages.

D. Providing such is not contrary to applicable law, Boxborough's share of construction costs for each fiscal year shall be its base percentage minus five percentage points. Acton shall pay the remainder of such construction costs.

E. In the event that some provision of applicable law requires some different apportionment of the costs of construction or capital or operating the District than is provided in this section of the Agreement, then insofar as is practical and allowed by the applicable law, in good faith the member towns shall apportion those costs, the division of which is not otherwise controlled by the applicable law, so as to exactly or as nearly as practical achieve the same overall apportionment of total costs in each fiscal year as would otherwise have been achieved by the formulas specified in Section 5, subsections C and D above.

In the event that (an) additional town(s) is (are) admitted into the Region under the provisions of Section 8, the formulas in Section 5, subsections C, D and E will be renegotiated.

Appendix 3. Property wealth of Peer Communities, per capita, per student

As presented at Acton Town Meeting Spring 2011. On either a per capita or per student basis, Acton is the least wealthy community in this group.

2010	Population	Students Public School	Students	EQV*	EQV/ person	EQV/ student
	census	DESE	%	Billions	'000s	'000s
Acton	21924	5042	23.0%	3.99	\$182	\$791
Boxborough	4996	951	19.0%	1.05	\$210	\$1,104
Carlisle	4852	982	20.2%	1.46	\$301	\$1,487
Concord	17668	2845	16.1%	5.56	\$315	\$1,954
Lincoln	6362	1494	23.5%	2.01	\$316	\$1,346
Sudbury	17659	4292	24.3%	4.26	\$241	\$992
Lexington	31394	6,366	20.3%	8.65	\$276	\$1,359

*EQV full, fair valuation all taxable property



Town of ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS



December 18, 2012

Dear Members of the Acton Public School Committee,

The Acton Finance Committee has had the opportunity to discuss some of the issues related to a proposal to expand our current Regional School District with Acton and Boxborough to include grades K through 6. Peter Ashton and Xuan Kong (representing the Regional Study Committee) presented to our committee at our November 29 meeting, and we followed that with a discussion among ourselves at our December 11 meeting. We concluded that we had some open questions, and thought these best directed to the Acton Public School Committee. We'd appreciate your written response at your earliest convenience, as this will guide our thinking on the subject in the weeks and months ahead.

1. Please identify and describe the specific educational benefits for Acton elementary students and families that will come with adding the Blanchard School to the five Acton elementary schools. If there are measurable benefits, please state how these will be measured.
2. When the Regional Study Committee presented to us in November, there were concerns expressed about why staff was being added to make the regionalization feasible. At our most recent meeting, our representative to the study committee, Bob Evans, indicated that there had been some new thinking about these staffing changes, and the savings had increased to approximately \$900,000. Please describe the staffing changes currently included in the regionalization plan, and indicate the educational rationale for these additions and subtractions.
3. One area that was discussed was the statement that the administration currently duplicates some tasks for each district (Acton, Acton-Boxborough, Boxborough), such as state reporting, special education compliance, etc. Could you elaborate how this improved efficiency will improve the educational experience for students, or what other efficiencies might be enabled and please provide several specific examples?
4. Several members of the Finance Committee expressed concern that regionalizing K-12 would result in a "loss of control" over budgets; two-thirds of the funds expended in each town would now be handled with an assessment

which can only be voted up or down at Town Meeting. As elected representatives from Acton, have members of the Acton School Committee discussed how to respond to this concern? Would it be your intent to continue to participate in shared budget development through the Acton Leadership Group process? What other assurances could you offer to assuage this concern?

5. Finally, if budget savings are attained as described by the Regional Study Committee, what would be the intent of the Acton Public School Committee about what to do with these savings? Is it the intent of the School Committee to shift these funds to municipal priorities and hence shift the split; would the savings be reinvested by the schools; would the money be returned to the taxpayers by taxing at less than the full amount allowed under Prop 2½, or is there another alternative as to what would happen with this savings?

We appreciate your thoughtful response to our questions, and recognize that this is a busy time of year for all of us as we embark on a new budget cycle and try to wind down for some time with family and friends over the winter holidays.

Doug Tindal, Chairman
On behalf of the Acton Finance Committee

Regionalization Study Committee Presentations

Group	Date	Time	Location	Presenster(s)	Other	Comments
Blanchard Parents (movie night)	1/4/2013	7:00 PM	Blanchard School	Mary Brolin, Brigid Bieber		
Acton COA	1/9/2013	12:30 PM		Peter Ashton	Mac Reid	
Acton Board of Selectmen	1/14/2013	7:20 PM (40 min)	Acton Town Hall, Room 204	Peter Ashton		
Blanchard PTF	1/24/2013 Tentative	7:30 PM	Blanchard School	Mary Brolin, Maria Neyland		Will hold if needed
Douglas and Gates Teachers	1/7/2013	3:30 PM	Douglas	Peter Ashton		
Boxborough Teachers	1/24/2013	3:15 PM	Blanchard School	Mary or Mac, Maria or Brigid		
Conant, Merriam and McCarthy-Towne Teachers						Deanne will arrange
Boxborough COA						Mary will arrange



Acton Leadership Group Meeting

6.3.1

January 10, 2013

5:00PM

Town Hall, Faulkner Hearing Room 204

Bart Wendell Facilitating

----- Agenda Topics -----

			<u>Comments</u>
1. Approve Minutes of December 13, 2012	General Discussion		
2. Update of FY13 Revenues and Expenses	Steve Mills Steve Ledoux		
3. Review of Updated ALG Spreadsheet	Don Aicardi Steve Barrett		
4. Discussion on Use of Reserves	ALL		
5. Update on Regionalization	Xuan Kong		
6. Update on OPEB Working Group	Don Aicardi Steve Barrett		
7. Public Comment			
8. Next Meeting – January 24, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.			

7.1.1 and 7.1.2

Note: Because these two items are large files, they are posted as separate documents after the packet.

7.1 FY 14 Budget Update- *Steve Mills, Don Aicardi*

7.1.1 ABRSD Prelim Budget by Character Code – Summary & Detail

7.1.2 APS Prelim Budget by Character Code – Summary and Detail
(to be discussed at APS SC meeting on 1/17/13)

**ACTON PUBLIC and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEES
Meeting Agenda**

**Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School**

**Saturday, January 26, 2013
Coffee 8:30 a.m.**

**9:00 a.m. – 1:45 p.m. Joint and ABR SC Budget Presentations
1:45 – 2:45 Acton Public SC Budget Presentations**

APS and ABRSD FY'14 Budget Presentations

9:00	Superintendent's Introduction	Steve Mills (15)
9:15	FY'13 Budget Overview	Don Aicardi (20)
9:35	Human Resources	Marie Altieri (15)
9:50	Pupil Services	Liza Huber (Overview & AB 40)
10:30	BREAK	(15)
10:45	Prof Dev / Curriculum	Deborah Bookis (45)
11:30	Junior and Senior High	Andrew Shen (10) / Alixe Callen (20)
12:00	LUNCH	
12:45	Facilities	JD Head (15)
1:00	Educational Technology	Amy Bisiewicz (15)
1:15	Community Education	Erin Bettez (15)
1:30	ABRSC Budget Discussion	(15)

AB Regional School Committee adjourns / APS SC Meeting continues - 10 min break

1:55	Acton Public Schools (K-6)	Steve Mills – introduction Liza Huber (15 APS, then 30 for principals) Damian Sugrue – Conant Principal Christopher Whitbeck – Douglas Principal Lynne Newman – Gates Principal David Krane – McCarthy-Towne Principal Edward Kaufman – Merriam Principal Priscilla Kotyk – Assistant Principal Matthew McDowell – Assistant Principal (15)
2:40	APSC Budget Discussion	
2:55	Adjourn	

Balance of FY'14 School Budgets Schedule

1/8/13	Preliminary budgets to APS and AB Regional School Committees released Presentation of FY'14 ABRSD Budget & Discussion
1/17/13	Presentation of FY'14 APS Budget & Discussion
1/26/13	Joint School Committee Saturday All-Day Session with presentations by school leaders; Selectmen / Finance Committee / public at large all encouraged to attend
2/7/13	AB Regional School Committee budget hearing (required by law) - <i>Possible Budget Vote</i> & Acton and Boxborough Finance Committees / Review / Comments to School
2/14/13	APS School Committee budget hearing (required by law) - <i>Possible Budget Vote</i> Possible Joint School Committee meeting if vote needed on Regional budget/assessments (2/18/13 is deadline to vote according to Regional Agreement)
3/7/13	AB SC Meeting
3/21/13	APS School Committee Meeting
3/28/13	Joint Acton/Acton-Boxborough SC Meeting
4/1/13	Acton Town Meeting begins
4/29/13	Special Town Meetings in Acton and Boxborough for Regionalization
5/3/13	Boxborough Town Meeting begins

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

School Committee Meeting
January 8, 2013

1

ABRSD FY'14 Operating Budget

Superintendent's Introduction

2

Introduction

The Public School Budget Must Be:

- a) A Statement of Values
- b) The Product of Teamwork
- c) Transparent

3

Introduction

1. Long Range Strategic Plan
2. Investment Budget
3. Sound Financial Management

4

ABRSD FY'14 "Investment Budget"

Direction for FY'14:

- 1) Calculate Level Service
- 2) Look for all possible savings
- 3) Review new staff requests, capital items, and program expansions for investment budget

5

ABRSD FY'14 "Investment Budget"

ABRSD FY'14 Budget

6

ABRSD FY'14 Preliminary Budget

Four Ways to View ABRSD Budget:

- 1) Traditional "Annual to Annual" Increase
- 2) "Layered" Analysis of Increases
- 3) Effect of Enrollment Shift on FY'14 Budget
- 4) Boxborough & Acton Assessment Increases

7

ABRSD FY'14 Preliminary Budget (in thousands)

	AB
FY'13 Final	\$39,114
FY'14 Preliminary Budget	\$40,775
\$ Change from Final FY'13	\$1,660
% Change from Final FY'13	4.24%

8

ABRSD Preliminary Budget FY'14 Estimate

FY10 to FY11 Annual increase?	3.72%
FY11 to FY12 Annual increase?	0.72%
FY12 to FY13 Annual increase?	1.59%*
FY13 to FY14 Annual increase?	4.24%

**Decreased by 1.23% by Federal EdJobs Grant*

ABRSD Preliminary Budget FY'14 Estimate

FY13 Final to FY14 Requested % Increase:

ABRSD Level Service Budget	3.04%
OPEB Trust Fund Increase	.35%
Investment Budget Recommendations	<u>.85%</u>
 FY'14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget	 4.24%

Acton to Boxborough Ratio Shift

- Boxborough enrollment is dropping.
- This trend will continue for the next several years.
- Enrollment based on Ashton Projections plus out-of-district.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Acton	2,336	2,343	2,381	2,391	2,386	2,380
Boxborough	617	593	576	536	533	509
Total	2,953	2,936	2,957	2,927	2,919	2,889
Acton %	79.11%	79.80%	80.52%	81.69%	81.8%	82.4%

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ABRSD “Three-Year Enrollment Percentages” FY’09-FY’14

FY	Boxborough	Acton	Variance
FY’09	21.46	78.54	.12
FY’10	21.15	78.85	.31
FY’11	20.77	79.23	.38
FY’12	20.19	79.81	.58
FY’13	19.33	80.67	.86
FY’14	18.39	81.61	.94

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FY'14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget Estimate

Based on: **current level service numbers** and
current state aid estimates; and
updated enrollment numbers

Town Assessments will increase from \$31,094,432 in FY'13 to \$32,654,263 in FY'14 (increase of **\$1,559,831**)

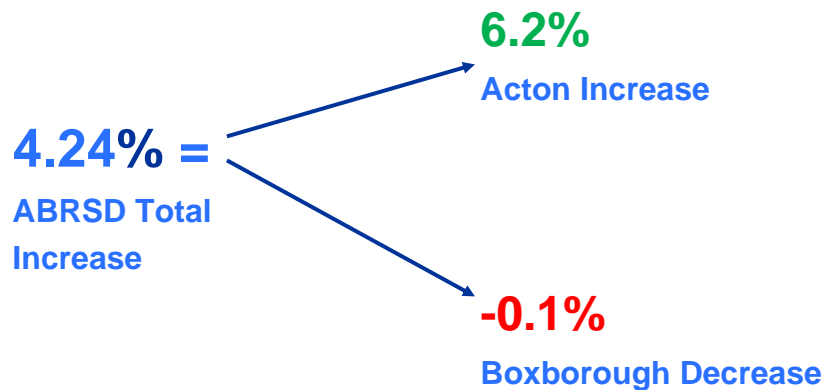
Figuring in: **regional agreement percentages ...**
 Acton 81.61%, Boxborough 18.39%

	<u>Acton</u>	<u>Boxborough</u>
FY'14 Assessments:	\$26,761,552	\$5,892,711
	increase (6.2%)	decrease (-.1%)

13

ABRSD FY'14 Preliminary Budget Estimate

Current FY'13 to FY'14 ABRSD Budget Increase:



14

FY'14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget (Continued)

	Acton	Boxborough
Current Percentages	81.61%	18.39%
FY'14	\$ 26,761,552	\$5,892,711
Last Year's Percentages	80.67%	19.33%
FY'13	\$26,479,658	\$6,174,605
Swing due to enrollment	+ \$281,894	- \$281,894

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ABRSD "Three Year Enrollment Dollar Shift" FY'11-FY'14

FY	Acton	Boxborough
FY'11 to FY'12	+ \$179,238	- \$179,238
FY'12 to FY'13	+ \$267,412	- \$267,412
FY'13 to FY'14	+ \$281,894	- \$281,894

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FY' 14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget

- 2.5% total salary increase estimated for all employees including steps, lanes, longevity and Supermax for teachers
- Health Insurance: HMO 75/25%, Indemnity 50/50%
- Moves current FY'13 staff forward into FY'14
- Accounts for any loss in grants used to support FY'13 Budget (IDEA, Title 2A)
- Health Insurance estimate 9% rate increase due to a combination of market rates and recent claims history (initial estimate by Health Insurance Trust; still under consideration) (currently a budget impact increase of 19% due to loss of federal EdJobs funds used in FY'13)
- Continuing "Realistic" budgeting whenever possible to reflect actual trends and to improve analysis

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Current FY' 14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget (Continued)

- Middlesex retirement (for ABRSD non-teacher staff) preliminary annual assessment - increasing by 13.4%
- Updated all ABRSD debt service (including debt service for Lower Fields project)
- Circuit Breaker reimbursement assumed at FY'13 level of 65% (\$1.1 million)
- Assumes continuing trends of lower energy usage
- Increasing Drug & Alcohol counseling hours

18

Current FY'14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget (Continued)

OPEB Trust Fund Contribution:

FY'13: \$236k

FY'14: \$376k

OPEB trust fund contribution is considered part of
ABRSD's annual operating budget

Annual Trust Contribution is marked on Table 6 to
be allocated between Acton & Boxborough

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FY'14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget (Continued)

FY'13 to FY'14

■ SPED Legal Services	(-10k)
■ ERI Estimate	(+109k)
■ Bus Leases (2 nd Year of 5 Year Lease)	(+11k)
■ Workers Compensation	(+37k)
■ Town of Acton MUNIS hosting - increase to move to new Application Service (Cloud Based)	(+34k)
■ Unemployment Insurance	(-20k)
■ Debt Service for Lower Fields Updated	(-26k)
■ Community Education Contribution For Lower Fields	(-25k)

20

FY'14 ABRSD Budget Items

What will we be monitoring in the next few months for the ABRSD?

21

FY'14 ABRSD Budget Items To Be Closely Monitored In Coming Months

- Chapter 70: Assuming full Foundation Budget - concerns about level revenue
- Current Assumption: State Aid based on final FY'13 Cherry Sheet
- Regional Transportation Revenue (**based on FY'12 EOYR at 65% up from 60%**)
- Circuit Breaker Reimbursement? (**\$1.1 million**) (currently estimated at 65%)
- Health Insurance Trust/Rates for FY'14 (currently at **9%**)?
- Energy Savings - Decreasing Usage?
- "E & D" Reserves Number Used to Support the ABRSD Budget?
- Are there opportunities, if appropriate, to move positions over to Special Revenue accounts?
- Legal Expenses - closely monitoring due to change?

22

FY'14 ABRSD Budget Items

What is the amount of "E & D" that we are using for the ABRSD FY'14 budget?

23

ABRSD Excess/Deficiency Balance: How will it be used in FY'14?

Based on assumption we will start the FY'14 budget process slightly below the E & D 5% Cap of **\$1.9m**

Start with 5% of Oper Budget E & D balance: (\$1.9m): 5%
2% of Oper Budget Used for FY'14 budget (\$770k): (2%)
 1% Oper Budget FY'13 Year End Turnback (\$385k): 1%
ESTIMATED FY'13 Year End E & D Bal (\$1.5m): 4%

Due to our high level of reserves, and our close proximity to the 5% cap, we will continue to evaluate this throughout the budget season

24

FY'14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget

FY'14 Investment Budget Requests

25

FY'14 ABRSD Preliminary Budget Investment Budget

Senior High: 2.0 FTE English Teachers (\$108k)
LESS: \$30k reduction in 990 salary
account (*LRSP Goals #1, 2, 3*)

Bridges Program (\$134k)
(*LRSP Value #1; Goals #1, 2, 3*)

Other: Professional Development (\$120k)
(*LRSP Goals #2, 3*)

Specific "Added Value" will be presented by
Principals on Budget Saturday

TOTAL: \$333k

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Current Unaddressed Needs

**ABRSD Highlighted Personnel Needs Not Included
In FY'14 Budget
– Junior High School**

Total Cost

JH Special Ed Classroom
(1.0) FTE SPED Teacher
(3) 19 hour Classroom Assistants

For caseloads at Learning Centers and
Special Programs

\$104,500

**Non-Level Service FY' 14 Highlighted Capital Budget
Requests – ABRSD Small Capital & Technology Needs
*not included in budget***

Senior High:

Lighting & HVAC Equipment	\$122k
Repave Sidewalk Outside Front Entrance	\$40k
Repair Bleachers in Lower Gym	\$20k
Complete TV Studio Replacement	\$29k
Language Lab Replacement	\$36k
Auditorium Stage Floor Replacement	\$7k

Non-Level Service FY'14 Highlighted Capital Budget
Requests – ABRSD Small Capital & Technology Needs

not included in budget

Junior High:

20 Desktop Computers for Special Education Learning Center Rooms	\$15k
Library/Media Center Computers	\$40k
Renovation of 10 Science Rooms -Tables	\$60k
Smartboard for Music/Chorus Room	\$1.8k

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School Committee FY'14 Budget Schedule

Upcoming Schedule

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Balance of School Committee FY'14 Budget Schedule

- 1/8/13 Preliminary budgets to APS and AB Regional School Committees released
Presentation of FY'14 ABRSD Budget & Discussion
- 1/17/13 Presentation of FY'14 APS Budget & Discussion
- 1/26/13 Joint School Committee Saturday All-Day Session with presentations by school leaders; Selectmen / Finance Committee / public at large all encouraged to attend
- 2/7/13 AB Regional School Committee budget hearing (required by law) - *Possible Budget Vote* & Acton and Boxborough Finance Committees / Review / Comments to School
- 2/14/13 APS School Committee budget hearing (required by law) - *Possible Budget Vote*
Possible Joint School Committee meeting if vote needed on Regional budget/assessments (2/18/13 is deadline to vote according to Regional Agreement)

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Balance of School Committee FY'14 Budget Schedule

- 3/7/13 AB SC Meeting
- 3/21/13 APS School Committee Meeting
- TBD Boxborough warrant goes to printer
- 3/28/13 Joint Acton/Acton-Boxborough SC Meeting
- 4/1/13 Acton Town Meeting begins
- 5/3/13 Boxborough Town Meeting begins

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Saturday, January 26th
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
R.J. Grey Junior High Library
School Department Budget Presentation
by Department for Public Input

Staff Presentations
School Committee Questions
Public Input

Table 6
ACTON-BOXBOROUGH RSD
 Analysis of Assessments
 Projected State Aid Numbers
 School Year 2013-2014

	GROSS BUDGET 2013-2014	ACTON 81.61%	BOXBOROUGH 18.39%
INSIDE DEBT LIMIT:			
OPERATING BUDGET	\$36,153,439	\$29,504,821	\$6,648,617
REGULAR TRANSPORTATION	\$1,383,455	\$1,152,191	\$231,264
OPEB TRUST FUND CONTRIBUTION	\$376,000	\$306,854	\$69,146
LOWER FIELDS CONSTRUCTION	\$123,518	\$106,979	\$16,539
SPED TRANSPORTATION	\$842,021	\$687,173	\$154,848
TOTAL INSIDE DEBT LIMIT	\$38,878,432	\$31,758,018	\$7,120,415
OUTSIDE DEBT LIMIT:			
CONST DEBT SERVICE (JHS&SHS/OUTSIDE 2 1/2)			
JH CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION	\$462,934	\$400,947	\$61,987
SH CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION	\$1,433,844	\$1,241,852	\$191,992
TOTAL OUTSIDE DEBT LIMIT	\$1,896,778	\$1,642,799	\$253,979
GROSS BUDGET	\$40,775,210	\$33,400,817	\$7,374,393
DEFERRAL OF TEACHER SALARIES	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL BUDGET INCLUDING DEFERRAL	\$40,775,210	\$33,400,817	\$7,374,393
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES:			
CHAPTER 70 BASE AID	\$6,969,133	\$5,687,509	\$1,281,624
CHOICE/CHARTER SCHOOL ASSESSMENT	(\$464,922)	(\$379,423)	(\$85,499)
CHARTER SCHOOL AID	\$108,536	\$88,576	\$19,960
REGIONAL SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION (Cherry Sheet)	\$737,542	\$613,635	\$123,907
TRANSFER FROM PREMIUM ON LOAN-JHS	\$658	\$570	\$88
TRANSFER FROM OPEB TRUST FUND	\$0	\$0	\$0
TRANSFER FROM RESERVES (Excess & Deficiency)	\$770,000	\$628,397	\$141,603
TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	\$8,120,947.00	\$6,639,265	\$1,481,682
ASSESSMENTS	\$32,654,263	\$26,761,552	\$5,892,711

*

Acton-Boxborough Community Education

Administration Building, 15 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720

MEMORANDUM

TO: Steve Mills

FROM: Erin Bettez

RE: Lower Fields Quarterly Update

DATE: December 13, 2012

Since the last report in September, the great news is that school use of the fields has increased, FOLF's rental revenues are up, and construction has progressed significantly.

Financial Snapshot

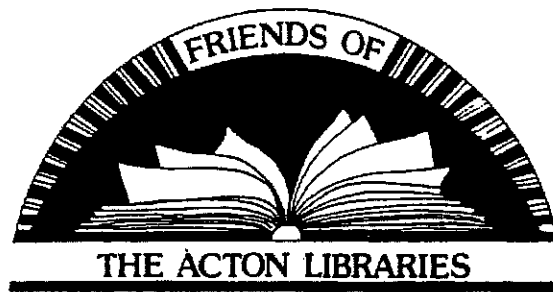
We receive monthly reports from the Friends of the Lower Fields, summarizing both projected rental revenues and those received each month. At the beginning of September, the projected annual rental revenue was \$175,275 (with \$37,800 rec'd). As of 11/30/12, FOLF's revenue projection for the year is \$198,068 with \$98,467.50 paid. Notably, our financial model projected rental revenues in Year 1 at \$200,000 so FOLF is close to meeting that target.

Construction

In the last two weeks, the lights have been hooked up and the temporary generator removed. Construction is well underway on the snack shack and other site amenities. The good weather has meant that the parking lot could be paved and people at the Lower Fields may now park there. This is a huge development, as users have been parking on school lots and walking out to the back fields. We expect all construction to be substantially complete early in this coming spring athletic season, so perhaps that is when we should consider planning a public ceremony.

School Use

At the time of the first report, ABRHS was utilizing every possible moment after school. What evolved over the fall months was frequent use during the school day by Phys. Ed. classes. This trend is expected to continue and even increase in the spring, when natural grass areas are still sodden and unusable.



December 6, 2012

Dr. Steven Mills
Acton Public and Regional Schools
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720

Dear Dr. Mills:

Here is our annual envelope full of checks for all the school libraries. In the past, we have asked permission first, then sent the checks. But this time, we'll take our chances!
(Should there be any questions, feel free to contact me at cdomblewski@gmail.com or 978-263-2046.)

As always, these checks represent the work of many volunteers over the course of the entire year. It is our wish that they be used specifically for library purposes: print, nonprint, or equipment.

With kind regards,

Carol Dombrowski, President
Friends of the Acton Libraries

\$4400 for ABRHS
\$2400 for RJGJHS
\$2300 for each elementary school: Conant, Douglas, Gates, McCarthy-Towne and Merriam
(\$2300 x 5 = \$11,500)

\$18300 total gift

Department of Educational Technology
Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
(978) 264-4700
<http://ab.mec.edu>

TO: Dr. Stephen Mills
FROM: Amy Bisiewicz
DATE: 1/4/13
RE: Donation from IBM Corporation

We have received a very generous donation from IBM Corporation in the amount of \$1,500, given in recognition of the volunteer service of IBM employee, Dawn Wang.

We would appreciate it if the School Committee would approve this gift to assist with the cost of STEM related activities and efforts, including the ABRHS Science team and Computer Science club.

Thank you.

To: Steve Mills
 From: Larry Dorey
 Re: Discipline Report for December, 2012
 Date: 12/28/12

There were 17 discipline referrals to the administration during the month of December, 2012. This total is down from 30 last year. 1 student was suspended this month, while 10 students were suspended during December, 2011.

Suspensions for December, 2012

Infraction	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Abusive/Obscene Language			2		
Alcohol Use	3				1
Disruptive/Uncooperative Behavior	1	1			
Drug Paraphernalia				3	
Drug Possession	2	1		1	
Forgery	1				
Leaving	1				
Other	1			2	
Physical Assault			1		
* Poss. with intent to distribute				1	
Sexual Harassment				1	
Truancy Issues			2	1	
Under the Influence				1	
Weapons		2			
Total	9	4	5	10	1

A list of all infractions for the month of December, 2012 appears on the backside of this page.

c: Alixe Callen

Other Infractions for December, 2012

Infraction	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Abusive/Obscene Language		1	3		
Academic Integrity				1	
Alcohol Use	3				1
Bus Discipline Issues					3
C.H. Alcohol		1	20	2	
Computer Use			1		
Disrespectful	1	1		2	
Disruptive/Uncooperative Behav.	4	5	1	6	
Drug Paraphernalia				3	
Drug Possession	2	1	1	1	
Forgery	2	2	3		
Harassment		1	5		5
Leaving School Grounds	13	9	4	1	2
Non Compliance w/school rules					
Other	1	2	4	5	
Out of School Issue			1		
Parking Violations				1	
Physical Aggression	1		1		
Physical Assault			1		
Poss. with intent to distribute				1	
Sexual Harassment				1	
Teasing		1			
Tardy		2		1	2
Teasing			4		2
Threatening			1		
Truancy	5	5	7	4	2
Under the influence of drugs				1	
Vandalism		1			
Weapons		2			
Total	32	34	57	30	17

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF MATHEMATICS LEAGUES

8.1.2

SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS CONFERENCE MATHEMATICS LEAGUE
SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS MATHEMATICS LEAGUE
WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS MATHEMATICS LEAGUE
WORCESTER COUNTY MATHEMATICS LEAGUE
GREATER BOSTON MATHEMATICS LEAGUE
MASSACHUSETTS MATHEMATICS LEAGUE

December 2012

President

Michael Curry
Canton High School
Canton 02021

Contest Director

Ben DeLorio
Belmont High School
Belmont 02478

Contest Coordinator

William Noeth
Acton Boxborough
Regional High School
Acton 01720

Secretary

Stephen Gregory
St. John's High School
Shrewsbury 01545

Treasurer

Martin J. Badoian
Canton High School
Canton 02021

Parliamentarian

Alfred Galante
Bentley University
Waltham 02452

Technology Coordinator

Michael Curry
Canton High School
Canton 02021

Seven Acton-Boxborough students were finalists and three others were semi-finalists in this year's Mathematics Olympiad competition. This examination, consisting of questions from all areas of high school mathematics - Arithmetic, Number Theory, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Analytic Geometry, Probability, and Logic, is co-sponsored annually by the Massachusetts Association of Mathematics Leagues and the Actuaries Club of Boston.

Junior Nihal Gowravaram led Acton-Boxborough as the top school scorer, with a perfect score. Also, placing in the top 100 statewide were David Fink, Shinya Hirata, Samuel Yuan, Joshua Xiong, Niket Gowravaram, and Embert Lin. These seven students will be invited to take the second level contest examination on March 5, 2013.

Ajay Saini, Ren-Jay Wang, and Maya Fridrikh were named as semi-finalists by placing in the top 10% statewide.

The results of this examination are used to identify students with exceptionally strong mathematical ability, as well as to stimulate student interest in mathematics.

The finalists will receive awards from the Massachusetts Association of Math Leagues at the Annual Awards Night presentation in May 2013.



William Noeth
Regional Department Leader
Mathematics, Grades 7-12

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
36 Charter Rd.
Acton, MA 01720

8.1.3

To: Stephen Mills
From: Alixe Callen
cc: Maria Anthony
Date: December 21, 2012
Subject: Donations to Window Seat

The following donations have been made to Window Seat:

Thomas Lux	\$100
Miller family	\$ 25

Their donations will be deposited into Fund 3305 – SHS Gifts.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
36 Charter Rd.
Acton, MA 01720

To: Stephen Mills
From: Alixe Callen
Date: December 3, 2012
Subject: Donation from Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce

Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce organized the Oktoberfest 5K Run/Walk that took place on October 13, 2012. For every registration \$5 is contributed to a non-profit organization of the participant's choice. As a result \$10 has been donated to the SHS Student Activity Fund.

The donation will be deposited into the Academic Decathlon fund to support their activities.

Thank you.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
36 Charter Rd.
Acton, MA 01720

To: Stephen Mills
From: Alixe Callen
cc: Maria Anthony
Date: November 31, 2012
Subject: Donations Received

The following have made donations to "Window Seat":

Gao family	\$25.
Wildes family	25.
Chen family	25.
Thomas Mullen/Catherine Coleman	30.
Ketan Parekh	30.
Bendig family	35.
Douglas Sondak	50.
Roy family	60.
Qin-Fan Zhu/Xinrong Qiu	75.
Engineering Solutions	100.
Salerno's Restaurant	100.
Dunkin Donuts	100.
Boheim family	100.

We ask that you approve the donations, which will be deposited into Fund 3305, SH Gifts.

Thank you.

R.J. Grey Junior High School

To: Steve Mills
 From: Allison Warren and James Marcotte
 Re: Discipline Report for December 2012
 Date: January 4, 2013

There were 25 discipline referrals/concerns (including requests from teachers for assistance) reported to the Administration during the month of December. There were no suspensions this past month.

	<u>Dec-08</u>	<u>Dec-09</u>	<u>Dec-10</u>	<u>Dec-11</u>	<u>Dec-12</u>
<i>Total Discipline Referrals Reported</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>25</i>

	<u>Dec-08</u>	<u>Dec-09</u>	<u>Dec-10</u>	<u>Dec-11</u>	<u>Dec-12</u>
Total Suspensions	4	2	6	1	0
Alcohol Use					
Vandalism	2				
Drug-related incident					
Fighting					
Harassment (non-sexual)					
Inappropriate/disruptive/disrespectful behavior		2	2	1	
Physical aggression	2		4		
Sexual harassment					
Stealing					
Threatening					

	<u>Dec-08</u>	<u>Dec-09</u>	<u>Dec-10</u>	<u>Dec-11</u>	<u>Dec-12</u>
Total Other Infractions	20	53	6	21	25
Abusive language/profanity	1	3			
Alcohol use/possession					
Bus discipline	2			1	2
Academic Integrity		3			
Class/school truancies		6		1	
Computer violation			2		
Disruptive behavior (classroom, cafeteria, hallway)	7	24	4	8	2
Harassment (non-sexual)/bullying/teasing		1		3	8
Non-compliance with school rules		3		4	4
Out of school issue					
Physical aggression	2				2
Sexual harassment	1	1			

Stealing					
Threatening		1			
Tardy to class					
Uncooperative/disrespectful behavior	7	11		4	7

The referrals/concerns generally were quickly resolved and no further intervention was required.

ELL STUDENT POPULATION
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
January 1, 2013

Category	Total as of 12/1/2012	Additions	Subtractions	Current Total as of 1/1/2013
RJG JHS	10	0	-1	9
ABRHS	6	0	0	6
ABRSD TOTALS	16	0	-1	15



Dear Parents and Guardians,

During this holiday season, I wanted to take the time to reflect on the various opportunities for learning that have been provided to our families and staff by Pupil Services during the first three months of school. Although I cannot fully describe all the professional learning in this newsletter, I have included brief summaries and snippets as a way of sharing.

First and foremost, thank you to all the families who came together to make our 6th annual Parent/Guardian Workshop Day on October 29th such a success. This widely attended workshop, **“Social Cognition: Infusing Strategies, Tools and Techniques in the Academic Setting ~ A Language Processing Perspective”**, was given by Pamela Ely, Founder and Director of the Ely Center in Waltham, MA.

Pamela first described how language develops and is influenced by a natural developmental perspective, called play. As each child is different, he/she brings to the setting unique interests, strengths and challenges. Emerging challenges may affect social, behavior, communications and cognitive tasks that in turn, may impede listening, talking, and in-class behaviors. Sometimes, these deficits can be defined as sensory issues, executive functioning or processing issues (language).

However, Pamela emphasized that it is important to use language in context (using and reading facial expressions, making eye contact, monitoring body language, taking the perspective of others, initiating and maintaining conversations, taking turns, and speaking clearly). For example, she created a five-point scale and helped us think through simple tasks for children like “stop, wait, think”. She applied the five-point scale to volume (chaos, group work, conversations, whisper, and silent), to voice/tone (angry, annoyed, neutral, happy/pleased/ excited), to big/little problem (disaster, big problem, problem, little problem, glitch). Practicing the five-point system with guided support can shape behaviors and encourage language processing.

Additionally, participants saw the positive aspects of friendship games (be nice, cheer each other on, give positives, stay with the group, take turns, think about others, help each other). These social interactions are embedded at play, in sport activities, in extra curricular activities, at home and in school. In a sense, wherever the child goes, there are stated and more importantly, for this discussion, unstated rules. With guided support, school and home teach and reinforce these social interactions within the context of play, activities, and classroom learning so that there is consistency and structure for learning and modeling for the future (children can rely on past learning and experience). Basically, what we are trying to achieve is an atmosphere where ample time is given to social pragmatics, expressive language, auditory comprehension, and self-advocacy.

Pamela Ely shared with the audience many ideas for the classroom and home. I have attached her actual slides and would emphasize that her practical tips and ideas are applicable for children of all ages and grades, with or without disabilities.

On November 3rd, through a collaborative effort of local early childhood educators from Acton and surrounding communities, we hosted a presentation by Dr. Peter Gray entitled, **“What Have We Done to Childhood?”** Dr. Gray is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Psychology at Boston College and those fortunate enough to attend were treated to an encouraging and personalized outlook on raising and working with children. Throughout his talk, Dr. Gray presented evidence from the research that children’s playfulness and curiosity are powerful vehicles for education if allowed to function effectively and unfettered. He explained the role of play and curiosity in children’s intellectual, social, moral, emotional, and physical development. There was reflection on the evolution of child’s play from more open ended and child driven, as seen through the middle of the last century, to the highly structured, adult driven and structured experience of most of our children’s play in society today. He emphasized the need to give our children the opportunity to drive and be responsible for their own play and their interactions with peers as a means of self-discovery and growth. Play gives children the opportunity to learn to problem solve on their own. Dr. Gray encourages the unleashing of the instinct to play, which will make our children happier, more self-reliant, more socially involved, more resistant to bullying behaviors, and better prepared for life. While it may be necessary for the adults in the lives of our students with special needs to provide some structure and boundary to play, the essential premise of giving children greater freedom in their play and less constant structure is worth considering.

During the district-wide professional day on November 6th, district paraprofessionals, working in both regular and special education settings, were offered the opportunity to participate in three workshops, designed to extend our professional training to all staff who come in contact with our children (paraprofessionals, bus drivers, etc.). We now include these staff members because we want to ensure that we, as adults, work consistently as one team.

As keynote speaker, I was able to address current issues faced by paraprofessionals in the areas of civil rights (discrimination and harassment), child abuse and neglect (the role and responsibilities of a mandated reporter), bullying prevention and intervention, student records (FERPA, maintaining student confidentiality, email communication), and more. In addition to practical tips for daily use, legal requirements for student support and intervention were shared through hypothetical scenarios. Facilitating discussion through questions and answers was well received by all participants.

With more than 30 years of teaching experiences, Mary Koert and Sally Smith from the EDCO Collaborative offered the paraprofessional group valuable information regarding the role and responsibilities of all teachers as part of an inclusive learning community for students with varying needs. A range of disabilities and disability categories were reviewed in addition to a range of instructional strategies and approaches.

Last but not least, and recognizing that each child carries his/her own identity with varying talents, Dr. Charles D. Brown led paraprofessionals through a pragmatic behavioral workshop designed to help staff understand the cycles of negative student behavior, while applying new strategies for providing behavioral support. Dr. Brown is a licensed practicing psychologist who has presented both nationally and in Europe and has extensive experience treating children with learning, language and behavioral difficulties. Dr. Brown has taught at Tufts University and served as a school psychologist for the Belmont Public Schools for more than 28 years. Participants practiced specific strategies for modifying a child's environment as a way of helping children regulate their emotions, increase frustration tolerance, and participate in learning. The talent and commitment of the district's paraprofessional staff were evident in the overwhelming attendance and participation of this essential group of professionals.

Finally, I wanted parents and guardians to be aware that district administrators were also offered customized professional learning opportunities through three administrative seminars that addressed Pupil Services' related practices and obligations regarding a range of topics that impact the group on a daily basis: navigating inquiries and concerns regarding student records, custody agreements, confidentiality, allegations of child abuse and neglect, and bullying prevention, to name a few. In addition to providing hands on information regarding the pertinent laws and regulations, these seminars also addressed themes of collaboration between home and school. Exposure to these seminars was the sharing of knowledge through discussion and dialogue, rather than an emphasis on the Acton-Boxborough policies. In collaboration with Stoneman, Chandler and Miller, our school special education legal consultants, we were able to bring the latest and current thinking on these topics.

In summary, our workshops balanced practical advice and strategies readily applicable to any environment and we thank our presenters for sharing their expertise with us. In Pupil Services, we are encouraged by your feedback about professional development for staff and parents and have made these types of workshops a priority for reflection, thought and learning. Additionally, we have attached a Pupil Services Booklist that you may find of interest. In closing, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you as parents and guardians for the continued support of Pupil Services. We are committed to your children's learning.

Happy Holidays,

Liza

Liza Huber
Director of Pupil Services



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AB SpEd PAC Website <http://www.abspedpac.org>

MONTHLY ENROLLMENT
ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS
2012-2013 ACADEMIC YEAR

Dec-12

Levels	Sept. 1			Oct. 1			Nov. 1			Dec. 1			Jan. 1			Feb. 1			Mar. 1			Apr. 1			May 1			Jun 1		
	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot	A	B(1)	Tot
K	265	43	6	267	43	6	269	43	6	272	43	6	278																	
1	312	59	7	312	59	8	310	59	8	312	59	8	320																	
2	350	54	8	348	54	8	348	54	8	352	54	8	360																	
3	383	53	7	382	53	8	392	53	8	381	53	8	389																	
4	355	65	2	354	65	2	354	65	2	354	65	2	356																	
5	354	68	2	354	70	2	356	70	2	355	70	2	357																	
6	382	76	5	387	75	5	387	75	5	388	75	5	387																	
n D.Pre-sch. Cldr	30	0	2	30	0	2	32	5	2	34	5	0	33																	
In D.Pre-sch. Int	7	5	0	7	5	0	7	11	0	11	0	0	11																	
OOD Pre-sch	3	2	0	3	2	0	3	2	0	3	2	0	3																	
O.D. SPED K-6	20	7	0	20	7	0	20	7	0	20	7	0	20																	
A.P.S. Total	2461	432	39	2459	433	41	2500	433	41	2517	433	39	2514																	
7	377	74	11	375	74	11	375	74	11	374	74	11	375																	
8	396	71	7	396	72	7	396	72	7	397	72	7	396																	
J.H.S. Total	773	145	18	771	146	18	771	146	18	771	146	18	771																	
9	413	71	12	408	71	12	407	71	11	406	71	11	406																	
10	397	75	7	392	74	7	393	74	7	393	74	7	393																	
11	420	106	4	419	107	4	417	107	4	418	106	4	418																	
12	381	100	7	379	100	7	376	101	7	376	101	7	376																	
9-12 Ungr.	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																	
H.S. Total	1611	352	30	1598	352	30	1593	353	29	1593	352	29	1593																	
Total JHS & HS	2384	497	48	2369	498	48	2369	499	47	2364	498	47	2364																	
O.D. SPED 7-12	45	9	0	45	9	0	44	9	0	42	8	0	50																	
Reg. Total	2429	506	48	2414	507	48	2408	508	47	2406	506	47	2399																	
A.P.S. Total	2461	432	39	2459	433	41	2500	433	41	2517	433	39	2514																	
Reg. Total	2429	506	48	2414	507	48	2408	508	47	2406	506	47	2399																	
Grand Total	4890	506	87	4873	507	89	4869	508	88	4881	506	86	5473																	

A = ACTON
B = BOXBOROUGH
C = Choice/Staff/Tuition In
Pre-School = SPED
P.G. = Post Graduates
Ungr. = Ungraded
O.D. = SPED Out of 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

8.6

PRESS RELEASE

The Town Clerk's Office would like to inform the residents of Town of Acton that Nomination Papers for the Tuesday, March 26th, 2013 Annual Town Election will be available in the Town Clerk's office during the regular office hours Monday-Friday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.

The last day to obtain nomination papers is February 1, 2013 at 5pm.

Those seeking office in the election must obtain the signatures of at least fifty (50) registered voters in the Town of Acton. The last day to file completed Nomination Papers with the Town Clerk's office is February 5, 2013 at 5pm.

The contested offices are as follows:

Office	Number of Vacancies	Term
Moderator	1	1 Year Term
Board of Selectmen	2	3 Year Term
School Committee	2	3 Year Term
Trustees, Memorial Library	1	3 Year Term
	1	1 Year Term to fill unexpired term
Water Supply Distrct	1 (Commissioner)	3 Year Term

Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
SCHOOL CALENDAR, 2013-2014
Bold Underlined Dates = No School Days

Aug.	M	T	W	T	F	Teachers' mtg. - Aug. 26	Jan.	M	T	W	T	F	Schools Open - Jan. 2
Sept.	26	27	28	29	<u>30</u>	Schools Open - Aug. 27				<u>1</u>	2	3	JH AND HS Early Dis. -
	<u>2</u>	3	4	<u>5</u>	6	No School - Aug. 30		6	7	8	9	10	Martin Luther King Day - Jan. 20
	9	10	11	12	13	Labor Day - Sept. 2		13	14	15	16	17	Kindergarten Change-over - Jan. 21
	16	17	18	19	20	Rosh Hashanah - Sept 5		<u>20</u>	21	22	23	24	School Days - 21
	23	24	25	26	27	HS Late Start -		27	28	29	30	31	
	30					School Days - 22	Feb.	M	T	W	T	F	
Oct.	M	T	W	T	F			3	4	5	6	7	JH AND HS Late Start -
		1	2	3	4			10	11	12	13	14	Presidents' Day - Feb. 17
	7	8	9	10	11	Columbus Day - Oct. 14		<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>	Winter Recess - Feb. 17-21
	<u>14</u>	15	16	17	18	Elem Early Dismissal -		24	25	26	27	28	School Days - 15
	21	22	23	24	25	School Days - 22	Mar.	M	T	W	T	F	
	28	29	30	31				3	4	5	6	7	
Nov.	M	T	W	T	F	Prof. Day - Nov. 5 (no school/students)		10	11	12	13	14	JH AND HS Late Start -
					1	Elem Early Dismissal -		17	18	19	20	21	(Possible Prof. Day - Mar 25)
	4	<u>5</u>	6	7	8	Veterans Day - Nov. 11		24	25	26	27	28	School Days - 21
	<u>11</u>	12	13	14	15	Half Day - Nov. 27		31					
	18	19	20	21	22	Thanksgiving Recess - Nov. 28-29	Apr.	M	T	W	T	F	
	25	26	27	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	School Days - 17			1	2	3	4	Good Friday - April 18
Dec.	M	T	W	T	F			7	8	9	10	11	Spring Recess - April 21-25
	2	3	4	5	6			14	15	16	17	<u>18</u>	Patriots Day - April 21
	9	10	11	12	13	Jr. High. Early Dis -		<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	School Days - 16
	16	17	18	19	20			28	29	30			
	23	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	Winter Recess - Dec. 24 - Jan. 1	May	M	T	W	T	F	
	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>				School Days - 16					1	2	
								5	6	7	8	9	
								12	13	14	15	16	Memorial Day - May 26
								19	20	21	22	23	School Days - 21
								<u>26</u>	27	28	29	30	
							June	M	T	W	T	F	
								2	3	4	5	6	Graduation - June 6
								9	10	11	12	13	Last day - June 12 - 19
								16	17	18	19	20	(depending on snow days)
								23	24	25	26	27	School Days - 9
													Total Days = 180 - 185

Note: Yom Kippur is Saturday, Sept. 14, 2013.

No School and Delayed Opening Announcements air on: <http://ab.mec.edu>,
TV Channels 4, 5, and 7 and radio stations WBZ and WEIM

Monthly School Committee Meetings are held:

Acton-Boxborough Regional - 1st Thursday, Jr High Library - 7:30 PM;

APS Elementary Schools - 3rd Thursday, Jr High Library - 7:00 PM. See

<http://ab.mec.edu/about/meetings.shtml> for more information.

APPROVED - 12/28/12

8.8