

Acton Public and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committees

June 6, 2013

7:00 p.m. Acton Boxborough Regional SC meeting

7:05 p.m. Joint APS/ABRSC Executive Session

**7:30 p.m. Joint APS/ABRSC SC meeting
followed by ABRSC 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

June 6, 2013

7:00 p.m. AB Regional School Committee Meeting

7:05 p.m. Joint APS/ABR School Committee Executive Session

7:30 Joint APS/ABR School Committee Meeting

followed by ABR School Committee Meeting

AGENDA

- 1.0 **ABRSC CALL TO ORDER** (7:00)
- 2.0 **Election of Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Officers for 2013-2014**
 - 2.1 Chairperson – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
 - 2.2 Vice Chairperson – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
 - 2.3 Secretary – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
 - 2.4 School Committee Annual Organizational Meeting – Policy File: BDA
 - 2.5 School Committee Officers – Policy File: BDB
- 3.0 **APSC CALL TO ORDER**
- 4.0 **JOINT SC EXECUTIVE SESSION** (7:10)
Strategy with respect to Negotiations

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPEN MEETING (7:30)

- 5.0 **CHAIRMEN'S INTRODUCTION**
 - 5.1 Thank you to ABRHS Principal, Dr. Alixe Callen – *Steve Mills, Maria Neyland*
 - 9.1 (Taken out of order) New ABRHS Leadership Team – *Steve Mills, JoAnn Campbell*
- 6.0 **APPROVAL of MINUTES and STATEMENT of WARRANT**
 - 6.1 Minutes of 3/7/13 Joint/AB/APS School Committee meeting (*next meeting*)
 - 6.2 Minutes of 4/4/13 Joint/AB SC Meeting (*next meeting*)
 - 6.3 Minutes of 4/25/13 ABRSC Meeting
 - 6.4 Minutes of 5/2/13 Joint AB/APS School Committee meeting (*next meeting*)
- 7.0 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 8.0 **JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS** (7:40)
 - 8.1 Recommendation to Approve FY'14 Gift from Acton Boxborough Student Activities Fund (ABSAF) – **ABRSC VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
 - 8.2 Visual Arts Department Presentation, Diana Woodruff, Director (7:45)
 - 8.3 Presentation by FUTURES Special Education Review – M. Neiman, Ph.D. and M. Palladino. Ph.D. (7:55)
 - 8.4 Superintendent's Annual Evaluation and FY14 Contract – *to be done at meeting on 6/20/13*
 - 8.5 Regionalization Report, 6/3/13 Acton and Boxborough Special Town Meetings- *Maria Neyland (oral)* (8:15)
 - 8.6 School Committee Member Reports (*oral*) (8:25)
 - 8.6.1 Acton Leadership Group (ALG) Report – *Dennis Bruce*
 - 8.6.2 Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) Report – *Maria Neyland*
 - 8.6.3 Health Insurance Trust (HIT) Report – *Kim McOsker*
 - 8.6.4 OPEB Task Force Update – *Dennis Bruce*

- 8.6.5 Acton FinCom Report - *Dennis Bruce*
- 8.6.6 Acton BOS Report - *Paul Murphy*
- 8.7 Policy Subcommittee Update (8:35)
 - 8.7.1 Security Camera Systems, File: EEAEB – **SECOND READING** – **VOTE** - *JD Head*
 - 8.7.2 Family and Medical Leave (FML) Policy, File GCCC/GDCC: – **FIRST READING** – *Marie Altieri*
 - 8.7.3 Small Necessities Leave (SNL) Policy, File GCCCA/GDCCA: – **FIRST READING** – *Marie Altieri*
- 8.8 FY14 School Calendar – Early Release/Late Start dates added and proposal for no school on 12/23/13 and ending school on 6/13/14 – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills* (8:45)
- 8.9 FY14 APS/ABR **School Committee** Meetings Calendar Draft – *Maria Neyland* (8:50)
- 8.10 Recommendation to Approve Non-Union Employee Benefits Manuals – **VOTE** – *Marie Altieri, manuals are posted at <http://ab.mec.edu/hr/hrcontracts.shtm>* (8:55)
- 8.11 Recommendation to Approve Food and Related Products Bid (TEC) – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*
- 8.12 Recommendation to Approve Naming of Acton Public Preschool-**VOTE**- *L.Huber, D..Bruce*

APSC adjourns. ABRSC Meeting continues.

- 9.0 **ABRSC BUSINESS** (9:00)
 - 9.1 New ABRHS Leadership Team – *Steve Mill, JoAnn Campbell*
Introduction of Interim Associate Principal Beth Baker and new Deans of Students Steven Martin and Maurin O’Grady
 - 9.2 Recommendation to Approve Bond Refunding and Refinancing of ABRSD Debt – **VOTE** – *Don Aicardi, Tess Summers* (9:05)
 - 9.3 ABRSD FY’13 Year End Review and Expenditure Initiative - *Don Aicardi* (9:15)
 - 9.3.1 Presentation Slides
 - 9.3.2 Letter from Acton Finance Committee dated 5/30/13
 - 9.4 Recommendation to Approve FY’14 Nonresident Tuition Charges-**VOTE**-*D. Aicardi* (9:25)
 - 9.5 Lower Fields Quarterly Report – *Steve Mills* (9:30)
- 10.0 **FOR YOUR INFORMATION** (9:35)
 - 10.1 AB Regional High School
 - 10.1.1 Discipline Report – April and May 2013
 - 10.1.2 Gifts
 - 10.2 RJ Grey Junior High School
 - 10.2.1 Discipline Report –April and May 2013
 - 10.3 Pupil Services
 - 10.3.1 ELL Student Population, May 1 and June 1, 2013
 - 10.3.2 Early Childhood Student Population Report, May 1 and June 1, 2013
 - 10.4 Enrollment Report – May 1, 2013
 - 10.5 Boxborough Town Meeting and Election results - FY14 APS/AB School Committee
 - 10.6 Community Meeting with Dr. Yong Zhao, July 23, 2013 7:00 p.m. ABRHS Auditorium
 - 10.7 All-Staff Retirement Party – June 13, 3:00-5:00, Wedgewood Pines Country Club, Stow
 - 10.8 Dismissal Times for Last Day of School – June 24, 2013
 - 10.9 Boston Globe 5/30/13, article on Student Stress
 - 10.10 Letter from MA Commission on Energy Resources re U.S. Dept of Education’s 2013 Green Ribbon School District Award to ABRSD
 - 10.11 Community Correspondence
 - 10.11.1 “Increasing Transparency” email and response
 - 10.11.2 “Regionalization” emails

NEXT MEETINGS

- June 20, 7:00 pm, RJGJHS Library, Joint APS/ABRSC followed by APS SC meeting

ADJOURN (9:45)

File: BDA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

The annual organization meeting for the Acton Public School Committee shall be held each year at the first meeting following the completion of the Acton annual town meeting. At this meeting, the Committee shall organize by electing one of its members as chairperson, another as vice-chairperson and a secretary who does not need to be a member. At this meeting, the Committee shall also fix the time for holding its regular meetings.

The annual organization meeting for the Acton-Boxborough Regional District School Committee shall be held each year at the first meeting following the completion of the Acton and Boxborough annual town meetings. At this meeting, the Committee shall organize by electing one of its members as chairpersons, another as vice-chairperson, and a secretary who does not need to be a member. At this meeting, the Committee shall also fix the time for holding its regular meetings.

APPROVED 12/2/10

Acton Public Schools and Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chairperson

The chairperson of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the chairperson will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.
4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval.
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the chairperson will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chairperson

The vice-chairperson of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36

Acton Public Schools and Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

Statement regarding the Appointment of
Beth Baker
to the position of
Associate Principal – Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

June 5, 2013

=====
Dr. Stephen Mills, Superintendent of Schools, is pleased to announce the appointment of Beth Baker as Interim Associate Principal of the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School.

Ms. Baker is currently the Regional Department Leader for Alternative Programs at ABRHS. She has worked with a diverse group of students, supporting them in their academic, behavioral, and emotional learning. In addition to her current leadership role, Beth has served as a member of the English department and as coordinator of our Academic Support Center (ASC). Beth has extensive experience in literacy instruction and coaching, including serving as a lecturer at Stanford University and as a literacy coach at Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley, CA. She has been a consultant for SRI International/Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and has worked as a teacher coach and literacy coordinator for CAL Reads. Beth has co-authored articles on literacy and reading and has presented on student-centered instruction and strategies for literacy instruction. Beth has a Bachelor's degree from UMass Amherst and a Master's degree from the University of California at Berkeley.

Beth Baker has all the qualifications that the school district and the Acton Boxborough Community would like to see in an Associate Principal. We welcome her in her new role on the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools' administrative team. Beth will assume her official duties on July 1, 2013.

Office of the Superintendent
Acton Public Schools/ Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
978-264-4700, x3206

Statement regarding the Appointment of
Steven Martin
to the position of
Dean of Students – Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

June 5, 2013

=====

Dr. Stephen Mills, Superintendent of Schools, is pleased to announce the appointment of Steven Martin as a Dean of Students of the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School.

Mr. Martin is currently serving as Assistant Principal at the Narragansett Regional Middle/High School. He served as an administrative intern at both the Forest Avenue School and Hudson High School in Hudson, MA. He has taught business, technology, and math at Hudson and Marlborough High Schools, and he coordinated Marlborough High School's theater program. Steve has a BA from Assumption College and a Masters degree from Framingham State College. He completed the Greater Boston Principal's Residency Network-Cohort 11 at Northeastern University and the Center for Collaborative Education.

Steven Martin has all the qualifications that the school district and the Acton Boxborough Community would like to see in a Dean of Students. We welcome him in his new role on the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools' administrative team. Steve will assume his official duties on July 1, 2013.

Office of the Superintendent
Acton Public Schools/ Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
978-264-4700, x3206

Statement regarding the Appointment of
Maurin O'Grady
to the position of
Dean of Students - Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

June 5, 2013

=====
Dr. Stephen Mills, Superintendent of Schools, is pleased to announce the appointment of Maurin O'Grady as a Dean of Students of the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School.

Ms. O'Grady is currently serving as an English teacher and administrative intern at Watertown High School. She is both the yearbook and newspaper advisor, designed and teaches a journalism course, and serves as a member of the School Site Council, Critical Incident Team, and Professional Development Committee. Maurin piloted a drop-out prevention program for WHS summer school and is a class advisor. She has a BA from Emmanuel College and a Masters degree from Simmons College. She completed the Commonwealth Leadership Academy.

Maurin O'Grady has all the qualifications that the school district and the Acton Boxborough Community would like to see in a Dean of Students. We welcome her in her new role on the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools' administrative team. Maurin will assume her official duties on July 1, 2013.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Draft Minutes

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

April 25, 2013
7:30 p.m.

<i>Members Present:</i>	Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppolino, Paul Murphy, Kim McOsker, Maria Neyland, Deanne O'Sullivan, Kristina Rychlik
<i>Members Absent:</i>	none
<i>Others:</i>	Steve Mills, Beth Petr

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Maria Neyland, Vice-Chairperson.

2.0 PreK – Grade 12 REGIONALIZATION AGREEMENT

- 2.1 Draft Regional Agreement with Appendix A dated 4/8/13, changes tracked
- 2.2 Draft Regional Agreement with Appendix A dated 4/8/13, "clean" copy
- 2.3 Revised Financial Model dated 4/7/13 (#7.1.3 from 4/10/13 SC meeting)

The Committee focused on the revised Draft Regional Agreement dated 4/8/13, which was the same version they discussed at the 4/10/13 School Committee meeting.

2.4 Addition of Intermunicipal Agreement

Maria Neyland explained that the Intermunicipal Agreement came up this week as something that needed to be added. The Committee had no questions and agreed that the sentence drafted by Attorney Lennox should be inserted into Section 4.B of the Proposed Agreement.

2.5 Need to revise Acton Town Charter due to change in number of School Committee members per new Draft Regional Agreement

2.5.1 Possible Draft from Town of Acton Attorney Stephen Anderson dated 4/23/13
The Acton Town Charter needs to be revised because it specifies six School Committee members and the proposed Agreement increases that number to nine members. Acton Town Counsel prepared Charter Amendment language in the packet. Peter Ashton suggested that this item be considered after the Regionalization vote at the meeting on June 3. This also must go to a ballot vote at the next annual town election in March. Attorney Lennox assured Peter that this would not hold up the timing of any aspect of full regionalization. If the Charter amendment does not pass at Town Meeting on June 3, but Regionalization does pass, it could be considered at another Town Meeting. If it does not pass a second time, regionalization could not move forward as proposed. Paul Murphy asked if the number of School Committee members should stay at six to avoid this situation, but there was consensus that the number of School Committee members was an important decision and had involved much serious discussion by the Regional School District Study Committee (RSDSC). Kim McOsker felt that adding more members would be valuable given all the subcommittee and other work required of members of the Committee. Maria asked Dennis Bruce (APSC Chair) to talk to Acton Town Hall.

Chairperson Janet Adachi stated that the Acton Board of Selectmen had been informed of this issue.

2.6 Assessment of Potential Reductions to Blanchard Budget with Full Regionalization
Mary Brolin walked the Committee through her assessment of potential reductions to the Blanchard budget, focusing on "efficiency reductions". Special education costs are difficult because they are so variable. Her analysis does not pull out any special education costs. She described it as a broad cut. Retirements are based on an informed estimate. Deanne O'Sullivan asked about the reduction of five classrooms on Mary's chart. She expressed concern that if an effort is made to try to equal out the schools and reduce class size over time, some families may be forced to move to a school during the 5 year time period. The point was made that there is no intention of closing a school.

In response to a question from Mike Coppolino, Peter referred to slide 14 from the 4/10/13 SC meeting presentation:

FINANCIAL BENEFITS	
Additional transportation aid	= +\$535K
Reduced increase in ch. 70 aid	= -\$156K
Personnel cost savings	= +\$466K
Bonus regional aid (declines over time)	= +\$139K
Contract savings	= + \$21K
NET TOTAL BENEFITS	= +\$1 Million
Average over 5 years	= +\$943K
ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL BENEFITS	= +\$300K to \$1M

Dr. Mills explained that some items could definitely be cut given full regionalization, like one of the two superintendents, however other positions are more complicated. The certified librarian that Boxborough has but Acton does not, is an example. Some may not consider this a saving in Boxborough when the position is shifted to the District. It is a budgetary issue to be decided, if a certified librarian will be available at all for the six elementary schools in a PreK-12 Regional School District. Dennis Bruce asked about Extended Day funding in Boxborough. Mary Brolin said that it has been used to reduce facilities and overhead. She was not sure how Acton used it.

Charlie Kadlec spoke from the audience. He asked what the difference would be if the number of full time equivalent employees (FTEs) in Acton and Boxborough schools were combined and compared to what that number would be with full regionalization. Peter said regionalization would lower the number of FTEs by 4 or 5, translating to approximately \$466,000 in savings. (Slide 14 above).

Mike Coppolino stressed the need for some type of ongoing review committee. He questioned whether page 5 section 6C and page 8 section 11, contained strong enough language to ensure that the savings will be examined and compared to what was projected. He felt that the Committee owes it to the public and future School Committees to confirm this as time goes by. Appendix A section E also has similar language. Maria pointed out that the Committee can do a review like this whenever they like. It could be part of the annual summer workshop meeting. Brigid Bieber agrees with Mike's request and said it could be done using a policy.

Kristina Rychlik emphasized the non financial benefits of full regionalization as well. The Committee agreed that this is very important.

On page 10 section 12 D5 Mary noted that there is a one year delay to get the transportation benefits. It was agreed to add wording to the last sentence similar to "... shall pay an assessment to the ABRSC of an amount equal to the cost of said transportation" Attorney Lennox will be asked to add this.

Dennis spoke for a number of people saying that Appendix A is hard to understand. Maria described it as the mechanism by which the \$1 million in savings is going to be split between the two towns. Contracts are not necessarily easy to understand. Peter Ashton was recognized as an important resource regarding Appendix A.

3.0 **June 3, 2013 SPECIAL TOWN MEETINGS in ACTON and BOXBOROUGH**

3.1 Drafting of Motion(s) for the Town Meeting Warrants

Peter Ashton and Mac Reid will write the warrant article and Attorney Lennox will write a draft motion. The Committee would like these for next week's SC meeting. Brigid noted that the motions might not be the same for both towns and that Attorney Lennox should be asked about that. Mike asked if there would be a more formal opinion from DESE before the June 3 Town Meetings. Dr. Mills is trying to get a meeting with DESE before Town Meeting with an informal commitment. Boxborough needs warrant text by May 6th and Acton by May 17th.

3.2 Timetable of Events

The Committee agreed there was not a lot of time to communicate the issues.

4.0 **PUBLIC FORUMS**

4.1 "Expanded Regionalization" slides

The Committee reviewed proposed slides to be used for the public forums. Janet Pierce spoke from the audience as an Acton parent suggesting that the 80 – 20 savings split be included in presentations. It was agreed that a consistent answer is necessary when asked how the savings will be allocated. This will be determined by the Boards of Selectmen and future School Committees as budget decisions are made each year.

Allen Nitchelm spoke from the audience suggesting that savings is not the right word to use. He asked for a promise that the "savings" will go back to the taxpayers. Maria Neyland stated that that decision is not in School Committee's jurisdiction. Allen requested that it be proposed to the ALG. He disagrees with taxing to the maximum and then saying savings have been provided.

The assessments will be reduced by the savings number and the results will be determined by the Boards of Selectmen, Finance Committees and School Committees.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents used: see agenda

Office of the Superintendent
Acton Public Schools/Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
978-264-4700, x3211

To: Justin Goodwin and Richard Guzzardi, ABSAF
From: Dr. Stephen Mills and Marie Altieri
Date: 5/31/13
Re: ABSAF Support for FY'14

Thank you very much for ABSAF's donation of \$83,000 for the 2013 – 2014 school year. We are so grateful for the Acton Boxborough Student Activity Fund's continued support of our students and programs.

Below is a breakdown of the 2013 - 2014 plan for use of the ABSAF gift funds.

FY '14 High School Student Activities Stipends	\$18,000
FY '14 Junior High Student Activities Stipends	\$ 7,000
FY '14 Interscholastic Athletics	\$43,000
Performing Arts (FY '14)	<u>\$ 15,000</u>
Transportation	\$2,000
Proscenium Circus – High School	\$9,000
Instruments	\$2,000
TOTAL:	\$83,000

Cc: A. Callen
A. Shen
S. Desy
M. Hickey
D. Aicardi

Office of the Superintendent
Acton Public Schools/Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
978-264-4700, x3211

To: Justin Goodwin and Richard Guzzardi, ABSAF
From: Dr. Stephen Mills and Marie Altieri
Date: 5/31/13
Re: Additional ABSAF Support for FY'13

Thank you very much for your additional gift of \$17,000 for the 2012 – 2013 school year. We will use the additional \$17,000 for interscholastic athletics. Combined with your prior gift of \$54,945, you have generously donated \$71,945 for the 2012 – 2013 school year. We know how hard you all have worked to raise this money, and we truly appreciate it.

Below is a breakdown of the 2012 - 2013 plan for use of the ABSAF gift funds.

FY '13 High School Student Activities Stipends	\$12,000
FY '13 Junior High Student Activities Stipends	\$ 6,000
FY '13 Interscholastic Athletics	\$27,945 + \$17,000 = \$44,945
Performing Arts (FY '13)	<u>\$ 9,000</u>
Transportation – High School	\$2,000
Proscenium Circus – High School	\$5,000
Instruments	\$2,000
TOTAL:	\$71,945

Cc: A. Callen
A. Shen
S. Desy
M. Hickey
D. Aicardi

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
for the
ACTON-BOXBORO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
and the
ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Conducted by Futures Education

Authored By:

Michael Neiman, Ph.D.

Michael Palladino, Ph.D.

Richard Judah, De.D.

Richard LaBrie, M.A.

Respectfully Submitted:

June 2013



Executive Process Summary

The leadership of the Acton-Boxboro Regional School District (ABRSD) and the Acton Public Schools (APS) commissioned this review of specific areas within the domain of its Pupil Services Department. The review entailed a triangulation of information gathered from: qualitative sources, quantitative analyses, and established benchmarks with respect to school-based practices. More specifically, the qualitative analyses comprised: (1) a series of interviews with related service providers, educators, para-professionals, administrators (central office and school-based), and parents; (2) a review of documents (i.e., IEPs) to ascertain the nature of interventions; (3) site visits to in-district programs; and (4) an understanding of the methods used to deliver special education services to students in reference to best practice, student outcomes, and Least Restrictive Environments (LRE). Quantitative analyses included: (1) multidimensional descriptive statistical analyses of the District's instructional, related services, and support personnel in reference to staffing configurations, workloads, and service delivery models; and (2) a review relating to the costs (i.e., transportation) and potential sources of revenue (i.e., Municipal Medicaid).

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

ABA: Applied Behavioral Analysis

AIR: Availability Index Ratio

DESE: (Massachusetts) Department of Education and Secondary Education

Effectiveness: The degree to which the services under review promote optimal educational outcomes and student access to the curriculum

Efficiency: The degree to which the special education services and personnel under review are responsibly, uniformly, and optimally utilized to ensure District resources are being expended in a fiscally sound manner

FAPE: Free and Appropriate Public Education

FTE: Full-time equivalent

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP: Individualized Education Program

LEA: Local Education Agency

LRE: Least Restrictive Environment

OOD: Out of District Placements

OT: Occupational Therapist or occupational therapy services

PD: Professional development

PLEP: Present Levels of Educational Performance (from an IEP)

PLC: Professional Learning Community

PT: Physical Therapist or physical therapy services

RSP: Related Service Provider

Rtl: Response to Intervention

SWD: Students with Disabilities

S-LP: Speech-Language Pathologist or speech-language pathology services

TA: Teaching Assistant

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PROJECT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

As mutually agreed upon between Futures Education and the leadership of ABRSD and APS, the purpose of this analysis is to describe, analyze, and provide recommendations to improve specific aspects of its special education delivery system. The particular areas under investigation included: (1) transportation services; (2) a review of related services; (3) the assignment and utilization of para-professional supports; and (4) the counseling and psychological services model.

As agreed to in the Proposal, the methodology entailed: a review of educational documents (i.e., Individualized Education Programs), descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, site visits, and confidential interviews with a representative number of stakeholders that allowed for a variety of perspectives.¹ Therefore, given the breadth and depth of these multiple sources, the results that are reported within this document represent recurring themes from the interviews (outlying comments were not included as part of the primary findings) coupled with quantitative data.

In consideration of the content areas that were addressed by multiple areas, and for ease of presentation, the document is configured with respect to two primary constructs: *Program Review* (comprising related services, paraprofessional utilization, and the counselor and psychology model) and *Financial Review* (comprising transportation and Medicaid). In turn, each of these two sections is divided into *Findings* and *Recommendations*. The document concludes with a *Final Commentary and Prospective Future Directions* that considers the findings with respect to the global aspects of programmatic effectiveness, fiscal viability, and potential directions leadership may consider as part of its strategic planning.²

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTARY

At the outset of this report, the authors wish to acknowledge Liza Huber, the Director of Pupil Services, all of her staff, and the school personnel for their help in facilitating all the needed logistics for this analysis. A project of this scope necessitates a great amount of effort in securing documents, staff for interview, physical space for the team, and a myriad of other requirements. The team is grateful for the grace, poise, and hospitality shown to us.

As shall be elaborated in that section of the report, the review team was extremely impressed with the continuum of services provided to the Districts' students. The APS and ABRSD staff, both special and general educators alike, takes justifiable pride in the quality of programs and supports that make the educational experience an extremely rich and meaningful one for students with educational disabilities. This programmatic excellence begins with a model pre-school program and is marked by an impressive continuum of services for students through grade 12. It is the authors' hope that the recommendations provided within this document will enhance what is already an exemplary program with respect to its effectiveness and fiscal efficiencies.

¹ A list of interviewees, categorized by stakeholder group, is presented in Appendix A

² Given the programmatic, and thus fiscal, connectivity of APS and ABRSD, this document combines the findings from the two phases that investigated identical areas across both districts.



PROGRAM REVIEW

FINDINGS

Related Service Providers

- As per the interviews, clinical related services providers (RSPs; comprising the SLPs, OTs, and PTs) evidence a solid understanding of the educational (vs. clinical) model of services that constitute their school-based practice. This contribution of the providers to maximizing educational outcomes appears to be enhanced by their support of teachers via integrated IEPs, participation in Student Assistance Teams, and overall presence at their respective schools. Thus the horizontal alignment, or the degree to which the interventions provided by the RSPs support educational growth, can be considered quite strong.

Per report, the RSPs also do a good job in explaining the distinction between educational and clinical orientations of service delivery to parents, advocates, and other IEP stakeholders. It is notable that the RSPs and other interviewees have noted that the District administrators have been much better at supporting their decisions in recent years, and that the consistent message that related services are designed to support student access the academic curriculum has been integral in creating both a “culture of celebration” when students are exited from services and a more amicable atmosphere at IEP meetings.

- Another dimension in considering the effectiveness of services and programs is vertical alignment. For the purposes of this discussion, vertical alignment can be defined as the continuity and consistency of practices as students progress from one program (or grade) to another. In a finding that appears to echo the common theme of a need to make APS and ABRSD more uniform, there are reports among some of the RSPs that eligibility for services and the scope of practice could be more uniform.
- It is notable that the RSPs across both Districts note an absence of a formal document that specifies criteria-guidelines that would allow greater data-driven decision making. In general, per report, the S-LPs and OTs are using a quantitative criterion of 1 standard deviation below the mean on standardized tests (i.e., a standard score of 85, as compared to the conventional standard score of 77 that equates to a 1 and ½ standard deviations below the mean). Arithmetically, this relatively liberal criterion accounts for a 9% “swing” of students are eligible for services, where consultation, Response to Intervention (Rtl)-influenced interventions, and home programs might be more appropriate modalities to support students.
- The RSPs under review available to support special education students was gauged by benchmarking the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members under review to the overall APS special education population of approximately 393 education students. In essence, this statistic is an “availability index ratio (AIR)” and allows an equivalent comparison of other districts with respect to staffing. The AIR is reported, but is a less valid metric for ABRSD staffing, as RSP services are typically more consultative at the secondary level.

APS

- The AIR vis-à-vis the 7.3 FTE speech-language staff is 54:1 (i.e., for every 54 students in special education there is 1 S-LP available to them; this does not equate to their caseloads), and compares to other districts that typically range from 50:1 to 115:1. The average weighted caseloads of the S-LPs is 48, and compares to average caseload of 40 reported in the most recent (2010) school survey provided by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.³
- The AIR for OT services, comprising 2 FTE OTs and 1.3 COTA, is 120:1, and is considered to be a generous staffing model in comparison to other districts that average 180:1.
- The AIR for PT services is approximately 393:1, and compares with an expected ratio of 350:1. However, the caseload of 33 students is within the expected caseload based on our past analyses.

ABRSD

- Despite the AIR of 215:1, the 2 S-LPs are considered to be generous staffing model based on the experience of the authors. Typically, as previously mentioned, services are more consultative in nature as students progress to secondary level; however a review of the IEPs suggests the following deviations of expected practice patterns: (1) students are receiving a very high amount of service minutes and some are actually having an increase in service minutes when they graduate to ABRSD; and (2) students are still qualifying for services even though standardized testing reveals skills to be within expected levels.
- Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physical Therapy (PT) are appropriately delivered as consultative services at the secondary level. However, with respect to OT, it was not clear in two cases how direct services addressing “handwriting” and “folding paper” was educationally relevant and appropriate.

Counselor and Psychology Delivery Systems

- In concert with the previous discussion regarding the RSPs, the school counselors and psychologists are viewed as effective team members. More specifically, there was unanimity among those interviewed who reported that the school counselors and psychologists possess a great deal of knowledge, energy, and talents that optimally support student achievement. In response to the question of how these services could be improved, the universal response was “we need more of them.”
- Roles, responsibilities, and guidelines for staff working with disabled students appear to be consistently defined across Districts. In this regard, School Psychologists and Counselors

³ The authors acknowledge that this is an imperfect comparison given that there are assistants that support the delivery of the S-LP services.

displayed considerable reliability in describing their roles and assignments, which were consistent with best practices. There are also unusual shared roles (e.g., counselors performing cognitive testing), which in most other districts is non-existent.⁴ Assessments are equitably distributed among the proper staff in the Districts.

- The authors were particularly impressed by the model used in ABRSD. Whereas a trend in many schools has been to reduce direct time with students and staff in lieu testing, psychologists in ABRSD actually spend time with teachers and students. In addition to the shared roles noted above, psychologists are closely aligned with special education programs providing individual counseling for students with disabilities, co-leading social pragmatics and life-skill groups, meeting with parents and teachers, and chairing pre-referral team sessions. This student-centered effort also applies to all students (i.e., those with and without IEPs).
- The selection of psychological and educational achievement assessment instruments is applied District-Wide: There is a standardized set of procedures and instruments that are used consistently from school-to-school. The particular instruments utilized are established as valid and highly reliable; this practice provides for a common language for parents and teachers, and is more cost-effective and efficient than a “hodge-podge” of diverse test kits.
- In the District, diagnoses of Specific Learning Disability (SLD) are strongly based on the Ability – Achievement Discrepancy Model, which compares the student’s scores on cognitive tests with scores on tests of academic achievement. The Individual with Disabilities Act of 2004 and subsequent addendums discourage the use of the Discrepancy Model in favor of using “patterns of strength(s) and weakness”, as measured by multiple sources and evidential data.
- In general, however, no concern was expressed in regard to over-identification of disabilities, and referrals for evaluation are generally appropriately generated, received, and processed. However, in a variable that may affect the over or under identification of students with disabilities, the child study process is reportedly applied inconsistently across APS. Also, there was strong indication that a model for Rtl is not as developed as it could be.

From a contextual perspective it is important to note that RTI is: (1) not intended to be a Special Education initiative, and thus should be considered within the singular purview of general education; (2) can be measured as an effective preventive and pre-referral process to the degree it addresses student needs prior to a special education referral; and (3) a robust process that, in order to be implemented with fidelity, requires training, collaboration, leadership, and the establishment of supports for all students (e.g., academic support centers).

⁴ This practice of sharing cognitive evaluations can be of efficient benefit to Special Education administration and service. It is not considered inappropriate, as long as the examiner has a graduate degree in a related field and there is certification of proper and professional training in the administration and interpretation of the test instrument. There appears to be sufficient supervision by the school psychologist(s) in this regard.

- The staffing models of the behavioral health providers (inclusive of other staff that support the emotional and behavioral health of students) across both APS and ABRSD was considered using the AIR metric. With respect to APS, there are 2 psychologists, 5 counselors, and 1 BCBA coordinator, equating to 8 FTE behavioral health providers. This ratio equates to an AIR of 49:1, and compares to an expected ratio of 21:1.

At ABRSD, the 19.4 FTE Behavioral Health personnel break out as follows:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Junior HS</u>	<u>HS</u>	<u>Total</u>
Psychologist	2.0	4.0	6.0
Counselors	4.0	8.8	12.8
Social Worker		0.6	0.6

This overall AIR of the staff equates to 23:1, which is in line with an expected ratio of 22:1.

Para-Professional Utilization and Supports

- Per multiple interviews, the para-educators (comprising teaching assistants and ABA trainers), are viewed as necessary and capable professionals that effectively support students and staff. The Districts' leadership is to be commended for ensuring that they have had necessary training and Professional Development (PD) to support students with unique needs. In consideration of the low number of students in Out of District placements (20, or 5% of the APS special education level), the investment of PD is considered to be especially critical.⁵
- From a qualitative perspective, the District appears to be quite judicious in its assignments of 1:1 paraprofessionals, and is in keeping with the growing culture at the IEP "table" to promote student independence. Aside from the ABA assistants, who are specifically trained to support students on the autism spectrum, a review of the IEPs suggests that students who are assigned 1:1 or shared para-educators are truly in need of this level of supports.
- In consideration of the 70.9 para-educators at APS (comprising 55.74 assistants and 15.11 ABA trainers), this equates to an AIR of 5.4, and equates to an expected ratio of 8.5:1. However, this staffing model must be seen through the lens of 5 mitigating factors:

⁵ APS and ABRSD staff and administration is to be commended for its long-range effort to return students from OOD placements. Clearly, the trend has been to return students to local program options. As a result, APS out-of-district placements have declined by 37% since FY08 and are currently less than 5% of the special education population. Similarly, ABRSD has substantially reduced OOD placements over the same period (-24%). However, the current 54 OOD students (12.4% of the SPED population) remains higher than what might be expected suggesting that the additional effort will be required to reduce the number of OOD students. Part of the answer is to develop new in-district options.

- APS is committed to an inclusion model, and according to the latest data from DESE, it is well-above state averages in supporting full inclusion (i.e., approximately 23% above the state average).
 - The 21 FTE special education teachers equates to an AIR of 18:1, which is less highly staffed than an expected AIR of 15:1.
 - As mentioned previously, APS has many more students within the District with higher needs that would otherwise be in out of district placements; placements that are relatively expensive.⁶
 - The “front-loading” configuration of relatively high para-professional supports in APS is allowing an attenuation of these supports, and thus student independence, at the secondary level (as stated below).
 - There is not always a clear connection between general education core subjects and special education pull-out services. Although the general/special education interface has reportedly improved over the last few years, remedial special education services are not always coordinated with general education curriculum, and there tends to be a high level of SPED pull-out during core subject sessions.
- The staffing level of paraprofessionals at ABRSD is appropriate. At the JHS there are 15.1 FTE paraprofessionals and at the HS there are 19.6 FTE for a total of 34.7 FTE. Only one para-professional is a dedicated 1:1 assignment, and it is deemed appropriate based on the review of pertinent records. If one excludes the 54 OOD students, the 382 in-District students with IEPs equates to a ratio of 11:1, and compares to an expected ratio of 8.5:1.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that the S-LPs and OTs convene to create Districts-wide exit and entry guidelines and criteria. As part of this, it is suggested that the cut-off score for skilled services incorporate the statistical criterion of 1 and ½ standard deviations on composite scores and the intensity of service minutes correlate to educational impact.⁷ The presumptive reduction of mandated services would allow:
 - Greater utilization of S-LP staff in special education classrooms to support co-teaching models.

⁶ K-6 OOD placements have decreased from 27 to 17 (37%) since FY08. The preschool has not placed a student out of the district in 3 years. The 3 preschool students currently placed out will age out this year.

⁷ On average, each student with S-LP services is receiving over 60 minutes of intervention per week at APS; re-calibrating intensity of services could support the S-LPs' role in supporting individual schools.



- An increased OT presence to bolster sensory and behavioral supports in self-contained classrooms (e.g., the pre-school program).

- Conduct an on-going focus review of students receiving speech-language supports at the secondary level with enactment of workload as part of entry and exit criteria. It is expected that 1 FTE will be able to cover the entire caseload with a primarily consultation model. This will allow greater S-LP presence and support in the lower grades, where the District can realize maximal return on investment of this service.
- The school psychologists may choose to convene to further operationalize the criteria for eligibility for a specific learning disability. The criteria should include, and emphasize, factors outside of the traditional discrepancy model that accounts for functional student performance, interventions through a traditional RtI model, and a data-driven process that ensures special education evaluation is the first resort, and not the last resort, for educational teams to consider.

It is therefore recommended that the District leadership, in conjunction with the principals, devise a rubric that clearly explains to staff the critical relationship between, and among, these early intervening processes. In this manner greater continuity and consistency within APS and across Districts may be enhanced.

Pre-referral success might also be enhanced by creating an Academic Support Center model similar to the program at ABRSD. Additionally, a district-wide behavioral intervention program, such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), would be beneficial for addressing concerns expressed by some interviewees.

- A paraprofessional-Response to Intervention (RtI) interventionist hybrid model for highly qualified (HQ) para-educators is recommended. This model will: (1) assure that the most qualified personnel are available to students; and (2) recognize the highly qualified status of designated para-educators and thus improving their morale. Furthermore, in keeping with the aforementioned HQ model, and if current union regulations permit, it may be possible for paraprofessionals who demonstrate competencies in these areas to address students with these corresponding needs.
- Continued PD and training for paraprofessionals is essential to ensure maximal return on investment; these trainings may include reinforcing adaptive behaviors, addressing the unique needs of students with autism, assistive technology, and reading and math supports.
- Moving forward, general education teachers would benefit from PD focused on more awareness of disability types (especially Autism). Special education teachers would benefit from PD focused on Common Core benchmarks and training in math and reading. The goal should be to establish a stronger link between general education Common Core standards and special education support services.
- The District may consider what many other districts have opted to do, which is to take monies earmarked for para-professional supports and devote them to hiring more certified teachers. In this manner, co-teaching capacity may be expanded, and because students

are receiving instructional supports within the classroom with a certified professional, it proves to be a more effective paradigm for students in special education and struggling learners within the classroom. In addition, the caseloads of the special education teachers effectively decreases because students served by para-professionals are, by law and regulation, “counted” on their caseloads and the teachers are still responsible for monitoring, communication with parents, and other activities beyond the purview of the assistants.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

This review provides particular focus on the District’s special education transportation services, which required a review of regular transportation routes as well. The Municipal Medicaid program, which is one of the few revenue sources available to the Districts, was considered as an additional component of the study.

FINDINGS

Transportation

- The CASE Collaborative utilizes 46 vehicles for these cost shared routes and the average student load per vehicle is 4.72 students. This average loading factor exceeds the State average for similar transportation services. The average route time for the Districts’ students is approximately 25 minutes for in-District and 47 minutes for out of district students; both of which are well within acceptable standards for special education transportation.
- The CASE Collaborative provides special education Transportation services to APS and ABRSD utilizing a multi-district routing and scheduling and cost sharing methodology. They currently transport students on routes that are cost-shared with APS and ABRSD; these include 119 students collectively from these Districts to 43 different placement/program locations. Without the ability to participate in multi-district routing and cost sharing the Districts would spend considerably more to transport the same number (119) students to the same in district and out of district locations either as self-operated or by contracted services.
- Based upon current CASE transportation assessments and the current numbers of students and program locations, the Districts’ transportation costs are approximately \$47.72 per student per day for APS and \$78.42 per student per day for ABRSD; both of which are significantly less than the average State cost for similar transportation.
- The District currently operates 26 buses daily: 25 buses for Tiers 2 & 3 and 26 buses for Tier 1. It may be possible for the District to eliminate 1 bus in Tier 1 and redistribute the student load and reconfigure the routes in Tier 1 to absorb those added students. Based upon our preliminary analysis, it may be possible to eliminate Bus 9 in Tier 1 only as it currently has the fewest students scheduled (45).

Medicaid

- Comparing the Districts similar in size and demographics indicates a potential Municipal Medicaid Revenue of approximately \$ 90,463 for APS and approximately \$107,355 for ABRSD.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It may be possible for the District to eliminate 1 bus in Tier 1 and redistribute the student load and reconfigure the routes in Tier 1 to absorb those added students. Based upon our preliminary analysis it may be possible to eliminate Bus 9 in Tier 1 only. It currently has the fewest students scheduled (45). In order to make a final determination, it would be necessary to conduct an actual head count of each bus at each school location. Based upon this actual head count, it would be possible to determine whether the remaining routes can actually absorb these added students.
- The Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (LPVEC) routinely provides Municipal Medicaid billing services throughout Western Massachusetts for over 30 municipalities and school districts. They also provide an analysis of the current District Medicaid revenue at no charge. Based upon this analysis the District can choose to contract with the LPVEC for Medicaid billing services. The services of the LPVEC are exempt from bidding under Ch. 30B M.G.L. as an intergovernmental agreement.

SUMMARY AND FINAL COMMENTARY

The authors concur with the interviewees: The Districts' special education programs are extremely well-led by Ms. Huber. En toto, the department provides exemplary educational services and programs to its students that are in keeping with the letter and spirit of the policies and procedures contained within IDEA and the state of Massachusetts. The programs offered to students with disabilities are both programmatically sound and are fiscally responsible. The authors reiterate what we consider to be the seminal programmatic and fiscal actions APS and ABRSD leadership may consider to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its special education delivery system:

1. Re-calibrate entry and exit criteria and guidelines for S-LP and OT services, thus allowing these service providers to support students outside of the IEP process; re-calibrate criteria for specific learning disabilities.
2. Further refine the Rtl-SAT (including an academic support center) processes throughout the districts to ensure uniformity and consistency, thus ensuring special education is the last option in a continuum of supports.



3. Ensure the return on investment for the generous para-educator staff with continued professional development and a re-consideration of the roles and responsibilities of the para-educators based on their expertise.
4. Enhance appropriate revenues through the Medicaid program through policies and procedures.
5. It is estimated that with students transitioning from the junior high school, the possibility of returning students from out-of-district placements and existing students on the spectrum, approximately 18-22 would provide a solid core for a high school *Connections* program.⁸
6. Consideration should be given to adopting a more uniform K-6 model across APS and thus avoid unnecessary transitions.

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Appendix A: Summary of Interviews Conducted by the Futures Education CESA Team

<u>Individuals</u> <u>Interviewed</u>	<u>Interviewer</u>			
	<u>#1</u>	<u>#2</u>	<u>#3</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Central Office Administrators/Coordinators	3	8 ⁹	1	12
Principals	3	3	1	7
Assistant Principal	2	1	1	4
Special Education Teachers	15	6	2	23
General Education Teachers	1	2	2	5
Psychologists		5	1	6
School Counselors		5	5	10
Speech-Language Pathologists	3	6		9
Physical Therapist	2	1		3
Occupational Therapists	2			2
Social Worker		1		1
Teacher Assistants	6	8	2	16
ABA Trainers		2		2
Parents		6		6
<u>Totals</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>106</u>

⁹ In some instances, more same staff member was interviewed by multiple team members



Appendix B: Out of District and Pertinent Budget Information

Acton-Boxboro Regional School District

Enrollment

Regional JH/HS October 1, 2012 enrollment: 2,969

Special education enrollment: 436 (14.7%)

OOD Placements: 54 (12.4); 33 [61%] and 21 collaborative [39%] 33 private = 7.6% of total Sped; 21 = 4.8%)

Budget:

The OOD expenditures suggest that the district has utilized local and collaborative public day placements to its advantage by decreasing private placements. Since FY07, OOD placements have decreased by 14 students (-20.6%). The current 54 students in OOD placements, however, are still considered to be on the high side. In-district programming whenever possible should remain as a high priority.

Acton Public Schools

Enrollment

APS administration provided student enrollment data from FY07 through October 1, 2012. During that time period, general education enrollments **declined from 2602 to 2501(3.9%)**; SPED enrollments during that same period **declined from 460 to 404 (12.2%)**. Currently, students on IEPs account for 16.2% of the FY13 total district enrollment (based on the October 1, 2012 data):

Acton October 1, 2012 total enrollment: 2,501

Special education enrollment: 404 (16.2%)

OOD Placements: 20 (5.0%)

Of particular note is that there are currently only 3 pre-school OOD placements and they will age-out this year. **There have been no new OOD pre-school placements in 3 years.**

Budget:

- The FY13 APS Budget is \$26,562,103
- Special Education approximately 22.5% = \$5,976,000
- OOD Tuitions: \$1,066,495 private; \$357,688 Collaborative; Total = \$1,424,183 (approximately 23.8% of SPED budget)
- Total teacher assistant salaries = \$2,050,240 (approximately 34.3% of SPED Budget)

- Autism Continuum PK and Connections K-6:

Estimated Per Pupil Costs:

BCBA	\$ 74,263
ABA Trainers	579,580
Teachers (3 x \$73,924)	221,772
Benefits, etc. @20%	175,123 (est.)
Incidental Costs @10%	<u>87,562 (est.)</u>
	\$1,138,300

43 Students \$26,472/Students



Appendix C: Discipline Workload Analysis

Discipline Workload Summary - Physical Therapy

Total Hours Analyzed	46.75	
Number of Staff	2	
Number Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Staff	1.2	
Total Hours Minus Testing	43.25	
Total Testing Hours (% in italics)	3.5	
Total Direct Service Hours (% in italics)	31	71.7%
Individual	9.25	29.8%
Group	19.5	62.9%
Consult	2.25	7.3%
Total Indirect Service Hours (% in italics)	12.25	28.3%
Travel	3.5	28.6%
Other	8.75	71.4%

Therapist Caseload Ranges

	MIN	MAX
caseload	17	33
wt caseload	35	44

Therapist Workload Percentages

	MIN	MAX
group	45	72
individual	23	43
consult	5	12
direct	62	78
testing	7	8
other	6	24
travel	7	9

	AVG	units/caseload
Caseload	25	1.84
Wt caseload	39.5	
Units	46	



Individual Breakdown of Weekly Workload by Therapist

PT										
Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	1	0	2.75	1	0	4.75	0.45	17.00	44	27
individual	2	0	1.5	1	0	4.5	0.43			
consult	0.25	0	0.5	0.5	0	1.25	0.12			
direct	3.25	0	4.75	2.5	0	10.5	0.78			
testing	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.07			
other	0	0	0	0.75	0	0.75	0.06			
travel	0.5	0	0.25	0.5	0	1.25	0.09			
Total Hours	3.75	0	6	3.75	0	13.5	1.00			

PT										
Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	4.75	5	2	1	2	14.75	0.72	33.00	35	65
individual	1.25	0.5	0.5	0.5	2	4.75	0.23			
consult	0.25	0	0	0.5	0.25	1	0.05			
direct	6.25	5.5	2.5	2	4.25	20.5	0.62			
testing	0	0.5	1	1	0	2.5	0.08			
other	1.5	1.25	1	2.25	2	8	0.24			
travel	0.75	0.5	0.5	0.25	0.25	2.25	0.07			
Total Hours	8.5	7.75	5	5.5	6.5	33.25	1.00			

Discipline Workload Summary - Occupational Therapy

Total Hours Analyzed	172	
Number of Staff	5	
Number Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Staff	4.6	
Total Hours Minus Testing	161	
Total Testing Hours (% in italics)	11	
Total Direct Service Hours (% in italics)	103.25	64.1%
Individual	16.5	16.0%
Group	80.5	78.0%
Consult	6.25	6.1%
Total Indirect Service Hours (% in italics)	57.75	35.9%
Travel	5	8.7%
Other	52.75	91.3%



Therapist Caseload Ranges

	MIN	MAX
caseload	51	67
wt caseload	51	78

Therapist Workload Percentages

	MIN	MAX
group	46	89
individual	8	26
consult	0	28
direct	41	71
testing	0	16
other	26	40
travel	1	5

	AVG	units/caseload
Caseload	58	1.52
Wt caseload	66.3	
Units	100.6	

Individual Breakdown of Weekly Workload by Therapist

OT

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	3.5	4	2.5	0	3.25	13.25	0.71	56.00	70	103
individual	1.25	2	1	0	0.5	4.75	0.25			
consult	0.75	0	0	0	0	0.75	0.04			
direct	5.5	6	3.5	0	3.75	18.75	0.59			
testing	0	0	1	0	1.5	2.5	0.08			
other	2.25	2	3.5	0	2.5	10.25	0.32			
travel	0.25	0	0	0	0.25	0.5	0.02			
Total Hours	8	8	8	0	8	32	1.00			

OT

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	3.75	2	5.5	5.5	0	16.75	0.89	67.00	78	120
individual	1	0.5	0	0	0	1.5	0.08			
consult	0.5	0	0	0	0	0.5	0.03			
direct	5.25	2.5	5.5	5.5	0	18.75	0.63			
testing	0	2	0	0	1	3	0.10			
other	1	2	1	1	3	8	0.27			
travel	0.25	0	0	0	0	0.25	0.01			
Total Hours	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	4	30	1.00			

OT

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt	Units
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									case	
group	2.5	1.5	0	0	2.5	6.5	0.46	51.00	51	79
individual	0.5	2	0.5	0	0.75	3.75	0.26			
consult	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	4	0.28			
direct	3.5	4.5	1	1	4.25	14.25	0.41			
testing	0	0	2.5	2	1	5.5	0.16			
other	3	2.5	3.5	3.5	1.5	14	0.40			
travel	0.5	0	0	0.5	0.25	1.25	0.04			
Total Hours	7	7	7	7	7	35	1.00			

COTA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	5	5.25	5.25	3.75	4	23.25	0.87			
individual	0.5	0	0	0.5	1.5	2.5	0.09			
consult	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.04			
direct	5.5	5.25	5.25	4.25	6.5	26.75	0.71			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	1.5	2.25	2.25	2.75	1	9.75	0.26			
travel	0.5	0	0	0.5	0	1	0.03			
Total Hours	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	37.5	1.00			

COTA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	3.75	4	5	4.5	3.5	20.75	0.84			
individual	1.5	0	1.5	0	1	4	0.16			
consult	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
direct	5.25	4	6.5	4.5	4.5	24.75	0.66			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	1.75	3.25	0.5	2.5	2.75	10.75	0.29			
travel	0.5	0.25	0.5	0.5	0.25	2	0.05			
Total Hours	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	37.5	1.00			

Discipline Workload Summary - Occupational Therapy

Total Hours Analyzed	397.5	
Number of Staff	16	
Number Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Staff	11.4	
Total Hours Minus Testing	356.5	
Total Testing Hours (% in italics)	41	
Total Direct Service Hours (% in italics)	212.5	59.6%
Individual	68	32.0%
Group	121.5	57.2%



Consult	23	<i>10.8%</i>
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Total Indirect Service Hours (% in italics)	144	<i>40.4%</i>
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Travel	0.5	<i>0.3%</i>
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Other	143.5	<i>99.7%</i>
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Therapist Caseload Ranges

	MIN	MAX
caseload	10	82
wt caseload	35	82

Therapist Workload Percentages

	MIN	MAX
group	22	93
individual	0	63
consult	0	24
direct	30	72
testing	0	23
other	21	47
travel	0	1

	AVG	units/caseload
Caseload	41.3	2.17
Wt caseload	48.8	
Units	101	

Individual Breakdown of Weekly Workload by Therapist

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	4	4	4	4	0	16	0.93	82.00	82	249
individual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
consult	0.25	0	0.25	0	0.75	1.25	0.07			
direct	4.25	4	4.25	4	0.75	17.25	0.49			
testing	1	1	1	1.5	3.5	8	0.23			
other	1.75	2	1.75	1.5	2.75	9.75	0.28			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	7	7	7	7	7	35	1.00			

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	0	2.5	0	2.5	0	5	0.67	18.00	45	36
individual	0	0.75	0	0.75	0	1.5	0.20			
consult	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	1	0.13			



direct	0	3.75	0	3.75	0	7.5	0.54
testing	0	0.75	0	0.5	0	1.25	0.09
other	0	2.5	0	2.75	0	5.25	0.38
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Total Hours	0	7	0	7	0	14	1.00

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	4	4	4	4	4	20	0.90	57.00	57	171
individual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
consult	0.25	0.5	0.5	0.75	0.25	2.25	0.10			
direct	4.25	4.5	4.5	4.75	4.25	22.25	0.64			
testing	1	1.25	1	1.25	1	5.5	0.16			
other	1.75	1.25	1.5	1	1.75	7.25	0.21			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	7	7	7	7	7	35	1.00			

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	2	1	1	1.5	3.5	9	0.62	35.00	35	81
individual	0.5	1	2	1.5	0.5	5.5	0.38			
consult	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
direct	2.5	2	3	3	4	14.5	0.41			
testing	1	1	2.5	0	1	5.5	0.16			
other	3.5	4	1.5	4	2	15	0.43			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	7	7	7	7	7	35	1.00			

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	2	1	0.5	1	2	6.5	0.48	48.00	48	101
individual	1	2.5	0	1	2	6.5	0.48			
consult	0	0	0	0.5	0	0.5	0.04			
direct	3	3.5	0.5	2.5	4	13.5	0.42			
testing	1	1.5	0	0	1	3.5	0.11			
other	3	2	6.5	1.75	2	15.25	0.47			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	7	7	7	4.25	7	32.25	1.00			

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	2.5	1.5	2.5	0	1.5	8	0.67	55.00	55	92
individual	0	0.5	0.5	0	1.5	2.5	0.21			
consult	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	1.5	0.13			
direct	3	2	3.5	0	3.5	12	0.37			
testing	1.5	0.5	1.25	2	1.5	6.75	0.21			
other	2	4	1.75	4.5	1.5	13.75	0.42			



travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Total Hours	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	32.5	1.00

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	1	2.5	0	2	2	7.5	0.44	32.00	32	
individual	4	1	0	1	1.5	7.5	0.44			
consult	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	0.5	2	0.12			
direct	5.5	4	0	3.5	4	17	0.57			
testing	0.5	2	0.5	0.5	1.5	5	0.17			
other	1	0.5	5.5	0.5	0.5	8	0.27			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	7	6.5	6	4.5	6	30	1.00			

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	2.5	1.5	1.5	0	0	5.5	0.55	35.00	35	62
individual	0.5	1	1.5	0	0	3	0.30			
consult	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	0	1.5	0.15			
direct	3.5	3	3	0.5	0	10	0.30			
testing	1	1	0	2.5	0	4.5	0.13			
other	2.5	3	3.5	2.5	7	18.5	0.55			
travel	0	0	0.5	0	0	0.5	0.01			
Total Hours	7	7	7	5.5	7	33.5	1.00			

SLP

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.22	10.00	50	17
individual	0	0	0	0	2.5	2.5	0.56			
consult	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.22			
direct	0	0	0	0	4.5	4.5	0.56			
testing	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.13			
other	0	0	0	0	2.5	2.5	0.31			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	0	0	0	0	8	8	1.00			

SLPA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	1.5	1.5	2.5	1	1	7.5	0.37			
individual	2.5	3	2	2	3.5	13	0.63			
consult	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
direct	4	4.5	4.5	3	4.5	20.5	0.71			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	2	1.5	1.5	1.75	1.5	8.25	0.29			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	6	6	6	4.75	6	28.75	1.00			



SLPA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	0	1.5	1.5	0	1	4	0.44			
individual	0	2	0.5	0	1	3.5	0.39			
consult	0	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	1.5	0.17			
direct	0	4	2.5	0	2.5	9	0.69			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	0	2	0.5	0	1.5	4	0.31			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	0	6	3	0	4	13	1.00			

SLPA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	1	0	0.5	0	1.5	3	0.33			
individual	2	0	1	0	1.5	4.5	0.50			
consult	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	1.5	0.17			
direct	3.5	0	2	0	3.5	9	0.60			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	2	0	2	0	2	6	0.40			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	5.5	0	4	0	5.5	15	1.00			

SLPA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	0	0	2.5	0.5	0	3	0.43			
individual	0	0	1.5	1.5	0	3	0.43			
consult	0	0	0.5	0.5	0	1	0.14			
direct	0	0	4.5	2.5	0	7	0.70			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	0	0	1.5	1.5	0	3	0.30			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	0	0	6	4	0	10	1.00			

SLPA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	2	2.5	2.5	0	0	7	0.54			
individual	1	1.5	2	0	0	4.5	0.35			
consult	0.5	1	0	0	0	1.5	0.12			
direct	3.5	5	4.5	0	0	13	0.72			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	2.5	1	1.5	0	0	5	0.28			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	6	6	6	0	0	18	1.00			

SLPA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
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group	1.5	1	2	1	2	7.5	0.39	?	?	?
individual	1.5	2.5	1	1	1	7	0.37			
consult	1	1	1	0.5	1	4.5	0.24			
direct	4	4.5	4	2.5	4	19	0.66			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	2	1.5	2	2.25	2	9.75	0.34			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	6	6	6	4.75	6	28.75	1.00			

SLPA

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Totals	%s	Caseload	Wt case	Units
group	1.5	3	3	1	2.5	11	0.67			
individual	1.5	1	0	0.5	0.5	3.5	0.21			
consult	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	2	0.12			
direct	3.5	4.5	3.5	1.5	3.5	16.5	0.57			
testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
other	2.5	1.5	2.5	3.25	2.5	12.25	0.43			
travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00			
Total Hours	6	6	6	4.75	6	28.75	1.00			

Explanatory Notes

1. FTE: Full time equivalent staff
2. Workloads are all student-directed activities that include both direct and indirect times and are used as opposed to caseloads given that workloads are a more valid metric to determine how the services providers are spending their time.
3. Direct services include therapy (individual or group) and consultation; indirect services are those such as preparation, travel and other student-centric services other than therapy and consultation.
4. A weighted statistic was used to account for the part time status of several speech-language pathologists and is calculated by dividing the SLPs' actual caseloads by their full time equivalence. For example an S-LP that works 1 day is a .2 FTE and if her caseload were 10, then her weighted caseload would be 50. Weighted does not refer to the intensity of the students on any given caseload, which presumably would be reflected in the direct time if a relatively lower caseload required a greater amount of therapy and consultation times.
5. The individual breakdown of each service providers' time was calculated from weekly time studies and is reported as (actual) total weekly hours in each category and in percentages in the following pages.

Appendix D: IEP Reviews

Quantitative and qualitative analyses of 65 district IEPs (35 at the primary level, 30 at the secondary level) reviewed direct and indirect service time, service delivery models, goals and objectives, and internal consistency of information pertaining to the related service areas of speech-language pathology (S-LP), occupational therapy (OT), and physical therapy (PT). Information gleaned from the analyses will assist in the development of recommendations intended to facilitate program effectiveness, enhance student achievement, maximize student learning, and capitalize upon staffing and cost effectiveness.

Preschool – Grade 6

- The relationship between direct and indirect service time was relatively consistent across the disciplines. Consultative services, as reported in IEPs reviewed, constituted a moderate percentage of total service time for the three disciplines (S-LP=10%; OT=9%; PT=14%). The indirect delivery of services (i.e., direct consultation with teachers and other related service providers) is invaluable to the generalization of skills across a student's curriculum. These findings suggest providers are afforded the weekly opportunity to collaborate and consult with other team members.
- "Push-in" services, whereby providers deliver intervention within general education classrooms, varied between the related service disciplines. OT was found to be the most frequent utilizer of this model; the "push-in" model constituted 25% of total weekly OT services. Although the analysis of a sub-sample of IEPs found that PT did not utilize "push-in" services, the nature of PT intervention may be more conducive to treatment outside the classroom (e.g., targeting balance on stairs). Additionally, students who receive PT services may more often be educated within self-contained classrooms due to the nature of their disability (e.g., students with multiple disabilities).
- Particularly noteworthy is the underutilization of "push-in" S-LP services. SL-P services provided within the general education classroom approximated 5% of total weekly service minutes. The "push-in" model of service delivery enables teachers, paraprofessionals, and students to maximize a student's generalization of targeted skills across her/his academic environment. Additional benefits include a service provider's ability to model and consult with classroom staff.
- A strong negative correlation (-.49) between service minutes and student age suggests an adherence to the front loading model, whereby the greatest intensity of services are focused on younger students, and as students advance in age, service minutes gradually decline. The front loading model of service delivery may be best exemplified by the observation that of the 16 students receiving at least 150 minutes of total weekly related services, 11 were age 8 years or younger. Even when eliminating from the equation the subset of pre-school students (who, by far received the highest number of service minutes – a mean of 207 minutes, compared to an overall mean of 145 minutes), findings still yielded a moderate negative correlation (-.33).

- On the individual student level, total weekly services minutes across all three related service domains tended to exceed that which the evaluator deemed appropriate and least restrictive based upon the reported student needs and targeted areas. Although service time was appropriate to the apparent needs of some students, the information in a substantial number of IEPs reviewed either did not support a need for a related service or did not warrant the intensity of services being delivered under the student's current IEP. The disproportionate nature of service trends across disability areas will be considered later in this document. When taken on a whole, the intensity of weekly minutes of S-LP, OT and PT across the mean, median and mode (S-LP: 89, 75, 75; OT: 66, 60, 60; PT: 55, 64, 75) were figures which far exceeded the typical in the author's experience.
- The quality of goals and objectives is of particular import to the delivery of appropriate and individualized services, as well as to providing a solid base from which progress can be measured and demonstrated. With few exceptions S-LPs and OTs were operating within their respective scopes of practice and implementing treatment supported by evidence. The goals and objectives corresponding to S-LP and OT services largely supported the academic curriculum, thus enhancing a student's ability to access classroom material. Furthermore, S-LP, OT and PT goals and objectives were typically well-written and measurable; however, there were some exceptions noted. Goals and objectives with poor measurability were characterized by vaguely stated target behaviors and lack of criteria. Measurability of goals and objectives is crucial to a service provider's ability to establish a baseline performance and track progress throughout the duration of the IEP.
- Despite the S-LPs and OTs sound adherence to the academic curriculum, of the 10 reviewed students receiving direct PT services, 3 had at least one objective which clearly did not support the academic curriculum. Examples included push-ups, jumping jacks, and ball skills. Many of these targeted areas can be addressed via an adapted physical education program. In some of these circumstances the IEP did clearly define how gross motor deficits impeded the students' ability to access the academic curriculum; however, service time was still dedicated to targeting skills that are not necessary for participate in the academic curriculum. Examples of physical therapy objectives which facilitate access to the academic curriculum included safely ascending or descending stairs or navigating uneven surfaces within the school environment.
- Another point of interest is the qualification criteria, particularly for those receiving S-LP services. Approximately 19% of the 31 IEPs with S-LP services did not support the need for direct intervention. In these instances, scores from standardized testing in the targeted areas were often reported to fall within the average (or slightly below average) range.
- Of particular import are the specific trends and disparity across disability groupings. Minimal variance in total weekly related service time was noted across disability groupings. Although students whose primary disability was Emotional received substantially fewer related service minutes (S-LP, OT, PT), this is not unexpected given the typical nature of those students' needs.

- Qualitative analyses revealed the most notable variance in services across disabilities. A substantially-sized group (approximately 48% of the 31 students receiving SL-P, OT, or PT services) for whom the information present in the current IEP either did not support eligibility for at least one related service (i.e., standardized scores were reported to be average or slightly below average and no other deficits were described to substantially impact the student's ability to access the curriculum) or did not support the intensity of services received for at least one related service ¹⁰. There was, however, one notable exception. Of the 8 students qualifying for special education services under the disability of Autism, only one student was judged to be receiving service minutes which appeared to exceed the stated need of the student.
- The elevated levels of service times brings into question whether pre-established criteria for related service eligibility has been developed and properly disseminated by the District.

Grades 7-12

- Although the IEP analysis could not quantitatively measure the relationship between direct and indirect service minutes across disciplines due to the reporting method of indirect services (e.g., weekly or monthly team consults), consultative (indirect) services were provided to approximately 38% of students receiving at least one direct related service (S-LP, OT, PT). This method of delivering services allows the team an opportunity for collaboration, and thus is invaluable to the generalization of skills across a student's curriculum.
- A stark contrast between the utilization of "push-in" services at the primary and secondary levels was observed. Within the subset of IEPs reviewed, no students were receiving a related service within the general education setting. As previously noted, the "push-in" model of service delivery enables teachers, paraprofessionals, and students to maximize a student's generalization of targeted skills across her/his academic environment.
- A weak positive correlation (.15) between service minutes and student age suggests a very poor adherence to the front loading model at the secondary level. The process of front loading services focuses the greatest intensity of services on younger students, and as students advance in age, service minutes gradually decline; however, the District's related service times largely remained the same as students advanced from 7th to 12th grade. These findings are quite dissimilar from those yielded by analyses at the primary level.
- On the individual student level, total weekly services minutes across all three related service domains tended to exceed that which the evaluator deemed appropriate and least restrictive based upon the reported student needs and targeted areas. Although service time was appropriate to the apparent needs of some students, the information in nearly all of IEPs reviewed did not warrant the intensity of services being delivered under the student's current IEP. A standard of 90 minutes of direct weekly S-LP service time was noted for nearly all students receiving S-LP intervention. Furthermore, 4 of the 26 students receiving a related service were judged by the author to be ineligible for at least one related service. This

¹⁰ This observation is supported by the previously reported quantitative data suggesting elevated weekly service minutes for the sub-sample as a whole.

judgment was based upon the author's professional experiences as well as reported performances on standardized testing. In these 4 cases, IEPs reported average or slightly below average standardized scores pertaining to the skills being targeted.

- When taken on a whole, the intensity of weekly minutes of S-LP, OT and PT across the mean, median and mode (S-LP: 99, 90, 90; OT: 36, 45, 45; PT: 80, 94, 95) were figures which greatly exceeded the typical in the author's experience. In fact, the service minutes associated with S-LP and PT at the secondary level exceeded those at the primary level. These findings bring into focus the importance of a developed and appropriately disseminated standard for eligibility and intensity of services.
- Of particular import are the specific trends and disparity in quantitative and qualitative measures noted across disability groupings. The most notable quantitative variance is perhaps the intensity of services between the analyzed group as a whole and students classified under the primary disabilities of Autism and neurological. Students with a neurological disability, on average, received a 187 weekly service minutes, as compared to an overall weekly average of 115 service minutes for the entire reviewed group. Similarly, students with autism, on average, received 143 weekly service minutes.
- The quality of goals and objectives is of particular import to the delivery of appropriate and individualized services, as well as to providing a solid base from which progress can be measured and demonstrated. With few exceptions S-LPs, OTs and PTs were operating within their respective scopes of practice and implementing treatment supported by evidence. The goals and objectives corresponding to the related services largely supported the academic curriculum, thus enhancing a student's ability to access classroom material. Although adherence to the curriculum was solid, poor measurability of a subset of goals and objectives was noted. Of the 26 students receiving a related service, approximately 31% had at least two objectives with weak measurability. In most cases poor measurability was characterized by lack of criteria. Measurability of goals and objectives is crucial to a service provider's ability to establish a baseline performance and track progress throughout the duration of the IEP.

8.7.1

File: EEAEB

First Read 5/2/13

SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEMS

Draft 4/26/13

I. PURPOSE

The Acton Public Schools and Acton Boxborough Regional School District uses video cameras throughout the Districts for the purpose of enhancing school safety and security. The objective is to promote and foster a safe and secure teaching and learning environment for students and staff, to improve public safety for community members who visit or use our school property, and diminish the potential for personal and district loss or destruction of property. Security camera recordings will be viewable in each building by authorized designees only.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Signage and Notification:

Appropriate signage will be posted at relevant entrances to school buildings and on school buses that notify students, staff and the general public of the District's use of security cameras. Students will receive additional notification at the beginning of the school year regarding the use of security cameras in the schools, on school buses and on school grounds. Such notification will include, but not be limited to, student handbooks.

B. Camera Placement:

1. The security camera system may be installed in public areas only. These areas include school buses, grounds, athletic areas, exterior entrances or exits to school buildings and large gathering spaces such as classroom corridors, cafeteria, lobby and main entries.
2. Restrooms, changing rooms, nurse's offices and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.
3. Security camera usage is prohibited in any space where there is a reasonable expectation for privacy. However, this policy does not preclude the Districts from placing cameras in such areas when there is a reasonable suspicion of activity that violates the law or is a violation of school policy and such a request is made by the building administration.
4. This policy does not prohibit the use of cameras for legitimate educational purposes, including but not limited to student performances.

C. Use of Video Recordings

1. The Superintendent or his/her expressly authorized designee shall oversee video surveillance. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for accessing video

surveillance information. However, recorded information will be available for use as necessary by appropriate school officials, and/or law enforcement personnel.

2. Security Camera System will be in operation and may be monitored by school personnel throughout the calendar year.

D. Data Storage:

1. All video recordings are stored in a secure place to avoid tampering and ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Recordings will be saved for no fewer than 30 days and appropriately destroyed/deleted.

Video that is used as evidence in a student discipline matter will be considered part of that student's record and will be retained in accordance with student record laws and regulations.

2. Information obtained through video surveillance may only be used for training, visitor management, disciplinary investigations, security or law enforcement purposes. No sound is to be monitored or recorded in connection with the video surveillance system.

3. Any video recordings used for security purposes on school buses, in school buildings or grounds are the sole property of the Acton Public Schools and Acton Boxborough RSD. Release of such videos will be made only as permissible pursuant to applicable law and with the permission of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Legal References:

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

State Laws and Regulations regarding Student Records

DRAFT

8.7.2
FIRST READ
6/6/13

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT

File: GCCC/GDCC

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

I. POLICY

A. Introduction

The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 ("FMLA") entitles eligible employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons, as explained below.

B. Employee Eligibility

To be eligible for FMLA benefits with the Acton Public School District and Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (the "Districts"), an employee must:

1. Work for the Districts;
2. Have worked for the Districts for a total of at least twelve months in the prior 7 years; and
3. Have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve months, prior to the leave request.

C. Leave Entitlement

Section 1. The Districts will grant an eligible employee up to a total of twelve work weeks of unpaid leave during a rolling 12-month period¹ for one or more of the following reasons:

1. For the birth of a son or daughter and to care for the new born son or daughter;
2. For the placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care;
3. To care for an immediate family member (spouse, son or daughter, or parent) with a serious health condition;
4. When the employee is unable to work because of his/her own serious health condition that prevents him/her from performing the functions of his/her job;
or

¹ For the purposes of calculating the 12-month period referred to above, the Districts will measure the 12-month period backward from the date of an employee's request for FMLA leave. Each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the Districts will determine the total amount of FMLA leave used by the employee during the preceding 12 months, and the remaining time available to the employee will be the balance of 12 weeks which has not been used.

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5. For a "qualifying exigency" (as defined in 29 CFR § 825.126) when the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who is a member of any branch of the military, including the National Guard or Reserves, has been deployed or called to active duty in a foreign country.

Spouses employed by the Districts are jointly entitled to a combined total of twelve work weeks of family leave except when the leave is needed to care for a son, daughter or a spouse with a serious health condition; under such circumstances, such employees may each be eligible for up to 12 weeks of family leave.

Leave for birth or placement for adoption or foster care must conclude within twelve months of the birth or placement.

Section 2. The Districts will also grant an eligible employee up to a total of twenty-six weeks of unpaid FMLA leave for the following reasons:

1. To care for a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (i.e., nearest blood relative), who is a current member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is an outpatient, or is on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty in the Armed Forces.
2. To care for a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (i.e., nearest blood relative), who is a veteran undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces (or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty) and that manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran. The veteran must have been a member of the Armed Forces (which includes the National Guard or Reserves) at any time during the period of five years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes the medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

Such 26-week leave period shall only be available for a single 12-month period.² To the extent spouses work for the Districts, the aggregate number of workweeks available to both spouses shall be limited to 26 weeks during the single 12-month period. In addition, any leave taken during that single 12-month period for one of the other qualifying reasons (as noted in this Policy) shall count against the 26 weeks available. (Only 12 of the 26 weeks total may be used for an FMLA-qualifying reason other than to care for a covered servicemember.)

² Calculation of the single 12-month period in this Section shall be based off the 12-month period immediately following the first day of such FMLA-qualifying leave. Such 26-week period shall not be based on the rolling measurement noted in Section 1.

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Section 3.

1. Under some circumstances, employees may take FMLA leave intermittently.
2. Also, the Districts may require employees to use accrued paid leave³, such as sick or vacation leave, to cover some or all of the FMLA leave. When paid leave is used, the employee must follow the Districts' paid leave policies and procedures with respect to use of such leave.
3. When intermittent leave is needed to care for an immediate family member, the employee's own illness, or a covered servicemember, and is for planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the Districts' operation.
4. The Districts may temporarily transfer an employee taking intermittent or reduced-schedule leave to an alternative job, with equivalent pay and benefits, that accommodates recurring periods of leave better than the employee's regular job when such leave is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment.
5. Any leave taken by an eligible employee for any of the reasons covered by this policy will be considered FMLA leave and will be designated as such even if the employee does not specifically identify the time off as FMLA leave.

D. Maintenance of Health Benefits

The Districts will maintain group health insurance coverage for an employee on FMLA leave whenever such insurance was provided before the leave was taken and on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. The employee will make arrangements with the Districts to pay his or her share of health insurance premiums while on leave. The Districts may recover premiums it paid to maintain health coverage for an employee who fails to return to work from FMLA leave.

E. Job Restoration

Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee will be restored to his or her original job, or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

In addition, an employee's use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of an employment benefit that the employee earned or was entitled to before using FMLA leave.

³ The Districts' policy on use of paid leave is subject to, and will be administered in accordance with, the Massachusetts Maternity Leave statute.

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F. Notice Certification and Status Reports

Employees seeking to use FMLA leave are required, as appropriate, to provide to their appointing authority:

1. NOTICE: Thirty (30) days advanced notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable, otherwise as soon as is practicable;
2. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION:
 - (a) Medical certification supporting the need for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee, an immediate family member, or a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness;
 - (b) Second or third medical opinions and periodic recertifications (at the Districts' expense) if requested by the Districts; and
 - (c) Medical certification and/or fitness for duty certification supporting the employee's ability to return to work as requested by the Districts, which the Districts may request include a statement from a health care provider that the employee can perform all of the essential functions of the job.
3. QUALIFYING EXIGENCY: Certification supporting the need for leave due to a qualifying exigency.
4. STATUS REPORTS: Periodic reports during FMLA leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work as requested by appointing authority.

The Districts will provide the employee with the appropriate notice, designation and certification forms in accordance with the FMLA regulations.

G. Other Provisions

This Policy shall at all times be interpreted in a manner consistent with the Department of Labor's Regulations pertaining to the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The FMLA does not affect any other federal or state law which prohibits discrimination, nor supercede any state or local law which provides greater family or medical leave protection. Nor does it affect the Districts' obligation to provide greater leave rights under a CBA or employment benefit plan, where applicable.

H. Departmental Procedures

The Districts' appointing authorities may establish their own procedures to implement this policy, subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

4 of 4

File: GCCC/GDCC

STAFF FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Current Policy

The School Systems shall comply with the mandatory provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The Superintendent shall issue, and from time to time amend, regulations setting forth the rights and procedures granted by the Act, and shall ensure compliance with those regulations either personally or by delegation, or by some combination of personal oversight and delegation.

LEGAL REFS.: P.L. 103-3, "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993"

DRAFT

8.7.3
FIRST READ
6/6/13

ACTION PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

File: G0CCA/
GDCCA

SMALL NECESSITIES LEAVE ACT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

I. POLICY

A. Eligibility

Employees that have been employed by the Acton Public School District or the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District ("the Districts") for at least twelve (12) months and have provided 1,250 hours of service to the Districts during the previous twelve (12) month period of time and qualify for Family Medical Leave status are eligible for leave under the Massachusetts Small Necessities Leave Act ("SNLA").

B. Purpose and Amount of Leave

An eligible employee is entitled to 24 hours of SNLA leave for any of the following purposes:

(1) to participate in school activities directly related to the educational advancement of the eligible employee's son or daughter¹, such as parent-teacher conferences or interviewing for a new school²;

(2) to accompany the eligible employee's son or daughter to routine medical or dental appointments, such as check-ups or vaccinations; or

(3) to accompany the eligible employee's elderly relative³ to routine medical or dental appointments or appointments for other professional services related to the elder's care, such as interviewing at nursing or group homes.

C. Twelve Month Period

The twelve (12) month period shall be consistent with that established under the Districts' Family and Medical Leave Act Policy.

D. Intermittent Use of Leave

Eligible employees may use SNLA leave in increments of time of one (1) hour or more.

¹ A "son or daughter" is defined as a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing *in loco parentis*. Further, the son or daughter must be under 18 years of age or 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.

² A "school" is a public or private elementary or secondary school, a Head Start program assisted under the Head Start Act, or a licensed children's day care facility.

³ An "elderly relative" is an individual that is at least 60 years of age and who is related by blood or marriage.

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E. Use of Accrued Leave

Eligible employees that have accrued vacation, personal or sick leave (for medical appointments only) at the time they use SNLA leave will be required to use such accrued leave during the time they are on SNLA leave.

Eligible employees that do not have accrued vacation, personal or sick leave (for medical appointments only or as otherwise permitted by Districts policy or collective bargaining agreement) at the time they use SNLA leave will receive unpaid leave.

F. Return to Work

An employee that receives SNLA leave will be restored to the position he or she held when the SNLA leave commenced.

II. PROCEDURES

A. Notice

Eligible employees must request SNLA leave at least seven (7) days in advance of the time for which SNLA leave is requested whenever the need for SNLA leave is foreseeable. If the need for SNLA leave is not foreseeable, an eligible employee must give the Districts notice as soon as practical. All notices to the Districts shall be made in writing unless circumstances prohibit written notice.

B. Certification

Each time an eligible employee takes SNLA leave, the eligible employees must complete a certification. Certification forms are available in the Superintendent's office. As required by law, the certification will be maintained in the eligible employee's personnel file for three (3) years.

2 of 3

Exhibit

SMALL NECESSITIES LEAVE ACT

Employee Certification

I certify that on _____ I will/did take _____ hours of leave for the following purpose:

- ☐ to participate in school activities directly related to the educational advancement of my son/daughter.
- ☐ to accompany my son/daughter to a routine medical or dental appointment.
- ☐ to accompany an elderly relative to a routine medical or dental appointment or appointment for other professional services related to the elder's care.

Employee Name: _____

Date: _____

3 of 3

Acton Public Schools

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

SCHOOL CALENDAR, 2013-2014

Bold Underlined Dates = No School Days

*** Parent/Guardian Conferences**
**** Professional Learning for Staff**

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	30	Schools Open - Aug. 27				1	2	3	**JH AND HS Early Dis. - Jan 7
	2	3	4	5	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		20	21	22	23	24	School Days - 21
	23	24	25	26	27			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 - Feb 10
		1	2	3	4			10	11	12	13	14	Presidents' Day - Feb. 17
	7	8	9	10	11	Columbus Day - Oct. 14		17	18	19	20	21	Winter Recess - Feb. 17-21
	14	15	16	17	18	*Elem Early Dismissal - Oct 29		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	(Possible Prof. Day - Mar 25)
					1	*Elem Early Dismissal - Nov 13		17	18	19	20	21	School Days - 21
	4	5	6	7	8	Veterans Day - Nov. 11		24	25	26	27	28	
	11	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	28	29	School Days - 17							**JH AND HS Late Start - Apr 8
Dec.	M	T	W	T	F			7	8	9	10	11	Good Friday - April 18
	2	3	4	5	6			14	15	16	17	18	Spring Recess - April 21-25
	9	10	11	12	13	*Jr. High. Early Dis - Dec 17, Dec 19		21	22	23	24	25	Patriots Day - April 21
	16	17	18	19	20	Winter Recess - Dec. 24 - Jan. 1		28	29	30			School Days - 16
	23	24	25	26	27	School Days - 16	May	M	T	W	T	F	
	30	31											Memorial Day - May 26
								5	6	7	8	9	School Days - 21
								12	13	14	15	16	
								19	20	21	22	23	
								26	27	28	29	30	
							June	M	T	W	T	F	Graduation - June 6
								2	3	4	5	6	Last day - June 12
								9	10	11	12	13	(plus one for each unscheduled no school day)
								16	17	18	19	20	School Days - 9
								23	24	25	26	27	Total Days = 180

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 without late starts/early dismissals

- SC to discuss having no school on Monday 12/23/13 and ending school 6/13/14

8.8
(Shows changes)

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**ACTON and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
2013-2014**

Meetings are held in the R.J. Grey Junior High School Library unless otherwise indicated.
 Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of the month;
 Acton Public School Committee meetings are usually held on the third Thursday.
 ABRSC Meetings start at 7:30 p.m.. APSC Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.
 All materials are posted at <http://ab.mec.edu/about/meetings>.

July 9 (Tues)	Joint School Committee Annual Workshop – 6:00 pm
August 6 or 22 (Thu)	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee, followed by Acton School Committee Meetings
September X September 19	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee (9/5/ is no school) Acton School Committee – Education Report from Douglas
October 3 October 17	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting Acton School Committee – Education Report from McCarthy-Towne
November 7 November 21	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee – Education Report from Gates
December 5 December 19	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Comm Education Report from AB Regional High School Acton School Committee
January 7 or 9 January 16 January 25 (Sat)	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee Joint School Committee Budget Saturday – 9 am – 2 pm
February 6 February 13	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee (open budget hearing-required by law) Acton School Committee (open budget hearing-required by law)
March 6 March 20 March 27	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Education Report from R.J. Grey Junior High School Acton School Committee – Education Report from Merriam Joint School Committee Meeting (serves as April meetings)
May 1 May 15	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee – Education Report from Conant
June 5 June 19	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee

Note: Acton Town Meeting is the first week of April. Boxborough Town Meeting is mid-May.

Personnel Office
Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools

TO: Acton Public School Committee
Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
DATE: June 1, 2013
FROM: Marie Altieri
SUBJECT: Approval of Administrator Benefits Manual

We have completed our annual update to the Administrator Benefits Manual. The committee can review the 2012-2013 manual on the schools' Human Resources Website at <http://ab.mec.edu/hr/hrcontracts.shtml>, and any changes are indicated below.

Article 1 of the Administrator's Benefits manual says that any changes require the approval of both School Committees. We are asking for your approval at the June 6 meeting.

Administrator Manual Changes:

1. Front Cover, change date to July 1, 2013
2. Article 14, page 14, "List of Administrative Positions," change HS Assistant Principal to HS Dean of Students and HS Associate Principal to reflect the new administrative structure at ABRHS.
3. Remove Article 10.2.4 and 10.2.5
 "10.2.4 If an Administrator and another member of the school staff belong to a single family unit and are eligible for coverage under Section 10.2.1 above under the same policy, each may, at his/her option, have his/her entitlement applied to the full cost of a single policy covering said family unit."

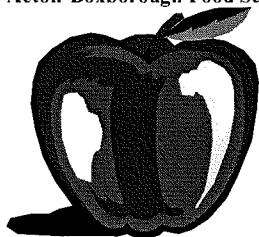
10.2.5 As in 10.2.4, each may, at his/her option, have his/her entitlement applied to the full cost of a single policy."

This is a benefit that was historically available to all employee groups. We have worked with each unit to remove this benefit. All employees were notified of this change in April. Families who received this benefit will phase in the new costs by paying 10% in 2013-2014 and 25% in 2014-2015. The Administrator manual is the only non-union manual that has this benefit listed.

4. Article 13.1 Staff Children Tuition
 Change title to, "Staff Children Attending Schools." Change application date from, "no later than the annual date of Kindergarten registration" to November 1.

We are asking for you to vote to accept the 2013-2014 Administrator Benefits Manual tonight.

Acton-Boxborough Food Services



Serving Education Daily

**Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
Food Service Department
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720-2995
Phone # 1-978-264-4700x3221
Fax # 1-978-264-3340
Kirsten Nelson, Director**

TO: Stephen Mills
FROM: Kirsten Nelson
DATE: May 16, 2013
RE: Recommendation to award Food and Related Product Bids

The Acton Public Schools and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District participated with The Education Cooperative (TEC) in the following bid categories:

- 1) Paper Products
- 2) Groceries
- 3) Vending
- 4) Bread Products
- 5) Milk & Milk Products

The following vendors were approved and awarded the bids at the May 8th bid award meeting at TEC.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1) Paper Products | Eastern Bag and Paper |
| 2) Groceries | Thurston Foods, Original Pizza |
| 3) Vending | Polar Beverages |
| 4) Bread Products | Duva Bakery |
| 5) Milk | Garelick Farms |

The above named vendors, with the exception of Eastern Bag and Paper, have serviced the district in the past and their services have been satisfactory.

To: Dr. Stephen Mills and the Acton Public School Committee

From: Liza Huber

Date: May 14, 2013

RE: Proposed Naming of the Acton Public Preschool Program

At the March 21, 2013 School Committee meeting, I sought your approval for naming the Acton Public Preschool Program (see attachments). In light of that discussion, I would like to propose the following process.

Per our "Naming School Facilities" policy and procedures, (File: FF and FF-R), we anticipate embracing broader and more representative groups without setting precedence for naming future programs.

Request for Nominations:

Nominations will be encouraged from the following representative groups:

- a. Community at large
- b. Officials of Acton
- c. Staff of the preschool
- d. Other interested staff
- e. Current and former students in the school system

Nominations should be sent to the Superintendent or School Committee Chair by 6/3/13.

Appointment of Screening Committee:

Per policy procedures, I would propose for your approval, the following nine member screening committee:

- a. Preschool Teachers – Julie Sleeper and Shelagh Conway
- b. Town Official – Paul Murphy
- c. Elementary Principal – Ed Kaufman
- d. Parent of a Special Education Student – Beth Tafler and Johanna Pyle
- e. Parent of a Regular Education Student -
- f. Community Representative – Steve Petr
- g. Director of Pupil Services – Liza Huber

The screening committee will review and evaluate the nominations and recommend three to the School Committee for a decision their meeting on 6/6/13.

Your approval of this process is kindly requested.

To: Dr. Stephen Mills and the Acton Public School Committee

From: Liza Huber

Date: June 4, 2013

RE: Proposed naming of the Acton Public School Program

At the May 16, 2013 School Committee meeting, approval was received for naming the Acton Public Preschool Program, following our "Naming School Facilities" policy and procedures (File: FF and FF-R).

At this time, the nine member screening committee has reviewed and evaluated the three nominations for renaming the Acton Public Schools Preschool Program and respectfully request a School Committee decision on 6/6/13:

The Carol P. Huebner Preschool
The Carol P. Huebner Integrated Preschool
The Carol P. Huebner Preschool Center

The most meaningful nomination was provided by a former graduate of the Preschool who wrote the following:

"I think it would be great if you named the preschool after Carol Huebner. When I was five years old in 1994, I was in the first class that was started at the preschool. My teacher, Johanna Pyle, was great and is still a friend. The assistant was Jean Martignette and Niki Holtzman also worked with us. Jean and Niki are retiring and Johanna is still a teacher. Carol made a preschool that was so good for students and teachers that they all wanted to stay. I graduated from Acton-Boxborough Regional High School and Middlesex Community College. Carol's preschool gave me a very good start. I think the preschool should be named after her just like the Space Center was named after John F. Kennedy; The Carol P. Huebner Preschool."

Your approval is kindly requested.



TO: Don Aicardi, Finance Director; Tess Summers, Treasurer
FROM: Peter Frazier, Senior Vice President
DATE: May 22, 2013
RE: Acton-Boxborough RSD, Massachusetts – Bond Refunding Status Summary

First Southwest Company, as the District's Financial Advisor, periodically analyzes the District's debt portfolio in order to identify opportunities to save interest costs by refunding. Listed below and attached are results of the most recent analysis.

There are a number of conditions that need to exist in order to successfully refund municipal debt, including a call feature (a prepayment option), low tax-exempt interest rates (relative to the existing debt) and taxable interest rates sufficiently high to efficiently fund the refunding escrow account. Also, refunding bond issues tend to be more efficient the closer their sale date is to the call date (prepayment date) of the refunded bonds. The District's bond issues that are candidates for refunding follow:

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Highest Interest Rate</u>	<u>Callable Balance</u>	<u>Estimated Savings</u>	
General Obligation Bonds of 2004	5.25%	\$3,360,000	\$326,198	(1)
General Obligation Bonds of 2005	6.00%	\$10,760,000	653,100	(2)

- (1) The Bonds are exempt from the limits of Proposition 2 ½. The present value savings represent 8.57% of the bonds refunded. There is (\$81,176) of negative arbitrage associated with this refunding opportunity at this time.
- (2) The Bonds are exempt from the limits of Proposition 2 ½. The present value savings represent 5.16% of the bonds refunded. There is (\$431,834) of negative arbitrage associated with this refunding opportunity at this time.

As none of the District's existing debt issues listed above have reached their call dates (prepayment dates), the District would have to issue advance refunding bonds in order to refinance the existing issues. Advance refunding issues entail selling bonds at current low interest rates and placing the proceeds of the bonds in an escrow account, invested in federal government backed securities that pay the debt service on the existing bonds up to the call date at which time the proceeds of the escrow would pay-off the outstanding principal on the refunded bonds.

Because the District's existing debt issues have call features, current interest rates are low, and the negative arbitrage associated with the refunding opportunities are well below the estimated savings, we believe it is a good time for the District to proceed with the refundings.

We will continue to monitor the District's debt issues for refunding opportunities. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please do not hesitate to call me at (617) 619-4409.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Refunding Bond Authorization Vote of the Regional District School Committee

VOTED: That in order to reduce interest costs on outstanding debt, the District is authorized to issue bonds or notes for the purpose of refunding all or any portion of its \$5,500,000 General Obligation Bonds, dated December 1, 2004, and its \$18,705,000 General Obligation Bonds, dated December 1, 2005, that are outstanding as of the date of this vote, including, if any, the payment of any premium and accrued interest associated therewith, and all other costs incidental and related thereto, under and pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 21A of the Massachusetts General Laws, or any other enabling authority.

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

Bond Refinancing Status Proposal
June 6, 2013

1

Background

November 1, 2012

Report to ABRSC regarding potential refunding
of regional school system debt

Meetings with First Southwest, our District's
financial advisor, with Director of Finance &
Regional Treasurer

Recommendation not to move forward

Background

Since November, 2012,
First Southwest has continued to monitor all
facets of this potential operation

First Southwest is now recommending to the
ABRSC that we move forward at this time

Last Meeting: May 23, 2013

The Opportunity

Because debt issued in 2004 and 2005 has call features,

Since current interest rates are low,

And the negative arbitrage associated with refunding are
well below the estimated savings,

now recommending to proceed with these financial
proceedings to refund and refinance

The Opportunity

Most of region's debt was authorized exempt
from the constrictions of Proposition 2 ½
(exception is Lower Fields debt last year);

The debt service payments show up on Table 6
as "Outside Debt Limit" obligations
-Just under \$1.9 million in FY14 Budget

The Opportunity

After 10 years, these bonds can be "called";
a.k.a. "can be paid off"

	Highest Interest Rate	Callable Balance
2004 Bonds	5.25%	\$3,360,000
2005 Bonds	6.00%	\$10,760,00

The Opportunity

Because we are still before the date by which the bonds would be “callable”,

the Regional School Committee, tonight, would have to authorize our Regional Treasurer to move forward towards “advanced refunding” of our existing regional debt

The Opportunity

Due to low interest rates, we have the ability to borrow money and place those dollars into an interest bearing escrow fund;

Funds from this escrow fund would:

First, pay the interest on the “callable” portion of the existing bonds;

Second, pay off the callable principal balance on the first call (prepayment) date;

Third, then ABRSD will then be responsible for the debt service on the new refunding bonds.

This will save our taxpayers money

The Opportunity

- All fees normally associated with borrowing will be covered and paid from escrow fund (printing, bond counsel, fees etc)-no effect on FY14 budget
- Same time frame as existing date schedules (Until 2025)
- Because it is refunding & reissuing existing debt, will continue to incorporate the “5% shift” from Boxborough to Acton as outlined in the current regional agreement

The Opportunity

Based on the numbers as of late May (subject to change as interest rates continue to move):

The Regional School district would realize savings to the taxpayers in both communities

In total, from 2014 to 2025:

2004 Debt: \$326,198

2005 Debt: \$653,100

\$979,298

in savings over the course of those years

The Opportunity

The Regional School Committee can authorize the Regional Treasurer and Finance Director to move forward with these transactions tonight;

ABRSC will have to vote final approval at the meeting in late July-early August (date yet to be determined)

Financial Milestones

Regional School Committee approval	June 6, 2013
Final Preliminary Official Statement (POS) prep & legal requirements	June 28, 2013
Draft POS to Moody's for questions/	
Draft POS & refunding analysis to Bond Counsel	July 1, 2013
Bond Rating call with Moody's	week of July 8, 2013
POS distributed electronically to market	July 10, 2013
Bond Rating released	By July 15, 2013
Competitive Bond Sale	July 17, 2013
RSC meets to approve sale and sign related paperwork	Late July-early August, 2013
Signed paperwork returned to FirstSouthwest/Dated delivery rate of bonds	Late July-early August, 2013

Proposed School Committee Vote

VOTED: That in order to reduce interest costs on outstanding debt, the District is authorized to issue bonds or notes for the purposes of refunding all or any portion of its \$5,500,000 General Obligation Bonds, dated December 1, 2004, and its \$18,705,000 General Obligation Bonds, dated December 1, 2005, that are outstanding as of the date of this vote, including, if any, the payment of any premium and accrued interest associated therewith, and all other costs incidental and related thereto, under and pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 21A of the Massachusetts General Laws, or any other enabling authority.

Closing

We're happy to answer to answer any of your questions.

Acton-Boxborough Regional
School District
Fiscal Year End Review
June 6, 2013

Superintendent's Introduction
Dr. Stephen Mills

1

FY'13 Year End Balances:
How should they be used?

- A. Purchase on a priority basis requests not included in the FY'14 budget?
- B. Review whether additional funds could be appropriated out of FY'13 balances into our OPEB trust fund?
- C. Allow FY'13 balances to flow into E & D (ABRSD) to maintain reserves at a prudent level?

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Acton-Boxborough Regional School
District
FY'13 Year End Expenditure Initiative
June 6, 2013

Don Aicardi, Finance Director

FY'13 Year End Balances:

**What are the goals for using this
capacity?**

FY'13 Positive Fund Balance

Acton Boxborough RSD

Current FY'13 Year End Estimate: \$620k

**Year End Balance As A Percentage:
1.6% of \$39.1m budget**

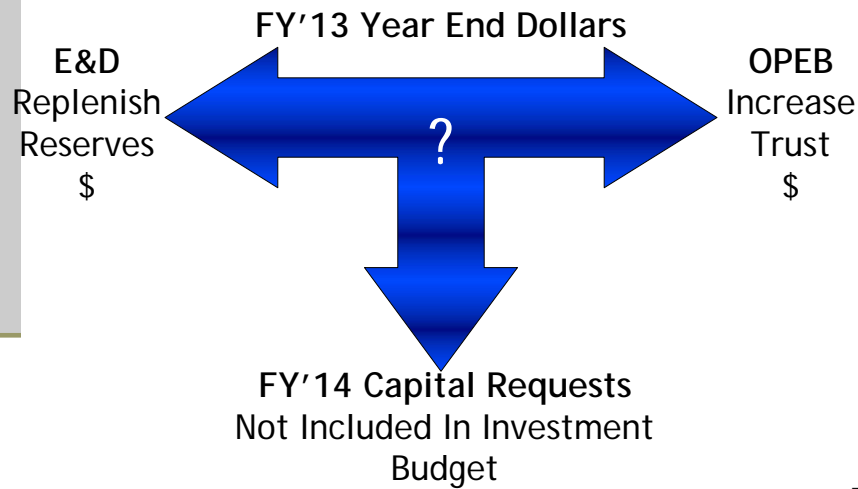
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Highlight To Remember

No vote is "required" tonight to transfer funds; but, consistent with the desire of the SC to review any proposed year-end spending proposals, we are presenting a recommendation for your input and affirmation.

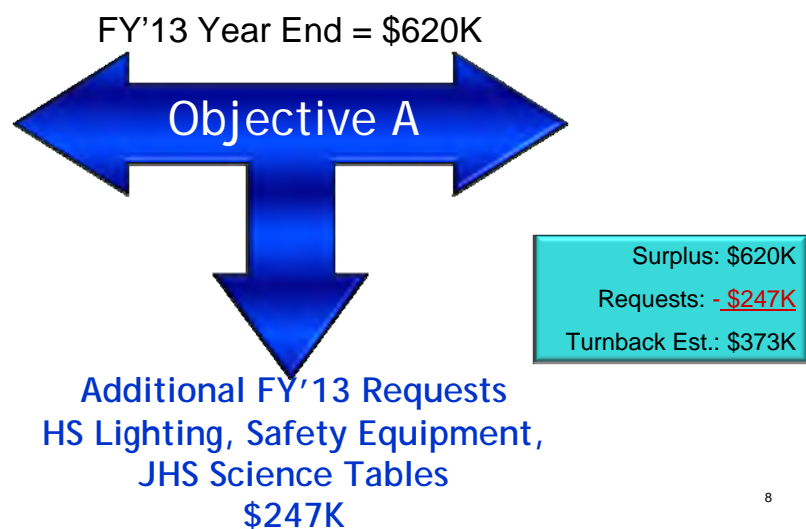
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FY'13 Year End Dollars



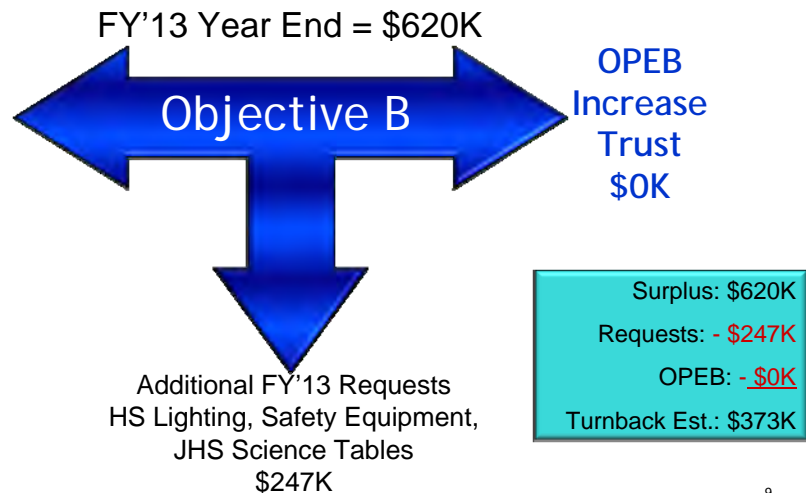
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FY'13 Year End Dollars – Objective A



8

FY'13 Year End Dollars – Objective B



OPEB for ABRSD

FY'13: **\$236,000** into OPEB Trust Fund

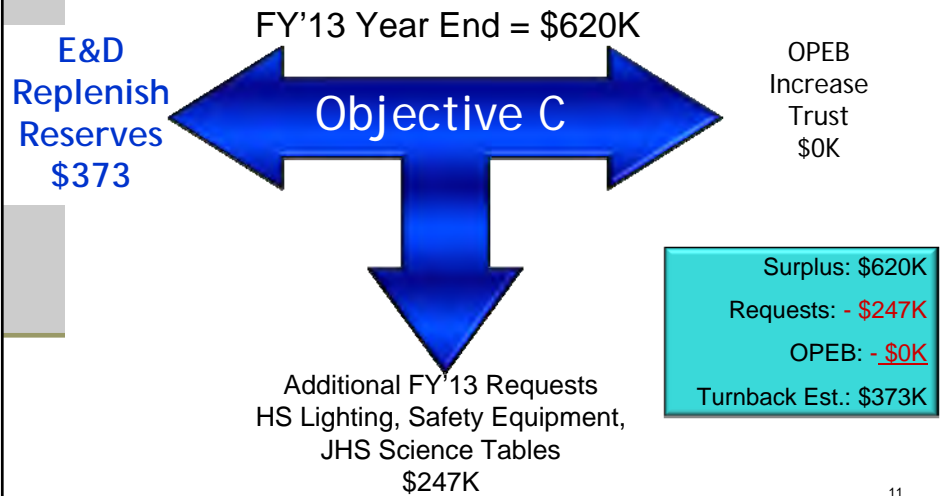
FY'14: **\$376,000** into OPEB Trust Fund

ABRSC's preference is to make contributions
into OPEB Trust as part of annual budget
process

Not recommending any year end
contributions at this time

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FY'13 Year End Dollars – Objective C



TONIGHT'S PROPOSAL - Objective C

Allow \$373k from FY'13 balances to flow into E & D (ABRSD) to be re-certified by the Department of Revenue.

REMINDER: Existing reserves were used to support the FY'14 budget: \$770k from E & D

ABRSD Excess/Deficiency Balance: Where will be in the fall?

The FY'14 State Budget process now indicates that the State Aid revenue numbers may be higher than the estimates used last spring in the Table 6 chart.

Final House numbers were \$60k lower;

Final Senate numbers are \$62k higher.

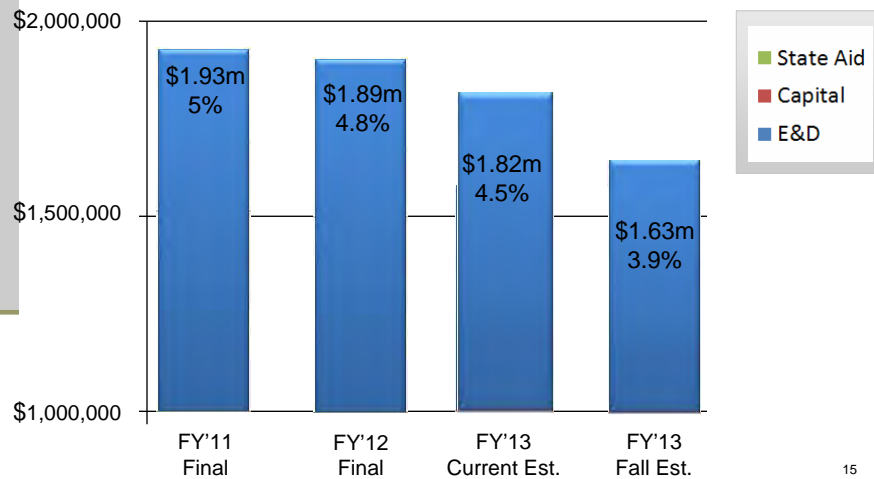
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ABRSD Excess/Deficiency Balance: Where will be in the fall?

Putting All The Pieces Together

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ABRSD Excess/Deficiency Balance: Where will we be in the fall?



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Acton Boxborough Regional School District Excess & Deficiency FY'98 to FY'13

FY	E & D	FY	E & D
FY'98	\$391,959	FY'06	\$632,349
FY'99	\$460,077	FY'07	\$1,415,970*
FY'00	\$803,026	FY'08	\$1,231,767*
FY'01	\$427,861	FY'09	\$1,545,953
FY'02	\$467,258	FY'10	\$1,711,823
FY'03	\$767,772	FY'11	\$1,925,118**
FY'04	\$605,464	FY'12	\$1,892,740
FY'05	\$805,557	FY'13	\$1,550,000 EST

FY'13 Positive Year End Fund Balance

Target from December 2012? 4.0%

**If a \$620,000 fund balance materialized,
what would be our E&D FB percentage?**

Current Estimate: 4.5%

**If \$247,000 in proposed spending moved
forward, what would the E&D FB percentage
be?**

Current Estimate: 3.9%

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**Acton-Boxborough Regional School
District
FY'13 Year End Expenditure Initiative
June 6, 2013**

Prepared By:
J.D. Head, Stephen Mills, Andrew Shen

FY'13 Year End Expenditures

We Have Already Committed To:

Item	Cost	Rationale
Safety Equipment	\$60,000	Committed to pay for Region's portion of Safety Task Force recommendations outlined at April 10, 2013 meeting
Lighting Equipment (High School)	\$122,000	AB contribution towards project; will access \$125,000 from NStar; allowed electricity account for FY'14 to be lowered by \$100,000

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FY'13 Year End Expenditures That We Are Weighing

Additional Recommended Expenditure:

Item	Cost	Rationale
Replacement of Science Room Tables at JH	\$65,000	Would allow for ten (10) science rooms at the Junior High to be reconfigured (First previewed on Budget Saturday, Jan. 2013)

To Summarize:

	\$620,000	Estimated FY'13 Year End Capacity
	-\$182,000	Already Committed
	-\$65,000	Recommended
TOTAL	\$247,000	From FY'13 Year End Capacity

Re-Design of Science Classrooms



Summary of Request

- ✓ Current design of the science rooms is not conducive to maximizing student engagement and science instruction
 - ✓ **Proposed remedy:** renovation of 10 science rooms - remove built-in tables and furnish with portable science tables.
- [Cost Placeholder: \$65,000]**

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What the Experts Say...

A report by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) notes that fixed demonstration tables are a poor design for science classrooms because they ***“limit flexibility and possibility for reconfiguration”*** and “limit useful space.” They recommend that science rooms be designed with movable tables.

(http://www.massschoolbuildings.org/sites/default/files/edit-contentfile/Guidelines_Forms/Guidelines_Policies/Science_Lab_Guideline_Presentation.pdf)

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Science Room Re-Design Cont'd:

- ✓ Adjust seating to reflect instruction (lecture, demonstration, group work)
- ✓ Address student seating needs (preferential seating for attention, as well as hearing/vision)
- ✓ Effective set up of stations for experiments
- ✓ Maximize use of perimeter areas and center of the classroom



ABRSD Items We Are Not Addressing

SH-Repave Sidewalk Outside Front Entrance	\$40k
SH-Repair Bleachers in Lower Gym	\$20k
SH-TV Studio Replacement	\$39k
SH-Language Lab Replacement (Held For FY'15)	\$36k
SH-Auditorium Stage Floor Replacement	\$7k
SH-Auditorium Repairs/Improvements	\$86k
SH-Blackbox Theater Improvements	\$16k
SH-Replacement LCD Projectors	\$59k
JH-20 Desktop Computers for Special Education Learning Center Rooms (Upgraded by Ed Tech during FY'13)	\$15k
JH-Library/Media Center Computers (from Ed Tech during FY'13)	\$40k
AB-Musical Instruments (Potentially from FY'13 Year End; Plan To Increase Operating Budget beginning in FY'15)	\$33k

FY'13 ABRSD Budget

Final Thoughts On FY13 Budget

25

Food For Thought

Our projected E & D fund balance is hovering around 4% of FY'14 annual operating budget;

No longer bumping up against 5% cap;

\$770k of E & D was used to underwrite the FY'14 budget;

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Food For Thought

ABRSD Budgets have been tightening;
 Smaller annual Increases lead to less potential money available at fiscal year end;
 If fund balance is to stop eroding Future E & D use should be roughly equivalent to year end replenishment;
 If not brought more into balance, E & D balance will continue to erode;
 E & D fund balance trends has bond rating implications;
 If E & D usage for the budget is lowered to stabilize the balance, it will affect both towns' assessments...

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Food For Thought

ABRSC has tried to find the right balance between:

- Keeping annual budget increases as low as possible....
- While moving forward with an investment budget;

OPEB trust fund contributions now annual;
 Decisions to rebuild fund balance reserves over lowering towns' assessments have been approved the last two years by ABRSC;

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Food for Thought

ABRSD Financial Stability;
Maintaining Level Service;
Investment Budget??;
Maintaining Our Physical Assets;
Prepare for Future OPEB Liability.

As usual,
Our challenge is to find the correct balance.

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Superintendent Wrap Up

Thank you for your support of the ABRSD FY'13 budget.

We are happy to answer any questions that you may have.

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May 30, 2013

Dennis Bruce, Chair
Acton Public School Committee

Dear Dennis,

At its May 21, 2013, meeting the Acton Finance Committee reviewed emerging information from the School administration regarding year end spending being considered at both the local and regional levels. Based on information derived from agenda packets, the chart on the next page formed the basis for our discussion.

By a vote of 8 to 1, the Finance Committee passed the following motion:

The Finance Committee recommends that school committee year end spending be limited in scope to security, safety, and energy efficiency items and specifically should not include Science room tables, desks and chairs for the elementary schools, and cafeteria furniture and equipment.

Our rationale for this position included the belief that furniture needs should be identified through the normal budgeting process and incorporated into the operating budgets. The Finance Committee fully supports efforts to improve security in conjunction with the work of the Safety Task Force and agrees that spending the funds at an early opportunity makes sense. We also commend the administration for not bringing forward personnel items as part of their proposal.

While we do not have a specific recommendation in regard to the uses of unspent monies, members noted that options include lowering the assessment for FY14, returning money to free cash or E&D, and contributions to the OPEB Trust Fund.

We appreciate the opportunity to learn about your considerations in time to contribute our thoughts to the discussion and hope you will share this letter with your colleagues on both School Committees. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

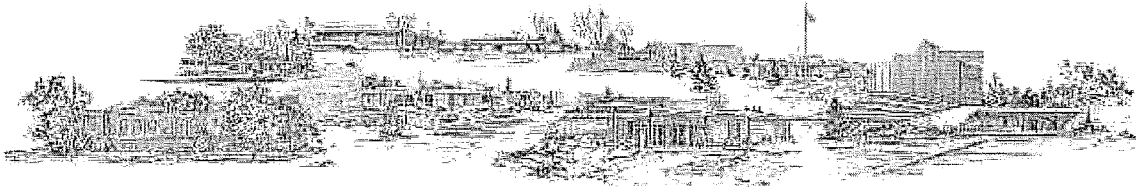
Patricia A. Clifford, Chair
Acton Finance Committee

ABRSD

Projected position end of FY2013	\$656,000	
E&D Certified as of 06/30/2012	\$1,892,727	
Safety equipment	\$60,000	Committed - Region's portion of Safety Task Force recommendations outlined at 04/10/2013 meeting.
Lighting equipment (ABRHS)	\$122,000	Committed - AB contribution toward project; will access \$125,000 from Nstar; allowed electricity account for FY14 to be lowered by \$100,000
Science room replacements of tables (RJG)	\$65,000	Under consideration - Would allow for 10 science rooms at Jr High to be reconfigured
Total	\$247,000	

APS

Projected position end of FY2013	\$324,000	
Safety equipment	\$90,000	Committed - APS' portion of Safety Task Force recommendations outlined at 04/10/2013 meeting.
Reading and Writing Units of Study	\$15,000	Under consideration - Due to newly published state frameworks, investments should be made in all five elementary schools. Current FY13 APS Learning Materials Account is \$7,200.
Gates School	\$9,000	Under consideration - Last two rooms at Gates with carpet - will be healthier and easier to maintain with tile floor
Desk and chair replacement (primary and next-tier classroom - Gates)	\$60,000	Under consideration - discussion with principal during FY14 budget deliberations unveiled need to address condition of classroom equipment
Desk and chair replacement (primary and next-tier classroom - Douglas)	\$80,000	Under consideration - discussion with principal during FY14 budget deliberations unveiled need to address condition of classroom equipment
Conant	\$28,000	Cafeteria tables, chairs, chair dolly
Total	\$282,000	



ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS / ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
 96 Hayward Road, Acton, Massachusetts 01720-2995 • (978) 264-4700 • Fax: (978) 266-2523

To: Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee
 From: Don Aicardi, Director of Finance *DA*
 Date: 5/31/2013
 CC: Dr. Stephen Mills

Background

School Committee policy (JFABA) notes that “any students from outside Acton or Boxborough who wish to enroll on a tuition basis” that the Regional School Committee “must approve such application on a space available basis”. The Policy also notes that the committee “shall set the rate for tuition each year in the spring upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. The tuition set pursuant to this policy shall be the average expense per pupil (including in such average both regular education costs and special education costs) for the Acton Public School District and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, respectively.”

Methodology

To the best of my knowledge, the potential non-resident tuition has been calculated for the ABRSD in two ways. The first way is simply to take the FY14 budget for ABRSD and divide it by the number of students used in the foundation enrollment calculation (as used by the DESE in the Chapter 70 calculation). This method has its virtues, but would not capture all fund expenditures, only those from the general fund appropriation.

Another method of determining the average expense per pupil would be to go to the DESE website where all expenditures from the previous fiscal years are posted. The DESE does this to “present Massachusetts school spending data in a way that is comprehensive, comparable, and transparent to the general public. These calculations show **all** school operating expenditures including those outside the general fund such as grants, private donations, and revolving accounts. They include payments for local resident pupils who are being educated in schools outside the district.”

The DESE website notes that “the following funding sources are all included in the functional expenditure per pupil measure:

- school committee appropriations
- municipal appropriations outside the school committee budget that affect schools
- federal grants
- state grants
- circuit breaker funds
- private grants and gifts
- school choice and other tuition revolving funds
- athletic funds
- school lunch funds
- other local receipts such as rentals and insurance receipts.”

If one uses the total expenditures from ABRSD from FY12 on the DESE website which lists total district expenditures, all funds, all functions (\$44,091,892) and then divides that number by the total average membership for that year (3,000), it is possible to perform an “average expense per pupil” calculation as required in the school committee policy. I believe that this second type of calculation is superior to the first method because it captures all expenditures from all funds from an unimpeachable source, the DESE website, and can be clearly understood by a third party.

Recommendation

Therefore, the administration recommends that the tuition rate for non-resident students in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District be set at \$14,696 for the 2013-2014 school year.

Acton-Boxborough Community Education

*** MEMO ***

TO: Steve Mills

FROM: Erin Bettez

RE: Lower Fields Update

DATE: June 4, 2013

Here is a brief update regarding use and revenues at the Lower Fields.

School Use

The fields are used daily for gym classes. All spring extracurricular sports practices and games were held as scheduled except for one boys' lacrosse game that had to be halted due to heavy rain/thunder/lightning.

FOLF/Rentals

As of May 31, FOLF has collected \$207,122.59 in rental revenues with a projected cash flow for the fiscal year of \$221,646.59.

Construction

The General Contractor will reach final completion of the project in a few weeks. After much discussion and debate with the GC, the auxiliary parking lot will be built by a new vendor and completed over the summer.

Concessions/Advertising

A-B Community Education equipped the concessions building, hired staff to work there, and opened up for business on Saturday, May 25. Sales and hours of operations are being tracked over the first few weeks/months so that a more finely tuned plan may be put into effect in the fall to maximize revenues.

The advertising plan has been rolled out and so far two local businesses have signed contracts to purchase signs.

To: Stephen Mills
 From: Larry Dorey
 Re: Discipline Report for May
 Date: 6/1/2013

There were 32 discipline referrals to the administration during the month of May, 2013. This total is up from 30 last year. 25 students were suspended this month, while 18 students were suspended during May, 2012.

Suspensions for the month of May, 2013

Infraction	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Abusive/Obscene Language					
Alcohol Possession				1	2
Alcohol Use		4	11	5	13
Disrespectful Behavior	2				
Disruptive/Uncooperative Behavior		2			1
Drug Distribution					3
Drug Paraphernalia					1
Marijuana Possession			1	1	4
Marijuana Use				5	
Fighting			3	4	
Harassment		3			
Leaving School Grounds				1	
Physical Aggression		1			
Physical Attack			1		
Sale of Alcohol			1		
Threatening				1	1
Truancy Issues		8			
Total	2	18	17	18	25

A list of all infractions for the month of May, 2013 appears on the backside of this page.

c: Alixe Callen

Other Infractions for May, 2013

Infraction	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Abusive/Obscene Language		1			
Academic Integrity	2		3		
Alcohol Possession				1	2
Alcohol use		4	11	5	13
Bullying			1		
Bus Discipline Issue	4				
Chem Health Alcohol				2	
Chem Health Smoking			3		
Computer use Violation			3		
Disrespectful	3	3			2
Disruptive/Uncooperative Behavior	2	7	4	3	2
Drug Distribution					3
Drug Paraphernalia					1
Marijuana Possession			1	1	4
Marijuana Use				5	
Fighting			3	4	
Forgery	1		4		
Harassment	2	4	2	2	1
Leaving School Grounds	3	11	4	4	1
Non Compliance w/school rules		2			
Other	1	3	1		
Out of School Issue	2				1
Physical Aggression		3			1
Physical Attack			1		
Sale of Alcohol			1		
Tardy			1		
Teasing		1	4	1	
Threatening				1	1
Truancy	1	14	3	1	
Vandalism				1	
Total	21	53	50	30	32

To: Stephen Mills
From: Larry Dorey
Re: Discipline Report for April, 2013
Date: April 30, 2013

There were 22 discipline referrals to the administration during the month of April, 2013. This total is down from 25 last year. 4 students were suspended this month, while 5 students were suspended during April, 2012.

Suspensions for April, 2013

Infraction	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Abusive/Obscene Language	1	2			1
Alcohol Use		2		1	
Alcohol Possession			3		
Drug Use				2	
Drug Possession	1			1	
Harassment		1			
Other				1	1
Physical Aggression	1				
Sexual Harassment	1				
Theft			2		
Truancy Issues		1			
Vandalism		1			2
Total	4	7	5	5	4

A list of all infractions for the month of April, 2013 appears on the backside of this page.

c: Alixe Callen

Other Infractions for April, 2013

Chemical Health - Drugs	1			1	
Disrespectful		3	1	2	
Disruptive/Uncooperative Behavior	2	8	8	7	3
Drug Possession	1				
Drug Related			2		
Forgery	1	1	2		2
Harassment		1	1	1	
Leaving School Grounds	11	8	3	6	4
Non Compliance w/school rules	1	1			
Other	3	5	3	2	1
Out of School Issue	1	4	1		
Parking Violations	2	7			1
Physical Aggression	1	2			
Sexual harassment	1				
Tardy			1		
Teasing		1	2		
Threatening		1			
Theft			2		
Tardy			1		2
Truancy	1	7	8	4	5
Vandalism		1			2
Total	27	54	42	25	22

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

To: Stephen Mills
From: Alixe Callen
cc: Melissa Dempsey
Date: May 1, 2013

Please accept a donation of \$100.00 from Carol Bull which will support our Community Service Program.

The funds will be deposited into Fund 3328, SHS Community Service Gifts.

Thank you.

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

10.1.2

To: Stephen Mills
From: Alixe Callen
cc: Melissa Dempsey
Date: May 16, 2013

Please accept the following donations which will support the SHS Community Service Program.

\$25.00 from Anne M. Hassett
\$25.00 from Majorie M. Murray
\$35.00 from Patricia A. Quilty

The funds (total of \$85.00) will be deposited into Fund 3328, SHS Community Service Gifts.

Thank you.

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

To: Stephen Mills
From: Alixe Callen
cc: Melissa Dempsey
Date: May 23, 2013
Subject: Donation from Middlesex Savings Bank

Middlesex Savings Bank has made a charitable gift to ABRHS, in support of Community Service Day t-shirts, in the amount of \$250.00 that will be deposited in Fund 3328, Community Service Gifts.

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

To: Stephen Mills
From: Alixe Callen
cc: Maura Champigny
Karin Drowne
Date: May 29, 2013

Please accept a donation to the Class of 2013 in the amount of \$256.94 from Trugoy Enterprises (dba Orange Leaf Frozen Yogurt). The funds will be deposited into Student Activities, Class of 2013.

Thank you.

R.J. Grey Junior High School

To: Steve Mills
 From: Allison Warren and Jim Marcotte
 Re: Discipline Report for May 2013
 Date: June 4, 2013

There were 42 discipline referrals/concerns (including requests from teachers for assistance) reported to the Administration during the month of May. There were 5 suspensions this past month.

	<u>May-09</u>	<u>May-10</u>	<u>May-11</u>	<u>May-12</u>	<u>May-13</u>
<i>Total Discipline Referrals Reported</i>	51	31	22	21	42

	<u>May-09</u>	<u>May-10</u>	<u>May-11</u>	<u>May-12</u>	<u>May-13</u>
Total Suspensions	10	7	1	6	5
drug-related incident				1	
fighting	5	2		3	
harassment (non-sexual)	1				
inappropriate/disruptive/disrespectful behavior		3	1		3
non-compliance with school rules	1			1	1
physical aggression	2	2			
sexual harassment	1			1	1
stealing					
threatening					

	<u>May-09</u>	<u>May-10</u>	<u>May-11</u>	<u>May-12</u>	<u>May-12</u>
Total Other Infractions	41	24	21	15	37
abusive language/profanity	2				1
alcohol use/possession					
bus discipline			1	5	10
Academic integrity		2			
class/school truancies	2	1			5
computer violation					
vandalism					1
disruptive behavior (classroom, cafeteria, hallway)	26	11	8	1	8
harassment (non-sexual)/bullying/teasing	2	3	4	2	4
non-compliance with school rules	5	3		3	6

out of school issue					
physical aggression	2	2			
sexual harassment					
stealing					
threatening					
uncooperative/disrespectful behavior	2	2	8	4	2

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

R.J. Grey Junior High School

To: Steve Mills
 From: Allison Warren and Jim Marcotte
 Re: Discipline Report for April 2013
 Date: May 1, 2013

There were 10 discipline referrals/concerns (including requests from teachers for assistance) reported to the Administration during the month of April. There were 2 suspensions this past month.

	Apr-09	Apr-10	Apr11	Apr12	Apr13
<i>Total Discipline Referrals Reported</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>10</i>

	Apr-09	Apr-10	Apr11	Apr12	Apr13
Total Suspensions	3	6	2	1	2
Alcohol Use					
drug-related incident					
fighting					
harassment (non-sexual)		2			
inappropriate/disruptive/disrespectful behavior				1	1
non-compliance with school rules					
physical aggression		2	1		1
sexual harassment		1	1		
stealing					
threatening		1			

	Apr-09	Apr-10	Apr-11	Apr-12	Apr-13
Total Other Infractions	34	30	17	10	8
abusive language/profanity		1		1	
alcohol use/possession					
bus discipline	1	1		5	
Academic Integrity		9			
class/school truancies	2				
computer violation		1			
vandalism					
disruptive behavior (classroom, cafeteria, hallway)	20	6	6	3	4
harassment (non-sexual)/bullying/teasing			1		

non-compliance with school rules	6	4		1	
out of school issue					
physical aggression		1	1		
Tardy to class		7	2		1
sexual harassment					
stealing					1
threatening					
uncooperative/disrespectful behavior	5		7		2
Other					

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

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

Category	Total as of 4/1/2013	Additions	Subtractions	Current Total as of 5/1/2013
RJG JHS	9	0	0	9
ABRHS	9	+1	0	10
ABRSD TOTALS	18	+1	0	19

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

Category	Total as of 5/1/2013	Additions	Subtractions	Current Total as of 6/1/2013
RJG JHS	9	0	0	9
ABRHS	10	0	0	10
ABRSD TOTALS	19	0	0	19

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

Levels	Sept. 1			Oct. 1			Nov. 1			Dec. 1			Jan. 1			Feb. 1			Mar. 1			Apr. 1			May 1			Jun 1				
	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot
K	265	43	6	271	267	43	6	273	269	43	6	275	272	43	6	278	272	44	6	278	272	44	6	278	275	44	6	281	275	44	6	281
1	312	59	7	319	312	59	8	320	310	59	8	318	312	59	8	325	319	58	8	327	318	59	8	326	318	59	8	326	320	60	8	328
2	350	54	8	358	348	54	8	356	348	54	8	356	352	54	8	360	353	54	8	361	353	54	8	361	357	54	8	365	358	54	8	366
3	383	53	7	390	382	53	8	390	392	53	8	400	381	53	8	389	384	54	8	392	382	54	8	390	381	54	8	389	382	54	8	390
4	355	65	2	357	354	65	2	356	354	65	2	356	354	65	2	356	359	65	2	361	359	65	2	361	359	65	2	361	359	65	2	361
5	364	68	2	366	364	70	2	366	354	70	2	356	365	70	2	357	355	69	2	357	355	69	2	357	355	69	2	357	355	69	2	357
6	382	76	5	387	382	75	5	388	383	75	5	388	382	75	5	387	382	75	5	387	382	75	5	387	382	75	5	387	382	75	5	387
in D.Presch. Clr	30	0	2	32	30	0	2	32	32	0	2	34	33	0	2	35	36	0	2	38	37	0	2	39	37	0	2	39	39	0	2	41
in D.Presch. ltr	7	5	0	7	7	5	0	7	11	5	0	11	11	5	0	11	9	5	0	9	9	5	0	9	10	5	0	10	17	5	0	17
OOD Presch	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3
O.D. SPED K-6	20	7	0	20	20	7	0	20	20	7	0	20	20	7	0	20	20	7	0	20	20	7	0	20	20	7	0	20	22	7	0	22
A.P.S. Total	2461	432	39	2500	2459	433	41	2500	2476	433	41	2517	2475	433	41	2516	2489	433	41	2533	2490	434	41	2531	2497	434	41	2538	2512	435	41	2553
7	377	74	11	462	375	74	11	460	375	74	11	460	374	74	11	459	376	74	10	460	377	75	9	460	376	75	5	466	374	75	5	454
8	396	71	7	474	396	72	7	475	396	72	7	475	397	72	7	476	395	71	7	473	394	71	7	472	393	71	5	469	393	71	5	469
J.H.S. Total	773	145	18	936	771	146	18	935	771	146	18	935	771	146	18	935	772	146	17	935	770	146	16	932	769	146	10	925	767	146	10	923
9	413	71	12	496	408	71	12	491	407	71	11	489	406	71	11	488	407	71	11	489	406	71	11	488	405	71	11	487	405	71	11	487
10	397	75	7	479	392	74	7	473	393	74	7	474	393	74	7	474	394	74	7	475	394	73	7	475	395	73	7	475	396	73	7	476
11	420	106	4	530	419	107	4	528	417	107	4	528	418	106	4	528	418	106	3	527	417	106	3	526	417	105	3	525	418	105	3	526
12	381	100	7	488	379	100	7	486	376	101	7	484	376	101	7	484	377	101	6	484	377	101	6	484	377	101	6	484	377	101	6	484
9-12 Ungr.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P.G.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H.S. Total	1611	352	30	1993	1598	352	30	1980	1593	353	29	1975	1593	352	29	1974	1596	352	27	1975	1594	351	28	1973	1594	350	27	1971	1596	350	27	1973
Total JHS & HS	2384	497	48	2929	2369	498	48	2915	2364	499	47	2910	2364	498	47	2909	2367	498	44	2909	2366	497	45	2908	2363	496	37	2896	2363	496	37	2896
O.D. SPED 7-12	45	9	0	54	45	9	0	54	44	9	0	53	42	8	0	50	41	8	0	49	42	8	0	50	43	8	0	51	45	8	0	53
Reg. Total	2429	506	48	2983	2414	507	48	2969	2408	508	47	2963	2406	506	47	2959	2408	506	44	2958	2408	505	43	2956	2406	504	37	2947	2408	504	37	2949
A.P.S. Total	2461	432	39	2500	2459	433	41	2500	2476	433	41	2517	2475	433	41	2516	2489	433	41	2530	2492	433	41	2533	2490	434	41	2538	2512	435	41	2553
Reg. Total	2429	506	48	2983	2414	507	48	2969	2408	508	47	2963	2406	506	47	2959	2408	505	45	2958	2408	505	43	2956	2406	504	37	2947	2408	504	37	2949
Grand Total	4890	506	87	5483	4873	507	89	5469	4884	508	88	5480	4881	506	88	5475	4897	506	85	5488	4900	505	86	5491	4898	505	84	5487	4903	504	78	5502

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

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

In D. = In District
 Distribution:

S. Mills
 M. Altieri
 D. Bookis
 L. Huber

D. Aicardi
 A. Bisewicz
 K. Nelson
 E. Weiner
 R. Cvitkovich

C. Bates
 All Principals (2)

Students other than Choice counted under column C:

Staff Students -
 Tuition In Students -
 Sped Tuition in Students

Actual
Acton Public Schools
2012 - 2013
May 1, 2013

Grade YO	Conant			Total	Douglas			Total	Gates			Total	McCarthy-Towne			Total	Merriam			Total	#Sec.	Avg. S		
	Rm	CAD	CB	CC	2#	DAD	DBD	DC	I#	GAD	GB		TAD	TB	TC	I/J2#	MAD	MB	MC	I#	6#			
K-25		22	18	19	59	20	20	20	60	19	21	40	Case +	22	20	20	62							
	Rm 3	4	5			3	4	5		1	3	3#		113	311	312	I/J1#	224	234	323	3#	8#	20.1	
Gr. 1-2		22	23	23	68	21	22	22	65	21	22	22	65	Case +	22	22	22	66						
	Rm 5	7	8			6	7	8		10	5	6	2#	114	301	302	I/J2#	133	135	231	334	4#	21.9	
Gr. 2-2		23	23	23	69	22	23	23	68	22	22	24	68	Case +	23	23	23	72						
	Rm 10	17	9	1#		9	10	11	2#	17	7	9	1#	212	213	314	I/J3#	233	321	322	332	1#	22.9	
Gr. 3-2		24	24	25	73	24	25	25	74	25	25	24	74	Case +	26	27	25	78						
	Rm 18	19	20			12	13	14		18	19	20	1#	115	210	310	I/J2	230	330	331	1#	2#	24.4	
Gr. 4-2		23	24	24	71	23	25	24	72	24	24	25	73	Case +	24	26	24	74						
	Rm 14	15	16			19	20	21		14	15	16		211	303	313	I/J1#	223	235	335	1#	2#	24.1	
Gr. 5-2		24	24	25	73	23	24	24	71	23	24	24	71	Case +	26	24	24	74						
	Rm 11	12	13			15	16	17		11	12	13	1#	112	214	215		232	324	333	4#	5#	23.8	
Gr. 6-1		26	26	27	79	26	24	26	76	25	26	26	77		26	26	26	78						
	Total Staff				3#				3#			8#	Case +	I/J4	Average	24.1	10#				15#	39#	25.8	
Total	21 Sec	Average	23.4	492	21 Sec	Average	23.1	486	20 Sec	Average	23.4	468	Case +	21 Sec	Average	23.3	490	23 Sec	Average	23.2	534	2470	106	23.3
	Range	18	27			20	26			19	26			20	26				20	26			18	27

**Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS
2013 -2014**

Acton Public Schools			<u>Term Expires</u>
Dennis Bruce*	Acton	dbruce@abschools.org	April, 2015
Michael Coppolino	Acton	mcoppolino@abschools.org	April, 2016
Kim McOsker	Acton	kmcosker@abschools.org	April 2014
Paul Murphy	Acton	pmurphy@abschools.org	April 2014
Deanne O'Sullivan	Acton	dosullivan@abschools.org	April, 2015
Kristina Rychlik	Acton	krychlik@abschools.org	April, 2016

* * * * *

Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools

(all of the above, plus the following Boxborough members)

Brigid Bieber	Boxborough	bbieber@abschools.org	May, 2015
Maria Neyland	Boxborough	mneyland@abschools.org	May, 2014
Mary Brolin	Boxborough	mbrolin@abschools.org	May, 2016

* Acton Public School Committee Chairperson

** A-B Regional School Committee Vice-Chairperson

5/31/13



Please Join Us for

An Evening with Dr. Yong Zhao

July 23, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

The Acton Public Schools and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, along with the Acton Chinese Language School, welcome Dr. Yong Zhao on July 23, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. to the High School auditorium. Please join our school administration and staff as we hear Dr. Zhao's presentation on the complexities of today's American education system and where it stands within global education.

About Dr. Zhao . . .

An internationally known scholar, author, and speaker, Dr. Zhao has established himself as one of the most compelling voices in education today with an emphasis on developing students to be creative, resourceful thinkers with an entrepreneurial spirit. He argues that our country's current focus on standardized learning and testing is counter-productive to developing the skills, strategies, levels of engagement, and attitudes students will need for our ever-changing world. Currently a Presidential Chair and Associate Dean for Global Education at the College of Education at the University of Oregon, Dr. Zhao is also a full professor in the Department of Educational Measurement, Policy, and Leadership and a fellow of the International Academy of Education. Author of *World Class Learners: Educating Creative and Entrepreneurial Students* and *Catching Up or Leading the Way: American Education in the Age of Globalization*, Dr. Zhao's books are available online at the Amazon bookstore. These books are also available at the Acton Memorial and Sargent Libraries.

How to register . . .

Please join us as Dr. Zhao shares his research and perspectives on developing the skills and strategies necessary for students to be successful in meeting the demands of a global society. If you plan on joining us, please let us know so that we can better accommodate the general public. Admission is free and seating is first come, first served; however, overflow spaces will be made available based on these attendance predictions. Visit the school districts' website at <http://ab.mec.edu> and click on the "General Admission" link under "News and Events."

Please join us for the

Retirement Celebration

in honor of
the following Acton and Acton-Boxborough
staff members

Susan Atwater-Rhodes

Peter Colby

Pamela Cranna

John Edmonds

Fern Gile

Susan Heartlein

Niki Holtzman

Ruth Johnson

Ursula Konde

Judith LaFrancis

Diane McSweeney

Christine Mohn

Kathy Santry

Elaine Vinal

Jayne Carter

Virginia Conway

Elaine DeRome

Andria Fuccione

Monty Grob

Patricia Higgins

Carol Huebner

Anne Kingan

George LaBarge

Jean Martignette

Susan Michelson

Barbara Raffa

Wendy Tompkins

Denise Wetherbee

Thursday, June 13, 2013

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

at the

Wedgewood Pines Country Club

Stow, MA

(Directions: www.wedgewoodpines.com)

Please tear off and return to
Peggy Elder, Superintendent's Office, by Tuesday, May 28.

_____ I plan to attend and have enclosed \$10

(for food & gifts)

Checks: "Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools"

(No need to respond if you are unable to join us, although
you are still welcome to contribute to the gifts!)

Your Name _____

(Please print!)

Office of the Superintendent
Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
978-264-4700, x 3206
<http://ab.mec.edu>

TO: All Staff
FROM: Steve Mills
ON: April 30, 2013
RE: **DISMISSAL TIMES FOR LAST DAY OF SCHOOL - JUNE 24, 2013**

Dismissal times for Monday, June 24, 2013:

10:45 a.m. - Raymond J. Grey Junior High School

10:55 a.m. - Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

12:15 p.m. - Douglas and Gates Schools

1:00 p.m. - Conant, McCarthy-Towne, Merriam Schools

On Monday, June 24, elementary schools will follow the regular Thursday dismissal schedule.

The Junior High will have its end of year assembly on Friday, June 21. The Junior High will have a half-day of school on Monday, June 24 and will remain at the Junior High until 10:45 dismissal. High School students will be dismissed on June 24 at 10:55 a.m. Buses will transport Junior High and High School students from their respective schools at dismissal time on June 24.

In addition, please note that High School students will be dismissed at 10:55 a.m. after final examinations on June 18 through June 21.

Buses will be provided to transport High School students home at 10:55 a.m. on June 18 through June 21.

Lunch will not be available from the High School Cafeteria starting Tuesday, June 18. High School students will need to make a request at the High School Office and lunch(es) will be sent down from the Junior High School.

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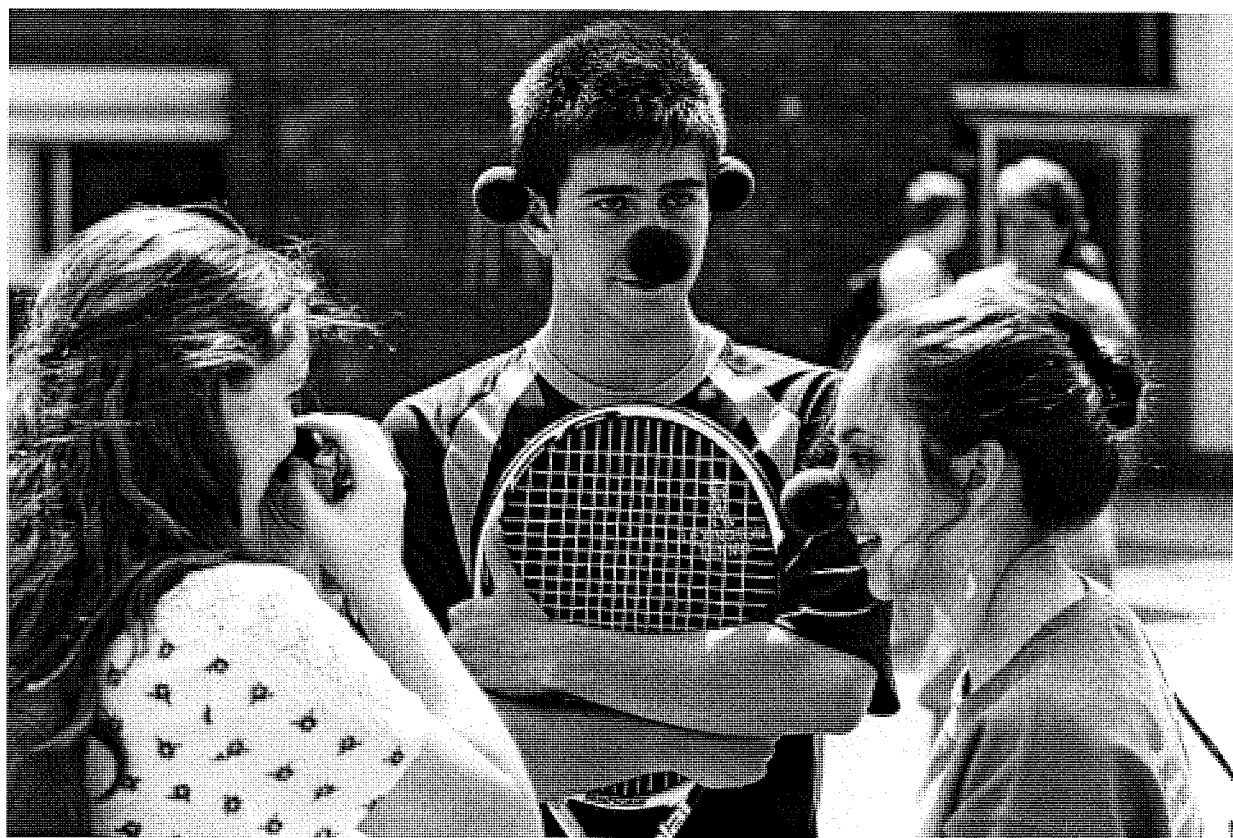
10.9

The Boston Globe

West

Lexington tries to tackle high school student stress

By **Kathleen Burge** | GLOBE STAFF MAY 30, 2013



YOON S. BYUN/GLOBE STAFF

Students chatted after participating in a group photo with their clown noses.

One day last week at Lexington High School, teachers wore red clown noses as they stood before their classes. Students blew bubbles in the quad, the outdoor common area, before school. Music played over the loudspeakers between classes, and teenagers danced in the hallways.

“Kids just got to be kids and play,” said wellness teacher Julie Fenn, standing in the quad where students had drawn on the pavement with chalk. “It’s been fun to see even our big boys blowing bubbles and laughing.”

This was the school's second stress-reduction day, designed to help some of the state's highest-achieving students manage the anxieties that can breed at competitive schools. Lexington High consistently is ranked among the top academically in the state, and its students receive with some of the state's highest SAT and Advanced Placement scores.

The effort to bolster students' emotional health has grown both in the town and the school system. Local parents, educators, and faith groups formed the Collaborative to Reduce Student Stress about three years ago, and the School Committee made stress reduction a priority. Teachers have been working with students on mindfulness techniques.

Lexington is not the only area community to look into ways of reducing stress in students. The district took notes on efforts in Needham, which has worked for years on the issue. Acton-Boxborough Regional and Belmont are also among the districts that have administrators trying to find ways to change school culture, at least a bit, to make it less competitive, less tense.

"We really are trying hard to get after this stress that the kids feel, and giving them some ways to get after it in healthier, appropriate ways," said Stephen Mills, superintendent of the Acton schools and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, whose students also have very high SAT scores.

On some Saturday nights, the high school holds socials with movies, basketball, pizza, and ice cream. It no longer publishes the honor roll in the local newspaper, and stopped naming a valedictorian and salutatorian for graduation.

In a 2011 survey, 89 percent of Lexington High students reported that the atmosphere at the school encouraged academic competition. The anonymous survey also found 40 percent reporting that they were under "a lot of stress," and 11 percent of students said they felt "extreme stress" in school, a number that had dropped since 2004.

The survey also found 83 percent of the students said family and friends would support them if they had problems.

"The stress level in Lexington, and in particular at Lexington High School, is alarmingly high," said principal Laura Lasa.

The school has tried to address the problem by getting rid of weighted grade-point

But Lasa believes there is more to be done. Educators are rethinking the kind of homework they give, and also whether to consider limiting the number of AP courses a student can take during high school.

Zach Strohmeier, senior class president and a member of the school's social and civic committee, which helped create the stress-reduction day, said the atmosphere at Lexington High is not all bad.

"Everyone has extreme goals and they want to do really well, and stress is a part of that," said Strohmeier. "It's just important that we recognize that it's there and have ways to deal with it."

During last week's event at Lexington High, Vanessa Savage blew bubbles in the quad, and meditated with her classmates. She liked the reprieve from the school's usual seriousness. But she was dubious that one day — even a day with yoga, free smoothies, stress balls, and rubber ducks — could change the school culture.

"I think it's good that they're trying to reduce the stress," she said. "But I think they promote it, too, because it's like the mentality that if you don't take AP's, you won't go to college, or you won't get into the Ivies."

"That's the LHS mindset," agreed her friend, Alaina Chin.

"It's really bad," Savage said.

In Lexington, educators are explaining the difference between good stress — the kind that helps students accomplish more — and bad stress, the kind that makes it harder to learn. If homework is a power struggle, they tell parents, then they are not giving their children a chance to fail. They encourage students to sleep enough, eat healthy foods, and try yoga.

The Collaborative to Reduce Student Stress was formed after a series of house meetings at



YOON S. BYUN/GLOBE STAFF

From left, Lisa Lee, Zach Strohmeier, Joyce Lo, Pruthvi Kilaru and Akshay Daftardar took a yoga class given by Lorraine Shedoudi of Lexington Power Yoga.



“Was it drugs; was it sex?” collaborative member B.J. Rudman recalled from the discussions. “It was stress.”

The issue had touched his own family. About seven years ago, his daughter was so overcome by the stress at Lexington High that she switched to a private school.

“She hit the high school and she was just overwhelmed by it,” he said. “And I don’t think her case was alone. It wasn’t an isolated case.”



YOON S. BYUN/GLOBE STAFF

Steven Hess blew bubbles during the stress free day.

The collaborative, which made a presentation to the school board earlier this year, notes that stress does not only come from school. Students set high standards for themselves. And some parents pressure their children to perform well in school, and take Advanced Placement classes, to sweeten their college applications.

But the group is encouraging the schools to evaluate the amount and type of homework students receive, and to consider policies setting limits on students taking Advanced Placement courses. Students who take several AP classes at once have hours of homework each night, Rudman said.

“You have kids staying up until 2 in the morning to do their work,” he said.

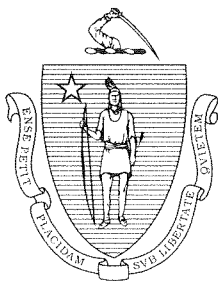
The collaborative looks at not only reducing stress but building resilience in students.

Savage, a sophomore, knows well the stress that administrators are trying to reduce. She started last fall with Advanced Placement biology on her class schedule. But she became so anxious about keeping up with the work that she talked to her doctor about it.

Savage said her doctor told her, “I didn’t take AP bio. And my daughter got into Harvard Med and she didn’t take AP bio. You’re fine. Don’t worry about it.’”

Savage dropped the class.

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Deval L. Patrick
Governor

Timothy P. Murray
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES
100 CAMBRIDGE STREET, SUITE 1020
BOSTON, MA 02114
Telephone: (617) 626-7300
Facsimile: (617) 727-0030

10.10

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.
Secretary

Mark D. Sylvia
Commissioner

April 30, 2013

Dr. Stephen Mills
Superintendent
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
16 Charter Rd.
Acton, MA 01720-2995

Dear Superintendent Mills,

Congratulations on being selected for a US Department of Education as a 2013 Green Ribbon School award! The Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and other agencies within the Patrick-Murray Administration were pleased to work together to bring the US Department of Energy's Green Ribbon Schools program to Massachusetts, and we are delighted that your school district was among those selected nationally for this recognition.

DOER appreciates the hard work, coordination and organization that went into the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District's application for this prestigious national honor. We are extremely proud that Acton-Boxborough was among 14 districts nationwide selected for this year's Green Ribbon School recognition awards honoring sustainability and healthy lifestyle excellence at public and private K-12 schools.

I look forward to joining Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rick Sullivan to congratulate you in person at a ceremony here in Boston in May. Our offices will be in touch with details regarding the ceremony.

Thank you for being a leader in energy and environmental education.

Sincerely,

Mark D. Sylvia
Commissioner

cc Kate Crosby, Energy Advisor, Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, Acton Public Schools





10.11.1

Acton Forum (mailto:theactonforum@gmail.com)

Increasing transparency for school union contract approval votes

Acton Forum <theactonforum@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 29, 2013 at 9:05 AM

To: dbruce@abschools.org, mneyland@abschools.org

Cc: allen@thehomesteader.com, Stow Laboratories Inc <stomail@stolab.com>, apsc@acton-ma.gov, abrsc@acton-ma.gov, manager@acton-ma.gov, bos@acton-ma.gov, fincom@acton-ma.gov, abrsc@abschools.org, robert.fucci@patch.com, msmith@wickedlocal.com

Dear School Committee Chairs Neyland and Bruce:

We are very concerned about the lack of transparency in the process being used by the school committees to approve school labor union contracts. Acceptance of these three-year agreements bind the town and Acton taxpayers to expenditures which are more than half of our total yearly budgets without any meaningful input from the public, the FinCom, or the BoS.

We know that the union contracts are being renewed shortly. We urge the school committees to consider the importance of transparency and to adopt a new procedure for labor union contract approvals.

HOW TO FIX THE TRANSPARENCY PROBLEM

We propose that the School Committee hold a public hearing about any new union contracts and allow at least two weeks for members of the public and other town boards to review the proposed contracts and offer their comments to the school committees before a formal vote is taken. Redacted documents including minutes and financial analyses could also be released, so long as they are reviewed so as not to harm future negotiations should the proposed contracts be approved or reopened negotiations should the proposed contracts not be approved. Or, if preparing the documents for release would cause too much of a delay, the Negotiations Subcommittee could hold an open meeting to explain the financial implications of the proposed contract and stick to what has been agreed to and not get into alternatives that the union or schools may have proposed in negotiations.

This would not change in any way the ultimate authority of the School Committees to approve union agreements. It would, however, allow the School Committees to get feedback from the public and other town boards prior to voting on the proposed new contracts. This is especially important in light of the proposal for full school regionalization. In our view, continuing the current practice of approving the contracts without public input would be even more harmful in a fully regionalized system.

BACKGROUND

When the current teacher union contract was approved in 2010 the process was anything but transparent. A special School Committee meeting was held on a Friday night. A public presentation to "sell" the agreement was given, but it did not provide full disclosure of the long-term costs of the new contract. Members of the public were allowed to speak, but had no time to prepare information, speak with any School Committee members, or review any specifics. The school committees then voted to approve the contract that same night. Only later, after we had requested hundreds of pages of previously unavailable subcommittee documents were we able to calculate the full cost of the new contract.

Acton's Finance Committee had offered a specific recommendation regarding all new labor union contracts -- that they be "net zero." This advice was followed by Town Manager Steve Ledoux for the municipal contracts. It is significant that the Town Manager, the only non-school committee voter who had access to the information about the proposed contracts, was also the only one who voted against acceptance because the proposed school contracts did not comply with the FinCom recommendation.

1 of 3

TEACHER SALARIES ARE HIGH

It should be noted that teacher salaries in the Acton / AB school system are high. The data indicates that raises of 5-10% per year to teachers have been routine and we now have 12 classroom teachers who earned over \$100,000 each last year (2012 gross wages) for a nine-month school year, not including benefits. The average and median salaries of the teaching staff (both elementary, high school, and other teachers) was about \$75,000 per year, not including stipends or benefits. It is possible that lack of public transparency is at least partly responsible for these increases.

OTHER SALARIES ARE ALSO HIGH

Teachers are not the only highly compensated individuals in the school system. The head custodian, groundskeeper, electrician, and plumber earned in the \$85,000 - \$92,000 range in gross wages last year. The average custodian in the Acton school system earned \$55,461 last year. And the number of employees in the system who earned over \$100,000 jumped from 30 in 2011 to 36 in 2012.

We request that the School Committees consider this issue and decide if more transparency would be beneficial to them and to the public. We ask that the other town boards who are involved with funding for the schools, primarily the Selectmen and Finance Committee, also provide their guidance whether more transparency and accountability would be beneficial to their boards.

Allen Nitschelm and Charlie Kadlec
Acton Forum

cc: Local and Regional School Committees, Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, Acton Patch, Acton Beacon, Town Manager Steve Ledoux



Increasing transparency for school union contract approval votes

Maria Neyland <mneyland@abschools.org>

Tue, Jun 4, 2013 at 11:23 AM

To: Allen Nitschelm <allen@thehomesteader.com>

Cc: Stow Laboratories Inc <stomail@stolab.com>, Dennis Bruce <DBruce@abschools.org>, Beth Petr <bpetr@abschools.org>, Stephen Mills <smills@abschools.org>, Marie Altieri <maltieri@abschools.org>

Allen,

Thank you for your inquiry about a public comment period for negotiations. We would welcome any public comment or suggestions about negotiations at this time. However, according to the ground rules that the School Committee has set with the AEA and other bargaining units for negotiations, we are not allowed to discuss negotiations until the contract is ratified. Once we come to an agreement, the bargaining unit will hold a meeting to ratify the contract and then the School Committee will have an open meeting with the contract ratification discussion and vote on the agenda. When this happens, we can take public feedback and the committee can discuss the pros and cons of the public comment, but we will need to vote at that meeting. If we agreed to wait two weeks we would not be honoring the good faith bargaining process in which we are legally required to participate.

Again, if you have feedback and input, I encourage you to give that input to the School Committee now so that we may consider it throughout the negotiations process.

Your letter and this response are included in the for your information portion of our packet for the June 6, 2013 School Committee meeting.

Thank you,
Maria



10.11.2

regionalization

No: [redacted] rizon.net>
To: abrsc@abschools.org

Mon, Jun 3, 2013 at 6:00 AM

Let me start by stating that I am in favor of the regionalization proposal.

The group opposed to regionalization distributed a flier on Saturday at the transfer station.

The flier had the following 2 bullet items.

- With regionalization, we lose forever the options that ownership of Blanchard and the abutting land now provide.
- Boxborough Grange donated the land on which Blanchard and our library sit, has anyone asked their opinion?

It is my opinion that the library and Blanchard are on 2 separate parcels. There is a municipal well on the Hager-library parcel that serves both the library and school. The Town acquired the 2 parcels at different times (1948 school and 1968 for library).

If the Towns vote to regionalize, would the land containing the library be transferred to Acton or the new regional school committee?

During the SC presentation tonight please clarify the land ownership issues. What parcels would need to be under control of the regional SC?

Thank you.



AB School Regionalization

Sun, Jun 2, 2013 at 9:36 PM

To: apsc@abschools.org

Dennis Bruce:

The Special Town Meeting Warrant describes the proposed regional school district as a Pre-K to 12 school system. Pre-K looks like pre-kindergarten, aka nursery school. Is this correct and do we now support nursery school or is this a new add-on with regionalization?

Thank you,

Acton



questions, comments re: regionalization

Tue, May 21, 2013 at 9:21 AM

To: abrsc@abschools.org

Hello, ABRSC,

Thanks for all of your work on this project. It's impressive and very appreciated.

1. I'd like to confirm the criteria to approve full regionalization or not - it is the affirmative vote of both town meetings on June 3rd? Is it a simple majority vote? My understanding based on website is that there are no other votes at town levels, only approval at state?

2. Comments and suggestions re: the info provided at meetings, on the website:

—Update the FAQ on the website as soon as possible. It has misinformation based on the old agreement. I imagine a lot of people like me would go to a FAQ first for simple points and summary.

—Best info and most clear info is in presentations to LWV and to school committees, especially basic financial info and savings. I suggest bolding or highlighting these.

—Several layers of savings are expected and/or may be possible. It would be helpful to see these in order, with footnote to additional explanations and details.

—Looks like Acton has a deficit (in years 6 and 7?) and then a compensating 450K additional support. Info to explain this and key questions is needed (would Acton actually spend more money than currently projected? Would Boxborough pay into 450K to help Acton?)

—For both towns, what is the yearly difference to a taxpayer? Town meeting (in Boxborough anyway) argues over 20K in library funding, but some seem to think savings somehow insignificant due to regionalization.

Our daughter went to Blanchard and she and we loved it, and I expect same town support and pride in the school will continue. Ditto re: AB higher grades!

Thanks very much,



Acton Public Schools

Regionalization flyer misleading

Tue, May 14, 2013 at 5:02 PM

Reply-To:

To: "abrsc@abschools.org" <abrsc@abschools.org>

I am dismayed to see you misleading the public in the new regionalization flyer by stating that 80% of the expected \$1 million in savings will go to Acton. This entirely ignores the very real fact that the sharing of these savings goes away after 5 years as outlined in the proposed regionalization agreement. There is very little financial benefit to Acton once the savings sharing disappears, but you are making people believe the opposite. I am shocked that anyone would feel that this is a responsible representation of the situation. Please fix this.

Sincerely,

Same author as email of 5/2/13



Fwd: Risks of Regionalization

Tue, May 7, 2013 at 4:49 PM

Reply-To: abrschools.org
To: abrschools.org

Good Evening,

Mary Ann Ashton suggested that I forward this e-mail to you.

Best wishes,

—— Forwarded message ——

From: fincom@acton-ma.gov >
Date: Tue, May 7, 2013 at 9:40 AM
Subject: Risks of Regionalization
To: "fincom@acton-ma.gov" <fincom@acton-ma.gov>, "bos@acton-ma.gov" <bos@acton-ma.gov>

Good Morning,

I am writing to you because I firmly believe that regionalization will have a negative impact on Acton real estate. The basic economic principals of supply and demand dictate that potential Acton home buyers will choose less expensive homes and readily available land taxed at lower rates in Boxborough if they are given the opportunity to take advantage of the 5 Acton elementary schools.

Members of the Regionalization Committee have assured citizens at forums that there will be no impact on real estate values dues to Regionalization. However, this assertion is false and it is not supported by peer reviewed journal articles that confirm school district consolidation has a direct impact on real estate value. The attached study finds that consolidation has a significant boost on real estate in small districts, but no impact on districts with more than 1,700 pupils.

Unfortunately for Acton, the study also states that regionalization has a negative impact on high income towns. In fact, the study points out that in high income neighborhoods regionalization leads to a 3.5% drop in housing value.

I have also attached PDF to this e-mail with information gathered at the Acton and Boxborough Assessors offices that clearly identifies the savings available to prospective home buyers who chose to live in Boxborough rather than Acton. In these difficult economic times, when young families are given the opportunity to spend less on real estate

while taking advantage of the same education system they will do just that.

Please do not put our \$3+ Billion dollar residential real estate market at risk in a gamble to save an estimated, \$1.4 million per year for 5 years. Or phrased differently, please do not ask the citizens of Acton to gamble the values of their homes for an estimated \$173 in savings per household/year for 5 years, which decreases to \$57 per household/year from 2019-2022. At the same time Boxborough household savings increase to an estimated \$811 per household/year from 2019-2022. These short term financial gains dwarf the resulting damage to Acton real estate values.

Sincerely,
[

2 attachments



The Impact of School District Consolidation on Housing Prices.pdf
251K



Acton Boxborough Data Analysis of Current Real Estate.pdf
151K

**Data From Massachusetts Department of Revenue
Division of Local Services
Assessment/Classification Report FY2013**

Code Explanation

101.....Single Family
102.....Condominium
103.....Mobile Home
109.....Multiple Houses 1 Lot
104.....Two-Family
105.....Three-Family

Acton

Code	Units	Value
101	4,906	\$ 2,478,691,500
102	2,317	\$ 558,530,900
MISC 103 109		
	12	\$ 8,138,700
104	79	\$ 30,568,200
105	15	\$ 6,325,100
Total	7,329	\$ 3,082,254,400
Average Value of Housing Units		\$ 420,556

FY 2013	Rate	Tax of Average Home
Residential Taxes	19.10	\$ 8,033

Boxborough

Code	Units	Value
101	1,174	\$ 598,721,000
102	801	\$ 82,738,200
MISC 103,109		
	2	\$ 948,600
104	14	\$ 5,714,700
105	0	\$ -
Total	1,991	\$ 688,122,500
Average Value of Housing Units		\$ 345,617

FY 2013	Rate	Tax of Average Home
Residential Taxes	17.69	\$ 6,114
Difference From Acton		\$ 1,919

**Data From Massachusetts Department of Revenue
Division of Local Services
Comparative Data FY2013**

Acton	
Land Area	20.0
Population	21,924
Population Density	1,098

Boxborough	
Land Area	10.4
Population	4,996
Population Density	482
Population Density Relative to Acton	44%

Hypothetical Numbers	
Total Population if Box had Acton Density	11,375
Difference From Current Population Density	6,379
Growth Percentage	228%

The Impact of School District Consolidation on Housing Prices

Yue Hu*, John Yinger[†]

July 23, 2007

Abstract

This paper estimates the capitalization of school district consolidation into housing prices in New York State between 1990 and 2000. We utilize first differencing and 2SLS to account for district heterogeneity and possible endogeneity of the consolidation decision. We find that consolidation boosted house values and rents by about 25 percent in very small school districts and that this effect declines with district enrollment, as expected based on economies of size. Consolidation has no impact on house values for districts with more than about 1700 pupils. We also find that the impact of consolidation on housing prices declines with tract income and actually is negative in the highest-income tracts.

Key Words: *school district consolidation, capitalization*

* We thank Stuart Rosenthal for kindly providing the data. We gratefully acknowledge helpful comments and suggestions from Jan Ondrich, Jeff Kubik, Maria Marta Ferreyra, Kalena Cortes, Christopher Rohlfs, Stacy Chen, William Silky, and two anonymous referees. Yue Hu thanks the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy for financial support. This work was conducted when Yue Hu was a research associate at Center for Policy Research in Syracuse University. The views expressed in the paper should not be attributed to anyone except the authors. All errors are our own.

*Corresponding author: Yue Hu, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, School of Education University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1025 West Johnson Street, Suite 871A, Madison, Wisconsin 53706; e-mail: yhu7@wisc.edu.

[†]John Yinger, Center for Policy Research, 426 Eggers Hall, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244-1020; e-mail: jyinger@maxwell.syr.edu



Same author as email dated 5/14/13

against elementary regionalization

Thu, May 2, 2013 at 2:29 PM

Reply-To: abrschools.org com>
To: "abrschools.org" <abrschools.org>

To whom it may concern,

I had hoped to attend this evening's school committee meeting, but am unable to do so. I want to take this opportunity to encourage you to vote against the regionalization of the Acton and Boxborough elementary schools.

1. This will hurt Acton home values. I recently bought a home in Acton because of the school choice options. I could have bought a larger house for the same money and paid lower taxes in Boxborough, but I wanted to have the choice of schools for my daughter. I believe that regionalization will lower my home value and drive people to buy in Boxborough.
2. No significant educational benefit to Acton. We already have five wonderful schools. There is no real need or significant benefit from adding an additional school.
3. No real financial benefit long term. I have read the financial analysis. Once the savings sharing stops after five years, we in Acton get minimal financial benefit from this deal. I am especially concerned about that given the very real change that I expect to see in my home value.
4. Concerns about Boxborough's continued support. Towns with aging populations, such as Boxborough's, are generally reluctant to support their schools fully. As an Acton resident, I don't want to have to pick up more of the bill because Boxborough residents don't support our school. I have been told by friends with older children in the school system that it can be difficult to get Boxborough to approve all parts of the school budget. If our towns have such different fiscal priorities, why are we getting even further in bed with them.
5. Educational benefits are poorly defined. The general statement that this will benefit Acton's education has been far too vague. The value of additional resources doesn't seem to match the potential costs to Acton in the merger.
6. Significant future costs to Acton. If we have a declining school population, why are we taking on an additional physical school that we will need to maintain. In the current and proposed cost sharing scheme, we will pay for a significant percent of this additional school that we don't even need. We certainly wouldn't otherwise be looking to buy another school building with the assumed declining school age population.

Some people say that it is the people's right to vote on this issue. However, we take guidance from committees such as this. A vote in support of the merger will be interpreted by many as meaning that it is in Acton's best interest. As mentioned above, I don't see how that is the case. Please have a concrete, well defined and well publicized reason, apart from being nice to our neighbors, for taking on so much risk.

Sincerely,

Acton