

**Acton Public, Acton-Boxborough Regional,
Acton-Boxborough Transitional
School Committees
May 22, 2014**

**7:00 p.m. Joint ABRSC/APSC Executive Session
7:30 p.m. ABTSC/ABRSC/APSC Open Meeting**

in the R.J. Grey Junior High Library

**JOINT ACTON PUBLIC (APSC) and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL (ABRSC)
and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH TRANSITIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABTSC)
MEETINGS**

Library

R.J. Grey Junior High School

May 22, 2014

7:00 p.m. Joint ABTSC/ABRSC/APSC Executive Session

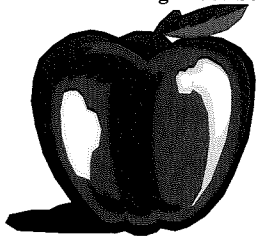
7:30 p.m. ABTSC/ABRSC/APSC Open Meeting

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order ABTSC, ABRSC and APSC (7:00)**
2. **JOINT ABTSC/ABRSC/APSC EXECUTIVE SESSION**
Strategy with respect to collective bargaining
3. **deleted**
4. **JOINT ABTSC/ABRSC/APSC OPEN MEETING (7:30)**
5. **Chairmen's Introduction – Maria Neyland**
Statement from School Committees regarding McCarthy-Towne School parents' comments at 5/1/14 School Committee meeting (*brought to meeting*)
6. **Approval of Minutes and Statement of Warrants (7:35)**
 1. ABTSC/ABRSC/APSC Minutes of 5/1/14 and 5/14/14 (*next meeting*)
7. **Public Participation**
8. **Negotiations Update – Maria Neyland (7:50)**
 1. **Possible VOTE on FY'14 Acton Education Association (AEA) Collective Bargaining Agreement – APSC/ABRSC VOTE – Maria Neyland**
(*Agreement would be brought to the meeting*)
 2. **Possible VOTE on FY'15 – FY'17 Acton Education Association (AEA) Collective Bargaining Agreement – ABTSC/ABRSC VOTE – Maria Neyland**
(*Agreement would be brought to the meeting*)
9. **Recommendation to Approve FY15 Food Service lunch prices – VOTE – Kirsten Nelson (8:20)**
10. **Recommendation to Approve Clare Jeannotte as FY15 Interim ABRSD Finance Director – VOTE – Steve Mills (8:30)**
11. **Policy Subcommittee Update (8:35)**
ABTSC/ABRSC/APSC Policies (*incorporating Blanchard policies, see separately posted document*)
 - i. Section H: Negotiations
 - ii. Section I: Instructional Program
 - iii. Section J: Students
 1. Consent Agenda #5 – **SECOND READING – ABTSC VOTE -Maria Neyland**
 2. Consent Agenda #6 – **FIRST READING (next meeting)**
12. **Regionalization Update – Steve Mills (8:40)**

1. ABRSD and the Town of Boxborough Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) – **ABTSC VOTE** (*addendum*)
 2. ABRSD and the Town of Boxborough Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – **ABTSC VOTE** (*addendum*)
- 13. School Committee Member Reports** (*oral*) (8:45)
1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Dennis Bruce*
 2. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) – *Maria Neyland*
 3. Health Insurance Trust (HIT) – *Mary Brolin*
 4. Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Task Force– *Dennis Bruce*
 5. Acton Finance Committee - *Dennis Bruce*
 6. Acton Board of Selectmen - *Paul Murphy*
 7. Boxborough Finance Committee- *Maria Neyland*
 8. Boxborough Board of Selectmen – *Maria Neyland*
- 14. Annual Superintendent’s Evaluation** – *Maria Neyland* (*oral*) (8:50)
1. FY14 Staff Survey summary
- 15. Boxborough Local Election/Town Meeting Update** - *Maria Neyland* (*July 1 addition of School Committee members per K-12 Regional Agreement*) (8:55)
1. Boxborough Town Meeting slides, 5/12/14
- 16. School Committee Meetings** – *Maria Neyland* (*oral*) (9:00)
1. Summer Workshop –Thur, July 24 6:30 p.m business starts at 7
 2. Business Meeting - August
 3. Proposed FY15 ABRSC Meeting Calendar – 7:00 p.m. start?
 4. Memo re Election of FY15 ABRSC Officers to be voted 6/5/14 SC meeting
 5. School Committee Annual Organizational Meeting Policy, File: BDA
<http://ab.mec.edu/about/policiespdf/BDA.pdf>
 6. School Committee Officers Policy, File: BDB
<http://ab.mec.edu/about/policiespdf/BDB.pdf>
- 17. FOR YOUR INFORMATION** (9:10)
1. Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Opinion on their decision in favor of APS/ABRSD regarding the “Pledge of Allegiance” case, 5/9/14
 2. Acton-Boxborough Regional High School
 - a. Discipline Report, May 1, 2014
 3. R.J. Grey Junior High School
 - a. Discipline Report, May 1, 2014
 4. Pupil Services
 - a. Early Childhood Student Population, 5/1/14
 - b. Monthly Report - English Language Learners Student Population, 5/1/14
 5. Monthly Enrollment: May 1, 2014 (*addendum*)
 6. Community Correspondence “MCAS or PARCC”, “Postpone Voting on AEA Agreement”
 7. Annual All-Staff Retirement Party invitation: June 12, 3:00 – 5:00 at Wedgewood Pines Country Club in Stow, rsvp to Beth by
 8. National Energy Education Development Project Awards Ceremony in Washington, DC for Gates & Douglas, State Awards for Conant & ABRHS
 9. Dismissal times for last day of school – Wednesday, June 18, 2014
- 18. ADJOURN** (9:15)
NEXT MEETINGS:
- June 5, 7:00 p.m. ABRSC/ABTSC/APSC meeting, Junior High Library
 - ~~June 19~~, 7:00 p.m. APSC meeting, Junior High Library – **CHANGED to Tuesday, June 24 at 7:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library, APSC/ABRSC/ABTSC meeting**

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 # 1-978-264-3348
Kirsten Nelson, Director
E-Mail: knelson@abschools.org**

To: Dr. Stephen Mills, Superintendent
From: Kirsten Nelson
Date: May 19, 2014
Re: 2014-2015 School Lunch Pricing

Our current pricing structure is as follows:

Acton Public Schools lunch \$2.75
Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools lunch \$2.50
with tiered pricing to \$3.50 at the High School.
Boxborough Public School lunch \$2.25

Due to the Paid Lunch Equity our average lunch prices need to be at least \$2.65.

After reviewing lunch prices at other school districts, we are recommending that we standardize lunch prices for all eight schools at \$2.75 with tiered pricing for premium meals at the Junior High and High School.

Proposed Lunch prices for 2014-2015:

Acton-Boxborough Regionals Schools lunch \$2.75
with tiered pricing to \$3.00 at the Junior High (Smoothie Lunch)
with tiered pricing to \$3.75 at the High School (Premium Lunch)

Attached is a listing of lunch prices from various School Districts.

Point of interest:

Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is conducting a demonstration project that adds Medicaid to the list of programs used to directly certify students for free meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). In demonstration sites, direct certification for free lunches and breakfasts will be extended to students who (1) are receiving Medicaid or living in the household with a child who receives Medicaid and (2) are members of families with income as measured by the Medicaid program, before the application of any expense, block, or other income disregard, that does not exceed 133 percent of the federal poverty guideline for their family size.

Massachusetts is one of six States participating in the demonstration, and our district is one of 150 in the State randomly selected to conduct direct certification using Medicaid data for school year (SY) 2013-2014.

Our district picked up an additional 90 students within the past month that qualify based on the new Medicaid piece. Currently 6.75% of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

School District	Elementary	Junior High	High School	Milk
Proposed Acton-Boxborough	\$2.75	2.75-3.00	2.75-3.75	\$0.50
Current Acton-Boxborough	\$2.75	\$2.50	2.50-3.50	\$0.50
Andover	\$2.75	\$2.85	3.00 -3.25	\$0.85
Arlington	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	
Ashland	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$2.75	
Ayer/Shirley	\$2.75	2.75-3.25	2.75-3.25	
Bedford	\$2.75	\$3.00	3.25-3.75	
Belmont	\$2.50	3.25-3.75	3.25-3.75	
Concord	\$3.35	\$3.35	\$3.85	\$0.65
Dedham	\$2.75	\$3.00	\$3.50	
Dover-Sherborn	\$2.75	3.25-3.75	3.25-3.75	
Groton Dunstable	\$3.00	\$3.25	\$3.25	
Harvard	\$2.50	\$4.75	\$4.75	
Holliston	\$2.75	3.00-4.00	3.00-4.00	
Hopedale	2.75	2.75-3.00	2.75-3.00	
Lincoln	\$3.00	\$3.00	N/A	
Littleton	\$2.85	\$2.85	\$2.85	
Mansfield	\$2.75	\$3.00	\$3.00	
Maynard	\$2.75	3.00-3.50	3.00-3.50	
Medfield	\$2.35	\$2.75	\$2.75	
Mendon-Upton	\$2.75	\$2.75	\$2.75	
Milford	\$2.25	\$2.50	\$2.75	
Millbury	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$2.75	
Millbury	2.35	2.60-3.25	2.60-3.25	
Miton	\$2.00	\$2.25	2.25-2.50	
Needham	\$2.30	\$2.55	2.55-3.30	
North Attleborough	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$2.75	
Norwood	\$2.25	2.50-2.75	2.50-2.75	
Reading	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$2.75	
Shrewsbury	\$3.00	3.25-3.50	3.25-3.50	
Uxbridge	\$2.75	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$0.60
Wakefield	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$2.75	
Walpole	\$3.00	\$3.25	\$3.25	
Wayland	\$3.25	\$3.50	\$3.50	
Weston	\$2.25	2.75-3.50	2.75-3.50	
Westwood	\$2.75	2.75-3.00	2.75-3.00	

May 2014

Office of the Superintendent
Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
(978) 264-4700 x 3211
<http://ab.mec.edu>

TO: Acton-Boxborough Transitional School Committees
FROM: Stephen E. Mills, Ed.D.
DATE: 5/19/14
RE: Recommendation to Approve Interim Finance Director

I would like to recommend to you that Clare Jeannotte be approved as the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD) Interim Business Manager for FY15.

Due to the resignation of APS/ABRSD Finance Director, Donald Aicardi, we now have an opening for the Finance Director/Business Manager of the newly expanded region. As part of the regionalization process, we have eliminated the School Business Manager position in Boxborough. Clare, who has held that position since July 2010, was a finalist for the same position at APS/ABRSD four years ago. She has experience as a regional school district business manager at Groton Dunstable Regional School District, Nashoba Valley Technical High School, and the FW Parker Charter Essential School and Regional Teachers Center. She comes highly recommended by Dr. Curtis Bates.

As you are aware, the business manager is one of the positions in a school district that must be appointed by the School Committee, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

Proposed Motion: that the Acton-Boxborough Transitional School Committee appoint Clare Jeannotte as the Interim Finance Director and Business Manager of the ABRSD effective 7/1/14 – 6/30/15.

**RECORD OF VOTE OF THE ACTON-BOXBOROUGH
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

May 22, 2014

At a duly called public meeting of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District School Committee on May 22, 2014, the Committee voted as follows:

1. To approve that certain intermunicipal Agreement (the "Agreement") between the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (the "District") and the Town of Boxborough (the "Town"), with its Exhibits, in the form presented to the Committee at its May 22, 2014 meeting.
2. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Committee.
3. To approve that certain Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") between the District and the Town in the form presented to the Committee at its May 22, 2014 meeting.
4. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the MOU on behalf of the Committee.
5. To authorize the Superintendent of Schools to take all actions on behalf of the Committee that are reasonably necessary, in the judgment of the Superintendent of Schools, to complete the acquisition of property and the conveyance of various easements in accordance with the Agreement, including without limitation executing all deeds, easements, a bill of sale, assignments of contracts, closing forms, closing documents, and settlement statements.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**RECORD OF VOTE OF THE ACTON-BOXBOROUGH
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSITIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

May 22, 2014

At a duly called public meeting of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Transitional School Committee on May 22, 2014, the Committee voted as follows:

1. To approve that certain intermunicipal Agreement (the "Agreement") between the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (the "District") and the Town of Boxborough (the "Town"), with its Exhibits, in the form presented to the Committee at its May 22, 2014 meeting.
2. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Committee.
3. To approve that certain Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") between the District and the Town in the form presented to the Committee at its May 22, 2014 meeting.
4. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the MOU on behalf of the Committee.
5. To authorize the Superintendent of Schools to take all actions on behalf of the Committee that are reasonably necessary, in the judgment of the Superintendent of Schools, to complete the acquisition of property and the conveyance of various easements in accordance with the Agreement, including without limitation executing all deeds, easements, a bill of sale, assignments of contracts, closing forms, closing documents, and settlement statements.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
TRANSITIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Elementary Survey 2014

14.1

Superintendent Survey
Dr. Stephen Mills

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Do Not Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Average Rating
Is an effective instructional leader	7.34% 8	41.28% 45	29.36% 32	9.17% 10	0.92% 1	11.93% 13	109	3.51
Is effective in his role in the districts	14.68% 16	58.72% 64	14.68% 16	8.26% 9	0.92% 1	2.75% 3	109	3.80
District goals are well developed and focus on improving teaching and learning	20.00% 22	58.18% 64	14.55% 16	3.64% 4	0.00% 0	3.64% 4	110	3.98
Is visible throughout the school district	12.73% 14	40.91% 45	20.91% 23	17.27% 19	6.36% 7	1.82% 2	110	3.37
Represents the districts well in the community	21.82% 24	49.09% 54	20.00% 22	4.55% 5	0.91% 1	3.64% 4	110	3.90
Represents the districts well to the School Committee	23.85% 26	39.45% 43	20.18% 22	8.26% 9	0.92% 1	7.34% 8	109	3.83
Develops strong and effective relationships with staff	6.36% 7	38.18% 42	32.73% 36	10.91% 12	5.45% 6	6.36% 7	110	3.31
Is a clear and effective presenter	14.55% 16	48.18% 53	15.45% 17	16.36% 18	3.64% 4	1.82% 2	110	3.55
Gets back to staff and parents in a timely manner	8.18% 9	25.45% 28	34.55% 38	0.00% 0	0.91% 1	30.91% 34	110	3.58
Inspires confidence as a leader	14.55% 16	48.18% 53	22.73% 25	9.09% 10	1.82% 2	3.64% 4	110	3.67
Actively pursues ways to improve the district	21.82% 24	50.91% 56	18.18% 20	3.64% 4	0.00% 0	5.45% 6	110	3.96

Elementary Survey 2014

Maintains students as the center of work and goals	23.85% 26	49.54% 54	16.51% 18	2.75% 3	0.92% 1	6.42% 7	109	3.99
Fosters trust and mutual respect	16.36% 18	41.82% 46	23.64% 26	10.91% 12	2.73% 3	4.55% 5	110	3.61
Inspires others to learn and grow and to improve their practice as educators	16.36% 18	41.82% 46	29.09% 32	3.64% 4	0.91% 1	8.18% 9	110	3.75
Is approachable	18.18% 20	46.36% 51	20.91% 23	6.36% 7	2.73% 3	5.45% 6	110	3.75
Is organized	10.00% 11	34.55% 38	32.73% 36	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.73% 25	110	3.71
Has a strong work ethic	27.27% 30	46.36% 51	17.27% 19	2.73% 3	0.00% 0	6.36% 7	110	4.05
Successfully engages all stakeholders in a shared educational vision	18.18% 20	36.36% 40	26.36% 29	9.09% 10	0.00% 0	10.00% 11	110	3.71
Reviews all options and effectively solves problems	13.64% 15	30.00% 33	32.73% 36	8.18% 9	0.00% 0	15.45% 17	110	3.58
Is willing to engage in difficult conversations	22.73% 25	41.82% 46	21.82% 24	0.91% 1	0.00% 0	12.73% 14	110	3.99
Makes difficult decisions	26.85% 29	48.15% 52	12.96% 14	2.78% 3	0.00% 0	9.26% 10	108	4.09
Works well with union leadership and helps resolve concerns	16.51% 18	41.28% 45	22.94% 25	5.50% 6	2.75% 3	11.01% 12	109	3.71
Surrounds himself with a strong leadership team	32.11% 35	48.62% 53	11.01% 12	2.75% 3	0.00% 0	5.50% 6	109	4.17
Plans and leads well-run and engaging meetings	14.81% 16	33.33% 36	33.33% 36	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	18.52% 20	108	3.77
Has strong written and verbal communications skills	13.64% 15	41.82% 46	28.18% 31	8.18% 9	3.64% 4	4.55% 5	110	3.56
Develops a budget that uses available resources to support instruction	20.18% 22	40.37% 44	23.85% 26	4.59% 5	0.92% 1	10.09% 11	109	3.83
Is a role model for others throughout the district	17.43% 19	37.61% 41	31.19% 34	6.42% 7	1.83% 2	5.50% 6	109	3.66

R. J. Grey Survey 2014

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Do Not Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Average Rating
Is an effective instructional leader	23.53% 8	47.06% 16	14.71% 5	8.82% 3	0.00% 0	5.88% 2	34	3.91
Is effective in his role in the districts	33.33% 11	57.58% 19	3.03% 1	3.03% 1	0.00% 0	3.03% 1	33	4.25
District goals are well developed and focus on improving teaching and learning	36.36% 12	48.48% 16	9.09% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	6.06% 2	33	4.29
Is visible throughout the school district	35.29% 12	47.06% 16	2.94% 1	5.88% 2	0.00% 0	8.82% 3	34	4.23
Represents the districts well in the community	44.12% 15	38.24% 13	5.88% 2	5.88% 2	0.00% 0	5.88% 2	34	4.28
Represents the districts well to the School Committee	35.29% 12	38.24% 13	8.82% 3	5.88% 2	0.00% 0	11.76% 4	34	4.17
Develops strong and effective relationships with staff	33.33% 11	42.42% 14	12.12% 4	9.09% 3	0.00% 0	3.03% 1	33	4.03
Is a clear and effective presenter	29.41% 10	23.53% 8	14.71% 5	23.53% 8	8.82% 3	0.00% 0	34	3.41
Gets back to staff and parents in a timely manner	20.59% 7	29.41% 10	20.59% 7	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	29.41% 10	34	4.00
Inspires confidence as a leader	35.29% 12	44.12% 15	14.71% 5	2.94% 1	0.00% 0	2.94% 1	34	4.15
Actively pursues ways to improve the district	38.24% 13	47.06% 16	8.82% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.88% 2	34	4.31

R. J. Grey Survey 2014

Maintains students as the center of work and goals	41.18% 14	47.06% 16	2.94% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.82% 3	34	4.42
Fosters trust and mutual respect	36.36% 12	51.52% 17	6.06% 2	0.00% 0	3.03% 1	3.03% 1	33	4.22
Inspires others to learn and grow and to improve their practice as educators	29.41% 10	38.24% 13	29.41% 10	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2.94% 1	34	4.00
Is approachable	47.06% 16	44.12% 15	5.88% 2	2.94% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	34	4.35
Is organized	35.29% 12	26.47% 9	17.65% 6	2.94% 1	0.00% 0	17.65% 6	34	4.14
Has a strong work ethic	41.18% 14	47.06% 16	2.94% 1	2.94% 1	2.94% 1	2.94% 1	34	4.24
Successfully engages all stakeholders in a shared educational vision	29.41% 10	50.00% 17	8.82% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.76% 4	34	4.23
Reviews all options and effectively solves problems	32.35% 11	38.24% 13	20.59% 7	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.82% 3	34	4.13
Is willing to engage in difficult conversations	35.29% 12	44.12% 15	11.76% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.82% 3	34	4.26
Makes difficult decisions	44.12% 15	50.00% 17	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.88% 2	34	4.47
Works well with union leadership and helps resolve concerns	26.47% 9	44.12% 15	11.76% 4	2.94% 1	0.00% 0	14.71% 5	34	4.10
Surrounds himself with a strong leadership team	52.94% 18	38.24% 13	5.88% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2.94% 1	34	4.48
Plans and leads well-run and engaging meetings	32.35% 11	14.71% 5	26.47% 9	8.82% 3	0.00% 0	17.65% 6	34	3.86
Has strong written and verbal communications skills	23.53% 8	26.47% 9	23.53% 8	20.59% 7	2.94% 1	2.94% 1	34	3.48
Develops a budget that uses available resources to support instruction	35.29% 12	41.18% 14	11.76% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.76% 4	34	4.27
Is a role model for others throughout the district	26.47% 9	50.00% 17	17.65% 6	2.94% 1	0.00% 0	2.94% 1	34	4.03

ABRHS Survey 2014

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Do Not Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total	Average Rating
Is an effective instructional leader	18.33% 11	48.33% 29	11.67% 7	6.67% 4	3.33% 2	11.67% 7	60	3.81
Is effective in his role in the districts	32.20% 19	50.85% 30	8.47% 5	1.69% 1	1.69% 1	5.08% 3	59	4.16
District goals are well developed and focus on improving teaching and learning	38.98% 23	42.37% 25	6.78% 4	5.08% 3	1.69% 1	5.08% 3	59	4.18
Is visible throughout the school district	16.95% 10	33.90% 20	22.03% 13	20.34% 12	1.69% 1	5.08% 3	59	3.46
Represents the districts well in the community	33.90% 20	40.68% 24	11.86% 7	6.78% 4	0.00% 0	6.78% 4	59	4.09
Represents the districts well to the School Committee	28.81% 17	44.07% 26	8.47% 5	6.78% 4	1.69% 1	10.17% 6	59	4.02
Develops strong and effective relationships with staff	22.03% 13	42.37% 25	22.03% 13	6.78% 4	3.39% 2	3.39% 2	59	3.75
Is a clear and effective presenter	27.12% 16	28.81% 17	20.34% 12	13.56% 8	8.47% 5	1.69% 1	59	3.53
Gets back to staff and parents in a timely manner	16.95% 10	35.59% 21	16.95% 10	1.69% 1	1.69% 1	27.12% 16	59	3.88
Inspires confidence as a leader	28.81% 17	50.85% 30	5.08% 3	10.17% 6	3.39% 2	1.69% 1	59	3.93
Actively pursues ways to improve the district	50.85% 30	33.90% 20	6.78% 4	1.69% 1	1.69% 1	5.08% 3	59	4.38

ABRHS Survey 2014

Maintains students as the center of work and goals	42.37% 25	37.29% 22	10.17% 6	3.39% 2	0.00% 0	6.78% 4	59	4.27
Fosters trust and mutual respect	37.93% 22	32.76% 19	10.34% 6	13.79% 8	1.72% 1	3.45% 2	58	3.95
Inspires others to learn and grow and to improve their practice as educators	35.59% 21	45.76% 27	8.47% 5	3.39% 2	3.39% 2	3.39% 2	59	4.11
Is approachable	33.90% 20	45.76% 27	18.64% 11	1.69% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	59	4.12
Is organized	32.20% 19	35.59% 21	16.95% 10	3.39% 2	0.00% 0	11.86% 7	59	4.10
Has a strong work ethic	42.37% 25	37.29% 22	11.86% 7	3.39% 2	1.69% 1	3.39% 2	59	4.19
Successfully engages all stakeholders in a shared educational vision	37.29% 22	42.37% 25	10.17% 6	5.08% 3	1.69% 1	3.39% 2	59	4.12
Reviews all options and effectively solves problems	27.12% 16	42.37% 25	15.25% 9	1.69% 1	1.69% 1	11.86% 7	59	4.04
Is willing to engage in difficult conversations	40.68% 24	40.68% 24	10.17% 6	0.00% 0	1.69% 1	6.78% 4	59	4.27
Makes difficult decisions	44.07% 26	33.90% 20	15.25% 9	0.00% 0	1.69% 1	5.08% 3	59	4.25
Works well with union leadership and helps resolve concerns	27.12% 16	33.90% 20	22.03% 13	3.39% 2	3.39% 2	10.17% 6	59	3.87
Surrounds himself with a strong leadership team	40.68% 24	47.46% 28	6.78% 4	3.39% 2	0.00% 0	1.69% 1	59	4.28
Plans and leads well-run and engaging meetings	23.73% 14	30.51% 18	18.64% 11	5.08% 3	3.39% 2	18.64% 11	59	3.81
Has strong written and verbal communications skills	23.73% 14	37.29% 22	20.34% 12	10.17% 6	5.08% 3	3.39% 2	59	3.67
Develops a budget that uses available resources to support instruction	40.68% 24	40.68% 24	8.47% 5	1.69% 1	1.69% 1	6.78% 4	59	4.25
Is a role model for others throughout the district	28.81% 17	40.68% 24	16.95% 10	6.78% 4	5.08% 3	1.69% 1	59	3.83

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Boxborough Annual Town Meeting
Commencing May 12, 2014

New Superintendent Glenn Brand

- 20 years in Education
Experience in Canada &
Massachusetts
- Assistant Superintendent
for Administration and
Finance - Sharon Public
Schools
- Principal, Assistant
Principal & Teacher



Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014

Thank You Dr. Mills



- 36 Years in Education
- Acton-Boxborough
2009 – 2014
- “High quality instruction
for every student in every
classroom every day”
- Thank you and good luck!

Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014

AB Regional High School Rankings



**10th
Best**
STEM
High
School in
the US



**2nd
Best**
School
District in
MA



**1st in AP
Scores**

**2nd in
SAT
Scores**



**State
Champs**
21 out of
the last 22
years

ABRSD Highlights

- 1 of only 14 Districts in U.S. Named a Green Ribbon School District
- Received Healthier U.S. Challenge Award
- 12 Students National Merit Scholarship Finalists
- HS Trivia Team Competing in HS Quiz Show
- Student Written Play "Paper Stars" State Finalist at MA Theatre Guild State Festival
- HS Band Awarded Best International Band at Ireland's St. Patrick Day Festival and Parade
- Blanchard Band Receives Gold Medal at MICCA

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

Expanded Region effective July 1, 2014

Six Elementary Schools, One Junior High School, One High School

Total Regional Budget – \$76,003,826

Boxborough Assessment – \$10,594,577

17.57% of Total Regional Assessment

Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014

Financial Benefits from Regionalization

Additional Transportation Aid	\$550,589
Staff Regionalization Savings	<u>\$416,454</u>
TOTAL	\$967,043*

*Does Not Include \$139,000 in new Regional Bonus Aid

Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014

ABRSD FY'15 Operating Budget \$416k Regionalization Staff Savings

Superintendent Salary Cut	(\$164,625)
Business Manager Salary Cut	(\$92,244)
Business Office Secretary Salary Cut	(\$22,846)
Sped Secretary Salary Cut	(\$22,845)
Contracted Services Cut	(\$35,000)
Assistant Principal Cut (.5 FTE)	
& Principal Addition – Reduction & Increase, net:	\$61,453
Clerk/Receptionist Cut	(\$36,424)
Tech Support Salaries - Data Entry Position Cut	(\$25,000)
Teacher – Art	\$7,872
Teacher - Phys Ed Cut	(\$47,623)
Cafeteria Manager Cut	<u>(\$39,172)</u>
	(\$416,454)

ABRSD FY'15 Operating Budget (in thousands)

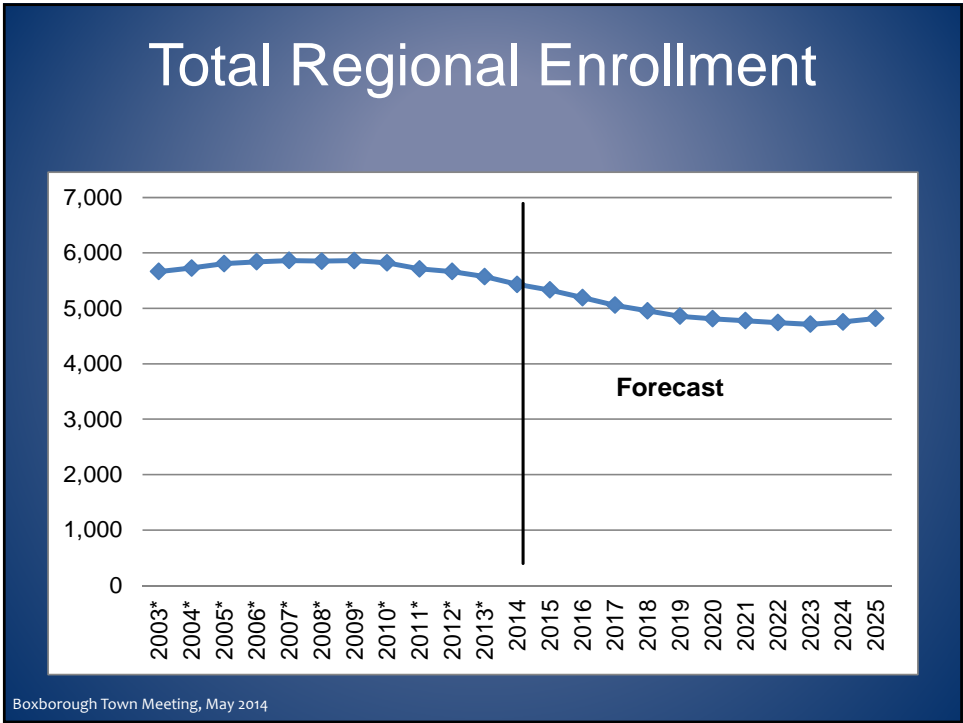
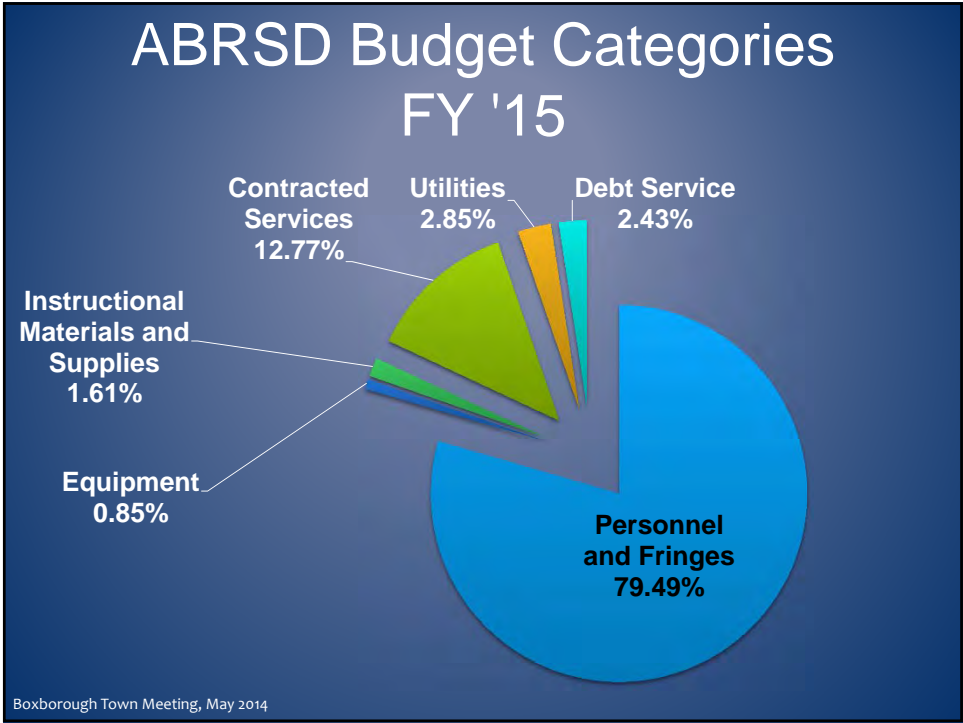
	A-B
FY'15 Budget	\$76,003
FY'14 Final (Constructed)	\$74,237
\$ Change from Final FY'14	\$1,766
% Change from Final FY'14	2.38%

Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014

Budget Analysis Budget Drivers (in thousands)

- Total Budget Increase \$1,766k 2.38%
- CASE and Out of District
Tuition Increase \$1,068k 1.44%
- OPEB Increase \$130k .17%

Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014



New Principal at Blanchard Mr. Dana Labb



- 11 Years in Education
- Principal of West Street Elementary School Southbridge, Ma

Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014

Dr. Curtis A. Bates 40+ Years as an Educator

1973-1989 Chaffins
Elementary School,
Holden, MA,
Teacher - Grades 2-
3, Reading Specialist

1999-2006
Chelmsford Public
Schools Principal -
Harrington
Elementary (7 yrs)
McCarthy Middle
School (2 yrs.)

2010-
present Superinten-
dent/ Director of
Curriculum/
Principal/
Boxborough Public
School

1989-1999 Principal
- Shaker Lane
Elementary
School, Littleton,
MA

2006- 2010
Superintendent /
Director of
Curriculum
Boxborough
Public School

Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014



Thank You and Good Luck
Dr. Bates!



Boxborough Town Meeting, May 2014

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETINGS
2014-2015**

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee meetings are usually held on the first and third Thursdays of the month, at 7:00 p.m. in the R.J. Grey Junior High School Library
All materials are posted at <http://ab.mec.edu/about/meetings>.

July	Annual Workshop
August	Summer Business Meeting
September 4	
September 18	
October 2	
October 16	
November 6	
November 01	
December 4	
December 18	
January 8	(second Thursday)
January 22	(fourth Thursday)
January 30 (Sat)	School Committee Budget Saturday – 9 am – 2 pm
February 5	Open Budget Hearing-required by law
February 26	(fourth Thursday)
March 5	
March 19	
March 26	(serves as April meeting)
May 7	
May 21	
June 4	
June 18	

Note: Acton Town Meeting begins April 6. Boxborough Town Meeting begins May 11.
5/19/14 <http://ab.mec.edu/about/schoolcommittee>

May 15, 2014

To: Maria Neyland, Chair, ABRSC/ABTSC

Cc: ABRSC/ABTSC members

From: Kristina Rychlik

Re: Proposed change in structure for School Committee Officers

Dear Maria:

In thinking about our committee in this coming year, I have come to believe that the current leadership structure may prove inadequate given changes due to expanded regionalization.

Effectively, the Chair of the new ABRSC will be doing what were formerly three separate jobs, acting as Chair of the BSC, APSC and ABRSC. That Chair would also have communications responsibilities to what were formerly three separate constituencies as well as the responsibility for maintaining relationships and clear lines of communications between the SC and the towns of both Acton and Boxborough. In addition, the committee will now number eleven (11), a larger group, with numerous new members.

I believe that job may be too big for any one person to do and do well. Even if the role of Vice Chair were expanded, I am concerned that if both the Chair and Vice Chair were from Acton, they would have a huge learning curve ahead of them in order to properly represent Boxborough. Therefore, I propose the following structure for us to consider for the Committee moving forward:

Chair: The Chair would work with CO to plan the proposed two school committee meetings per month, and would run those meetings. The Chair would also act as the Spokesperson for the Committee, and be responsible for responding to emails and media requests, in addition to being the primary contact for CO and the Administration.

One (1) Acton Vice Chair and One (1) Boxborough Vice Chair

The Vice Chairs would serve numerous roles; they would act as primary liaison to their respective town boards and constituencies such as ALG, FinCom and BoS in Acton, and BLF, FinCom and BoS in Boxborough. The Chair would also represent the SC at ALG in the event that the Chair is from Acton. The Vice Chairs would also serve to step in in the Chair's absence, and serve as leaders to the Committee in significant ways; remember that these positions would exist now to shrink the Chair's responsibilities to a more manageable level.

Of course, this proposed structure might not be the only option. Or perhaps you disagree, or others do as well, with the need for a change. But I do ask that we

discuss this as a group at our May 22nd meeting, in the event that we do wish to change the leadership structure in advance of choosing our leaders for next year.

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

File: BDB

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

Court "Opinion" on the
Decision

17.1

Term 

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Jane DOE [FN1] & others [FN2] vs. ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL
DISTRICT & others. [FN3]

SJC-**11317**.*

Middlesex. Sept. 4, 2013. - May 9, 2014.

Constitutional Law, Equal protection of laws, Equal Rights Amendment, Education. *School and School Committee*, Regional school district.

CIVIL ACTION commenced in the Superior Court Department on November 10, 2010. The case was heard by *S. Jane Haggerty, J.*, on motions for summary judgment.

The Supreme Judicial Court granted an application for direct appellate review.

Eric C. Rassbach, of the District of Columbia (*Diana M. Verm*, of the District of Columbia, & *J. Patrick Kennedy* with him) for the interveners.

Geoffrey R. Bok for the defendants.

David A. Niose for the plaintiffs.

The following submitted briefs for amici curiae:

Andrew P. Blake, *David S. Petron*, *Judith C. Gallagher*, & *Christopher R. Mills*, of the District of Columbia, for Steven Palazzo & others.

David A. Cortman, of Georgia, *Jeremy D. Tedesco*, of Arizona, & *Andrew D. Beckwith* for Alliance Defending Freedom & another.

Jay Alan Sekulow, *Stuart J. Roth*, & *Colby M. May*, of the District of Columbia, *Erik M. Zimmerman*, of Virginia, & *Carly F. Gammill*, of Tennessee, for American Center for Law and Justice.

Ronald A. Lindsay & *Karla Grossenbacher*, of the District of Columbia, for Center for Inquiry.

Thomas R. McCarthy & *Brendan J. Morrissey*, of the District of Columbia, *Kelly J. Shackelford* & *Hiram S. Sasser, III*, of Texas, & *Gregory D. Cote* for The American Legion & another.

Martha Coakley, Attorney General, & *Amy Spector*, Assistant Attorney General, for the Commonwealth.

Present: Ireland, C.J., Spina, Cordy, Botsford, Gants, Duffly, & Lenk, JJ.

IRELAND, C.J.

This case presents two questions of State constitutional and statutory law: first, whether the daily recitation of our Nation's pledge of allegiance (pledge) in the defendants' schools violates the plaintiffs' equal protection rights under the Massachusetts Constitution, because the pledge includes the words "under God"; and second, whether the recitation of the pledge violates G.L. c. 76, § 5, which prohibits discrimination in Massachusetts public school education. We hold that the recitation of the pledge, which is entirely voluntary, violates neither the Constitution nor the statute.

1. *Procedural background.* The plaintiffs, Jane Doe and John Doe, commenced this action in the Superior Court challenging the practice by which the pledge is recited each morning in the public schools of the town of Acton and the Acton-Boxborough regional school district. The plaintiffs and their children are both atheists and Humanists. [FN4] They alleged, among other things, that the daily recitation of the pledge violated their rights under the Massachusetts Constitution--specifically, art. 1 of the Declaration of Rights, as amended by art. 106 of the Amendments (art. 106) [FN5]--because the pledge includes the words "under God." They also alleged that the recitation of the pledge violated G.L. c. 76, § 5. [FN6], [FN7] They sought declaratory and injunctive relief, including a declaration that the daily, in-school recitation of the pledge in its current form, including the words "under God," violated their State constitutional and statutory rights; an order enjoining the defendants from continuing with the pledge in its current form or in any form that includes affirmations as to the existence or nonexistence of a deity; and a declaration that the recitation of a form of the pledge with the words "under God" omitted would not violate the Massachusetts Constitution or G.L. c. 76, § 5. [FN8]

All parties moved for summary judgment. A judge in the Superior Court granted the motions of the defendants and the interveners and denied the plaintiffs' motion. The plaintiffs appealed. We granted their application for direct appellate review, which was supported by the defendants and interveners.

[FN9]

2. *Facts.* The following facts are drawn from the summary judgment record, which in this case included numerous affidavits filed by both sides. No party contended that there were any genuine issues of material fact that precluded the granting of summary judgment.

The pledge is recited in the defendants' schools on a daily basis. The language of the pledge states: "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." This language is codified at 4 U.S.C. § 4 (2012). [FN10] The pledge was first codified in 1942, but at that time it did not include the words "under God." Those words were added to the statute in 1954, in circumstances we shall describe below.

The pledge is recited in the defendants' schools, and in schools across Massachusetts, pursuant to G.L. c. 71, § 69, which provides, in relevant part, that "[e]ach teacher at the commencement of the first class of each day in all grades in all public schools shall lead the class in a group recitation of the 'Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.' " The parties do not dispute that the flag ceremony, of which the pledge is a part, is intended to instill values of patriotism and good citizenship. Although the statute purports to impose a monetary fine on teachers who fail to lead the pledge, the parties do not dispute that the defendants' school administration does not require participation by teachers or students. The school superintendent, in his affidavit, avers that "[f]or both students and teachers, participation in the Pledge of Allegiance is totally voluntary. Any teacher or student may abstain themselves from participation in the Pledge of Allegiance for any or no reason, without explanation and without any form of recrimination or

sanction."

At the time the parties filed their cross motions for summary judgment, the Does' three children were fourteen, twelve, and ten years old. They acknowledged in their affidavits [FN11] that "[they] understand that [they] have the right to refuse to participate in the flag-salute ceremony, but [they] want to participate in it." They also acknowledged that "[i]n fact, usually when [their] class[es] say[] the Pledge [they] do participate in the ceremony (although [they] usually do not say the 'under God' words)." The children, as atheists and Humanists, "do not believe that the United States of America or any other country is 'under God.'" They stated that they believe that the pledge, as recited in their schools, "suggests that all good Americans believe in God" and that others, like them, "who don't believe in God, aren't as good as others who do believe." Jane Doe and John Doe, in their affidavits, likewise expressed concern that the recitation of the pledge "marginalizes [their] children and [their] family and reinforces [a] general public prejudice against atheists and Humanists, as it necessarily classifies [them] as outsiders, defines [them] as second-class citizens, and even suggests that [they are] unpatriotic." They claimed that "[i]t is inappropriate for [their] children to have to draw attention to themselves by not participating, possibly leading to unwanted attention, criticism and potential bullying," and that at their children's ages, " 'fitting in' is an important psychological need." As the motion judge noted in her memorandum of decision, however, there is no evidence in the summary judgment record that the Doe children have ever been subjected to any type of punishment, bullying or other mistreatment, criticism, condemnation, or ostracism as a result of not participating in the pledge or not reciting the words "under God."

3. *Discussion.* a. *History.* We begin with a short overview of the history of the pledge. As many courts have concluded, the pledge is a fundamentally patriotic exercise, not a religious one.

The pledge first appeared in 1892 in a nationally circulated magazine for American youths. *Elk Grove Unified Sch. Dist. v. Newdow*, 542 U.S. 1, 6 (2004). Its timing coincided with the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in America, and with a nationwide interest in commemorating that historic occasion. *Id.* The magazine proposed that students recite the following words as part of a flag-salute ceremony that would take place in the Nation's schools, designed to instill a sense of national unity and patriotism: "I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands: one Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all." *Id.* The phrase "one Nation indivisible" was particularly meaningful at that time, in light of the fact that the country had, in its recent past, fought and survived the Civil War with the national unity intact. [FN12] *Id.* at 6 n. 1.

The pledge was first adopted by Congress in 1942, during World War II. *Id.* at 6, citing Pub.L. No. 77-623, 77th Cong., c. 435, § 7, 56 Stat. 377 (1942).

[FN13] The pledge was one part of a joint Congressional resolution establishing "a detailed set of 'rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America.'" *Elk Grove Unified*

Sch. Dist., *supra* at 6, quoting Pub.L. No. 77-623, *supra*. "This resolution, which marked the first appearance of the Pledge of Allegiance in positive law, confirmed the importance of the flag as a symbol of our Nation's indivisibility and commitment to the concept of liberty." *Elk Grove Unified Sch. Dist.*, *supra* at 7.

In 1954, Congress amended the pledge to include the words "under God." *Id.* See Pub.L. No. 83-396, 83d Cong., 2d Sess., c. 297, 68 Stat. 249 (1954). The amendment came during the escalation of the Cold War, and there is some indication in the legislative history that the amendment was intended to underscore that the American form of government was "founded on the concept of the individuality and the dignity of the human being," which is grounded in "the belief that the human person is important because he was created by God and endowed by Him with certain inalienable rights which no civil authority may usurp." H.R.Rep. No. 1693, 83d

Cong., 2d Sess., at 1-2 (1954). The House Report acknowledges that "[f]rom the time of our earliest history our peoples and our institutions have reflected the traditional concept that our Nation was founded on a fundamental belief in God." *Id.* at 2. The report identifies a number of historical statements and documents of the founding fathers and subsequent national leaders that refer expressly to "God," "Nature's God," the "Creator," and like terms, and that reflect an understanding that the Nation was founded on a belief in God, including the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, and the Gettysburg Address. *Id.* at 2-3.

[FN14], [FN15] See *School Dist. of Abington Township v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203, 213 (1963) ("The fact that the Founding Fathers believed devotedly that there was a God and that the unalienable rights of man were rooted in Him is clearly evidenced in their writings, from the Mayflower Compact to the Constitution itself"); *Newdow v. Rio Linda Union Sch. Dist.*, 597 F.3d 1007, 1032, 1038 (9th Cir.2010) ("The words 'under God' were added as a description of 'one Nation' primarily to reinforce the idea that our nation is founded upon the concept of a limited government, in stark contrast to the unlimited power exercised by communist forms of government"; "A reasonable observer ... aware of the history and origins of the words in the Pledge would view the Pledge as a product of this nation's history and political philosophy"). [FN16]

Although the words "under God" undeniably have a religious tinge, courts that have considered the history of the pledge and the presence of those words have consistently concluded that the pledge, notwithstanding its reference to God, is a fundamentally patriotic exercise, not a religious one. See, e.g., *Elk Grove Unified Sch. Dist.*, 542 U.S. at 6 ("As its history illustrates, the Pledge of Allegiance evolved as a common public acknowledgment of the ideals that our flag symbolizes. Its recitation is a patriotic exercise designed to foster national unity and pride in those principles"); *Newdow v. Rio Linda Union Sch. Dist.*, 597 F.3d at 1014 ("We hold that the Pledge of Allegiance does not violate the Establishment Clause [of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution] because Congress' ostensible and predominant purpose was to inspire patriotism and that the context of the Pledge--its wording as a whole, the preamble to the statute, and this nation's history--demonstrate that it is a predominantly patriotic exercise. For these reasons, the phrase 'one Nation under God' does not turn this patriotic exercise into a religious activity"); *Myers v. Loudon County Pub. Sch.*, 418 F.3d 395, 407 (4th Cir.2005) (distinguishing constitutional challenge to pledge from school prayer cases because of "the simple fact that the Pledge, unlike prayer, is not a religious exercise or activity, but a patriotic one"; stating that inclusion of words "under God," despite their religious significance, "does not alter the *nature* of the Pledge as a patriotic activity"). It is principally for that reason that all of the Federal appellate courts that have considered a First Amendment challenge to the voluntary recitation of the pledge in public schools, with the words "under God," have held the practice to be constitutional. See *Freedom From Religion Found. v. Hanover Sch. Dist.*, 626 F.3d 1, 4-5 (1st Cir.2010), cert. denied, 131 S.Ct. 2292 (2011); *Croft v. Perry*, 624 F.3d 157, 162-163 (5th Cir.2010); *Newdow v. Rio Linda Union Sch. Dist.*, *supra* at 1042; *Myers*, *supra* at 408; and *Sherman v. Community Consol. Sch. Dist. 21 of Wheeling Township*, 980 F.2d 437, 439- 440 (7th Cir.1992), cert. denied, 508 U.S. 950 (1993). [FN17]

b. *Voluntary recitation.* It is undisputed, as a matter of Federal constitutional law and as a matter of fact on the summary judgment record before us, that no student is required to recite the pledge.

The statute that calls for the daily recitation of the pledge in Massachusetts schools, G.L. c. 71, § 69, on its face imposes no affirmative requirement on students to participate. It purports, at most, to require teachers to lead a daily recitation of the pledge, a requirement that is itself of doubtful constitutional legitimacy. See *Opinions of the Justices*, 372 Mass. 874 (1977). In the seminal case of *West Virginia State Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943), the United States Supreme Court considered a claim that the mandatory recitation of the pledge by school students violated the First Amendment. The plaintiffs in that case were Jehovah's Witnesses who

objected on free speech and free exercise grounds to both a mandatory salute to the flag and a mandatory recitation of the pledge required by the State board of education. *Id.* at 629-630. The Court held that the mandatory salute and pledge violated the plaintiffs' First Amendment rights. [FN18] *Id.* at 642.

The *Barnette* decision sounded the death knell for any statute, governmental regulation, or policy that purports to impose a requirement on students to recite the pledge. The Attorneys General of this Commonwealth have long recognized this to be the case. See Opinion of the Attorney General, Rep. A.G., Pub. Doc. 12 at 170 n. 1 (1977); Opinion of the Attorney General, Rep. A.G., Pub. Doc. 12 at 106 (1970); Opinion of the Attorney General, Rep. A.G., Pub. Doc. 12 at 243 (1965); Opinion of the Attorney General, Rep. A.G., Pub. Doc. 12 at 64 (1943). The individual Justices of this court likewise have recognized it to be true. See *Opinions of the Justices*, 372 Mass. at 880 ("We think it is clear from the opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States in the *Barnette* case that no punishment of any kind may be imposed on a student who elects, as a matter of principle, to abstain from participation"); *id.* at 881 ("it is clear that no such decision [requiring a student to participate in the recitation of the pledge and punishing noncompliance] could be made today"). Although this court has not been called on previously to so state, we take this opportunity to confirm what has been obvious and understood to be the case for the decades since the *Barnette* case was decided: no Massachusetts school student is required by law to recite the pledge or to participate in the ceremony of which the pledge is a part. Recitation of the pledge is entirely optional. Students are free, for any reason or for no reason at all, to recite it in its entirety, not recite it at all, or recite or decline to recite any part of it they choose, without fear of punishment.

c. *Analysis under the equal rights amendment.* The plaintiffs' constitutional claim in this case is very limited. They do not claim that the practice of reciting the pledge violates their religious rights under the establishment or free exercise clauses of the First Amendment, or under cognate provisions of the Massachusetts Constitution. Nor do the plaintiffs make any other claim under the Federal Constitution. Their sole constitutional claim is an equal protection claim brought pursuant the equal rights amendment, art. 106.

The plaintiffs rely on our recent decision in *Finch v. Commonwealth Health Ins. Connector Auth.*, 459 Mass. 655 (2011), S. C., 461 Mass. 232 (2012), for the proposition that the recitation of the pledge is subject to strict scrutiny in Massachusetts because it discriminates against them on the basis of a classification identified in art. 106, i.e., their religion. [FN19] The *Finch* decision reaffirmed that "[t]he classifications set forth in art. 106 [sex, race, color, creed, or national origin] ... are subjected to the strictest judicial scrutiny." *Id.* at 662, quoting *Commonwealth v. King*, 374 Mass. 5, 21 (1977). See *Animal Legal Defense Fund, Inc. v. Fisheries & Wildlife Bd.*, 416 Mass. 635, 640 (1993) ("Classifications based on sex, race, color, creed or national origin are considered suspect"). "Effectively, art. 106 removes the first step--determination whether a classification is suspect-- from equal protection analysis and mandates strict scrutiny of the enumerated classifications." *Finch, supra*, citing *King, supra*. Thus, if the practice of reciting the pledge did in fact single out the plaintiffs and treat them differently from others in any legally cognizable way (in other words, create a "classification") because of their religious beliefs, their argument might be commendable. The flaw in the argument, however, is that there is no classification, let alone a suspect classification based on religion, created by the practice of reciting the pledge in the manner it is presently recited, voluntarily.

Classification, and differing treatment based on a classification, are essential components of any equal protection claim, Federal or State. See *Cleburne v. Cleburne Living Ctr., Inc.*, 473 U.S. 432, 439 (1985), citing *Plyer v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202, 216 (1982) (equal protection mandate "is essentially a direction that all persons similarly situated should be treated alike"); *San Antonio Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 1, 59-60 (1973) (Stewart, J., concurring) ("The function of the Equal Protection Clause ... is simply to measure the validity of *classifications* created by state laws. There is hardly a law on the books that does not affect some people differently from

others. But the basic concern of the Equal Protection Clause is with state legislation whose purpose or effect is to create discrete and objectively identifiable classes"); *Wirzburger v. Galvin*, 412 F.3d 271, 283 (1st Cir.2005), cert. denied, 546 U.S. 1150 (2006) (provisions of art. 48, The Initiative, II, § 2, of Amendments to Massachusetts Constitution, which exclude from initiative petition process any measure related to "religion, religious practices or religious institutions," or which concern art. 18, as amended by arts. 46 and 103 of Amendments to Massachusetts Constitution, the so-called anti-aid amendment, "do not require different treatment of any class of people because of their religious beliefs.... In short, this is not the classic violation of equal protection in which a law creates different rules for distinct groups of individuals based on a suspect classification"). See also *Finch, supra* at 676 ("[T]he right to equal protection recognizes that the act of classification is itself invidious and is thus constitutionally acceptable only where it meets an exacting test"); *Matter of Corliss*, 424 Mass. 1005, 1006 (1997), citing *Murphy v. Commissioner of the Dep't of Indus. Accs.*, 415 Mass. 218, 226 (1993), *S. C.*, 418 Mass. 165 (1994) ("One indispensable element of a valid equal protection claim is that individuals who are similarly situated have been treated differently"). [FN20] Here there is no discriminatory classification for purposes of art. 106--no differing treatment of any class or classes of students based on their sex, race, color, creed, or national origin. All students are treated alike. They are free, if they choose, to recite the pledge or any part of it that they see fit. They are entirely free as well to choose to abstain. No one is required to say all or even any part of it. And significantly, no student who abstains from reciting the pledge, or any part of it, is required to articulate a reason for his or her choice to do so.

The United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit recently considered a similar claim under the Federal equal protection clause. In *Freedom From Religion Found. v. Hanover Sch. Dist.*, 626 F.3d at 4-5 & nn. 6 & 7, the plaintiffs claimed that a voluntary recitation of the pledge in the New Hampshire public schools violated their rights because they were atheists and agnostics who objected to the inclusion of the words "under God" in the pledge. They claimed that the pledge discriminated against them on account of their religious views. *Id.* at 5 n. 6. The court disposed of the equal protection claim in short order, concluding that the New Hampshire pledge statute, which expressly made the recitation of the pledge voluntary, did not treat any class or classes of students differently:

"Under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment [to the United States Constitution], the Constitution 'guarantees that those who are similarly situated will be treated alike.' *In re Subpoena to Witzel*, 531 F.3d 113, 118 (1st Cir.2008). Invoking the Equal Protection Clause, [the plaintiffs contend] that the School Districts have a duty to show equal respect for [their] atheist and agnostic beliefs, that they are in breach of this duty by leading students in affirming that God exists, and that they created a social environment that perpetuates prejudice against atheists and agnostics. However, the New Hampshire Act does 'not require different treatment of any class of people because of their religious beliefs,' nor does it 'give preferential treatment to any particular religion.' *Wirzburger v. Galvin*, 412 F.3d 271, 283 (1st Cir.2005). Rather, as the district court found, 'it applies equally to those who believe in God, those who do not, and those who do not have a belief either way, giving adherents of all persuasions the right to participate or not participate in reciting the pledge, for any or no reason.' *Freedom From Religion Found. v. Hanover School Dist.*, 665 F.Supp.2d 58, 72 (D.N.H.2009). Therefore, [the plaintiffs'] equal protection claim fails."

Freedom From Religion Found., *supra* at 14.

In an earlier section of its opinion, the First Circuit addressed the plaintiffs' claim that the recitation of the pledge also violated the First Amendment's establishment clause, because its inclusion of the words "under God" effectively constituted an impermissible State endorsement of theistic religions. *Id.* at 6-14. Although the plaintiffs in this case are *not* asserting an establishment clause claim, or for that matter any claim under the Federal Constitution, we find one part of the court's discussion of that claim particularly instructive on the equal protection

claim that we have here. The plaintiffs in that case, similar to the plaintiffs here, maintained that the recitation of the pledge would effectively cast them as outsiders. *Id.* at 10. As part of its discussion of the so-called endorsement mode of analysis,

[FN21] the First Circuit acknowledged the principle that "[a] practice in which the [S]tate is involved may not 'send[] the ancillary message to members of the audience who are nonadherents 'that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community, and an accompanying message to adherents that they are insiders, favored members of the political community.' " *Id.*, quoting *Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Doe*, 530 U.S. 290, 309-310 (2000). The court rejected the plaintiffs' claim that there is such a message sent when the pledge is recited voluntarily:

"At the heart of [the] claim is [the] argument that those students who choose not to recite the Pledge for reasons of nonbelief in God are quite visibly differentiated from other students who stand and participate. The result, [the plaintiffs argue,] is that the recitation of the Pledge makes the Doe children outsiders to their peer group on the grounds of their religion.

"[The plaintiffs'] premise is that children who choose not to recite the Pledge become outsiders based on their beliefs about religion. That premise is flawed. Under the New Hampshire Act, both the choice to engage in the recitation in the Pledge and the choice not to do so are entirely voluntary. The reasons pupils choose not to participate are not themselves obvious. There are a wide variety of reasons why students may choose not to recite the Pledge, including many reasons that do not rest on either religious or anti-religious belief. These include political disagreement with reciting the Pledge, a desire to be different, a view of our country's history or the significance of the flag that differs from that contained in the Pledge, and no reason at all. Even students who agree with the Pledge may choose not to *recite* the Pledge. Thus, the Doe children are not *religiously* differentiated from their peers merely by virtue of their non-participation in the Pledge."

Freedom From Religion Found., 626 F.3d at 10-11. The same can be said of the plaintiffs' art. 106 claim in this case. Participation is entirely voluntary; all students are presented with the same options; and one student's choice not to participate because of a religiously held belief is, as both a practical and a legal matter, indistinguishable from another's choice to abstain for a wholly different, more mundane, and constitutionally insignificant reason.

The plaintiffs nevertheless press the claim that the children are adversely affected by the recitation of the pledge because of their religious views. They claim to be "stigmatize[d]" and "marginalized," and to "feel excluded," when the pledge is recited by others, regardless of whether they participate. Specifically, they contend that having the pledge with the words "under God" recited in their schools effectively conveys a message that persons, like them, who do not believe that the Nation is "under God" are "outsiders," "second-class citizens," and "unpatriotic."

The plaintiffs do not appear to be claiming that their children have been punished, bullied, criticized, ostracized, or otherwise mistreated by anyone as a result of their decision to decline to recite some (or all) of the pledge. There is no evidence in the summary judgment record that the plaintiffs' children have in fact been *treated* by school administrators, teachers, staff, fellow students, or anyone else any differently from other children because of their religious beliefs, or because of how they participate in the pledge. Nor is there any evidence that they have in fact been *perceived* any differently for those reasons. The plaintiffs do identify what they claim is a poor public perception of atheists in general, and they maintain that their children's failure to recite the pledge in its entirety may "possibly" lead to "unwanted attention, criticism, and potential bullying." However, there is nothing in the record indicating that this has in fact happened to the plaintiffs' children or to any other Massachusetts schoolchildren because of their decision to exercise their right not to recite the words "under God" in the pledge.

[FN22] In short, there is nothing empirical or even anecdotal in the summary judgment record to support a claim that the children actually have been treated or perceived by others as "outsiders," "second-class citizens," or "unpatriotic."

The plaintiffs' claim of stigma is more esoteric. They contend that the mere recitation of the pledge in the schools is itself a public repudiation of their religious values, and, in essence, a public announcement that they do not belong. It is this alleged repudiation that they say causes them to feel marginalized, sending a message to them and to others that, because they do not share all of the values that are being recited, they are "unpatriotic" "outsiders." We hold that this very limited type of consequence alleged by the plaintiffs--feeling stigmatized and excluded--is not cognizable under art. 106.

[FN23]

The fact that a school or other public entity operates a voluntary program or offers an activity that offends the religious beliefs of one or more individuals, and leaves them feeling "stigmatized" or "excluded" as a result, does not mean that the program or activity necessarily violates equal protection principles. If we were to accept the plaintiffs' theory, numerous programs and activities that are otherwise constitutional would be scuttled under the rubric of equal protection. For example, in *Curtis v. School Comm. of Falmouth*, 420 Mass. 749, 750, 760 (1995), cert. denied, 516 U.S. 1067 (1996), we upheld a program adopted by the town of Falmouth school committee that made condoms available to students in the junior and senior high schools in Falmouth. We rejected the claims of parents and students that the program violated their constitutional rights to familial privacy and parental control of their children's education and upbringing, as well as their right to the free exercise of religion. *Id.* at 751, 763. If we were to accept the plaintiffs' equal protection theory in this case, the Falmouth program would be vulnerable for essentially the same reason: the plaintiffs in that case could claim that the implementation of the program in the schools--the dispensing of condoms by the school nurse and the presence of condom vending machines in the restrooms--sends a daily message to them that the school accepts and even promotes values that do not comport with their religious views, and therefore publicly renders them "outsiders" based on their religious beliefs. The school condom availability program, which passes muster under the religion provisions of the Federal and State Constitutions, would be struck down under art. 106. A host of other school programs would likewise be vulnerable. [FN24],

[FN25]

Where the plaintiffs do not claim that a school program or activity violates anyone's First Amendment religious rights (or cognate rights under the Massachusetts Constitution), they cannot rely instead on the equal rights amendment, and claim that the school's even-handed *implementation* of the program or activity, and the plaintiffs' *exposure* to it, unlawfully discriminates against them on the basis of religion. See *Harris v. McRae*, 448 U.S. 297, 322 (1980) ("The guarantee of equal protection ... is not a source of substantive rights or liberties, but rather a right to be free from invidious discrimination in statutory classifications and other governmental activity" [footnote omitted]); *San Antonio Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 411 U.S. at 33 ("It is not the province of [courts] to create substantive constitutional rights in the name of guaranteeing equal protection of the laws"). Where the program or activity is applied equally to all students, and where those who object to it are not required to participate, or may choose to participate in all parts of it that they do not find objectionable, the feeling of "stigma" caused by seeing or hearing the program being provided to others is not legally cognizable for purposes of the equal rights amendment. [FN26] Any claim that, by conducting the program or activity for others who do choose to participate, the school has publicly repudiated a plaintiff's beliefs and thereby rendered him or her a "second-class citizen" or "outsider" is not tenable, and we decline to apply art. 106 in this fashion. [FN27]

d. *Analysis under G.L. c. 76, § 5.* Finally, the plaintiffs argue, very briefly, that the recitation of the pledge in the defendants' schools violates G.L. c. 76, § 5. See note 6, *supra*. They cite *Attorney Gen. v. Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Ass'n*, 378 Mass. 342, 344 n. 5 (1979) ("With the passage of [the equal rights amendment,] our constitutional law has caught up to § 5"), and appear willing to assume, as we did in that case, that the antidiscrimination provisions of the statute equate with the provisions of art. 106. They argue that, because the daily recitation of the pledge violates art. 106, it also violates § 5. For the same reasons we hold that the pledge does not violate art. 106, however, we also hold that it does not violate the statute. Moreover, as we have stated, reciting the pledge is a voluntary patriotic exercise, but it is not a litmus test for defining who is or is not patriotic. The schools confer no "privilege" or "advantage" of patriotism within the meaning of the statute to those who recite the pledge in its entirety.

4. *Conclusion.* The judgment of the Superior Court is affirmed. The judge's declarations that the daily recitation of the pledge of allegiance does not violate art. 1 of the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights, as amended by art. 106 of the Amendments, or G.L. c. 76, § 5, are also affirmed.

So ordered.

LENK, J. (concurring).

I concur in the result and much of the reasoning of the court's opinion. I write separately to note my view that the presence of the phrase "under God" in the pledge of allegiance (pledge) creates a classification that is potentially cognizable under the equal rights amendment of the Massachusetts Constitution, art. 1 of the Declaration of Rights, as amended by art. 106 of the Amendments, although not on the record in the present case.

Our opinion rightly notes that recitation of the Pledge, in whole or in part, is entirely voluntary. But the logical implication of the phrase "under God" is not diminished simply because children need not say those words aloud. A reference to a supreme being, by its very nature, distinguishes between those who believe such a being exists and those whose beliefs are otherwise. This distinction creates a classification, one that is based on religion. Theists are acknowledged in the text of the pledge, whereas nontheists like the plaintiffs are excluded from that text, and are, therefore, implicitly differentiated.

To be sure, as our holding makes clear, the plaintiffs here did not successfully allege that their children receive negative treatment because they opt not to recite the words "under God," or that the inclusion of that phrase in the pledge has occasioned "the creation of second-class citizens." *Goodridge v. Department of Pub. Health*, 440 Mass. 309, 312 (2003). Absent such a showing, the plaintiffs' claim must fail. See *Matter of Corliss*, 424 Mass. 1005, 1006 (1997), citing *Murphy v. Commissioner of the Dep't Indus. Accs.*, 415 Mass. 218, 226 (1993), S.C. 418 Mass. 165 (1994) (differential treatment is "[o]ne indispensable element of a valid equal protection claim"). But our holding today should not be construed to bar other claims that might rely on sufficient indicia of harm. Should future plaintiffs demonstrate that the distinction created by the pledge as currently written has engendered bullying or differential treatment, I would leave open the possibility that the equal rights amendment might provide a remedy.

FN1. Individually and as mother and next friend of her three children, who are students in the defendants' schools.

FN2. John Doe, individually and as father and next friend of his three children; and the American Humanist Association. The association is a nationwide organization, with more than 120 chapters and affiliates and more than 20,000 members, "that promotes

Humanism and defends the rights of Humanists and other non-theistic individuals."

FN3. Town of Acton public schools and the superintendent of schools of Acton and the Acton-Boxborough regional school district; Daniel Joyce and Ingrid Joyce, individually and as parents and next friends of their two children, who are students in the defendants' schools, interveners; Knights of Columbus, interveners. The Knights of Columbus is an incorporated lay Catholic fraternal organization with more than 1.8 million members worldwide. For clarity, we refer to the original defendants as "the defendants" and the Joyces and Knights of Columbus as "the interveners."

FN4. The plaintiffs describe atheism in their complaint, and in affidavits in support of their summary judgment motion, as "a religious view" that does "not accept the existence of any type of God or gods." They describe Humanism as "a broader religious world view that includes, in addition to a non-theistic view on the question of deities, an affirmative naturalistic outlook; an acceptance of reason, rational analysis, logic, and empiricism as the primary means of attaining truth; an affirmative recognition of ethical duties; and a strong commitment to human rights."

FN5. Article 1 of the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights, as amended by art. 106 of the Amendments (art. 106), commonly referred to as the equal rights amendment, states, in relevant part, that "Equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged because of sex, race, color, creed or national origin."

FN6. General Laws c. 76, § 5, provides, in relevant part, that "[n]o person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation."

FN7. The plaintiffs also alleged in their complaint that the recitation of the pledge of allegiance (pledge) violated the schools' nondiscrimination policy. They no longer press this claim.

FN8. The American Humanist Association sought essentially the same relief in this case as the individual plaintiffs. The individual plaintiffs, Jane Doe and John Doe, are members of the association. Because it is clear that the individual plaintiffs have standing to pursue their claims, asserting their rights individually and the rights of their children, we need not consider whether the association, by itself, has standing to bring the types of claims made in the case. See *Tax Equity Alliance for Mass., Inc. v. Commissioner of Revenue*, 401 Mass. 310, 314 (1987).

FN9. We acknowledge receipt of the briefs submitted by the following amici curiae: Alliance Defending Freedom and Massachusetts Family Institute; American Center for Law and Justice; Center for Inquiry; The American Legion and The American Legion Department of Massachusetts; Steven Palazzo, Mike McIntyre, and thirty-six other members of the United States House of Representatives; and the Commonwealth.

FN10. The statute provides: "The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: 'I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.', should be rendered by standing at attention facing the

flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove any non-religious headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute."

FN11. Each child filed an affidavit in support of the plaintiffs' motion for summary judgment. The affidavits are for all intents and purposes identical.

FN12. According to the amicus brief of the American Legion and the American Legion Department of Massachusetts, the text of the pledge underwent minor changes in 1923 and 1924. In 1923, the American Legion and other groups participated in the first National Flag Conference, which voted to change the phrase "my Flag" to "the flag of the United States," and in the following year, the Flag Conference approved another small change, the addition of the words "of America" after the reference to the United States.

FN13. The text of the pledge at that time was as follows: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all." *Elk Grove Unified Sch. Dist. v. Newdow*, 542 U.S. 1, 6 (2004).

FN14. Similarly, the Massachusetts Constitution contains references to "God," "the Supreme Being," and the "great Creator and preserver of the Universe." See, e.g., art. 2 of the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights.

FN15. Likewise, in 2002, Congress reaffirmed the pledge as amended in 1954, in response to the decision of a panel of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in *Newdow v. U.S. Congress*, 292 F.3d 597, 600, 612 (9th Cir.2002) (2-1 decision holding unconstitutional a California school district policy and practice of teacher-led voluntary recitation of pledge), *S. C.*, 328 F.3d 466 (9th Cir.2003), rev'd sub nom. *Elk Grove Unified Sch. Dist. v. Newdow*, 542 U.S. 1 (2004). See Pub.L. No. 107-293, 107th Cong., 2d Sess., §§ 1-2, 116 Stat.2057-2060 (2002). The 2002 act, like its 1954 predecessor, contained extensive congressional findings about the Nation's religious heritage, including a recitation of various historic documents and statements of the founding fathers and subsequent national leaders that referred to "God" and "the Creator," and a synopsis of numerous decisions of the United States Supreme Court that have referred favorably to the pledge and other references to God as part of our national heritage. See H.R. Rep. 659, 107th Cong., 2d Sess. (2002). See also *Elk Grove Unified Sch. Dist.*, *supra* at 26-30 (Rehnquist, C.J., concurring) (identifying numerous "[e]xamples of patriotic invocations of God and official acknowledgments of religion's role in our Nation's history").

FN16. Although the Federal statute sets forth the language of the pledge, it says nothing

about its recitation in public schools or elsewhere. As stated earlier, the pledge is recited in Massachusetts schools pursuant to G.L. c. 71, § 69. The plaintiffs point to nothing in the legislative history of the Massachusetts statute suggesting that it, or any of its amendments throughout the years, was motivated by religious concerns.

FN17. The Supreme Court has not yet expressly decided whether a voluntary recitation of the pledge in public schools is constitutional. That said, the Court, in dicta, and its individual Justices have repeatedly referred to the pledge favorably. See *Myers v. Loudon County Pub. Sch.*, 418 F.3d 395, 405 (4th Cir.2005) (observing that "in every case in which the Justices of the Court have made mention of the Pledge, it has been as an assurance that the Pledge is not implicated by the Court's interpretation of the Establishment Clause"), and cases cited. For the most recent example of this, see *Greece v. Galloway*, no. 12-696 (May 5, 2014), slip op. at 19 (plurality opinion of Kennedy, J.); *id.* at 22 (Kagan, J., dissenting).

In the *Elk Grove* case, three Justices wrote separately to address the substantive merits of the challenge made to the pledge in that case; although their opinions demonstrate differing views of jurisprudence arising under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the opinions also illustrate that under any of the jurisprudential views that are espoused there, a voluntary recitation of the pledge in the Nation's public schools would withstand a First Amendment attack. See *Elk Grove Unified Sch. Dist.*, 542 U.S. 1, 18, 30 (2004) (Rehnquist, C.J., concurring); *id.* at 33, 43 (O'Connor, J., concurring); *id.* at 45, 47 (Thomas, J., concurring). No Justice of the Supreme Court, in the *Elk Grove* case or in any other case, has suggested that the future of the pledge as part of our Nation's public school curriculum is in peril. See *Myers*, *supra* at 406 (finding it "noteworthy that, given the vast number of Establishment Clause cases to come before the Court, *not one Justice has ever suggested that the Pledge is unconstitutional*. In an area of law sometime marked by befuddlement and lack of agreement, such unanimity is striking").

FN18. The speech and religion claims that were successfully asserted by the plaintiffs in that case did not concern the words "under God," as those words, at that time, were not part of the pledge. *West Virginia State Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624, 628-629 (1943).

FN19. Article 106 does not expressly mention religion. See note 5, *supra*.

The plaintiffs treat the word "creed," which is found in art. 106, as synonymous with "religion." Neither the parties nor any of the amici claim that the difference in terminology is significant for present purposes, and we find no reason to differentiate between those terms here.

FN20. See also E. Chemerinsky, *Constitutional Law; Principles and Policies* § 9.1.2, at 685-686 (4th ed. 2011) ("All equal protection cases pose the same basic question: Is the government's classification justified by a sufficient purpose? ... The first question [in equal protection analysis therefore] is: What is the government's classification? How is the government drawing a distinction among people? Equal protection analysis always must begin by identifying how the government is distinguishing among people").

FN21. "Under the ... endorsement analysis, courts must consider whether the challenged governmental action has the purpose or effect of endorsing, favoring, or promoting religion." *Freedom From Religion Found. v. Hanover Sch. Dist.*, 626 F.3d 1, 10 (1st Cir.2010), cert. denied, 131 S.Ct. 2292 (2011), citing *County of Allegheny v. American Civ. Liberties Union, Greater Pittsburgh Chapter*, 492 U.S. 573, 593-594 (1989).

FN22. The plaintiffs cite an incident in Rhode Island in which an atheist high school student was treated hostilely by fellow students (and others in the community) who objected to her public campaign and (ultimately successful) litigation to force the city to remove a "prayer mural" from the school auditorium. It suffices to say that the circumstances of that case are readily distinguishable from what is before us, and we therefore decline to consider it. See *Ahlquist v. Cranston*, 840 F.Supp.2d 507 (D.R.I.2012).

FN23. A typical equal protection claim under art. 106 alleges that someone has actually been *treated* unequally compared to others similarly situated-- e.g., deprived of an available legal right or benefit, saddled with a penalty, or has otherwise had his or her legal rights or duties impinged--without the requisite constitutionally-supportable justification. See, e.g., *Finch v. Commonwealth Health Ins. Connector Auth.*, 461 Mass. 232, 233 (2012) (claiming that qualified aliens were denied State subsidies for purchase of health insurance); *Elroy E. v. Commonwealth*, 459 Mass. 1, 4 (2011) (claiming that petitioner was denied benefit of judicial hearing on relief from registration under Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Act); *Commonwealth v. Weston W.*, 455 Mass. 24, 25 (2009) (claiming that city's "youth protection curfew" interfered with juveniles' constitutional right of free movement); *Brackett v. Civil Service Comm'n*, 447 Mass. 233, 234 (2006) (claiming that plaintiffs were impermissibly bypassed for job promotions); *Goodridge v. Department of Pub. Health*, 440 Mass. 309, 312 (2003) (claiming that same-sex couples were denied right to civil marriage). The plaintiffs nevertheless claim that stigmatization alone can sometimes constitute a cognizable injury, without a corresponding loss or denial of some type of benefit, imposition of a penalty, or other interference with one's established legal rights or duties. We need not answer such a broad question. We hold only that the very limited type of "stigma" alleged in this case--the feeling of rejection or exclusion arising from the State's uniform implementation of a voluntary program or activity that is antithetical to one's religious beliefs but which is not shown to violate the First Amendment or cognate provisions of the Massachusetts Constitution--is not actionable.

FN24. We disagree with the plaintiffs' suggestion that, for these purposes, there would be a meaningful difference between the voluntary nonparticipation (or partial participation) in the recitation of the pledge, on the one hand, and classroom lessons on human sexual education, homosexuality, evolution, gender equality, and other similar topics, on the other hand. Under the theory of equal protection they have constructed, by offering any constitutionally permissible program or activity the school essentially creates a situation where those who, for protected reasons, elect not to participate can claim they that have been thereby rendered "outsiders" and relegated to an inferior status.

FN25. If the plaintiffs are correct, it is difficult to see how the pledge could be recited at all in Massachusetts, even without the words "under God." While the plaintiffs challenge only the inclusion of those words, and appear otherwise content to recite the pledge, any Jehovah's Witness could claim under the plaintiffs' theory that the recitation of the pledge,

even without its reference to God, offends his or her religion and thereby impermissibly stigmatizes him or her. See note 18, *supra*. See also *Newdow v. Rio Linda Union Sch. Dist.*, 597 F.3d 1007, 1036 (9th Cir.2010) ("To the Jehovah's Witnesses in *Barnette*, even the version of the Pledge that did not contain the words 'under God' violated their religious freedom by causing them to pledge allegiance to something other than God").

FN26. Similarly, this type of alleged injury would not be cognizable under the First Amendment. See *Curtis v. School Comm. of Falmouth*, 420 Mass. 749, 763 (1995), cert. denied, 516 U.S. 1067 (1996) ("The plaintiffs' argument that the well-known existence of peer pressure in secondary schools adds to the alleged burden on their free exercise rights simply does not rise to the level of constitutional infringement.... Although the program may offend the religious sensibilities of the plaintiffs, mere exposure at public schools to offensive programs does not amount to a violation of free exercise. Parents have no right to tailor public school programs to meet their religious or moral preferences"); *Parker v. Hurley*, 514 F.3d 87, 106 (1st Cir.), cert. denied, 555 U.S. 815 (2008) ("Public schools are not obliged to shield individual students from ideas which potentially are religiously offensive, particularly when the school imposes no requirement that the student agree with or affirm those ideas, or even participate in discussions about them"). See also *Elk Grove Unified Sch. Dist.*, 542 U.S. at 32 (Rehnquist, C.J., concurring) ("the mere fact that [one] disagrees with this part of the Pledge does not give him a veto power over the decision of the public schools that willing participants should pledge allegiance to the flag in the manner prescribed by Congress").

FN27. We likewise reject the plaintiffs' contention that, when some children choose to exercise their constitutionally protected right not to say the words "under God," there is necessarily conveyed a message that the children are "unpatriotic." Patriotism is not a legal status or benefit that is conferred or withheld by the State, and it is certainly not limited to those who recite the pledge in its entirety. There is no litmus test for patriotism. Schools might conduct patriotic exercises, but they do not define who is and who is not patriotic. See Webster's New World College Dictionary 1056 (4th ed. 2007) (defining patriotism as a "love and loyal or zealous support of one's country").

The case would be different if, for example, the State purported to certify citizens as patriotic (or not) and restricted eligibility for that certification to only those individuals who recite the pledge in its entirety, including the words "under God." Nothing of the sort has happened here.

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Term

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To: Stephen Mills
 From: Larry Dorey
 Re: Discipline Report for April, 2014
 Date: April 30, 2014

There were 21 discipline referrals to the administration during the month of April, 2014. This total is down from 22 last year. 9 students were suspended this month, while 4 students were suspended during April, 2013.

Suspensions for April, 2014

Infraction	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Abusive/Obscene Language	2			1	
Alcohol Use	2		1		
Alcohol Possession		3			
Disrespect					3
Disruptive/Uncooperative					2
Drug Use			2		
Drug Possession			1		
Harassment	1				1
Other			1	1	
Sexual Harassment					
Theft		2			3
Truancy Issues	1				
Vandalism	1			2	
Total	7	5	5	4	9

A list of all infractions for the month of April, 2014 appears on the backside of this page.

c: JoAnn Campbell

Other Infractions for April, 2014

Infraction	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Abusive/Obscene Language	2		1	1	
Academic Integrity		3			
Alcohol Possession		3			
Alcohol Use	2		1		
Bullying		1			
Bus Incident					1
Chemical Health - Alcohol				1	
Chemical Health - Drugs			1		
Disrespectful	3	1	2		10
Disruptive/Uncooperative Behavior	8	8	7	3	3
Drug Related		2			
Forgery	1	2		2	
Harassment	1	1	1		2
Leaving School Grounds	8	3	6	4	
Non Compliance w/school rules	1				
Other	5	3	2	1	
Out of School Issue	4	1			
Parking Violations	7			1	
Physical Aggression	2				
Tardy		1			
Teasing	1	2			
Threatening	1				
Theft		2			3
Tardy		1		2	
Truancy	7	8	4	5	2
Vandalism	1			2	
Total	54	42	25	22	21

R.J. Grey Junior High School

To: Steve Mills
 From: Allison Warren and Jim Marcotte
 Re: Discipline Report for April 2014
 Date: May 6, 2014

There were 23 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-10	Apr11	Apr12	Apr13	Apr14
<i>Total Discipline Referrals Reported</i>	36	19	11	10	23

	Apr-10	Apr11	Apr12	Apr13	Apr14
Total Suspensions	6	2	1	2	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	2
sexual harassment	1	1			
stealing					
threatening	1				

	Apr-10	Apr-11	Apr-12	Apr-13	Apr-14
Total Other Infractions	30	17	10	8	21
abusive language/profanity	1		1		
alcohol use/possession					
bus discipline	1		5		
Academic Integrity	9				1
class/school truancies					
computer violation	1				
vandalism					
disruptive behavior (classroom, cafeteria, hallway)	6	6	3	4	10
harassment (non-sexual)/bullying/teasing		1			2

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

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

5/1/2014

MONTHLY ENROLLMENT
ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS
2013-2014 ACADEMIC YEAR

	Sept. 1				Oct. 1				Nov. 1				Dec. 1				Jan. 1				Feb. 1				Mar. 1				Apr. 1				May 1				Jun 1			
Levels	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot	A	B(1)	C	Tot				
K	281	39	7	288	281	39	7	288	281	40	7	288	281	39	7	288	280	40	7	287	278	40	7	285	277	40	7	284	280	40	7	287	278	40	7	285	0			
1	302	51	6	308	302	51	6	308	301	52	6	307	298	51	6	304	300	51	6	306	302	52	6	308	302	52	6	308	302	52	6	308	305	54	6	311	0			
2	316	60	6	322	316	60	6	322	317	60	6	323	316	60	6	322	315	61	6	321	314	61	6	320	314	61	6	320	313	61	6	319	315	61	6	321	0			
3	366	59	8	374	365	59	9	374	365	60	9	374	365	59	9	374	365	59	9	374	365	59	9	374	365	59	9	374	364	58	9	373	363	58	9	372	0			
4	373	57	7	380	375	57	7	382	375	57	7	382	374	58	7	381	373	59	7	380	372	58	7	379	372	58	7	379	371	58	7	378	373	58	7	380	0			
5	355	71	2	357	355	71	2	357	355	72	2	357	356	72	2	358	358	73	2	360	360	74	2	362	361	74	2	363	361	74	2	363	362	75	2	364	0			
6	358	71	2	360	358	69	2	360	359	69	2	361	358	69	2	360	357	70	2	359	356	70	2	358	357	70	2	359	356	70	2	358	362	70	2	364	0			
1 D.Pre-sch. Clr	55	22	0	55	41	22	0	41	41	22	0	41	45	22	0	45	46	23	0	46	53	23	0	53	55	26	0	55	58	27	0	58	60	27	0	60	0			
In D.Pre-sch. ltn	0	2	0	0	8	2	0	8	8	2	0	8	9	2	0	9	9	2	0	9	9	2	0	9	9	2	0	9	9	2	0	9	9	2	0	9	0			
OOD Pre-sch	2	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	0			
O.D. SPED K-6	22	7	0	22	24	7	0	24	25	7	0	25	25	7	0	25	26	7	0	26	26	7	0	26	25	7	0	25	25	7	0	25	25	7	0	25	0			
A.P.S. Total	2430	441	38	2468	2425	439	39	2464	2427	443	39	2466	2427	441	39	2466	2430	447	39	2469	2436	448	39	2475	2438	451	39	2477	2440	451	39	2479	2453	454	39	2492	0			
7	391	71	7	469	389	72	7	468	390	72	7	469	390	72	7	469	391	72	7	470	389	71	7	467	389	71	7	467	387	72	7	466	386	72	7	465	0			
8	374	77	9	460	376	78	9	463	376	78	9	463	376	79	9	464	373	77	9	459	373	76	9	458	374	76	9	459	374	77	9	460	375	78	9	462	0			
J.H.S. Total	765	148	16	929	765	150	16	931	766	150	16	932	766	151	16	933	764	149	16	929	762	147	16	925	763	147	16	926	761	149	16	926	761	150	16	927	0			
9	398	71	9	478	394	72	9	475	396	72	8	476	396	72	8	476	394	72	7	473	394	72	7	473	394	71	8	473	393	71	8	472	392	71	8	471	0			
10	403	72	9	484	404	73	9	486	404	73	9	486	404	73	9	486	403	73	9	485	401	73	9	483	402	73	9	484	402	72	9	483	401	72	9	482	0			
11	396	78	8	482	393	81	8	482	393	80	8	481	395	80	8	483	394	81	8	483	396	82	8	486	398	80	8	486	398	80	8	486	397	80	8	485	0			
12	411	108	5	524	405	106	6	517	405	107	6	518	403	107	6	516	403	107	6	516	404	106	6	516	404	106	6	516	403	106	6	515	402	106	6	514	0			
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	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	0	0	0	0				
H.S. Total	1608	329	31	1968	1596	332	32	1960	1598	332	31	1961	1598	332	31	1961	1594	333	30	1957	1595	333	30	1958	1598	330	31	1959	1596	329	31	1956	1592	329	31	1952	0			
Total JHS & HS	2373	477	47	2897	2361	482	48	2891	2364	482	47	2893	2364	483	47	2894	2358	482	46	2886	2357	480	46	2883	2361	477	47	2885	2357	478	47	2882	2353	479	47	2879	0			
O.D. SPED 7-12	43	8	0	51	43	8	1	52	48	8	0	56	48	8	0	56	51	8	0	59	53	8	0	61	52	9	0	61	52	9	0	61	52	9	0	61	0			
Reg. Total	2416	485	47	2948	2404	490	49	2943	2412	490	47	2949	2412	491	47	2950	2409	490	46	2945	2410	488	46	2944	2413	486	47	2946	2409	487	47	2943	2405	488	47	2940	0			
A.P.S. Total	2430	441	38	2468	2425	439	39	2464	2427	443	39	2466	2427	441	39	2466	2430	447	39	2469	2436	448	39	2475	2438	451	39	2477	2440	451	39	2479	2453	454	39	2492	0			
Reg. Total	2416	485	47	2948	2404	490	49	2943	2412	490	47	2949	2412	491	47	2950	2409	490	46	2945	2410	488	46	2944	2413	486	47	2946	2409	487	47	2943	2405	488	47	2940	0			
Grand Total	4846	485	85	5416	4829	490	88	5407	4839	490	86	5415	4839	491	86	5416	4839	490	85	5414	4846	488	85	5419	4851	486	86	5423	4849	487	86	5422	4858	488	86	5432	0			

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

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

In D. = In District

Distribution:

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

D. Aicardi
 A. Bisewicz
 K. Nelson
 E. Weiner
 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
2013-2014

5/1/2014
12:21 PM

May 1, 2014

Grade YO	Conant				Total	Douglas			Total	Gates			Total	McCarthy-Towne				Total	Merriam				Total	#Sec.	Avg. Siz
Rm	CAD	CAM	CPM	2#	DAD1	DAD2	DAM			GAD	GAM	1#		TAD1	TAD2	TAM	[1]3#		MAD	MAM	MPM	1#	7#		
K-26	20	20	20	60	20	21	20	61		21	20	41		21	20	21	62		20	20	21	61	285	14	20.4
Rm	3	4	5	1#	3	4	5	2#		3	5			310	311	312	[1]2#		133	231	334	1#	6#		
													Case	23	22	23	68								
Gr. 1-2	22	23	23	68	22	22	23	67		22	21	43		22	22	23	67		22	22	22	66	311	14	22.2
Rm	6	7	8		6	7	8		6	8	10	3#		301	302	303	{1}1#		224	234	323	2#	6#		
													Case	22	23	22	67								
Gr. 2-2	21	21	21	63	22	20	22	64	21	22	22	65		22	22	22	66		21	21	21	63	321	15	21.4
Rm	9	10	20		9	10	11		17	7	9	3#		313	314	315	[4]2#	230	324	330	331	4#	9#		
													Case	23	24	26	73								
Gr. 3-2	23	24	23	70	23	24	23	70	23	24	24	71		23	23	23	69	23	23	23	23	92	372	16	23.3
Rm	17	18	19	1#	12	13	14	2#	18	19	20	1#		213	214	215	[3]3#	233	321	322	332		7#		
													Case	26	24	24	74								
Gr. 4-2	23	24	24	71	25	24	23	72	24	24	24	72		23	24	24	71	23	23	24	24	94	380	16	23.8
Rm	14	15	16		19	20	21		13	15	16	1#		210	211	212	[3]		135	232	333	1#	2#		
													Case	24	27	24	75								
Gr. 5-2	24	25	25	74	23	25	25	73	24	24	24	72		24	24	24	72		24	24	25	73	364	15	24.3
Rm	11	12	13		15	16	17		11	12	14			113	114	115	1#		223	235	335	1#	2#		
Gr. 6-2	24	24	24	72	23	24	24	71	24	25	24	73		24	24	24	72		23	23	24	70	358	15	23.9
Total Staff				4#				4#				9#					12#					10#	39#		
													Case	[13]	Averag	23.6	496								
Total	21 Sec	Averag	22.8	478	21 Sec	Averag	22.8	478	19 Sec	Averag	23.0	437		21 Sec	Averag	22.8	479		23 Se	Avera	22.6	519	2391	105	22.8
Range	20	25			20	25			20	25				20	24				20	25			20	25	

ALL DAY K - CAD, DAD1, DAD2, GAD, TAD1, TAD2, and MAD

**EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENT POPULATION
MONTHLY REPORTING & PROJECTIONS**

Acton Public Schools
May 1, 2014

	March 1, 2014	Additions/ Subtractions March 1, 2014	Final Total As of March 1, 2014	April 1, 2014	Additions/ Subtractions April 1, 2014	Final Total As of April 1, 2014	May 1, 2014	Additions/ Subtractions May 1, 2014	Final Total As of May 1, 2014	End of Year Projection**
<i>SPED</i> 3-Year Olds (In-District)	24	+1	25	25	+1	26	26	0	26	26
<i>SPED</i> 4-Year Old (In-District)	17	-1	16	16	0	16	16	+2	18	19
<i>SPED</i> 5-Year Old (In-District)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>SPED</i> 3-Year Old <i>Tuition in From</i> <i>Boxborough</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>SPED</i> 4-Year Old <i>Tuition in From</i> <i>Boxborough</i>	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	1
SPED Student In Class TOTAL	43	0	43	43	+0	44	44	+2	46	48-50
Itinerant	13	+2	15	15	+2	17	17	0	17	20
OOD Preschool	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	2
SPED TOTAL	57	59	59	59	+3	62	62	+2	64	61-62
<i>*TYPICAL</i> 3-year old (In-District)	23	0	23	23	0	23	23	0	23	24
<i>*TYPICAL</i> 4-Year Olds (In-District)	25	0	25	25	+1	26	26	-1	25	28
TOTAL	105	+2	107	107	+4	111	111	+1	112	112**

The school district must ensure that programs are available for eligible students 3 and 4 years of age. The programs must developmentally appropriate and located in a setting that includes student with and without disabilities (State Requirement 603 CMR 28.06 (7) and Federal Requirement 34 CFR 300.101 (b); 300.124(b); 300.323(b))

**Projections may be impacted by move-ins and/or Department of Public Health referrals

17.4.a.

17.4b.

**MONTHLY REPORTING OF
ELL STUDENT POPULATION**

Acton Public Schools

May 1, 2014

Category	Total as of 4/1/2014	Additions	Subtractions	Total as of 5/1/2014
Conant	34	+1	0	35
Douglas	31	0	0	31
Gates	22	0	0	22
McCarthy-Towne	41	0	0	41
Merriam	25	0	-1	24
APS TOTAL	153	+1	-1	153

5/1/14



Beth Polr <hpolr@abschools.org>

Postpone voting on AEA Agreement

Allen Nitschelm <allen@thehomesteader.com>

Tue, May 20, 2014 at 4:59 PM

To: abrsc@abschools.org

Cc: Stow Laboratories Inc <stomail@stolab.com>, fincom@acton-ma.gov, bos@acton-ma.gov

Dear School Committee members,

I am once again renewing my request that the School Committee release the AEA proposed contract for FY13-15 (or whatever time periods are now being considered) as scheduled this Thursday and then postpone a vote to approve the contract for at least two weeks.

This gives the public time to review the agreement, any supporting documents that are also released, especially financial projections, and give input to their elected officials prior to the vote.

The Finance Committee should certainly be given the opportunity to review the contract and make comments from their perspective, as should the Board of Selectmen who, as we know, have to set the tax rate.

Doing this will not just be beneficial to the public, it will also show the School Committee's respect for the Acton Leadership Group (ALG) process under which they pledged to continue operating as a condition of Town Meeting approval of regionalization. Committing the town and taxpayers to a three-year or longer agreement without any input from the other boards would be uncollaborative.

If you vote without adequate or meaningful public input, you are committing Acton taxpayers to a three-year (or longer) agreement. Decisions of this nature should always be transparent, especially when it is the single most important financial decision that is made in Acton.

I strongly urge you to allow the public at least two weeks to review the documents and submit their comments in person or in writing prior to your vote.

Allen Nitschelm
Acton Forum



17.6

Re: [mailto:steph@abschools.org]

MCAS or PARCC

Scott Smyers <sdsmyers@gmail.com>
To: Stephen Mills <smills@abschools.org>
Cc: cochair@douglasschoolpto.org, abrsc@abschools.org

Wed, May 14, 2014 at 1:22 PM

Dear Dr. Mills,

Please review the attached letter.

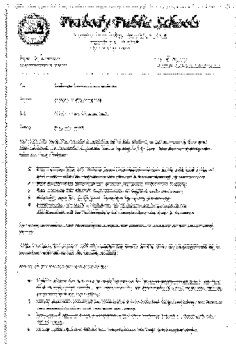
What is the status of the AB decision on MCAS or PARCC?

Please inform me, the school committee and ALL PTOs when the informational sessions are scheduled.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott Smyers
382 Central Street
Acton



Peabody Superintendent Letter 5 13 14.jpg
70K

Please join us for the

Retirement Celebration

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

Sharon Armistead
Betsy Bollier
Marcia Charter
Claire Dix
Jill Finch
Susan Gunther
Susan Hunt
Janet Kennedy
Diane Landry
Stephen Mills
Linda Potter
Susan Sousa
Allen Warner

Christine Avery
Ann Burbank
Ann Decker
Amanda Finizio
Jeanie Furlan
Justine Hollywood
Frank Ignachuk
Lorraine Kaskiewicz
Dorothy Keyworth
Patricia O'Boyle
Maura Sharp
Eileen Sullivan
Laura Watkins

Thursday, June 12, 2014
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 27.**

_____ 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!)



17.8

Beth Parr <bpar@abschools.org>

National awards to Gates, Douglas & state awards to Conant, ABRHS!

Kate Crosby <kcrosby@abschools.org>
To: AB News <news@abschools.org>

Fri, May 9, 2014 at 3:07 PM

I am thrilled to announce that a national **"Energy Champion"** award has been given to **Gates** and **Douglas** for their Green Teams....and a state **"Energy Champion"** award has also been given to **Conant** and **ABRHS** for their Green Teams. These awards are the result of six wonderful portfolios (created by each Green Team) to document student engagement in energy conservation strategies. These portfolios were reviewed by Massachusetts Dept of Energy Resources, NSTAR and the National Energy Education Development Project in Washington, DC.

The Gates and Douglas teams will have the opportunity to travel to Washington, DC to be recognized at the awards ceremony there - all expenses paid! (ABRHS's Resource Force team was similarly recognized two years ago.)

The participating schools and awards received:

- **Gates Elementary School, Advisor Rebecca Acheson): Energy Champion - National Rookie of the Year (grades 6-8)**
- **Douglas Elementary School, Advisor Thais Savage with assistance from Catherine Christensen): Energy Champion - National Rookie of the Year (grades K-2)**
- **Conant Elementary School, Advisors Betty Ann Vitale, Melissa Hayes, Mike Liuzzo w assistance from Robyn Harding, Sara Wilcox): Energy Champion - Massachusetts Rookie of the Year (grades 3-5)**
- **Merriam Elementary School, Advisors Karen Sonner, Tom Sidley)**
- **R.J.Grey Junior High School, Advisor Jeanne Goulet)**
- **Acton-Boxborough RHS, Advisor Kate Crosby): Energy Champion - Massachusetts School of the Year (grades 9-12)**

I'd like to offer huge thanks to every one of the Green Teams for the terrific work they've been doing, and in particular I'd like to thank the **Green Team advisors** for their guidance and commitment to engaging students, cutting energy costs and greening up our schools! Abundant thanks as well to faculty and staff across the district for your support of these programs.

ABRSD/APS continues to demonstrate important regional and national leadership in energy conservation and sustainability, and these awards are a reflection of that commitment. These team portfolios are magnificent, and we'll share them for everyone to enjoy once we clarify photo permissions.

*the "Rookie" designation signifies a school participating for the first time in the program.

† Congratulations to everyone involved! †

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: May 6, 2014
RE: **DISMISSAL TIMES FOR LAST DAY OF SCHOOL - JUNE 18, 2014**

Dismissal times for Wednesday, June 18, 2014:

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

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

12:15 p.m. - Conant, McCarthy-Towne and Merriam Schools

1:00 p.m. - Douglas and Gates Schools

On Wednesday, June 18, elementary schools will follow the regular Thursday dismissal schedule.

The Junior High will have its end of year assembly on June 18. Buses will transport Junior High and High School students from their respective schools at dismissal time on June 18.

In addition, please note that High School students will be dismissed at 10:55 a.m. after final examinations on June 12 through June 17.

Buses will be provided to transport High School students home at 10:55 a.m. on June 12 through June 18.

Lunch will not be available from the High School Cafeteria starting Thursday, June 12. 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.