

**ACTON PUBLIC and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes (approved 3/25/11)**

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

**March 3, 2011
7:00 p.m. Joint Exec Session
7:30 p.m. JT SC Meeting
followed by APS SC Meeting**

Members Present: Brigid Bieber, Mike Coppolino, Herman Kabakof, Xuan Kong, Terry Lindgren, Sharon McManus, Maria Neyland, John Petersen
Members Absent: Bruce Sabot
Others: Marie Altieri, Don Aicardi, Steve Mills, John Murray (left at 7:24 p.m.), Beth Petr

The Chairs of the Acton-Boxborough Regional and the Acton Public School Committees called the Joint School Committee meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

JT EXECUTIVE SESSION – to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, AEA, and to discuss strategy with respect to litigation

At 7:04 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

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

YES (Bieber, Coppolino, Kabakoff, Kong, Lindgren, McManus, Neyland, Petersen)

This was done after Brigid Bieber declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board. She said the meeting was to discuss contract negotiations with the AEA.

At 7:04 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

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

YES (Bieber, Coppolino, Kabakoff, Kong, Lindgren, McManus, Neyland, Petersen)

This was done after Brigid Bieber declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Board.

At 7:05 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

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

YES (Coppolino, Kabakoff, Kong, Lindgren, McManus, Petersen)

This was done after John Petersen declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board. He said the meeting was to discuss contract negotiations with the AEA.

At 7:05 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

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

YES (Coppolino, Kabakoff, Kong, Lindgren, McManus, Petersen)

This was done after John Petersen declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Board.

At 7:30 p.m., the Committees were polled and voted to go out of Joint Executive Session.

STATEMENT of WARRANT

AB Warrant #11-017 dated 2/10/11 in the amount of \$1,633,234.10 and AB warrant #11-018 dated 2/24/11 in the amount of \$2,169,099.38 were signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures.

APS Warrant #201117 dated 2/22/11 in the amount of \$232,677.38 was signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures.

EDUCATION REPORT

Dr. Alixe Callen, Principal of ABRHS, reported on the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC) Report of the Visiting Committee for Acton-Boxborough Regional High School. This site visit took place October 3-6, 2010 and was a major focus for the High School. While the report was very complimentary and provided many valuable comments and suggestions for the Administration, Dr. Callen said that the visiting committee was “appalled” at the work load of the staff. She said that the school was heartily commended on our mission statement, but that the staff looked forward to working on rubrics and doing more than just giving grades. She said that finding time for faculty to work together is essential, but very difficult. Time is key for professional development, technology integration, and interdisciplinary work

John Petersen read a quote from the report about how the community works together for the success of the school. John asked how we measure some of our progress. Dr. Callen said the senior and staff surveys are valuable but they want to do more. The Committee thanked Dr. Callen and her staff for all of the time spent on this important endeavor.

A committee member asked Dr. Callen to let the School Committee know how they could help them do more interdisciplinary work.

APPROVAL of MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of 1/6/11 Joint/AB SC meeting
- 4.2 Minutes of 1/22/11 Joint SC Saturday Budget meeting
- 4.3 Minutes of 2/3/11 Joint/AB SC meeting with Finance Committees
- 4.4 Minutes of 2/9/11 Joint SC Executive Session (Open Meeting section)

One committee member stated that it was difficult to receive minutes via email the night before a meeting and have time to adequately review them. The previous week was school vacation so packets were delivered on Monday night (as opposed to the usual Friday) and the addendum had to be completed immediately after that. It was agreed to hold all of the minutes until the next meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ann Sussman spoke from the audience as a parent and architect. She is concerned that the Acton Schools are not participating enough in land use planning. She feels that our schools are too large and crowded and gave the example that some ABRHS students have to go outside instead of using the hallways to switch classes. She urged the Committee to read reports about zone build out and meeting 40B requirements. An email from her is in the packet. She advocated for doing more community planning and getting involved in Acton 2020. She invited anyone to contact her for more information.

JT UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 ALG Report

John Petersen reported on the 3/2/11 ALG Meeting including the revised spreadsheet. He stated that the ALG process helps to understand what part of the citizen dollars the school should be asking for.

6.2 Acton FinCom Report

Materials for this meeting are posted on the schools' website at <http://ab.mec.edu/about/meetings.shtml>.

Xuan Kong reported on the FinCom discussions and referred to the ALG spreadsheet. He urged the Committee to look beyond just the next year.

6.3 BLF Report

Maria Neyland reported that Boxborough is still budgeting at 10% because they are very conservative. Boxborough currently has a \$340,000 deficit. Dr. Mills said that State Representatives are making opposite statements as far as state aid goes right now.

6.4 FY'11 and FY'12 Budget Update

Dr. Mills did a summary presentation on the APS and AB budgets and asked that they be revoted due to changes in the health insurance trust (HIT). He was asking for less than a 1% increase in both budgets and now that has been reduced to a ¾% increase. His goal is to get to level service budgets with the Finance Committee's approval, then address some educational needs and cash flow to reserves. One School Committee member stated that there is an option some of that money could be returned to the town, by way of reducing the assessment that will then reduce the tax rate.

Another member advocated for more assistants with that money to improve the education. The Chair cautioned about addressing one budget at a time. This discussion was about the Regional Budget first.

John Petersen made the motion for the AB Regional School Committee found on 6.4.1 in the addendum, per the recommendation of the Superintendent for \$38,502, 351. It was seconded.

He stated that the choices for the Committee are simple according to this motion. What is voted tonight goes into the warrant. Additional funding can be discussed in a month or so when numbers are firmer.

When asked for details of the change in HIT, John Petersen reported that \$300,000 is due to the lowering of HIT costs on Feb 10 and Feb 24. The new cash flow for March showed a favorable variance for just that month by \$236,000. so the Trust voted to move their rates again. This created the large surplus, resulting in the School Committee's revote.

A member asked why they lowered the assessment rather than increase the service level when the needs are known. Dr. Mills said that he has consistently asked for level service so he felt he should stick with that request. He will probably discuss the additional needs that should be paid for at a joint school committee meeting in May.

John Petersen wanted to focus people's attention on the \$2 million of reserves that the budgets plan to use. He acknowledged that some say this is unsustainable. With a budget increase of less than 1%, John feels that these are important numbers and ones that could be argued either way. The process that the Committees have gone through has done a good job of weighing all of these issues. He stated that Acton faces very real structural budget issues.

Brigid Bieber read Bruce Sabot's email, which he sent because he is out of town.

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of voting a level service budget now versus including funding for some of the needs above level service.

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

It was moved, seconded and

VOTED: that the total appropriation for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District for the fiscal year of July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 be set at \$38,502,351 and that member towns be assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Agreement and amendments

thereto as follows: Acton \$24,891,337, Boxborough \$6,220,828, remainder to be accounted for by the Anticipated Chapter 70 Aid in the amount of \$6,285,614, Anticipated Charter School Aid in the amount of \$37,268, Transportation Aid, Chapter 71, Section 16C in the amount of \$564,346, a transfer from E&D Reserves in the amount of \$502,300, and a transfer from the Junior High School Project Premium on Loan in the amount of \$658.

(YES: Bieber, Coppolino, Kong, Lindgren, McManus, Neyland, Petersen
ABSTAINED: Herman Kabakoff)

A committee member confirmed that the APS budget number can be changed prior to Town Meeting.

Xuan Kong made a motion and it was seconded that the APS Committee accept the Administration's recommendation that the school year 2011-2012 APS District Budget be set at \$26,113,719. This budget covers the period July 2, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

A committee member asked about ALG and John Petersen said that it was his understanding that if Chapter 70 revenues come in higher, the consequence will be to increase the reserves (E&D or Free Cash) per ALG. The member referred to the FinCom information (their 2/8/11 meeting) included in the ALG material in the addendum. The member asked John to bring any need for consensus back to the School Committee.

The Committee discussed how to handle excess of Chapter 70 funding. In previous years, the APS budget stayed the same and the excess flowed to free cash. FinCom has concerns that the budgets being voting on tonight use \$2 million of reserves. FinCom feels that if more money comes in, it is not a given that it should be spent because reserves have been used. FinCom has requested that if additional Chapter 70 money comes in, it should be used to close the gap. Instead of doing this, Dr. Mills plans on paying forward to close the gap. Secondly, FinCom would consider not taxing the \$293,000. Right now, both amounts are being taxed. Finally, if there is still additional money, another conversation was requested at ALG to talk about how to proceed. The School Committees, Board of Selectmen and FinCom would all need to discuss their priorities together. FinCom has requested that Boards not make those decisions without talking to the Finance Committee, per their contingency document. It was noted that there are different answers for the two school districts. The Region is their own appropriating authority so they can decide about extra funding. The Acton Public School District requires a Town Meeting vote so a special Town Meeting would be needed for the appropriation.

Xuan Kong asked why the ALG spreadsheet shows COPS as a reduction from the APS budget for FY12. Some committee members were confused due to the extensive discussion that took place over the past year about COPS funding. It was agreed that last year the APS SC decided that, while agreeing wholeheartedly on the value of the program, the schools would not fund COPS for FY12.

Xuan withdrew his motion and it was seconded.

He suggested that the Committee vote a \$73,000 higher APS budget. Another member asked how the \$73,000 out of balance amount created by this move would be covered. It was stated that the ALG process is not perfect but the leaders come to a consensus and that is what is taken back to the Boards. John Petersen said that although the Committee can obviously vote different budget numbers if they choose to, it should not be done casually at this late stage in the process. Everyone appreciates that it is enormously complicated to find the balances in these budgets.

Herman Kabakoff moved and it was seconded that the APS Committee accept the Administration's recommendation that the school year 2011-2012 APS District Budget be set at \$26,113,719. This budget covers the period July 2, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

Heather Harer asked for clarification about COPS funding. John Petersen said that the Town will be supporting and funding this program, although it appears that the accounting on the ALG spreadsheet is confusing people. FinCom Chair, Mary Ann Ashton clarified. She stated that she is 99% sure that the \$26,113,719 does not include the COPS funding and that the Town budget does.

Xuan asked whether there was agreement about COPS funding at the recent meeting that John Petersen had with Dr. Mills and BOS Chair, Lauren Rosenzweig-Morton. John thought there was municipal agreement to pay for COPS. John will prepare a memo with Lauren for the School Committee that explains how the COPS funding was treated in the budget. He understands that the APS budget does not include it and that the Town budget does include it for FY12.

Acton Public School Committee

It was moved, seconded and

VOTED: that the APS Committee accept the Administration's recommendation that the school year 2011-2012 APS District Budget be set at \$26,113,719. This budget covers the period July 2, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

(YES: Coppelino, Kabakoff, Lindgren, McManus, Petersen

NO: Kong)

6.5 Health Insurance Trust Report

John Petersen reported on the meetings of 2/10/11 and 2/24/11 during the budget discussion.

6.6 Subcommittee Updates

6.6.1. Policy

6.6.1.1 Recommendation to Approve New Policy on Admission of Exchange Students (File: JFABB) – **SECOND READING**

Maria Neyland reported that wording was added to specify that the policy is for up to 3 students total in grades 7 – 12. A point of clarification was made that an exchange student is for one school year or less.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the New Policy on Admission of Exchange Students (File: JFABB).

6.6.1.2 Recommendation to Approve Revised Policy on Nonresident Tuition Rate (File: JFABA) – **FIRST READING**

Maria Neyland reported that this proposed policy is similar to Lexington's. Our legal counsel has reviewed it. MASC does not have a sample policy for this. It is an average of regular and special education tuition costs. In the past, only regular education costs were used.

6.6.1.3 Recommendation to Approve Revised Policy on Field Trips (File: IJOA) – **FIRST READING**

Brigid Bieber reported that the Subcommittee combined the Student Travel and Field Trips Policies. The recommendation is that only International trips will be approved by School Committee. Procedures and the form are included, although they are not voted on. A Committee member asked what is a privately run trip. Brigid said that it is one that a student could go on, but it is not sponsored by the school. A member asked if the subcommittee considered contacting other people who are affected by this policy such as school staff. Another member asked if people paying a fee for their child to go on a trip, should be told if the compensation includes anything other than expenses of the trip. He asked for some divulgence of what the money is going for. Marie Altieri noted that the disclosure form is approved by the Principal. Extra

trips are not permitted per this form. A change is needed to say that the School Committee needs to approve as well.

6.6.1.4. Recommendation to Approve New Policy on Advertising in Schools/Corporate Sponsorship (File: NEW)

This new policy is not completed yet.

A member asked if the Nondiscrimination Policy could be revisited so that adding “gender identity” could be included.

6.6.2. Class Size

Amy Hedison reported that they hope to present findings at the next meeting. Their recommendations will be dependent on students’ age. She urged the Committee to put their work into action once they are finished.

6.6.3. Long-Range Strategic Planning

Dr. Mills reported that this group continues to work on a community survey and mission/goals.

6.6.4 Cost Savings Task Force

Xuan Kong reported that this discussion has been going on for two years. It is hoped that a report will be ready for public review and comment before Acton Town Meeting.

6.7 SMART Goals Progress Updates

Dr. Mills reviewed progress on this year’s goals. He highlighted the excellent CPR review, done every 6 years, and thanked Liza Huber for her efforts. He emphasized that there are many things going on in the schools besides the budget. He highlighted Facilities Director, JD Head going into classrooms as a substitute as part of the “It’s All About Instruction” theme for this year. A member asked Marie Altieri about the new MUNIS employee self service feature. She said that we are just starting to see the benefits. Currently, it is just for staff to view their forms.

6.8 July 2010 Joint School Committee Workshop Review

Brigid review the list of action items from the workshop. Generally they have been accomplished. The Committees did not get their picture taken for the school website, something that was meant to make them more visible/accessible in the community.

Terry Lindgren asked for a balance sheet for the Before and After School Programs by May 1.

NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Recommendation to Approve ABRHS Varsity and JV Baseball teams’ overnight field trip to Easton, PA

It was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the ABRHS Varsity and JV Baseball teams’ overnight field trip to Easton, PA, 4/29/11 – 5/1/11

7.2 Change to ABRHS Student Handbook Policy re Captain’s Rule (*page 35*)

Dr. Callen stated that our current policy is very punitive and has not been effective. We need to give kids the chance to make mistakes and grow and learn from them. This is in keeping with the NEASC report about the tone and culture of our school. Being suspended for 25% of the rest of the games following an offense and other sanctions, has not been a deterrent. There’s no learning opportunity with the existing policy because it penalizes the student for so long. Several committee members wanted to see a minimum compulsory period of suspension included in the policy. Dr. Callen said that the captaincy is a term of a few months so that is clear. It was asked if there is a way to build in restorative justice. Students are required to see a drug/alcohol counselor as part of the consequences.

It was moved, seconded and

VOTED: to accept the proposed change to the ABRHS Student Handbook Policy re Captain’s Rule

(YES: Lindgren, McManus, Petersen NO: Coppolino, Kong, Kabakoff)

7.3 Discussion with Acton Boxborough Youth Soccer (ABYS)

Steve Mills updated the Committee about a preliminary proposal to field turf the lower playing fields. ABYS would take out a note and dramatically update these fields. The Town would have to be involved because JD believes the only egress is through the skateboard park. Steve met today with JD Head, Erin Bettez, and the ABYS reps. This would be a big project. Steve Desy and JD are taking approximately \$200 for a feasibility study to be done.

7.4 Acton Town Meeting Plan

John Petersen will do the APS and AB Budget presentations given that Brigid is from Boxborough. Comments regarding the Region should go to Brigid and comments regarding the APS presentation should go to John.

7.5 Recommendation: ABRSD Participation in School Choice 2011-2012

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: To participate in the state's School Choice program for 2011-12 by only accepting siblings of existing Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Choice students, and current 6th grade Choice students from the Blanchard School in Boxborough who will be entering R.J. Grey Junior High School in grade 7.

7.6 Recommendation to Accept Gift from The Madison Group

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: To accept a \$500 donation from The Madison Group toward the cost of the Alternative Program's trip to Merrowvista.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Dr. Mills highlighted several of the FYI items.

He thanked the ABRHS Boys Varsity Basketball Team for donating the proceeds of their annual Youth Holiday Clinic to Lazarus House. He also thanked The Acton Lion's Club for their \$400 donation for the Alternative Program's trip to Merrowvista. The text on the RJGJHS Discipline Report in the addendum was not updated. There was only 1 suspension during the month of February. Dr. Mills mentioned the showing of *Race To Nowhere*, followed by a panel discussion on March 15. More information is at <http://www.racetonowhere.com/home>

John Petersen thanked the community for the emails they sent to the Committees this month.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee adjourned at 11:11 p.m.

The APS School Committee decided not to meet following the Joint meeting and adjourned at 11:12 p.m.

NEXT MEETINGS:

March 17 at 7:30 pm, APS SC Meeting at Gates School

March 24 at 7:30 pm, Joint SC Meeting at RJ Grey JH Library (serves as April meetings)

March 29 at 9AM – 2PM, *MASC Day on the Hill* at the State House, Boston

Respectfully Submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: See agenda attached
 Statement from Bruce Sabot
 Revised ALG Spreadsheet dated 3/3/11

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

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

**March 3, 2011
7:00 p.m. Joint Exec Session
7:30 p.m. AB SC Meeting
followed by APS SC Meeting**

AGENDA with addendum

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER – Joint School Committee
 - JT EXECUTIVE SESSION – to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, AEA, and to discuss strategy with respect to litigation
- 2.0 CHAIRMAN’S INTRODUCTION
- 3.0 EDUCATION REPORT – *Alix Callen, ABRHS Principal (7:35)*
 - 3.1 New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC) Report of the Visiting Committee for Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, October 3-6, 2010
- 4.0 APPROVAL of MINUTES and STATEMENT of WARRANT (7:50)
 - 4.1 Minutes of 1/6/11 Joint/AB SC meeting
 - 4.2 Minutes of 1/22/11 Joint SC Saturday Budget meeting (*addendum*)
 - 4.3 Minutes of 2/3/11 Joint/AB SC meeting with Finance Committees (*addendum*)
 - 4.4 Minutes of 2/9/11 Joint SC Executive Session (Open Meeting section) (*addendum*)
- 5.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (7:55)
- 6.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - 6.1 ALG Report – *John Petersen/Xuan Kong (8:00)*
 - 6.1.1 Meeting 1/31/11 Draft Minutes
 - 6.1.2 Meeting Agenda for 3/2/11
 - 6.1.3 Meeting Materials for 3/2/11 (*addendum*)
 - 6.1.4. Revised ALG Spreadsheet 3/3/11 (*addendum*)
 - 6.2 Acton FinCom Report – *Xuan Kong (oral) (8:20)*
 - 6.3 BLF Report – *Maria Neyland (oral) (8:25)*
 - 6.4 FY’11 and FY’12 Budget Update – *Steve Mills / Don Aicardi (8:30)*
 - 6.4.1 Recommendation to Approve Revised FY’12 ABRSD Budget and Assessments – **VOTE** - *Steve Mills (addendum)*
 - 6.4.2. Presentation Slides (*brought to meeting*)
 - 6.5 Health Trust Report – *John Petersen (8:40)*
 - 6.5.1. Meeting 2/10/11 (*addendum*)
 - 6.5.2. Meeting 2/24/11 (*addendum*)
 - 6.6 Subcommittee Updates (8:45)
 - 6.6.1. Policy – *Brigid Bieber (oral)*
 - 6.6.1.1 Recommendation to Approve New Policy on Admission of Exchange Students (File: JFABB) – **SECOND READING** – **VOTE** - *Maria Neyland*

- 6.6.1.2 Recommendation to Approve Revised Policy on Nonresident Tuition Rate (File: JFABA) – **FIRST READING** – Maria Neyland (addendum)
- 6.6.1.3 Recommendation to Approve Revised Policy on Field Trips (File: IJOA) – **FIRST READING** – Brigid Bieber (addendum)
- 6.6.1.4. Recommendation to Approve New Policy on Advertising in Schools/Corporate Sponsorship (File: NEW) – Sharon McManus (next meeting)
- 6.6.2. Class Size – Terry Lindgren (oral) (9:00)
- 6.6.3. Long-Range Strategic Planning – Steve Mills (oral)
- 6.6.4 Cost Savings Task Force – Xuan Kong (oral)
- 6.7 SMART Goals Progress Updates – Steve Mills (revised page 6 in addendum) (9:10)
- 6.8 July School Committee Workshop Review – Brigid Bieber (9:20)
 - 6.8.1. Attachment A.School Comm Assignments - July Workshop (addendum)
- 7.0 **NEW BUSINESS** (9:25)
 - 7.1 Recommendation to Approve ABRHS Varsity and JV Baseball teams’ overnight field trip to Easton, PA, 4/29/11 – 5/1/11 – **VOTE** – Steve Mills
 - 7.2 Change to ABRHS Student Handbook Policy re Captain’s Rule (page 35)– **VOTE** - Alixe Callen (9:30)
 - 7.3 Discussion with Acton Boxborough Youth Soccer (ABYS) regarding lower playing fields – Steve Mills (oral) (9:40)
 - 7.4 Acton Town Meeting Plan – Brigid Bieber (oral)
 - 7.5 Recommendation: ABRSD Participation in School Choice 2011-2012 – **VOTE** – Steve Mills, (9:45)
 - Proposed Motion:* To participate in the state’s School Choice program for 2011-12 by only accepting siblings of existing Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Choice students, and current 6th grade Choice students from the Blanchard School in Boxborough who will be entering R.J. Grey Junior High School in grade 7.
 - 7.5.1. School Choice data
 - 7.6 Recommendation to Accept Gift from The Madison Group – **VOTE** – Steve Mills (addendum)
- 8.0 **FOR YOUR INFORMATION** (9:50)
 - 8.1 ABRHS
 - 8.1.1. Discipline Report, February 2011
 - 8.1.2 Gift to Lazarus House from ABRHS Boys Varsity Basketball Team’s annual Youth Holiday Clinic, 12/10
 - 8.1.3 Spring Coaches (addendum)
 - 8.1.4 \$400 Gift from The Acton Lion’s Club for Alternative Program’s trip to Merrowvista (addendum)
 - 8.2 RJ Grey Junior High
 - 8.2.1. Discipline Report, February 2011 (addendum)
 - 8.3 Pupil Services
 - 8.3.1. ABRSD ELL Student Population, February 2011
 - 8.3.2 On Team newsletter (addendum)
 - 8.4 Curriculum Update
 - 8.4.1 Race To Nowhere Panel, March 15 at 7 p.m. in High School Auditorium <http://www.racetonowhere.com/home>
 - 8.4.2 Boston Globe Scholastic Art Awards

- 8.5 FY'11 Monthly ABRSD Financial Reports
 - 8.5.1. Budget Status Summary
 - 8.5.2. Budget Status Summary – Special Education
- 8.6 Correspondence from the Community
 - 8.6.1 Homework Pressures
 - 8.6.2. Budget Concerns (10 citizens' emails) (*addendum*)
 - 8.6.3. Where Can I View the Budgets? (*addendum*)
 - 8.6.4. School Budget Feedback (*addendum*)
 - 8.6.5. Concerns about School/Town Planning (*addendum*)
 - 8.6.6 Remember the Private Money and Time Donated to the Schools (*addendum*)
- 8.7 Enrollment Report/Class Size Numbers – February 1, 2011
- 8.8 RJGJHS Project Wellness, “Creating Connections” - March 23rd at Merrimack College
- 8.9 *Lamplighter*, December 2010, posted at www.ab.mec.edu
- 9.0 AB SC ADJOURNS and APS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING BEGINS (10:00)
- 9.1 ALG Review and Possible Revote of APS FY'12 Budget – *John Petersen/Don Aicardi*
- 10.0 NEXT MEETINGS: (10:05)
 - March 17 at 7:30 pm, APS SC Meeting at Gates School
 - March 24 at 7:30 pm, Joint SC Meeting at RJ Grey JH Library (serves as April meetings)
 - March 29 at 9AM – 2PM, *MASC Day on the Hill* at the State House, Boston
- 11.0 ADJOURN (10:10)

Read at JT Sc 3/3/11

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Good evening, I would like to apologize to my fellow school committee members and to my constituents in Boxborough because my work is preventing me from attending tonight's meeting.

I understand that everyone is concerned about the rising cost of everything including our taxes and many people want some type of relief from all the spending. Reducing the burden of local taxes continues to be a target area. I can not speak for the Acton Public Schools, but for the AB Regional School district this would be the worst time for us to think about reducing our school spending. Both the Junior High and Senior High schools are near capacity, our classrooms are overcrowded, and like the rest of the community our (Regional School districts) costs are rising. We are fortunate that our students are able to be so successful despite these obstacles.

However from my perspective funding of public education is not going to be getting easier. The Federal government is starting to and will continue to reduce its spending and education will be impacted. Everyone knows it has to happen because if the Federal government does not reign in spending then the current generation of students we are educating will be the ones having to bail this country out. If that is the case, let's hope they learned enough from the education we are providing them today.

We have also been fortunate that the Commonwealth has continued to provide level funding for education, but again as long as revenues coming into the Commonwealth continue to decline or at best stay stable the amount of funding that the Commonwealth provides to education will also be impacted. We have to ensure that the regional school district can provide the education our children need and make sure we have the reserves in place for when the the funding from the Commonwealth and Federal governments decline. Thus I support and encourage my colleagues on the school committee to ensure we provide Dr. Mills and his organization the funding they need to educate our children.

Let me close with these thoughts about educating our children. Americans complain that jobs are being moved outside the borders of the United States because the cost of the workforce in places like India, Malaysia, and Singapore is less and that is true. Today not only is the cost of the workforce in Asia less expensive the education of the workforce is just as good and sometimes better than the education that is provided in the US. I am seeing it personally as I am currently in Asia interviewing candidates for new job openings. We have to ensure our children have the education they will need to compete on the global job market.

Thank you,
Bruce Sabot