



Acton Public, Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committees Annual Workshop

June 28, 2012

at 6:00 p.m.

Business begins at 6:30 p.m.

**at the Blanchard School Library
Boxborough**

ACTON PUBLIC and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING WORKSHOP

Blanchard School Library
Boxborough

June 28, 2012
6:00 p.m.

6:30 p.m. Joint APS/AB SC Workshop Meeting

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Chairmen's Introduction**
3. **Statement of Warrant**
4. **School Committee Business**
 - 4.1. Consent Agenda
 - 4.1.1. AB/APS: Recommendation to Approve Minutes of SC Workshop on 7/26/11 – **VOTE** – *Xuan Kong*
 - 4.1.2. AB: Recommendation to appoint new Regional School District Study Committee (RSDSC) members – **VOTE** – *Xuan Kong*
 - 4.1.3. AB: Recommendation to Accept Proceeds of Loan from Acton-Boxborough Youth Soccer (ABYS) for Construction of Lower Fields Project – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills*

School Committee Annual Workshop

5. **School Committee Policy, Operations, and Organizations**
 - 5.1. Policies
 - 5.1.1. Review of SC Member Ethics policy, File: BCA (BP)
 - 5.1.2. Policy Subcommittee Updates (BB)
 - 5.2. Operations
 - 5.2.1. Roles/Responsibilities/Relationships (SM)
 - 5.2.2. Communications with PTSO (DO)
 - 5.2.3. Mentors for new SC members (XK)
 - 5.2.4. APS SC Meeting Locations (KM)
 - 5.2.5. FY13 APS/AB SC Meeting Schedules (XK)
 - 5.3. Organizations
 - 5.3.1. Subcommittee Assignments (XK)
6. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: "Strategy with Respect to Collective Bargaining"** (BB/XK)
7. **Budget/Finances**
 - 7.1. School Districts Financial Projections using Acton Finance Committee Long-Range Planning Framework (XK)
 - 7.2. OPEB (DB)
 - 7.3. FY2014 Budget Process and Budget Priorities (XK, KM)

8. **Regionalization**

8.1. What other leadership role(s) should ABRSC as a whole take (MN, XK)?

9. **School Operations**

9.1. FY14 School Calendar Revisited (MC)

9.2. Return to Review of Demographic Survey Results (MC)

9.3. Ensure that all staff has some special needs training (PM)

9.4. Even focus on cost reduction for all goals (PM)

9.5. Use of technologies in classrooms and for school-parent communications (DO)

10. **Other Issues**

11. **Recommendation to Approve 2012-2013 Subcommittee Members – VOTE – *Xuan Kong***

Adjourn

ACTON PUBLIC and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING WORKSHOP Draft Minutes

Sargent Library
Boxborough

July 26, 2011
6:00 p.m.

6:30 p.m. Business Meeting begins

Members Present: Brigid Bieber, Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppolino, Xuan Kong, Kim McOsker, Maria Neyland, John Petersen, Bruce Sabot
Members Absent: Paul Murphy
Others: Don Aicardi, Steve Mills, Beth Petr

ABRSC Chair, John Petersen and APSC Chair, Mike Coppolino, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairmen's Introduction

The goal of the meeting was to identifying primary topics for the year, not to go into great detail about any item.

2. Regionalization

Bruce Sabot described the proposed Regional Study/Planning Committee and what they would do. The DESE would eventually have to approve any change to Regionalization. The School Committee would have to show DESE the benefit of what a revised Regionalization Agreement would bring to both communities. Once a proposed agreement has been achieved, both towns have to agree to it. This study/planning process would take about a year. Preliminary information would be available by next Town Meetings in 2012. There is some concern that 2/3 of Boxborough's budget would be an assessment if this goes through. The ABRSC unanimously supported moving forward with this study. A vote will be taken at the August 1st ABRSC meeting to form the Study Committee. Bruce will ask Mac Reid and Rep. Jennifer Benson about the recommended composition of the committee, as well as the timeline. Mike Coppolino asked if the Committee that drafts the new Agreement has to be the same as the Study Committee. It was pointed out that the 1998 Regional Agreement was reviewed by the Committee of: Lees Stuntz, Cheryl Levine, John Fallon, Dore Hunter, Sandy Pitcher, Anne Ridley and Isa Zimmerman. It is believed that there were two committees: study and amendment drafting. See powerpoint slides from Bruce.

3. Regional Budgeting Issues

Don Aicardi just finished one budget cycle as Finance Director. Don proposed quarterly budget reports focused on trends instead of brief monthly updates. He also plans to start the internal budget discussion earlier, perhaps in October to be well prepared in December to start the next budget discussion. He was surprised at the passion for the level of detail required to answer some School Committee members' questions this past year. Don wants to report to SC on a quarterly basis and make adjustments during the year, not all at the end as was done this year. He wants to devote more time to analyzing the budgets, given current resources. Steve Mills pointed out that one of the comments on Steve's evaluation was for the Committee to focus more on educational issues and not so much on the budget.

John asked if the Committee agreed with quarterly reports for the current year, unless there was anything unusual or significant. Bruce preferred the ongoing discussion of next year's budget planning process, to be sure the Committee has ultimate control over their budget. The

Committee agreed on quarterly reports for FY12, and to making spending adjustments during the year as appropriate and not all at the end.

Mike Coppolino asked if there should be a subcommittee to consider budgeting to actual numbers and coming up with some simple reports. Westford uses the lines they report to the state for their reports.

John asked the Committee what level of service they would strive for - the level currently being provided or what they would like to be providing. Brigid Bieber pointed out the "massive list of unmet needs" and said she would support a budget that addressed some of the needs, not all of them, but above level service. Steve Mills asked Alixe Callen to submit a budget with the NEASC 7 standards in mind. Increased staffing was identified as a need.

Xuan Kong stated that level service cannot be gold standard, what students are learning is key. He wants educators to justify needs with concrete scientific evidence showing that expenses will lead to better education. He wants to see more long term planning and goal setting.

Mike is not satisfied with the CASE accounting methods. He feels significant money could be saving in this area. He pointed out that Westford decided not to use CASE transportation 7 or 8 years ago and saved hundreds of thousands of dollars. Steve Mills said he is happy to take up this issue but he is only one voting member at CASE. Mike said there are 2 parts to this issue, the accounting piece to charge actual students to take advantage of circuit breaker, and CASE transportation. He believes the District can provide its own transportation more efficiently. Maria Neyland asked for this information for the Committee's consideration. Steve agreed to provide it.

Maria expressed serious concern that many Boxborough citizens feel that Acton Leadership Group (ALG) is setting their assessment and they have no input. Unless Boxborough is given a seat at the ALG table, it is imperative that the Regional School Committee and its representation have a voice. She stated that the ALG reps must bring the Committee's input clearly to ALG. Bruce Sabot felt like the process has worked well for the past few years, but last year it did not.

Brigid stated that assumptions are made when budgeting is done and at some point those decisions should be locked. At ALG, some assumptions were changed last March without proper ABRSC representation, in an effort to make Acton balance their budget. John Petersen replied that the ABRSC should have met to discuss this as it happened. John said the Committee should have been clear about the assessment, and that the ABRSC should agree on their numbers in October to help prevent this and lead the discussion at ALG. Maria concluded that SC members are well educated about their communities and ALG is not familiar with the Boxborough community. The numbers must be fairly represented. The Committee agreed on the importance of this discussion and to continue it at their Aug 2 SC meeting.

4. Office of the Superintendent

Steve Mills asked that the Superintendent's contract be reviewed every year. An open discussion and vote will be on the Aug 2 meeting agenda. The Committee will also discuss whether to change the evaluation form.

The Committee considered whether to change legal counsel due to cost. Atty Peter Ebb of Ropes and Grey has been excellent but at \$770 per hour, he is very expensive. Steve feels the Districts could get excellent legal counsel from less expensive attorneys. He suggested that an RFP for legal services be considered. Steve was asked to pull together the last two years of expenses for Ropes and Grey, and note how much was Peter's time and how much was less costly associates' time. Don will collect this information and provide it to the Committee.

Beth Petr left the room at 8:25 p.m. and returned at 8:37 p.m. while the Committee talked about Central Office staffing levels. During that time, the Committee agreed that Steve Mills should feel comfortable hiring more support staff if he felt it was necessary.

5. Policy Issues

Xuan reported on the Long Range Planning Subcommittee. By November, the new Plan incorporating planning priorities will be presented to SC for feedback. The Committee was also asked to comment on the timeline. Last month, 30 staff members at the Leadership Institute weighed in on the values and goals, creating a very thoughtful document. The hope is that this Plan will inform the budgets going forward and make them more intelligent and most responsive to our communities. Mike was surprised that academics came in second. He thought academics should be first.

John wanted to see the Negotiating Subcommittee (NSC) stay in place so Negotiations can start as soon as they're ready. It is also good to get to know the union representatives in a positive way, not just when negotiations are happening. John Petersen, Brigid Bieber and Terry Lindgren were on the Subcommittee last year. John asked if they would like to meet with AEA, OSA, AFSCME reps quarterly. In Boxborough, the SC chair does this, not the NSC. Brigid agreed that getting together even once or twice a year would be valuable for all. This does not need to be as part of the NSC. Mike would be happy to meet like this, but cannot be on the NSC. John will try to go to one or two of the union meetings, and offer the chance for them to attend our meetings, if they like. Xuan will help if needed. The Chairs will make these connections with the unions. John said an example is the Schedule B proposal and how that will be handled. John would like the NSC to handle this item and if the SC agrees, he asked for a couple of volunteers for NSC. Kim McOsker will do it. Maria Neyland will do it with Brigid and Kim if someone else can help out if she cannot continue.

Regarding School Committee meetings, it was agreed to:

- Identify people in the audience so they don't have to wait all night to speak
- Work together to model good teamwork during meetings
- Disagree without being disagreeable
- Have no surprises
- Provide times on agenda with vice chair as timekeeper, no late meetings
- Keep addenda short

The Committee agreed that the September meeting will be paperless. Amy will provide a few iPads for those who don't have a laptop to view the material posted on the school website.

6. Other Issues

A new Teacher Evaluation process is coming. The goal for Steve is to develop benchmarks and tools in every content area in every grade K -12. Starting a year from now, part of the evaluations will be how students are assessed in ability.

The Lower Fields Project is on the agenda for Aug 2. SC will look at the general concept and consider that money will be coming out of the SC budget, perhaps \$200,000. Maria will not agree to go forward, unless she sees numbers about cost showing that it makes financial sense. Kim was uncomfortable with the first presentation although she loves the idea of developing the fields. Brigid told the Fields Committee that the SC needs more information, primarily from the Administration. Mike would like to agree to the concept, but needs rough assurance that after the sports organizations get their money back, the schools are next in line, as well as how expenses will be covered. The Committee needs more numbers about this proposed project. John will try to get that information by the next meeting.

The policy subcommittee is reviewing the Use of Email by School Committee Members policy. The law requires that copies of all emails be archived and made public upon request. School Committee emails are public records. A new policy will be proposed to the Committee soon.

Due to time, the Committee asked that the International Field Trip policy and school committee's oversight role, as well as a discussion of the Demographics Study be added to the agenda for the Aug 2 meeting.

7. APS Issues

The discussion of K-6 Funding of Assistants – how should we fund (PTO, local budget, Comm Ed, other?) will take place at the next APS SC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 p.m. by both ABRSC and APSC.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

DRAFT

ACTON PUBLIC and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING WORKSHOP

Sargent Library
Boxborough

July 26, 2011
6:00 p.m.

6:30 p.m. Business Meeting begins

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Chairmen's Introduction**
3. **Regionalization**
 - Vote for Study Committee – discussion, timing
 - Goal for Study Completion – process overview
 - Goal for Town Meetings Apr/May 2012
4. **Regional Budgeting Issues**
 - Financial Reporting to SC; adequate or alter format?
 - Service Level including Class size for FY13? FY14?
 - E&D target level? How should E&D be used?
 - Management of year end spending
 - ALG process, representation, communication and effect on the regional budget
 - Calendar for Regional Budget
 - CASE Accounting / Transportation Savings
5. **Office of the Superintendent**
 - Superintendent Contract (update)
 - Format for Superintendent Review – should it be revised?
 - Central Office Staffing Levels – are they adequate?
 - Legal Counsel – are we using counsel cost effectively?
6. **Policy Issues**
 - Long-Range Planning (Xuan)
 - Negotiation – should we have a negotiating subcommittee?
 - SC as a whole – are we functioning well?
 - Structuring SC meetings to end by 10pm and Ground Rules
 - SC Going Paperless
 - SC Members Email Practice and Policy
 - "Demographic Study" – further analysis of existing study? New study? Action plan?
7. **Other Issues**
 - ABYS Fields Project
 - International Field Trip policy – school committee oversight role? Scholarships?
 - Identification of New Issues of importance to the schools, school committee
8. **APS Issues**
 - K-6 Funding of Assistants – how should we fund (PTO, local budget, Comm Ed, other?)
9. **Adjourn**

TO: Xuan Kong, ABRSC Chairperson
FROM: Peter Ashton and Mac Reid, FY'12 RSDSC Co-chairs
DATE: 6/28/12
RE: Appointment of new Regional School District Study Committee (RSDSC)

We would like to propose the following members for the FY'13 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Study Committee (RSDSC):

Peter Ashton
Mac Reid
Mary Brolin
Adria Cohen
Kristin Hilberg
Xuan Kong

Pamela Harting-Barrat (or designated representative) from Acton Board of Selectmen
Vincent Amoroso (or designated representative) from Boxborough Board of Selectmen
Robert Evans (or designated representative) from Acton Finance Committee
Jim Ham (or designated representative) from Boxborough Finance Committee
Stephen Mills (or designated representative) from Acton school administration
Curtis Bates (or designated representative) from Boxborough school administration

*** MEMO ***

TO: Steve Mills

FROM: Erin Bettez

RE: Loan to the Lower Fields Project

DATE: June 2012

Acton-Boxborough Youth Soccer has secured a loan in the amount of \$1,119,500 through Middlesex Savings Bank. The loan proceeds will be donated to the Acton-Boxborough Regional School district and used towards construction of the Lower Fields project.

A-B Community Education recommends that the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District vote to accept these loan proceeds.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
(Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics)

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above:

1. Community responsibility
2. Responsibility to school administration
3. Relationships to fellow Committee members

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her community should:

1. Realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children.
2. Recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. Remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
4. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
5. Remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times.
6. Accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her school administration should:

1. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
2. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
3. Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results.
4. Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:

1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
2. Realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
3. Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions.

File: BCA

4. Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Committee or from members of other Committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems
5. Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

SOURCE: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, 5/22/64

2011-2012 Policy Subcommittee

The following policies and procedures were reviewed and revised this year:

KF Use of School Facilities (and KF-R)

Approved: 11/17/11

Procedures revised: 12/7/11

Extensive revision of procedures and fees with significant community input

KHB Advertising in Schools (and KHB-R)

Approved: 12/15/11

New policy allowing limited advertising consistent with criteria and procedures. Final approval is responsibility of the Superintendent.

JJIF Head Injury Management (and JJIF-R)

Approved: 2/2/12

New policy as required by new state law, including extensive review by Nurses, Athletic Director and Administration to ensure consistent and clear communication with all involved with the injured student.

DJ Fuel Efficient Vehicles

Approved: 3/1/12

Revised miles per gallon guidelines for compliance with MA Dept of Energy Resources

BHE Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members

Approved: 3/1/12

School Committee members are given individual school email accounts to be used for all committee business without forwarding to a personal email account to ensure accurate archiving and records retention

BEDJA Remote Participation

Approved: 3/22/12

New policy in response to new state law permitting electronic committee member participation under certain circumstances.

JIE Pregnant/Parenting Students

Approved: 3/22/12

Revision to ensure these students receive equal educational opportunities under Title IX.

IKF Graduation Requirements

Approved: 5/3/12

Added art requirement, revised to include previously approved 100 credits

JIC Student Conduct

Approved: 6/7/12

Combined JIC with Student Discipline JK and JK-R. Language included from anti-bullying statute and added regarding reporting criminal activity. Reference made to Memorandum of Understanding between school districts and local police, file: KLGA.

JCAC Assignment of Students From Other Schools

Approved: 6/7/12

Policy now applies to APSD and ABRSD

6/13/12

School Committee Policies Under Review:

1. Gifts to Teachers/Coaches re complying with Ethics Rules, File: GBEBC – Kim, FIRST READING at 8/1/12 JT SC meeting
2. Student Fees, Fines, and Charges, File: JQ and Activities Fee Procedures JQA-R – Maria, FIRST READING at 8/1/12 JT SC meeting
3. Exchange Students, File: JFABB – Request from public – preference for non-profits?
4. Sexual Harassment, File: ACAB – update contact names, revise title

SC Policies for Future Consideration:

5. Facebook and Social Networking Websites, File: IJNDD (new)
6. Mission and Vision, File: AD – include Long Range Strategic Plan?
7. Wellness re new restrictions File: ADF and ADF-R – new advisory committee being established, appointed by Superintendent, nurses involved
8. Class size guidelines, File:
9. Student Fundraising/Donations and Gifts, File: JJE and JP (new)?
10. School Admissions, File: JF – include an affidavit for residency?
11. Policies that reference Assistant Superintendent – IL and JJ-R

FY'12 Policy Subcommittee Members: Brigid Bieber, Kim McOsker, Paul Murphy, Maria Neyland, Beth Petr, Marie Altieri, Liza Huber, administrators as needed

6/22/12

**ACTON and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
2012-2013**

Meetings are held in the R.J. Grey Junior High School Library unless otherwise indicated.

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month;

Acton Public School Committee meetings are held on the third Thursday.

ABRSC Meetings start at 7:30 p.m., APSC Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

All materials are posted at <http://ab.mec.edu/about/meetings>.

June 28 (Thur)	Joint School Committee Annual Workshop - 6 pm, Blanchard School Library, Boxborough
August 1 (Wed)	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee, followed by Acton School Committee Meetings
September 6 September 20	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee
October 4 October 18	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting Acton School Committee
November 1 November 15	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee
December 6 December 20	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee
January 8, 2013 (Tues) January 17 January 26 (Sat)	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee Joint School Committee Budget Saturday – 9 am – 2 pm
February 7 February 14	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee (open budget hearing-required by law) Acton School Committee (open budget hearing-required by law)
March 7 March 21 March 28	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee Joint School Committee Meeting (serves as April meetings)
May 2 May 16	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee
June 6 June 20	Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Acton School Committee

Note: Acton Town Meeting is the first week of April. Boxborough Town Meeting is mid-May.
6/21/12

<http://ab.mec.edu/about/schoolcommittee>