

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH TRANSITIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABTSC) and
ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE (APSC) MEETINGS Minutes** (approved 10-3-13)

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 19, 2013
7:00 p.m. ABTSC Meeting
7:30 p.m. APSC Meeting

Members Present: Brigid Bieber, Mary Brodin, Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppolino (7:02), Kim McOsker, Paul Murphy, Maria Neyland, Deanne O’Sullivan (7:02), Kristina Rychlik
Members Absent: none
Others: Don Aicardi (7:30), Marie Altieri (7:30), Deborah Bookis (7:30), Liza Huber (7:30), Steve Mills, Beth Petr

The Acton-Boxborough Transitional School Committee was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Maria Neyland.

2. **Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Superintendent Search**
 1. Sample materials from 2008-2009 Superintendent Search
 2. Proposed timeline and committee makeup for 2013-2014 Search

Maria Neyland reviewed the materials from the 2008 Superintendent Search. There was a sense that it was a large committee but the process worked well. Kim McOsker emphasized that this process needs community involvement.

Maria stated that having three School Committee members on the Search Committee is important because hiring and evaluating the Superintendent is one of the School Committee’s primary responsibilities. Some members could participate in multiple roles. The previous search was facilitated by Marie Altieri. Because there are four staff members who have superintendent certification, Andrew Shen offered to facilitate for this search.

The Committee was comfortable with a Search Committee of 14, as proposed. Brigid noted that if Andrew facilitates he should not have to have another role because it is difficult to do both. Interested Search Committee candidates should email or send a letter to one of the three School Committee chairs: Dennis Bruce, Brigid Bieber or Maria Neyland by October 1st. They should briefly state why they want to participate and describe their experience/qualifications. The request for candidates will be distributed by AB News, PTO lists, Acton and Boxborough Town Halls and other outreach options. As in the past, the Chairs will review the candidates and present a slate to the School Committee to vote on at their October 3rd meeting.

Kim McOsker stated that the Regional parent on the Search Committee should be an Acton parent based on enrollment. Mike Coppolino, Dennis Bruce, Brigid Bieber, and Kristina Rychlik offered to be on the Search Committee. They were asked to email one of the Chairs with their statements.

The Committee discussed the proposed process based on the last search. The number of public forums is decreased. Public forum dates will be publicized as early as possible. The Committee discussed how soon to advertise. The point was made that some high quality superintendents may not know if they will be looking for a job yet. October or November is the most common time for search advertising.

The Committee discussed whether to do the search on their own (“in-house”) or hire a firm. They hired MASC (Massachusetts Association of School Committees) in 2008 after interviewing 5 search firms. The School Committee unanimously agreed to hire a firm to handle the search acknowledging the cost.

The Committee expects that two nights of interviews will be needed to choose a firm. At least four will be interviewed. Beth will do a meeting wizard to identify which nights are best in October, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

The Transitional School Committee will vote the search committee at the 10/3/13 meeting.

3. **Blanchard School Principal Search Update** (7:30)

Marie Altieri reported that the search committee met for the first time on 9/19/13. Advertising will begin by the end of next week.

The ABTSC adjourned at 7:37 p.m. and the APSC was called to order at 7:40 p.m..

4. **CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**

There will be many meetings this year so members need to try to keep them as focused as possible.

5. **STATEMENT of WARRANT**

APS warrant #201406 dated 9/17/13 in the amount of \$633,562.21 was signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - none

7. **APSC BUSINESS**

1. Superintendent's Safety Task Force Update

Dr. Mills reported that the Task Force meets quarterly. The first meeting is next Tuesday. Video monitors are operational now in the buildings. The public should know that they are being taped in these areas now. Panic buttons are in place in the school offices. ID badges will be worn by all staff in the next few weeks. At Mike Coppolino's request, the Task Force will revisit the locking of all front doors of the schools. These meetings are always open to the public.

2. Boxborough School Committee (BSC)/APSC Agreement for School Choice Enrollment for 2013-2014 – VOTE

Dr. Mills described this item as common sense and the start of the transition to a fully regional school district. The Committee was asked to review and vote on an agreement allowing families that move between Acton and Boxborough during the FY13 school year, to attend school in either town for FY13 on a space and program available basis with principal's approval. Transportation for FY13 is the responsibility of the family. This is not considered a "choice student" and there is no net cost to either community. Dennis Bruce acknowledged that the Committee does not usually vote on items at the first meeting, but this should be an exception.

APS VOTE:

Paul Murphy moved, Mike Coppolino seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the Agreement for School Choice Enrollment for 2013-2014 dated 9/11/13 found in the packet.

Dennis Bruce will sign as the APSC Chair and Brigid Bieber will sign as BSC Chair.

Dr. Mills stated that JD Head will do a presentation on possible one tier busing for next year at the October meeting. He said that by pooling some items, money could be saved and may allow the District to spend those funds on other important needs.

3. Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Field Test

Dr. Mills shared his frustration that all of our schools have been chosen for this new performance based assessment due to the amount of time more testing takes away from instruction.

Deborah Bookis referred the Committee to her memo and the DESE letter in the packet. A parent letter is ready to go out but she does not know which classes will be selected yet. There is still a lot more guidance to come. She commented that going forward, there will be no more apples to apples comparisons because of all the changes in testing. Kristina Rychlik mentioned an article in the New York Times about parents who are opting out of testing. PARC becomes the test next year and replaces the MCAS.

4. School Committee Member Reports

1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG)
Kim McOsker and Dennis Bruce attended the 9/12/13 meeting. See minutes in packet.
2. Health Insurance Trust (HIT)
HIT will meet on 9/26/13.
3. Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Task Force
The Task Force will meet on the 10/2 or 10/9. Liability has been almost cut in half which is good news. Dennis Bruce stated that more information is coming in October.
4. Acton Finance Committee
Steve Mills is presenting at FinCom next Tuesday. Dennis will attend.

5. Enrollment Report – September 1, 2013

Marie Altieri reported that October 1 is when official enrollment is locked in. The Ashtons will be asked to do the enrollment projections followed by a presentation in November. High School enrollment for the first time is starting to go down slightly. Class sizes are getting better. This is the first time there are no classes with over 25 students ever. There are 288 kindergartners with 21 or 20 in each class. The only grade levels over class size guidelines are 2nd and 3rd grades and that is only slightly right now. Marie said that the District is on target for enrollment right now. Dennis Bruce noted that Gates has one free classroom now which is finally being used as an art room.

9. NEXT MEETINGS

- October 3, 7:00 p.m. ABRSC/ABTSC Meeting, R.J. Grey Junior High Library
- October 17, 7:00 p.m. APSC Meeting, R.J. Grey Junior High Library

The Committee adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda