

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
Minutes (Approved 10/1/15)

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 17, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Michael Coppolino, Amy Krishnamurthy, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Deanne O'Sullivan (7:03), Kristina Rychlik
Members Absent: Maria Neyland
Others: Marie Altieri, Bonnie Bisbicos, Deborah Bookis, Glenn Brand, Clare Jeannotte, Beth Petr

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Kristina Rychlik, Chairwoman.
2. **Chairman's Introduction** – The presenters were welcomed by the Chair and the Superintendent.
3. **Statement of Warrant and Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. Minutes of meetings on 9/3/15 and 4/30/15 were approved as amended.
 - 3.2. Warrant #16-006 dated 9/10/15 in the amount of \$1,336,779.26 and #16-006PR dated 9/17/15 in the amount of \$830,341.16 were signed by the Committee.
4. **Public Participation** - none
5. **National Art Education Research Delegation to Finland Overview**

Director of Visual Arts, Diana Woodruff presented on her fascinating trip to Finland with this national delegation. She shares these experiences via presentations for her art staff, and describes the cultural insight that she has gained into some of our students' backgrounds, as well as how other countries value art and art's role in education. This helps her be more reflective in her teaching.
6. **Existing Conditions Study Update – Dore and Whittier**
 - 6.1. Press Release
Dr. Brand introduced Donald Walter and Rani Philip from Dore and Whittier. Don said that their firm always hopes that their designs will inspire and reflect the teaching and education that goes on inside the buildings, just like Diana's presentation before them showed so beautifully. They approach projects by asking, "How will education advance in the future and how will buildings reflect that?" They value the master planning process, that our district has begun, because that is where it all starts.

Once a plan for the district is developed, it will be presented to the community, including the School Committee, for dialogue before it is final. Don confirmed that they have access to Blanchard School documents that were done previously, and appreciated the large amounts of material that JD has provided to them already. Dr. Brand stated that doing a study like this is critical for any district to undertake. In terms of timeline, any work will not be part of the FY17 budget. The second phase of the study, examining the educational spaces including consideration of enrollment, is anticipated to be a request in the FY17 budget. It was emphasized that the community will be engaged in this process, and although a building committee is definitely not being launched yet, Dr. Brand plans to launch a new "Future School Needs" committee soon.

7. **United Way Community Needs Assessment Presentation –Patty Higgins**
<http://abuw.org/attachments/category/12/ABUW%20CNA%20-%20Executive%20Summary%20-%20Full%20-%202015-06-02%20FINAL.pdf>

Dr. Brand thanked Marie Altieri for suggesting this very informative presentation. Patty Higgins from the United Way presented on the study that was done to provide insight into the most pressing needs in our community, including those “under the radar” and not widely recognized.

The Committee enthusiastically thanked the United Way for their valuable work. Patty said that a task force is discussing what their next steps will be as far as how to use the information. They hope and encourage other organizations to look at the data and decide how their groups can address some of these issues. Kristina Rychlik noted that there are definitely similarities between this information and what the School Committee and Administration used for their budget process last year. Patty said that the Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results were not considered as part of this study because the timing of the release of the YRBS data did not coincide with the United Way’s schedule. Marie Altieri encouraged the School Committee to look on the website beyond the executive summary because there is a tremendous amount of valuable detail, particularly as it could relate to the demographic study.

The point was made that the United Way needs many volunteers to help communicate this information and help to make important changes happen. Paul Murphy noted that these types of problems cannot be fixed with year to year solutions and “bandaids” as has been done in the past. He is interested in more long term cultural shifts that need to happen. Deanne O’Sullivan stated that all of the many surveys that are done end with the same conclusion. She said that the Wellness Committee and everyone should be working together to empower the children and work from the bottom up. She feels that it all ties into mental health and the need for qualified school counselors. Mike Coppolino agreed but emphasized the dire need for parental education because if parents don’t know, nothing will change. He asked how parents could be educated most effectively. He agreed that the effort cannot be year to year and the responsibility cannot fall on the public education system, the United Way or anyone one group. It takes a whole community to address these issues. Mary Brolin agreed and advocated for bringing the report to the 3 Board Meeting next month to include all of those community leaders. She said everyone must help to build resiliency of our youth, educate our parents and support our seniors. Patty is presenting these results to many local groups over the next few weeks so that will begin a common understanding. She attended the School District Leadership Team meeting yesterday and the point was made by our staff that parent education is key. The point was made that this may not necessarily require more money right away, but could start with more outreach and communication to get the discussion started.

8. **FY16 Superintendent Goals – Second Read – VOTE**
The student learning goal was revised from the last meeting’s presentation.
Brigid Bieber moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously
VOTED: To approve the FY16 Superintendent’s Performance Goals as presented.
9. **Central Office Restructuring Proposal – Second Read - VOTE – Glenn Brand**
Dr. Brand explained in more detail how the proposed Executive Assistant to the School Committee would continue to work closely with him, and not exclusively with School Committee members. He would rely on this person to devote significant time to assisting him with issues and projects that the superintendent needs to address in preparation for possibly discussing with, or presenting to, the Committee. The new Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Director of Finance position does not require as high level of skills and experience and would not be used in this way. Dr. Brand also outlined some of the recent personnel changes in the Central Office that have added to this need,

including the recent retirement of a 30 year plus staff member. Mike Coppolino presented some comparable information that he collected, and stated that he has a better understanding of the need for this restructuring now and is in support of it.

Mary Brolin moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the Central Office Restructuring Plan as proposed by the Superintendent.

10. **MASC District Governance Program Update** – *Kristina Rychlik*

10.1. Review of ABRSC 2015 - 2016 Operating Protocols – **VOTE**

Mary Brolin moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the ABRSC Operating Protocols as proposed.

11. **Demographic Survey – Next Steps** – *Glenn Brand, Mike Coppolino*

Dr. Brand spoke with Andrew Shen and he will meet with the new group to share his experience on the original committee. It was stated that this is a School Committee initiative to better understand our students, policies and communities for the future. Mary Brolin said that it should not require a lot of staff involvement, although clearly input from Andrew and the Administration will be needed. The Boston College staff will meet with the committee after an outline is made. Mike will update them.

12. **Recommendation to Appoint Melissa Andrew as ABRSD Assistant Treasurer per M.G.L. Ch. 71, Section 16A.** – **VOTE** – *Glenn Brand*

Clare Jeannotte explained that this is required due to the segregation of duties, as a result of Denise Kelly's retirement.

Mary Brolin moved, Mike Coppolino seconded, and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to appoint Melissa Andrew as ABRSD Assistant Treasurer, and further, to authorize our current banks to update authorized signers on all existing accounts to include Melissa Andrew, Assistant Treasurer, and Margaret Dennehy, Treasurer, and further, to remove Denise Kelly and any other authorized signers at the same time this change is made.

13. **School Committee Member Reports**

13.1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Kristina Rychlik*

A meeting will be held on 9/24/15.

13.2. Health Insurance Trust (HIT)– *Mary Brolin*

A meeting will be held on 9/25/15.

13.3. Acton Board of Selectmen – *Mike Coppolino*

There was a discussion of a possible fixed transportation route through Kelly's Corner that could affect the school. The Arlington Street parcel that the School District has first consideration on may be considered for a Senior Center. The Special Town Meeting in November has not decided on yet.

13.4. Boxborough Finance Committee- *Mary Brolin*

Jim Ham is no longer a member. Amy Burke is the school committee liaison

13.5. Boxborough Board of Selectmen – *Brigid Bieber*

The Board voted to approve the Amendment to the Regionalization Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that School Committee voted at their last meeting.

13.6. Minuteman Tech (MMT) Update – *Diane Baum*

The MA School Building Association (MSBA) has moved forward with some changes to the proposal. MMT must gain support by June or the MSBA will not give them the funding. They are looking to increase enrollment. See memo and letter. Brigid will attend the meeting on 9/28. Members must let Beth know if they plan to attend to avoid quorum. See the letter from MMT regarding the clarification of the Building Project, 8/28/15.

13.7. Danny's Place Youth Services Update – *Amy Krishnamurthy*
See <http://dannys-place.org/> Two flyers in the packet describe current offerings for students in grades 6 – 8 and for High School students.

14. **Superintendent's Report** – *Glenn Brand*

14.1. School Committee Liaisons for each School

Dr. Brand thanked the Committee members for volunteering for these positions.

15. **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

15.1. From the Office of Curriculum and Assessment

15.1.1. Summer Professional Development Report

15.1.2. August 31st Professional Development Report

15.1.3. Ready to Learn: Survey for Local Pediatricians

Dr. Brand stated that these three opportunities/activities are part of what makes this School District so special. He noted that to have 150 staff members participate in professional development over the summer is amazing. Deborah Bookis pointed out that many of the courses continue through the Fall and many involve mentoring and/or working together on ways to support students. The before school start (8/31/15) for Professional Development this year was new and worked well. Deborah also highlighted the Pediatrician survey that is being done. This data will be shared when the report is complete.

The ABRSC adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

NEXT MEETINGS:

Oct 1	ABRSC Meeting	7:00 p.m. in Jr High Library
Oct 15	ABRSC Meeting	7:00 p.m. in Jr High Library
Oct 22	ABRSC Governance Workshop	7:00 p.m. in Jr High Library