

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
Approved Minutes

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 6, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Baum, Mary Brolin, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Angie Tso, Eileen Zhang
Members Absent: Michael Bo
Others: Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Dawn Bentley, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chairperson Diane Baum.

2. **Chairman's Introduction** – *Diane Baum*

2.1. Welcome!

The Chairperson introduced ABRHS representatives to the School Committee: Michael Cheng, Betty Markman, and Arnav Mehra. She thanked them for their civic engagement and noted that their participation was outlined in School Committee policy JIB and MA General Law 71:38 M.

3. **Public Participation**

Per policy BEDH, members of the public may speak for up to 2 minutes on items not included on this agenda. Typically, the Committee/Administration will not respond to comments during public participation.

Noting the careers of a variety of AB graduates from an attorney to a magician, John Petersen urged the School Committee to redouble their efforts to take an expansive and diverse view of education as they begin the new school year. He asked that the Committee create flexible policies to best serve the diverse needs of our communities, including those that may only affect a small number of students.

Christine Russell spoke as a parent about an incident last year and requested a clear, concise disciplinary policy regarding behavior problems on the elementary school buses. Mr. Light thanked Ms. Russell and invited her to contact him for further information.

4. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes** – *Diane Baum*

Diane Baum read the warrant numbers that were being signed by the Committee.

4.1. Meeting minutes of August 23, 2018 – **VOTE**

Mary Brolin moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded and it voted to approve the minutes as amended. Maya Minkin abstained.

4.2. Proposed reconsideration of meeting minutes of July 23, 2018 workshop – **VOTE**

Paul Murphy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and the minutes of the July 23, 2018 workshop were approved as proposed. Maya Minkin abstained. The section was reconsidered to correct an inaccuracy.

5. **Introductions** – *Diane Baum*

- Acton’s New Town Manager, John Mangiaratti,
- Boxborough’s New Town Administrator, Ryan Ferrara

Mr. Mangiaratti and Mr. Ferrara were welcomed by the Committee and both expressed enthusiasm for their new roles and working with the School Committee.

6. **Superintendent’s Report** – *Peter Light*

Mr. Light reported that a student was injured by a car yesterday and is recovering. Everyone is thinking of him and his family.

6.1. Welcome Back to Staff presentation, 8/29/18

Mr. Light shared some pictures from all of the schools on the first day. Amy Krishnamurthy thanked Principal Sugrue for how smoothly the election ran at Conant on Tuesday which was also the first day for students. Mr. Light read his update memo to the Committee emphasizing its importance. It has been posted to the Superintendent Update section of the website, as is now the practice.

6.2. Summer Professional Learning Memo, Deborah Bookis

Mr. Light was very excited to share all of the learning that the staff engaged in during the summer, noting that 117 educators participated in 23 projects.

6.3. Mental Health: District Work

<http://abschoolswellness.weebly.com/mh-district-work.html>

Mr. Light reviewed the extensive work that has been done around Wellness by the District and thanked Dawn Bentley and Deborah Bookis for their efforts. A followup update will be provided to the Committee some time in late fall.

The Chairperson reminded members that formal requests for items to be on a meeting agenda should be sent to Diane Baum and the Superintendent.

In response to a question about if there is a student communication map, similar to the parents’ communication map, Mr. Light said that he prefers to focus on building relationships between students and faculty who can listen and direct them and not emphasize a document.

7. **New Superintendent’s Induction Program**– *Peter Light*

7.1. Introduction of Dr. Matt King

Dr. King began his career in Concord Carlisle, moved to Lincoln Sudbury and then to the Wellesley schools. His regional school experience will be valuable. There are 41 new superintendents in MA this year. Usually he will visit the district twice a month spending 6 hours per month, then 4 hours a month for the second year. It is a three year program. As an experienced superintendent, Dr. King is there to help Mr. Light think through problems and dilemmas as they come up. Dr. King was thanked for working with our district.

8. **Transportation Update** – *Peter Light*

Mr. Light thanked JD Head and his department for their efforts during the first 3 days of school with the new transportation schedules. AB is one of the largest transportation systems in the state, outside of the cities. Although much has gone very well, there are some issues that warrant attention. He reminded the public that the significant changes to bussing were due to a commitment to student wellness and priorities were balanced.

The committee discussed:

- Buses have more students on them than in the past, although no bus has been oversubscribed. Mr. Light will ask principals to be sure that all students are sitting in seats. He will also see if it is true that there are more Junior High students riding the bus. That number should not have been affected by the changes.
- The bus driver staffing issue is due in part because there has been a shortage of drivers everywhere for about 5 years. We increased our salaries a few years ago. If more buses are added next year, this will still be an issue. AB does have a systemic shortage because the transportation office was designed for 20 buses, and there are now 40. Mr. Light is looking into this.
- The importance of student behavior and etiquette are part of bus safety. Monthly professional development for the drivers is being provided in areas such as behavior management. Drivers are also coming into the schools so the kids get to know them better.
- Families will be encouraged to use the new app that will be available soon to watch the timing of their buses.
- There is some concern about the younger kids having longer rides as well as those with special needs. Regarding adjusting the buses and routes, Mr. Light said that all rides are set up at 45 minutes with the maximum efficiency using the transportation software. He doesn't know if there is a solution to reduce the ride time this year because of the way it is designed. Managing individual students' experiences is the focus. They are really trying to make good decisions for kids. The routes need to be normalized and then discussion can take place when the next budget cycle starts. A member noted that this is the first time parents have been given a way to comment or express concern and it is appreciated.

9. **Subcommittee Reports – Diane Baum**

9.1. Building– *Mary Brolin (oral)*

Skanska is now on board as the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) with Arrowstreet as the architect. They see the challenges and most importantly, the opportunities of our project. There is a Kick-off meeting at Douglas School tomorrow. The Educational Team is working with Arrowstreet now to develop the Educational Plan which will be brought to the School Committee at a future meeting.

9.2. Budget – *Amy Krishnamurthy(oral)*

The first meeting is being scheduled. Amy Krishnamurthy will chair.

9.3. Policy – *Amy Krishnamurthy(oral)*

The first meeting is being scheduled. It will be an orientation because it is a large subcommittee with a number of new members. Amy will also chair this group.

9.4. Protocols – *Peter Light*

9.4.1. 2018-2019 ABRSC DRAFT Operating Protocols – *First Read*

The subcommittee has met twice and reviewed Melrose's protocols which were shared at the workshop. They decided to bring the draft to the School Committee for feedback, and then meet again to refine the document before the Committee is asked to vote on it. Many members shared their thoughts on the draft, which was generally very well received. Ideally the subcommittee can meet and present a final draft at the School Committee meeting on September 20, but it is most important to take the time to have the best version possible for the Committee's consideration.

10. **School Committee Member Reports – Diane Baum**

- Tessa McKinley said that the first PTSO liaison meeting will probably be on Oct 1.

- Diane Baum reported on the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) meeting held yesterday. They are required to do a Basic Rights workshop every year and it is now a webinar.
- Ginny Kremer signed up with an organization for legislative updates. She will be having coffee with Jamie Eldridge soon.
- Pam Nourse will give an update about Minuteman Tech's building project at the Oct 18 School Committee meeting.
- Acton Fincom meets next Tuesday. They are working on their annual Point of View (POV) document.
- Boxborough Selectmen were preparing for the Special Town Meeting. The Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) has a schedule for Budget planning.
- A few years ago, the School Committee did a budget primer for new members. The Superintendent and Finance Director will discuss whether this would be helpful.

11. **Recommendation to Accept Gifts to the School District – VOTE – Peter Light**

- 11.1. \$5,000 from Lowe's to Gates School for a Smart Board
 Paul Murphy moved, Ginny Kremer seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to accept the gift from Lowe's to Gates School for a Smart Board with much gratitude .
 Paul thanked the teacher for taking the initiative on this grant.

12. **FYI**

- 12.1. FY19 School Schedule
Tessa McKinley noted that the Junior High and High School early dismissal times are now listed on the school calendar.
- 12.2. Family Financial Assistance Letter, on the website at
https://www.abschools.org/district/student_services
- 12.3. FY19 ABRSC Committee Assignments, *approved 8/23/18*
- 12.4. Building Resilience: A Parent/Caregiver Series, Rana Chudnofsky, Ed.M.
 October 3rd and 10th 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. The Gallery at Villageworks
The Superintendent highlighted this event.
- 12.5. Meet Acton's New Town Manager, John Mangiaratti, and School Superintendent, Peter Light, September 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the Acton Town Hall, sponsored by the League of Women Voters - Acton Area
- 12.6. Meet Boxborough's New Town Administrator, Ryan Ferrara, and School Superintendent, Peter Light, October 3 at 7:00 p.m. in the Boxborough Library, sponsored by the League of Women Voters - Acton Area
- 12.7. Suicide Prevention Training, Sept 17, offered by AB Cares, Free and Open to the Public, see abuw@abuw.org
The Superintendent highlighted this event.

The ABRSC adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda, list of warrants