



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting

October 15, 2020

7:00 p.m. Open Meeting

Via zoom webinar:

<https://abschools.zoom.us/j/95248771505>

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
MEETING AGENDA

Virtual Public Zoom Webinar Meeting

October 15, 2020

To attend open meeting: <https://abschools.zoom.us/j/95248771505>

7:00 p.m.

To call in: 312 626 6799

Live streaming: <http://actontv.org/on-demand/livestream/government>

1. **Call to Order (7:00)**
2. **Chairperson's Welcome – Tessa McKinley**
3. **Public Participation – Please use “Hand Raise” feature to participate (not the “Chat”)**
4. **Superintendent's Update – Peter Light**
5. **ONGOING BUSINESS (7:15)**
 - a. **Approval of Meeting Minutes of 10/1/20 – VOTE – Tessa McKinley**
 - b. **Discussion Regarding Request to Retire the AB Colonial Mascot - Possible VOTE - Tessa McKinley (memo with comments summary to be in addendum)**
 - c. **Subcommittee and Member Reports**
 - i. **Policy – Diane Baum (met on 10/7/20)**
 1. **Subcommittees of the School Com (new), File: BDE - Second Read - VOTE**
 2. **FYI: School Committee Officers, File: BDB**
 - ii. **Acton Board of Selectmen - Kyra Cook**
(Acton Annual Town Meeting has been postponed)
 - iii. **Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) - Tessa McKinley**
 - iv. **Building Committee Update - Peter Light**
6. **Selection of ABRSC Delegate and Alternate to the 75th Annual MA Association of School Committees Meeting on November 7, 2020 - VOTE - Tessa McKinley (9:00)**
7. **Statement of Warrants & Recommendation to Approve – VOTE – T. McKinley (9:10)**
8. **FYI**
 - a. **MASC Report of the Resolutions Committee - to be discussed November 5**
 - b. **This Month in the Division of Open Government, September 2020**
9. **Adjourn (9:15)**

NEXT MEETINGS: October 29 Workshop, November 5 New Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Posted on 10/9/20 at 3:00 p.m.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	2
---------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	----------

AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Chairman's Welcome
--------------------------	---------------------------

PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley
---------------------	----------------

SUMMARY OF TOPIC	The Chair welcomes members and the public to the meeting. If it is a virtual remote meeting, that is stated and the remote participation policy BEDJA is mentioned. Voting at remote meetings must be done by roll call. The Chair is also required to state if the meeting is being taped. Acton TV tapes and broadcasts most School Committee meetings.
-------------------------	---

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?		
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information	
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required	
	Request formal action with a specific vote:	
		If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
		for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
		with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
-------------------------	--

FOLLOW-UP	
------------------	--

APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min.
--	--------

ATTACHMENTS	none
--------------------	------



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Public Participation		
PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Per policy BEDH, members of the public may speak for up to 3 minutes on items not included on this agenda. Comments regarding items on the agenda should be made during that part of the meeting. Typically, the Committee/Administration will not respond to comments during public participation.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request formal action with a specific vote:		
		If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
		<input type="checkbox"/>	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min.
ATTACHMENTS	none

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	4
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Superintendent's Update		
PRESENTER(S)	Peter Light		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Bi-weekly Superintendent's Update. This is brought to the meeting.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min.
ATTACHMENTS	Brought to meeting

5

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	5.a
---------------------	----------	---------------------------	-----

AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Approval of Meeting Minutes
--------------------------	-----------------------------

PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley
---------------------	----------------

SUMMARY OF TOPIC	The Committee reviews and votes to accept the minutes of the previous meeting.
-------------------------	--

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?		
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information	
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required	
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:	
If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:		
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR	
X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately	

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	"Move that the ABRSC approve the minutes of the meeting on October 1, 2020 as written/amended"
-------------------------	--

FOLLOW-UP	
------------------	--

APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min.
--	--------

ATTACHMENTS	Draft minutes
--------------------	---------------

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
MEETING DRAFT MINUTES

Virtual Public Zoom Webinar Meeting

October 1, 2020

To attend open meeting: <https://abschools.zoom.us/j/95248771505> 6:00 p.m. Executive Session

To call in: 312 626 6799

7:00 p.m. Open Business Meeting

Live streaming: <http://actontv.org/on-demand/livestream/government>

Members Present: Evelyn Abayaah-Issah, Diane Baum (7:11 p.m.), Kyra Cook, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, John Petersen, Nora Shine (left at 7:00 p.m.), Angie Tso, Yebin Wang (7:05 p.m.)

Members Absent: none

Others: Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

1. Call to Order (6:00)

The ABRSC was called to order by Tessa McKinley at 6:06 p.m.

She noted that the meeting was being conducted both in person and remotely via a Zoom webinar and that members Kyra Cook, Amy Krishnamurthy and Nora Shine. Yebin Wang would be participating via zoom at 7:00. The following members were in the auditorium with Tessa: Evelyn Abayaah-Issah, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer, John Petersen, and Angie Tso. Diane Baum would also be coming at 7:00. Per Remote Participation policy, BEDJA, all votes were done by roll call. The meeting was being taped by Acton TV.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION (6:00)

Tessa stated the need for an Executive Session to be convened under MGL Ch 30A, sec. 21(a) purpose (3): to discuss strategy with respect to litigation because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Committee. She said that the Committee would return to open meeting at approximately 7:00.

John Petersen made the motion, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by roll call to enter executive session for the reason given.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

The Committee returned to OPEN MEETING at 7:06 p.m.

3. Chairperson's Welcome – Tessa McKinley

Tessa McKinley read a statement thanking the 200 people who shared their thoughts regarding the petition to remove the AB mascot that was presented at the 9/17/20 School Committee meeting. In light of the district's commitment to examining the issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in our schools, the Committee will return to this issue at the meeting on Oct 15. In the meantime, everyone was encouraged to have a conversation with someone who doesn't share their opinion in an effort to find common ground and understanding. Tessa informed the public that the Oct 29th meeting will now be a Committee workshop and a new School Committee meeting will be on Nov 5.

4. Public Participation – none

5. Superintendent's Update – Peter Light

One case of Covid19 has been reported at the High School although it is someone who was not in school leading up to the period when they tested positive. Notification is first sent to close contacts, then to the whole building. So far all has gone smoothly. Mr. Light thanked the local group who donated the “Be Kind” signs for our schools in honor of former Acton resident Carroll Spinney who created Big Bird. Members agreed that it is exciting to see activity in the schools again with “a tiny bit of normalcy”. Massachusetts communities have started ticking up in covid cases, so everyone needs to stay vigilant. AB publishes updated health metrics every Thursday on the website.

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1 Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC)

Amanda Bailey, Carrie Weaver and Abe Gutierrez were welcomed as the SEPAC leadership. They presented their feedback form trends and 2020-2021 goals and priorities. These include:

- Monitor state guidance and families’ experiences regarding reopening schools
- Conduct parent/guardian survey(s)
- Address and remove barriers to SEPAC participation and SEPAC leadership for BIPOC parents/guardians of children with disabilities
- Participate in the search process for new special education director
- Community education on Basic Rights and other topics

Their survey will be published at end of this month and a formal report will be done in the spring. SEPAC will also provide feedback, as usual, as part of the budget process. In response to a request by a committee member, for any information about changes in parents’ hours, Amanda said that parents are being asked to document how much time it’s taking now to support their children and that will be shared. In response to being asked where SEPAC stands regarding some of the dyslexia recommendations presented at School Committee, Amanda replied that Debbie Dixon has provided information, but SEPAC has ongoing concern. There will be inevitable curriculum gaps this year, but there is concern that some hybrid elementary students may not be receiving all of the reading foundations instruction recommended.

7. ONGOING BUSINESS

7.1. Approval of Meeting Minutes of 9/17/20 – VOTE – Tessa McKinley

John Petersen moved, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED by roll call: to approve the minutes of September 17, 2020 as amended.
(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Tso, Wang)

7.2. Budget Update

7.2.1. FY22 Budget Guidelines

The budget timeline will be delayed. The Acton Board of Selectmen is considering delaying Acton Annual Town Meeting so it is closer to Boxborough’s Town Meeting in May, as suggested at ALG. The timeline will be considered after this decision is made. The Committee was asked for comment on the budget guidelines before the Administration goes too far into the process. The draft has been reviewed by the Budget Subcommittee. Mr. Light will share the draft

strategic plan with the Committee even though it has not been voted yet because it will help members understand the guidelines, particularly bullet 6.

Comments included:

- Dave said that benchmarks for replenishing revolving accounts vary district to district and program to program. A benchmark is a measure of where we were. Due to the pandemic this is going to be difficult to compare.
- A member noted that having a big reserve is good, but it is coming from the taxpayers. We should avoid excessive community tax. Reserves depend a lot on the volatility of the operation, and right now there is maximum volatility.
- Round two of the CARES Act has just come out. We just received \$55,000 which is the first FEMA check for FY20 costs, so this will be revenue for FY21.
- A member asked, what is the key strategy or message of our budget? Mr. Light responded that that is actually the Committee's decision, and it is not just one thing. This is a difficult task in such an uncertain environment.
- Regarding bullets 3 and 5, a member stressed that they should be realistic, particularly given today's uncertainty. She wondered whether one or both of these should be combined with bullet 4. Another member liked the bullets as is because she understood them to say that the district prioritizes this kind of programming.
- Although it's important to be sensitive, the Committee has to give direction to the Administration and tell them what the most important priorities are, even when flexibility is required.
- Regarding bullet 5, specific groups of students were included because Mr. Light received input that this was more valuable than using general terms.
- Members want to be sure priority items are lined up if/when conditions improve.
- Budget Saturday will look different this year, especially given that it will be remote. More time will be needed upfront with the admin team so they can thoroughly think it through. Dave agreed, adding that a flexible budget is key.
- Because Acton Annual Town Meeting (ATM) drives our budget schedule, members should advocate that ATM be aligned with Boxborough's Town Meeting dates permanently. This would mean a delay of about 6 weeks.
- A member noted that after listening to the SEPAC report, the district could be facing an enormous gap for children who are not getting the foundational support they need. Remote instruction is not the ideal format.

7.3 Subcommittee and Member Reports

7.3.1. Policy – *Diane Baum (met on 9/25/20)*

6.3.1.1 Subcommittees of the School Com (new), File: BDE - First Read
The subcommittee proposed this new policy to codify what the Committee is doing regarding subcommittees. Diane asked for feedback on clause #2 about how members are appointed. It was suggested that procedures might be helpful. Not everyone agreed. Not having dates and timelines (as in procedures) provides flexibility. Defining what a subcommittee is, and perhaps what each reviews, is important for future committees. It was agreed that if the policy is clear, and the chair is comfortable as it's

written, procedures are not necessary. Although the slate of subcommittee members made up by the Chair used to be voted on by the Committee it has not been in recent years. Members generally felt the current method, with no voting, has worked.

7.3.1.2 Recommendation to Suspend Homework Policy, File: IKB - **VOTE** ($\frac{2}{3}$ weighted vote required *per policy BGF*)

Given the nature of this school year and the different learning modes (In-person Hybrid and Fully Remote), it was recommended that this policy be suspended until the District returns to full in-person teaching. With the various schedules, this would mean that homework could be assigned over a long weekend or a holiday weekend. Assessments could also be assigned after long weekends. The intent is to preserve the continuity of student learning while being mindful of the need for social-emotional wellness and balance for students. This suspension is primarily due to when there is a long weekend. With our hybrid schedules, there could be 5 or 6 days of no homework allowed if the policy is in effect.

Understanding homework expectations is still important. There are 2 parts of the homework – quantity and quality, or synchronus and asynchronus. We have to be mindful of both pieces and achieve a balance of the two. A member asked if given that we are trying to keep Social Emotional Learning (SEL) at the forefront and minimize trauma, is there a way to edit the policy instead of suspending it? This was considered, but it was decided that homework should be left to the teacher's discretion. AB has historically challenged the homework policies so Mr. Light was concerned that it would take too long to modify the policy. Some counselors at the high school told him that the kids were saying the amount of homework feels appropriate right now. The teachers are really recognizing the social emotional needs of the students and Mr. Light trusts their professional judgment. Strict guidelines do not work in a pandemic. They want to give staff the flexibility to keep the academic work flowing.

A member asked for clarification about what having no homework policy would mean. Mr. Light explained that the policy has rigid guidelines about when you can and cannot assign homework and assessments. This suspension would give staff more flexibility to assign work. The member asked if we are concerned about learning gaps, will having no guidelines create inconsistency among students depending on what class they're in? Mr. Light replied that the current policy would prevent teachers from assigning homework or assessments due to holidays and the current structure for possibly an extended number of days.

A member stated that we have a unique opportunity because every other day, our students have to learn remotely. This is a clear example of how they can manage their time and learn on their own. A few years ago, he would have been concerned about suspending the policy, but today

homework is internalized with our staff and it is important to do this now. Teachers need the leverage and freedom to create and make this work.

John Petersen moved to suspend the Homework policy, File: IKB, until school fully reopens. Ginny Kremer seconded the motion.

Amanda Bailey stressed that this policy is also about individuality, not just quantity and quality of homework. Without it in place, she implored the administration to include in the guidance for all staff the need to take into account the accommodations and supports particularly needed by students who receive services.

The Committee **VOTED by roll call** on the motion and it was approved. (YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Wang NO: Tso)

7.3.2 Budget - Adam Klein (*met on 9/21/20*)

No change was made to the subcommittee's charge. The budget calendar and guidelines were discussed.

7.3.3 Acton Leadership Group (ALG) - *John Petersen*

7.3.3 Spreadsheet from 9/24/20 meeting and Minutes

Minor changes were made to the charter; the ALG will continue to work to consensus. The multiyear ALG model currently assumes that Acton will tax to the levy limit in FY22, there will be little increase in state funding and E&D use will be \$1 million. The Acton portion of the ABRSD assessment is assumed to increase 3.9% while the Minuteman assessment is assumed to increase 31%. The difference between revenues and expenses is a deficit of \$1.2 million. Through the ALG discussions and adjustments to the budget of the operating entities, the FY22 deficit must be reduced to zero.

The Town plans to bond the North Acton Fire Station in March 2021. No significant change in local revenues have occurred. The level of state and federal support for Towns and Schools for FY22 is highly uncertain. In considering the budget process, ALG agreed that the town would be better served by a later town meeting. Jon Benson will be working to set a new date with the Acton Select Board.

The Acton Finance Committee is thinking that town and schools should strive to achieve no tax increase for FY22 and that, in part this should be achieved through the use of reserves. The Fincom would also like to see a new iteration of a cost-reduction committee; both entities thought that the additional burden on personnel would be unwise. Minutes and the ALG charter are available on the Town of Acton Docushare.

7.3.4 Legislative Liaison - *Ginny Kremer*

Ginny met with our state legislators and reported no new information on funding. There is interest in helping AB fund the gap between Half Day and All Day Kindergarten. There are a couple of bills in the state

legislature to suspend MCAS testing this spring. She will keep the Committee informed.

7.3.5 MASC/MASS Annual Conference – *Diane Baum*

An abbreviated zoom version is being done this year because their bylaws state they have to have an annual assembly and vote on resolutions. A moratorium on MCAS is the first resolution. A delegate to attend the assembly on Nov 7 will be chosen at the meeting on Oct 15.

7.3.6 Building Committee Update - *Peter Light*

FYI: Naming District Facilities Policy FF and Procedures

FYI: Value Management List and Minutes

Value Management was done at the last meeting. A couple of change orders came in under estimate so that helped and some of the design contingency was shifted to the budget, so the gap has been addressed. A finalized price should be available in December. Covid prevented a ground breaking ceremony but a topping off ceremony could be done. The community should start thinking about the building name and signage. Policy FF will govern that process. Marie will act as staff liaison.

8. **Recommendation to Accept \$4,000 Donation from Danny's Place Youth Services to AB Community Education's Leader-in-Training Program - VOTE - *Peter Light***

Adam Klein moved, Diane Baum seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: to accept this generous donation of \$4,000 from Danny's Place Youth Services to Com Ed's Leader-in-Training Program with gratitude.
(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, McKinley, Petersen, Tso, Wang ABSTAINED: Krishnamurthy)

9. **Statement of Warrants and Recommendation to Approve – VOTE – *T. McKinley***

John Petersen moved, Adam seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: *See motion on warrant memo.*

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Tso, Wang)

10. **FYI**

9.1. Thank you for "Be Kind" Big Bird Signs from "Acton Celebrates Carroll Spinney"

9.2 Call for Public Comment re Retiring the Colonial as AB's Official Mascot

9.3 FY21 District Calendar including change to Indigenous Peoples' Day on 10/12/20

Angie Tso wished all families a Happy Mid-Autumn Festival!

10. **Adjourn**

Adam Klein moved, John Petersen seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: to adjourn the ABRSC at 9:01 p.m.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Tso, Wang)

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of Documents used: see agenda



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	5.b
---------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	------------

AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Discussion Regarding Request to Retire the AB Colonial Mascot - Possible VOTE
--------------------------	--

PRESENTER(S)	Peter Light, Tessa McKinley
---------------------	-----------------------------

SUMMARY OF TOPIC	<p>The Committee was presented with a request to retire the AB Mascot last July from a group of students (ABSEJ) who felt that it does not represent “who we are or what we stand for as a community”. They presented at the School Committee meeting on September 17th along with staff members of ECARES who agreed. The School Committee asked for public comment before October 14th and agreed to return to the discussion of the petition and possibly take action at the School Committee meeting on October 15th. The “Naming District Facilities” policy FF states that any request to name a facility (including a program, such as the mascot) must be brought before the School Committee for approval.</p>
-------------------------	---

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?		
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information	
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required	
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:	
		If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
		<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin-right: 10px;"></div> <div>for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR</div> </div>
		<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin-right: 10px; text-align: center; line-height: 40px;">X</div> <div>with the request that the School Committee take action immediately</div> </div>

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	<p><i>Possible motions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Move to retire the AB Colonial Mascot, with the understanding that programs and new purchases made by the District will no longer bear the name “Colonials”, but changes to existing capital items such uniforms, scoreboards and other items will be undertaken as time and funding permit. 2. Move to keep the AB Colonial Mascot
-------------------------	---

APPROX. TIME ON AGENDA	90 min.
-------------------------------	---------

ATTACHMENTS	Chairperson’s memos dated 10/13/20 and 9/24/20, ABSEJ petition 7/11/20, ABSEJ presentation 9/17/20, ECARES Letter to School Committee 9/8/20
--------------------	--

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700
www.abschools.org

Tessa McKinley

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Chair

October 13, 2020

To My Fellow School Committee Members,

I'm writing to you to share and comment on the feedback we have received regarding the petition to remove the colonial as the mascot of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District.

As you know, the Acton Boxborough Students for Equity and Justice (ABSEJ) first approached the committee on July 11, 2020 with the presentation of their petition to change the colonial mascot. I met with the group along with Peter Light, Dawn Bentley, and Larry Dorey on August 13, 2020. The group then presented formally to us as a committee at our September 17th meeting. In the time since, we have received a plethora of feedback from our current students and staff, alumni, and community members. There have been heated discussions on many platforms, some more respectful than others. A second petition was created and circulated. We have received over 350 emails (and are still receiving them as I type) with all sorts of opinions. About half of the communications we received were from current students/staff and alumni. The other half were from community members. Of the community members that wrote in, they were divided nearly evenly over whether or not to retire the mascot. Alumni were similarly divided. When it came to our current students and staff, however, the numbers couldn't be clearer. 74% of our current students and staff that took the time to write to us were in favor of retiring the mascot.

As of 4:00 pm 10/13/20	Keep the mascot	Retire the mascot
Alumni	25	23
Community members	89	87
Current students/staff	30	85
Responses w/no preference	14	
Total responses	353	

I was completely ambivalent about raising this issue when it was first brought to my attention in July. I knew that we had a mountain of work in front of us as we attempted to bring kids and teachers back to school. I knew that we had an uncertain financial future but I also knew that we had an incredibly

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

passionate group of students who had done their homework and were ready to make their case. I must admit that I am incredibly glad that they were so persistent in their requests. I have spent the last month doing a lot of listening. I have read some compelling arguments representing the *intent* of the designation of the colonial as our mascot. I have also read some devastating emails detailing the *impact* of having the colonial as our mascot. As we begin our discussion, I want to remind you of the question that is before us because that question has become somewhat distorted in the rhetoric that has developed around each side of this debate. The student petition asks us to retire a mascot that causes discomfort for many in our community. They are not looking to erase all vestiges of colonial representation. The retirement of a mascot is NOT a statement that our colonial roots should be negated. Similarly, there are many in the community that feel that the colonial represents the values of freedom, hard work and the struggle against oppression. There is room in our community for us to acknowledge that the mascot that has represented us for decades may no longer be the best representation for our community going forward. This is not a reflection of missed opportunities to learn history. Rather, it is an incredible tribute to our teachers and students that they have uncovered a history that was long misrepresented.

As a committee we have committed ourselves to the values of diversity, equity and inclusion. While it seems that this request may only be symbolic in nature, it is clear from the correspondence we received that this is a major barrier for many students and staff to do the necessary anti-racist work that we have acknowledged is central to our growth as a school community. I hope that our conversation will be focused on the question at hand: Should the colonial mascot be retired? This is not the same question as should a minority opinion govern the majority or should we honor our heritage or should we change our social studies curriculum? All of these are valid questions but not what we are tasked with as a committee. I read this morning, this tidbit from historian Heather Cox Richardson and it is timely: "History, though, is different from commemoration. History is about what happened in the past while commemoration is about the present. We put up statues and celebrate holidays to honor figures from the past who embody some quality we admire. But as society changes, the qualities we care about shift." I look forward to listening to your thoughts and questions as we respectfully discuss this issue.

Thank you,
Tessa



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700
www.abschools.org

9/24/20

5.6

Peter J. Light

Superintendent of Schools

Members of the Acton and Boxborough Communities,

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee is welcoming public comment as it considers a petition to retire the Colonial as the official mascot of the District.

On September 17, 2020, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee heard from a student group, AB Students for Equity and Justice (ABSEJ), who recently submitted a petition to the Committee requesting consideration to retire the Colonial as the official mascot of the High School and District. Last Spring, the petition garnered over 1,300 signatures supporting this change. At our meeting on September 17, ABSEJ presented their case for this change which included a letter which was supported by many notable individuals and groups in our community including: Senator Jamie Eldridge, Racial Justice for Black Lives, Educators Committed to Anti-Racist Equity and Social Justice (ECARES), Fostering Racial Justice Boxborough, First Parish Church of Stow and Acton, Unitarian Universalist Church, Angel Youth Foundation, Indivisible Acton, and Highrock Covenant.

In their letter to the Committee, ABSEJ noted *"a white-male-colonist mascot in no way reflects the ever-changing community of Acton-Boxborough. As the community grows and diversifies, our current mascot is not representative of who we are or what we stand for as a community."* The petition submitted last Spring further noted, *"Although mascots intend to bring fan bases together, the AB mascot gives a likeable face to a time period that set the stage for present day racial divisions. Changing the mascot is an ethical and educational action that will underscore the need to know real, and not sugar coated, representations of the past."*

The Committee recognizes that the Acton-Boxborough community includes many members and groups who may have a variety of views on the issue before the Committee. The School Committee will deliberate on the petition again and consider action at its meeting on October 15, 2020. We invite the public to submit comments in writing by **Wednesday, October 14th** by emailing us at abrsc@abschools.org. While we recognize that public comment is not a vote, we are interested in hearing a variety of opinions on changing the mascot to help make our deliberation more meaningful.

Sincerely,
Tessa McKinley
ABRSC Chair
abrsc@abschools.org

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

AB Students for Equity and Justice Call For Mascot Change



To Whom It May Concern:

We are the Acton-Boxborough Students for Equity and Justice (ABSEJ), a coalition of AB students and alum committed to hold the Acton-Boxborough community accountable against systemic oppression in all forms. In light of our community's response to the nationwide Black Lives Matter movement, we are writing to you about an issue specific to our community that is overdue for change.

Our mascot is currently the Acton-Boxborough's "Colonial," which pays homage to the colonists who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 17th century. Not only does it glorify colonialism, the "Colonial" mascot also disregards the generational pain and suffering that European colonists inflicted upon Black and Indigenous people of color in their quest to colonize the Americas. Colonialism brought slavery to the Americas and the idea of race that white Europeans used to justify it. Therefore, colonialism is a historical reason for why the Black Lives Matter movement must exist in the current moment.

Furthermore, a white-male-colonist mascot in no way reflects the ever-changing community of Acton-Boxborough. As the community grows and diversifies, our current mascot is not representative of who we are or what we stand for as a community.

Many community members have already expressed their discomfort and desire to change the mascot. In less than a month, [an online petition](#) started by an ABRHS alum has collected over 1,200 signatures from town residents, AB alum, and current students. In a separate survey that we conducted on community members recently, we found that over 57% of respondents from

Acton or Boxborough agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “the AB ‘Colonial’ mascot is a reflection of racial and cultural inequality.” 81% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that “there is enough representation of minority groups in the school administration and on school campuses.”

As we continue to imagine our anti-racist educational environment and curriculum, changing the mascot is an ethical and educational action that will underscore the need to know real, and not sugar-coated, representations of a problematic past. We have already witnessed numerous instances of the removal of racist mascots and statues around our country. [Just last month](#), our neighbors in Walpole, MA voted to change their problematic “Rebels” mascot. We appreciate the June 2020 letter on “Anti-Racist Action Steps for AB Schools” and believe that in accordance with [our mission statement](#), it is time for us to follow suit and adopt a new mascot that upholds our values.

We are not effective supporters of Black Lives Matters unless we challenge the normalization of colonialism in our daily lives. To do so, we need to take concrete actions, starting by changing the narratives that we tell. Narratives have power. We need a symbol for school spirit that is not at odds with our mission statement, rather than a symbol associated with racism and oppression.

A new mascot that represents our diverse community would be a first step for ABRHS to create a more inclusive space for all. We hope that you will join our call to change the ABRHS colonial mascot. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you wish to learn more about our initiative or become involved.

In solidarity,

Acton Boxborough Students for Equity and Justice

For More Information Visit:

Petition:

<https://www.change.org/p/acton-boxborough-regional-high-school-let-s-change-the-ab-colonials-mascot>

Black Lives Matter Acton Facebook Mascot Post:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/958865607884406/permalink/960870914350542/>

ABSEJ Instagram and Facebook pages:

<https://www.instagram.com/abs4ej/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ABSEJ-100724201708079/>

AB STUDENTS FOR EQUITY AND JUSTICE CALL FOR MASCOT CHANGE

...

ABSEJ Student Leaders

INTRODUCTION TO ABSEJ

AB Students for Equity and Justice are committed to ensure that neither Acton nor Boxborough remains a participant in the systemic oppression that has impacted marginalized communities in our nation for generations.

**WHAT IS A COLONIAL?
AND WHY ARE WE
CALLING TO CHANGE
OUR SCHOOL'S
MASCOT?**

*Today we honor
and call this land
by its original
name, Nippenet.*



MASCOT INITIATIVE PROGRESS

- Petition
- Survey
- Letter

Support for the Mascot Initiative

Senator Jamie Eldridge

Racial Justice for Black Lives

Educators Committed to Anti-Racist Equity and Social Justice (ECARES)

Fostering Racial Justice Boxborough

First Parish Church of Stow and Acton

Unitarian Universalist Church

Angel Youth Foundation

Indivisible Acton

Highrock Covenant

MASCOT REMOVAL

- Timeline
- Removal Process
- Student involvement/opinion

Dear Members of the School Committee:

We are members of Educators Committed to Anti-Racism, Equity and Social Justice (ECARES), a cohort at the high school seeking to create a safe and equitable environment for students in all aspects of the educational experience. Accordingly, we are writing to support the Call to Action proposed by AB Students for Equity & Social Justice (ABSEJ) regarding the removal of the Colonials mascot.

As so eloquently stated by ABSEJ in their email to AB Admins dated July 11, 2020, the Colonials mascot does not represent our AB community, whose influence and presence on native lands caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Indigenous people. By making this change, the district would be taking real beginning action in direct support of our goal to foster an actively anti-racist school environment. These changes acknowledge the devastating legacy of European exploration, colonization, and exploitation in the Americas, particularly the impacts on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, who suffered genocide and other grave injustices, and whose descendants continue to experience the effects of structural racism and systemic inequality today, here in our own community as well as all over the country. We would be honoring the Nipmuck and Pawtucket peoples, the native inhabitants of the land known today as Acton, Massachusetts, as well as the Black peoples who were ripped from their African homelands and brought here through the transatlantic slave trade.

Since the murder of George Floyd, people around the country have mobilized through the Black Lives Matter movement. We have witnessed the removal of Confederate symbols and statues, the elimination of racist mascots in public schools (including at least three in the Massachusetts school districts of Walpole, Nashoba, Winchester), and policy changes and reform to combat racism in a number of institutions, organizations and industries.

As one of the top school districts in the state, ABRSD must continue to be a model for other districts by doing what is right and just during this defining moment in history. We join ABSEJ in appealing to you to eliminate the use of a mascot that represents racism, ethnic violence, and genocide with the goal of replacing it with one that celebrates the diversity of our community and aligns with our school's values. The school committee has voted to replace the Columbus Day holiday on the second Monday of October with Indigenous Peoples' Day to commemorate the humanity, histories, and cultures of Native Americans, and removing the mascot is in line with this previous committee vote. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Educators Committed to Anti-Racism, Equity & Social Justice:

Betty Baker	Lindsay Rosenman	David Brusie
Susan Ervais-Bohmiller	Anna Secino	Amy Houle
Dan Goldner	Elisabeth Ryden	Mee Byun
Jacky Gottesman	Tina Vanasse	Patricia Garrison
Megan McGrath	Jen Moss	Jen Gabel
Su Nugent	Cathy Foster	Sarah Turner

Acton-Boxborough Athletics

Director of Athletics: Steven Martin
36 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
Phone: 978-264-4700 X:3420
E-Mail: smartin@abschools.org
<https://abrhs.abschools.org/athletics>

TO: Superintendent, Peter Light
FROM: Steve Martin, ABRSD Athletic Director
RE: Uniform Change
DATE: 9/24/2020

Dear Peter Light,

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of Athletics here at Acton Boxborough. I just wanted to reach out as far as the current conversation around the mascot and the cost it would be for the Athletic Department in uniforms.

The following number is based on the number of players we could have and the estimated cost of uniforms from recent invoices or from our coaches. To replace the uniforms from Junior High School through our Varsity would be a significant cost to the district. If we were to change our uniforms in just one season the cost to replace all of our uniforms would be an estimated \$218,295.00. Most of our Junior High and our Varsity Uniforms have been newly replaced in the past three years.

There also would be other costs associated with this. We would have to redo the floors of the gymnasium, scoreboards replaced, and signage are among other items that would be other significant costs to the buildings and grounds.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, and again thank you for all that you do for the Athletic Department.

Steven Martin,

Director of Athletics



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	5.c.i
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Policy Subcommittee Update		
PRESENTER(S)	Diane Baum		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	<p>This is the Second Reading of a new policy - Subcommittees of the School Committee, File: BDE. The First Reading was done at the meeting on Oct 1. Policy BDB "School Committee Officers" is included as FYI to show that a duty of the Chairperson is to "appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval". These two policies should be consistent. This was reviewed by the policy subcommittee on Oct 7.</p>		
WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?			
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information		
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required for Subcommittees policy		
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:		
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:		
		for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting or	
	X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately	
SUGGESTED MOTION	"Move to approve the new Subcommittees of the School Committee policy, File: BDE."		
FOLLOW-UP			
APPROX. AGENDA TIME	5 min.		
ATTACHMENTS	Subcommittees policy, as presented for First Read		

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

5.c.2.1

New

File: BDE

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Draft for First Read 10/1/20

Unchanged for Second Read 10/15/20

The School Committee shall appoint members to subcommittees annually for a period of one year. These subcommittees may be created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.
2. The Committee chairperson, subject to approval by the Committee, will appoint the subcommittee chairperson and its members.
3. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.
4. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
5. All subcommittees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

NOTE:

The cross reference to policy BEC is included because the open meeting law, and its exceptions, applies to both School Committee meetings and meetings of the subcommittees of the School Committee.

5.c.2.2
Fyi**File: BDB - SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS****Duties of the Chairperson**

The chairperson of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/She will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the chairperson will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.
4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval.
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the chairperson will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chairperson

The vice-chairs of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officers of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to them. Each vice-chairperson will support the chairperson in the business of their town.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36

Approved: 5/21/15

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	5.c.ii
---------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	---------------

AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Acton Select Board Update
--------------------------	----------------------------------

PRESENTER(S)	Kyra Cook
---------------------	-----------

SUMMARY OF TOPIC	This is an update on the recent meeting, including news that the Acton Annual Town Meeting will be postponed from April.
-------------------------	--

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?		
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information	
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required	
	Request formal action with a specific vote:	
		If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
		for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
		with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
-------------------------	--

FOLLOW-UP	
------------------	--

APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min.
--	--------

ATTACHMENTS	
--------------------	--

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	5.c.iii
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) Update		
PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?			
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information		
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required		
	Request formal action with a specific vote:		
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:		
		for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR	
		with the request that the School Committee take action immediately	

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION			
FOLLOW-UP			
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 minutes		
ATTACHMENTS			

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	5.c.iv
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	School Building Committee Update		
PRESENTER(S)	Peter Light		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Update on progress		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?			
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information		
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required		
	Request formal action with a specific vote:		
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:		
		for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR	
		with the request that the School Committee take action immediately	

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	10 min.
ATTACHMENTS	Minutes from the Building Committee meeting

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Building Committee (SBC)

Virtual Public Webinar Meeting

September 23, 2020

To attend: <https://abschools.zoom.us/j/97676739190>

7:00 p.m

Members Present: Mary Brolin; Adam Klein; Peter Light; Marie Altieri; Peter Berry; Dennis Bruce; Jason Cole; Bob Evans; Bill Hart; JD Head; Gary Kushner; David Martin; Lynne Newman; Maria Neyland; Katie Raymond; Mac Reid Chris Whitbeck.

Members Absent: Amy Krishnamurthy.

Other: Karen Coll; Representatives from Skanska: Chuck Adam, Sovathya Sar, Vincent Vadeboncoeur; Representatives from Arrowstreet: Emily Grandstaff-Rice, Larry Spang, Katie Lillich; Representatives from Consigli: Jody Staruk, Kristy Lyons, Jeremiah Driscoll, Jay Rodriguez; members of the public.

1. Mary Brolin called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

2. Review of Detailed Design -- Chuck Adam/Emily Grandstaff-Rice/Jody Staruk

Chuck Adam reminded SBC members of the September 9th discussion that the project was \$3MM over budget. Since that time one change order has been approved, for removal of soils containing arsenic and toxic substances. The building project leadership team has spent the past two weeks working to identify areas for savings that won't impact the overall building and they have also found better ways to do some things.

The committee reviewed a list of Value Management items, which had been divided into several groups: implemented, accepted but not yet implemented, rejected, recommended for SBC consideration, and pending further information. Emily Grandstaff-Rice clarified three of the buckets, describing implemented items as those that the contractors and the Working Group team had agreed would not impact the building and had already implemented; accepted items as those that the team had agreed to but not yet implemented; and rejected items as changes that could impact the longevity or functioning of the building. The items recommended for SBC review were more ambiguous items that the working teams weren't comfortable deciding without SBC input. Some items on the VM list, such the elimination of lightning protection, were included to reconcile the design with the estimates following prior VM changes.

Total savings identified through the VM process were \$2.6MM, including

- \$2.2MM in combined savings from already-implemented items
- \$303K for items that have been accepted but not yet implemented
- \$100K in reduced Owners contingency. The team has verified that the town will waive some, but not all, permit fees, so the Owners contingency, which included \$500K for permit fees, was reduced.

Additional items on the list totaling \$578K were rejected; these items had been included in the spirit of 'everything is on the table.' Three items were listed for SBC consideration, focusing on the gym flooring material and the potential scaling back of the goal of net zero water. In addition, some contingency

At ABRSD, our mission is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.
WELLNESS - EQUITY - ENGAGEMENT

allowances were found to be duplicative of costs in other areas and were reduced from the initial estimates. The budget still includes an escalation amount of \$285K in case prices go up as we solicit subcontractor bids.

Jason Cole asked at what point there would be no further need for this type of VM. Emily said that final drawings will be issued on October 15th, less than a month away. Jody Staruk said that one purpose of the construction contingency is to accelerate the purchase of services if there is concern that costs could increase. When the final bidding process is complete, the project costs will be known and the contingencies will be eliminated.

Much of the discussion focused around several issues:

- Skylights – Members had varying reactions to eliminating the skylights in the media center. Some viewed the skylights as an instrumental design element in one of the most prominent areas of the building. Other members had concerns about leaks and maintenance issues with skylights. JD Head said that skylights in other district buildings leak and have posed maintenance problems. Emily showed renderings of the media center, noting that the images don't really emphasize the skylights. Peter Light said that the original plans called for a large dome light in the media center but that was eliminated earlier in the process; the skylights are so small they don't add as much value. Larry Spang said that the skylights were included to allow a little extra natural light to come in at different times of day. Adam Klein asked whether the issue was one of maintenance or cost, noting that the skylights were not considered for elimination until cost became an issue. If we save money on the skylights, the savings could be applied to FFE later. Mary Brolin reminded the group that one goal is to maximize MSBA reimbursement. Emily said there will be a lot of natural light coming into the media center from the windows, and said we could designate the skylights as an alternate when we go out to bid.
- The rainscreen, an esthetic item that would give the cafeteria a unique look that is different from the rest of the building – Peter Light and Lynne Newman felt that the wood-like esthetic of the rainscreen was in keeping with the setting. Larry said the rainscreen is an esthetic element that performs essentially the same as the CMU covering the rest of the building. Jason Cole asked if the decorative tiles on the exterior of the café had been eliminated, saying he saw them as a desirable design detail; that decision has not yet been made.
- Contingencies – Bill Hart asked to review the contingency accounts. Chuck said that the estimates include two contingencies, the design contingency and the contractor's, or pricing, contingency. The design contingency is for protection regarding cost estimates and any design changes until the project is put out to bid. In addition, there are two contingencies included in the total project budget, the construction contingency and the owner's contingency. The construction contingency covers unknowns or hidden conditions, such as hazardous materials buried in the walls as old buildings are demolished. The owner's contingency is for soft, non-construction related costs outside of the budget, such as unanticipated legal fees, permit fees and bond costs. Changes that were not requested by the owner are either considered GMP contingencies coming from the contractor's contingency or construction contingencies.

Marie Altieri said some unanticipated site costs have been worked into the budget without reducing the contingencies; Peter Light noted that, given the early draw on some contingencies, the team felt they should treat these conservatively. Chuck said Jeremiah Driscoll has spent a lot of time and effort to find less costly ways to relocate the septic, reducing the cost from \$1.4MM to \$910K. If there are unused contingency funds when we submit the GMP, we can add some items back; some items have been moved into the FFE budget. Mac Reid asked if there was any concern about whether the FFE budget will be adequate. Emily said the FFE budget was based on per-student comparisons with other schools. If FFE goes over budget we will have to look at reducing the quality or expected longevity of some items. Those decisions will be made later, with input from stakeholders, including principals, teachers and others.

- Bike racks – Peter Berry asked about the reasons for reducing the number of bike racks. He said there are increasing numbers of bike lanes in town, as well as more public support for bikes. Emily will double check on Acton’s requirements, but she said that LEED certification requires bike racks for 5% of population; CHIPS is different but the principals feel comfortable that 60 bike racks is enough for this population and is about double the usage that the schools combined normally see. The current bike racks are not in good enough shape to reuse.

Chuck had asked Arrowstreet to review a number of items to be sure they didn’t impact the energy models. Eliminating insulation on return ducts will marginally increase our EUI, but the EUI is already much lower than the original targets and they felt comfortable with the slight reduction in efficiency; the change won’t adversely impact the noise or function of the HVAC system. JD said that plans for the PV are being finalized now; although some PV was lost when we eliminated the penthouse roof, he is confident that we can compensate for the loss by adding panels to the café roof or bigger sections to carport roofs.

JD said some items in the plan would not be needed, such as window washing anchors; the district uses a lift to wash windows. Katie Raymond asked if there were other issues like the window washing anchors that we may not need. Chuck said the team has gone through items individually to identify anything that may not be needed. Jason Cole asked why items like window washing anchors were in the budget to begin with if they have never been used or needed before.

Gary Kushner pointed to some changes in materials, asking whether those would significantly affect the look of the building. Emily said that some substitutions were aimed at reducing the price points of materials or the construction labor required. She noted that, even with the size reduction, the roof walkways are still larger than in the initial designs. The handrail at the media center was priced for more than what was required and drawn, and construction and installation will cost less than estimated. The number of acoustic ‘clouds’ were left in areas where there is likely to be a lot of noise, like the cafeteria and hallways, but were reduced in areas that will be less noisy based on analysis with the acoustic consultant. Bathroom floors are made of epoxy but the 4-inch rise from the floor will now be rubber instead of epoxy. Laminate will be substituted for wood veneer behind the classroom coat hooks.

Kristy Lyons said that the electrical estimator had suggested the two pending electrical items on the list, and they are working with the designers to confirm that these changes are acceptable. Jason asked if there were

any safety risks in reducing the number of exterior lights; Larry said that the goal is to determine whether reductions can be made without reducing the amount of light. Gary asked about the status of the bridge. Larry said they are finalizing the bid package for this to get it out a little before the rest of the GMP. The subcontractor will have to get approval from the Army Corps of Engineers. There is now a roof over the bridge in the budget, as well as lighting under the handrails.

Covid has had some impact on the design. Toilets and sink faucets are hands-free, and the nurses' station has an isolation area. It is too early to talk about any impact on FFE but lessons learned from experience with the current hybrid model will be discussed. There will be some impact on construction when the contractors are doing interior work and have to maintain physical distances.

a. Value management as needed (vote)

Chuck said we need a final list of alternate items by October 15th to be included in bids for the GMP. Potential alternates will be reviewed by the senior working group, and by the full SBC if time allows. If we identify alternates, we have to prioritize them to ensure a fair bidding process. Jody Staruk said that some alternates, such as signage, may not affect trade bids and don't have to be decided before final documents. Some alternates involve only one trade contractor while others can involve multiple trades.

Mary summarized the primary issues raised during the discussion and asked for a sense of the committee about whether to keep each in the project, drop it, or list it as an alternate item:

- Skylights (potential savings of \$34,700) – The majority of the committee favored dropping these (12 members) although some preferred to keep it on the list as an alternate (5 members).
- Cafeteria rainscreen (potential savings of \$125K) – The majority of the committee supported keeping this (15 members), while one member favored dropping it and one member asked to add it to the alternate list.
- Use of Owner's contingency (\$100K) – some potential uses of owners contingency are duplicated in estimates. Members agreed to reduce this contingency by \$100K
- Bike racks – members were comfortable with the reduced number of bike racks.

Mary noted that we're adding a lot back into the construction contingency budget. Chuck said there are still potential issues with the site and we are trying to be more conservative.

3. Permits/Meetings with Acton Town Depts – Mary Brolin/Emily Grandstaff-Rice/Chuck Adam

a. Conservation Commission

The Order of Conditions has been registered at the Middlesex Registry of Deeds.

b. Board of Health

Emily hopes to have an update from the Board of Health at the next SBC meeting.

c. Building Department

The foundation permit looks to be set. The team is discussing permit fees with Acton's Select Board.

4. Schedule Updates – Chuck Adam

a. Overall Schedule

We are still on track with our master schedule although the soils issue had an impact on the construction schedule.

b. MSBA

The MSBA has our 90% CD submission and we expect comments next week. We needed, and received, a new letter of approval for our education plan from DESE.

c. Bid Packages

There will be no more early bid packages; the next bidding process will be for the GMP in December.

5. Modular Update – Chuck Adam

Triumph hopes to have all ramps and furniture installed by October 2nd so the town can do a final inspection.

6. Construction Updates – Consigli

Jay Rodriguez reviewed the four-week look-ahead schedule. The crew began hauling away excess soil on September 22nd and should have the large pile completely removed within 8-10 days. That will enable them to begin setting spread foundation footings. The soil contaminated with arsenic has already been removed. Lynne used photos of the site, shared by Jeremiah Driscoll, to describe the logistics of parent drop-offs and pickups on school days, saying these are becoming more efficient. Gates has been able to create outdoor playspaces on the paved surfaces and students are finding new, Covid-safe, ways to play.

7. Budget Update – Chuck Adam

See discussion above.

8. Invoice Approval – Mary Brolin/ Chuck Adam – No invoices to approve. Chuck reviewed the reporting, bill paying and MSBA reimbursement procedures with the district finance group on September 23rd, and will continue to meet with them over time.

9. Minutes – Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting(s) – Mary Brolin

Bob Evans moved, Jason Cole seconded and, by a roll call vote, the minutes of the September 9, 2020 SBC meeting were unanimously approved as written. (Yes: Altieri, Berry, Brolin, Cole, Evans, Hart, Head, Kushner, Light, Martin, Newman. Abstain: Bruce, Klein, Neyland, Raymond, Reid, Whitbeck. Absent: Krishnamurthy.).

10. Adjourn

Mary said that we will need to discuss the November meeting dates; one date falls on Veterans Day and the other is the day before Thanksgiving. The building project leadership team will look at options and discuss dates at the next SBC meeting.

Maria Neyland moved, Jason Cole seconded and, by a roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned at 9:09pm. (Yes: Altieri, Berry, Brolin, Bruce, Cole, Evans, Hart, Head, Klein, Kushner, Light, Martin, Newman, Neyland, Raymond, Reid, Whitbeck. Absent: Krishnamurthy.).

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Coll

Documents Used:

90% Completion Value Management Budget

Four-Week Look-Ahead

Photos of the Building Site

Draft Minutes of the September 9, 2020 SBC Meeting

Next Building Committee Meetings (all virtual zoom meetings at 7 pm unless noted):

October 14, 2020

October 28, 2020

November TBD



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	6
---------------------	----------	---------------------------	---

AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Selection of ABRSC Delegate and Alternate to the 75th Annual virtual MASC Meeting on November 7, 2020
--------------------------	---

PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley
---------------------	----------------

SUMMARY OF TOPIC	The Committee chooses a representative and an alternate for this Annual Meeting to vote the agenda items. This includes voting on the 10 resolutions presented by the Resolutions Committee which were proposed by member districts and the MASC Board of Directors.
-------------------------	--

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?		
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information	
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required	
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:	
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:	
		for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
	X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	<p>"Move to approve XX as the ABRSC Delegate to the 75th Annual virtual MASC Meeting on November 7, 2020."</p> <p>"Move to approve XX as the ABRSC Alternate Delegate to the 75th Annual virtual MASC Meeting on November 7, 2020."</p>
-------------------------	---

FOLLOW-UP	Review of the resolutions will be done at the meeting on November 5th, as needed.
------------------	---

APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	10 min.
--	---------

ATTACHMENTS	Resolutions for the Nov 7th meeting are in the FYI
--------------------	--

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	7
--------------	----------	--------------------	---

AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Statement of Warrants and Recommendation to Approve
-------------------	---

PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley
--------------	----------------

SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Warrants are the listing of all payments made by the school district for the period, including payroll, vendors and others. The School Committee approves these at every meeting.
------------------	---

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?		
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information	
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required	
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:	
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:	
		for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
	X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	See motion in memo in the packet from D. Verdolino
------------------	--

FOLLOW-UP	
-----------	--

APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min
---	-------

ATTACHMENTS	Summary memo from D. Verdolino in the addendum and posted folder of individual warrants
-------------	---

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road - Acton, MA 01720
www.abschools.org

7.

Finance Department
David A. Verdolino, Director
(978) 264-4700
dverdolino@abschools.org

October 8, 2020

To: School Committee Chair
From: Dave Verdolino /dav/
Re: School Committee Agenda - Warrants

Members –

Below please find a summary of warrants for which I am respectfully requesting your consideration and approval at tonight's regular meeting.

The Warrant Subcommittee has previously reviewed these warrants, for the purpose of check distribution. A majority of the Subcommittee conveyed their approval electronically and the related disbursements have been made. The full School Committee should vote its authorization of these expenditures of budgeted and other funds in its custody. All members have received for each warrant the information provided as shown below, namely:

1. (for vendor warrants, including payroll withholding remittances)
 - Declining balance register of payments ("Declining Dollar report")
 - Warrant detail (payments by vendor)
2. (payroll)
 - Payroll Warrant summary

As you know, these Warrants are customarily provided to you in hard copy format for your review and manual signature. Obtaining your approval in this manner will eliminate the future need to produce what could be many paper reports, all requiring your signatures.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation with this request.

<u>Warrant Type</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Warrant #</u>		<u>Amount</u>
PAYROLL	10/8/2020	P2108	\$	2,639,302.05
VENDOR	10/1/2020	21-007 (regular vendors)	\$	2,815,107.61
	10/8/2020	21-008 (PR (deductions))	\$	563,480.80
	10/8/2020	21-008A (regular vendors)	\$	30,179.00
STUDENT ACTIVITY FUND REIMBURSEMENT	10/1/2020	21-007SH (Senior High)	\$	33,886.21



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road - Acton, MA 01720
www.abschools.org

Finance Department
David A. Verdolino, Director
(978) 264-4700
dverdolino@abschools.org

Recommended Motion Wording

I move that the School Committee vote to approve:

Payroll warrant(s) as follows –

Number P2108 dated 10/8/2020 in the amount of \$2,639,302.05;

Payroll deduction warrant(s) as follows –

Number 21-008PR dated 10/8/2020 in the amount of \$ 563,480.80;

Vendor warrant(s) as follows –

Number 21-007 dated 10/1/2020 in the amount of \$ 2,815,107.61;

Number 21-008A dated 10/8/2020 in the amount of \$ 30,179.00;

Student Activity reimbursement warrant(s) as follows –

Number 21-007SH dated 10/1/2020 in the amount of \$ 33,886.21.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	10-15-20	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	8
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	For Your Information (FYI)		
PRESENTER(S)	The Chairperson and/or Superintendent may highlight individual items		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	A variety of items may be found in the FYI: announcements, awards, publicity, reference materials, etc. that do not need discussion.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	
ATTACHMENTS	various

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

report of the resolutions committee

The members of the Resolutions Committee met virtually on June 25, 2020 to consider resolutions proposed by member districts and the MASC Board of Directors for consideration at the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Association. Members present were: Ellen Holmes, Chair, Ex-Officio, Ashburnham-Westminster Regional; Deborah Davis, Northeast Metropolitan Voc. Tech.; Barbara Davis, Holbrook; Margaret Hughes, Narragansett Regional; Laura Fallon, Northampton; Irene Feliciano-Sims, Holyoke; William Fonseca, East Longmeadow; Jason Fraser, Silver Lake Regional; Beverly Hugo, Framingham; Mildred Lefebvre, Holyoke; Stacey Rizzo, Revere; Wendy Rua, Agawam; Lynn Ryan Assabet Voc. Tech.; Paul Schlichtman, Arlington; and Robert Swartz, Gardner.

The following resolutions were moved forward by the Resolutions Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

RESOLUTION 1: MCAS AND HIGH STAKES TESTING

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS the MASC Membership and MASC Board of Directors have previously and repeatedly taken the position of opposing high stakes testing including the MCAS; and

WHEREAS the COVID-19 Remote Learning Model has negatively and disproportionately affected students with learning disabilities, students of lower socioeconomic status, ELL students and students who identify as minorities; and

WHEREAS the social and emotional trauma both individually and collectively has yet to be truly realized in the students who have experienced the shutdown of their local school buildings and separations from their peers and supportive adults; and

WHEREAS the students of the Commonwealth have already missed valuable face to face instructional opportunities with their teachers and would benefit from focusing on those important instructional opportunities and social emotional supports;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC rejects the calls for the students of 2022 who missed their tenth grade MCAS testing to be required to make it up during the 2020-2021 school year or ever. We demand those students be held harmless for not taking the MCAS and that their graduation requirements shall be determined by locally controlled voices of the School Committee and School Administration within the remaining graduation requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Additionally, we reiterate our call for a moratorium on all high stakes testing for the 2020-2021 school year so all students can benefit from their time being focused on direct instruction and we urge the legislature to enact a moratorium on high stakes testing of three years.

RESOLUTION 2: COVID-19 STATE FUNDING

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS if schools are to re-open this fall in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the responsibility of each school district to do so safely and responsibly; and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that each school district is able to pay for the enormous additional staffing, transportation and material expenses required to do this; and

WHEREAS the state cannot expect mandatory COVID-19 safety guidelines to be followed without also ensuring that each school district has the funds required to implement these guidelines;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the state must guarantee every school district full reimbursement for whatever COVID-19 expenses are required to follow state mandates. We must ensure a statewide school re-opening that is safe, responsible and equitable. There can be no unfunded mandates for COVID-19.

RESOLUTION 3: SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANTI-RACISM RESOLUTION

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS as schools have the responsibility to equip students with their civil right of obtaining a free and appropriate public education, it is the responsibility of each school to ensure we create a welcoming community for ALL students; and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility that every district provide to all district staff, including School Committee members, annual professional development on diversity, equity and inclusion; and

WHEREAS every district will commit to recruiting and retaining a diverse and culturally responsive teaching workforce; and

WHEREAS every district will examine their policies for institutional and systemic racialized practices and implement change with sustainable policies that are evidence based; and

WHEREAS every district will incorporate into their curriculum the history of racial oppression and works by black authors and works from diverse perspectives; and

WHEREAS we as school district leaders can no longer remain silent to the issues of racism and hate that continue to plague our public and private institutions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that all the school districts in the Commonwealth should guarantee that racist practices are eradicated, and diversity, equity and inclusion is embedded and practiced for our students, families, faculty and staff.

School Committee members should ensure our that school culture and that of every district in the Commonwealth is anti-racist, and that acknowledges that all lives cannot matter until black lives matter.

RESOLUTION 4: LOWERING THE VOTING AGE FOR MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS the right to vote is elemental to democracy and that right should be protected and guaranteed to all qualified citizen; and

WHEREAS sixteen and seventeen-year-olds possess the same critical analytic intelligence as eighteen-year-olds; and

WHEREAS in Massachusetts, sixteen-year-olds have been deemed able to consent to sexual intercourse, obtain a learner's permit and driver's license, get married with parental consent, work a full-time job and pay taxes, and be tried as an adult in a court of law; and

WHEREAS the 2018 Act to Promote Civics Engagement mandated an increased emphasis on civics education in Massachusetts Public Schools; and

WHEREAS studies conducted in places with a voting age of 16 have demonstrated that, when partnered with a strong civics education, a lowered voting age results in higher overall civic engagement and voter turnout and higher propensity to develop a lifelong voting habit; and

WHEREAS early voter engagement increases civic participation later in life, which is vital to a democracy; and

WHEREAS turnout among all voters in the United States is decreasing, and a push to vote is much needed for younger citizens; and

WHEREAS 16-year-olds may now pre-register to vote in Massachusetts, which may provide a logistical framework for their local participation; and

WHEREAS the rules of local voting should be a local issue; and

WHEREAS Representative Andy Vargas and Senator Harriet Chandler have introduced the EMPOWER Act (H.720/S.389), which would give municipalities the ability to lower their municipal voting age on local authority;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the sponsors call upon the Massachusetts Legislature to pass the EMPOWER Act and take other means necessary to allow cities and towns to establish a minimum voting age of sixteen years for all municipal elections.

RESOLUTION 5: SUPPORTING INCREASED FEDERAL SUPPORT AND STIMULUS FUNDING FOR PUBLIC K-12 EDUCATION

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic is a monumental and unprecedented challenge, emerging quickly and demanding an immediate overhaul of the instructional plans and strategies of school systems across the country; and

WHEREAS the nation's public schools remain committed to delivering high-quality instruction while ensuring the health and safety of our students and staff; and

WHEREAS to date, the employees of the Massachusetts Public Schools have worked around the clock to continue to provide our students and families with access to educational needs such as Chromebooks; and

WHEREAS the Massachusetts Public Schools has maintained payroll for full and part-time district employees, providing stability to our community during economic uncertainty; and

WHEREAS Massachusetts Public Schools have continued to provide daily lunches to students despite a projected shortfall of revenue from the Federal Meals Program; and

WHEREAS these challenges will persist and likely grow as COVID-19 affects our economy and destabilizes funding for public school; and

WHEREAS revenue shortfalls may result in budget cuts and personnel reductions; and

WHEREAS federal legislation has been approved to provide urgently needed funding to underwrite the recovery of the American economy and to support critical public programs, including public education with such examples as American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, additional funding for the Education Jobs Fund to help school districts retain existing employees, recall former employees, and hire new ones, and the recent Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) and other measures to stabilize public education and other public programs; and

WHEREAS public education is one of the largest employment bases of any field or industry; and

WHEREAS research has repeatedly found a strong causal relationship between levels of schooling and wages that individuals earn over a lifetime; and

WHEREAS for public schools to thrive and for our students to realize a bright and productive future, the federal government needs to make a substantial new investment in our well-being; and

WHEREAS it is likely that further emergency legislation will be required to underwrite the cost of public safety supplies, technology, and personnel to maintain the status of public schools; and

WHEREAS this level of funding is the minimum needed by the nation's public schools to sustain and accelerate their academic achievement trends over the past decade, including gains in reading and math achievement that outpace the national average; and

WHEREAS the governor and General Court may be able to access additional state revenues through use of accumulated reserves or through the implementation of progressive tax legislation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC align with state superintendents of schools and urge the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation and state legislators to advocate for and approve additional education funding for our nation's public schools through the enactment of progressive tax legislation.

RESOLUTION 6: RETENTION OF MEDICAID REVENUE (Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS the Affordable Care Act expanded access for health care to millions of Americans, including thousands of Massachusetts families who have been without health insurance; and

WHEREAS through the expansion of the Medicaid program, more families in economic distress gained access to health insurance and, subsequently, affordable health care; and

WHEREAS the Medicaid program reimburses public school districts for certain clinical services provided to students who may be clients of special education or who experience disabilities, and this revenue provides critical support to the districts and municipalities where they are based; and

WHEREAS the restriction of Medicaid eligibility and reduction of funding would require the Commonwealth to choose between extraordinary state budget increases to fill the gap or absorb the cost of caring for families who could lose health insurance;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC urges the General Court to require that 100% of Medicaid reimbursements to cities and towns be provided in full amount to the public schools of each municipality, through a school district revolving account, to underwrite the cost of providing an adequate education.

RESOLUTION 7: ATTEMPTS BY US DOE TO DIRECT FUNDING TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS (Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS a recent "advisory" issued by the United States Secretary of Education has inappropriately interpreted language in the recently enacted COVID-19 relief legislation to benefit private schools disproportionately in the distribution of federal funding for economically disadvantaged students; and

WHEREAS in recognition of this executive branch attempt to overreach in the interpretation of a federal statute in devising a formula for the distribution of funds under Title I and other provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as revised and reauthorized; and

WHEREAS the commissioner of Education in Connecticut, in citing the Secretary for such a misrepresentation of the law, has advised officials of that state to follow the language of the law rather than the interpretation issued in the "advisory," and thus save thousands of dollars for economically disadvantaged students in the public schools of that state

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC petition the Attorney General of Massachusetts to review and recommend to the Executive Office of Education and the MA Department of Elementary Education to review the formal language of such statutes that determine the distribution of federal funds to benefit economically disadvantaged students and, further that the Attorney General provide legal guidance to state agencies in Massachusetts to implement such formulas based on the actual language and legislative intent of the statute should that be in variance with any "advisory" issued by the United States Secretary of Education.

RESOLUTION 8: MEMBERSHIP OF A SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ON THE BOARD OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION (Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is established to oversee and implement policy related to public education; and

WHEREAS most boards and commissions in Massachusetts appropriately include representatives of constituent groups subject to the jurisdiction of those boards and commission; and

WHEREAS a glaring omission among members of the BESE is a representative of the people elected to oversee public policy making among the many city, town and regional school district school committees;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC submit to the General Court proposed legislation that MGL Chapter 15, Section 1E be revised as follows:

Section 1E. There shall be in the department a board of elementary and secondary education, in this chapter called the board, which shall consist of the chairman of the student advisory council established under this section, the secretary of education, in this chapter called the secretary, or her designee, and 9 members appointed by the governor. The 9 members appointed by the governor shall consist of 1 representative of a labor organization selected by the governor from a list of 3 nominees provided by the Massachusetts State Labor Council, AFL-CIO; 1 representative of business or industry selected by the governor with a demonstrated

commitment to education; 1 representative of parents of school children selected by the governor from a list of 3 nominees provided by the Massachusetts Parent Teachers Association; 1 representative from a school committee from a list of three nominees provided by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and 5 additional members.

RESOLUTION 9: PROVIDING EQUITY FOR SEXUAL ORIENTATION - LGBTQ+ STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND STAFF

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS gender identity is not listed as a protected class in federal laws; and

WHEREAS LGBTQ+ students, teachers and staff are victims of discrimination, harassment, and at-risk behaviors at rates alarmingly higher than non-LGBTQ+ persons;

WHEREAS the social and emotional wellness of our students has a direct relationship with their academic and future success and that schools have the moral and ethical responsibility to address the whole child so that they may experience success in school and in society; and

WHEREAS school districts that respect and support their teachers and staff by providing an inclusive culture where all can thrive, irrespective of gender identity, are more successful and in turn, are supporting a thriving school climate; and

WHEREAS the Commonwealth of Massachusetts currently recognizes in state law LGBTQ+ as a protected class;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC file legislation and petition our federal legislative delegation to also file legislation which would have the effect of adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes in order to provide equity and support to our LGBTQ+ students, teachers and staff and petition our legislative delegation.

RESOLUTION 10: RELATIVE TO THE MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC

(Submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

WHEREAS districts are required to have special but comprehensive plans for educating students during the pandemic crisis; and

WHEREAS student attendance is an important element of a district plan for returning-to-school, and school committees apply local policies for student attendance; and

WHEREAS the emergency nature of the pandemic requires that students may need to be educated in such venues as schools, home, institutions or other remote locations; and

WHEREAS circumstances may require that students be absent from school for reasons that may include extended illness, exposure to illness including COVID-19, or the judgment of parents or guardians determining that it is not safe for their children to return to a school building or other learning venue;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that MASC advocate for legislation and regulation that protect the rights of parents to withhold their children from school for reasons of their health status or health risk and, further,

- That MASC advocate for regulations that hold districts accountable for the attendance of students provide appropriate exemptions for students who experience or require extended absences from school due to health-related issues or concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and further,
- That MASC petition the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to waive all accountability requirements regarding attendance for the 2020-2021 school year, and
- That such regulations exempt districts from sanction status on the basis of attendance when such absences are related to a public health crisis, including COVID-19.



E.b

Beth Petr <bpetr@abschools.org>

This Month in the Division of Open Government: Accuracy and Detail in Meeting Minutes

2 messages

Attorney General's Division of Open Government <OpenMeeting@mass.gov>
Reply-To: Attorney General's Division of Open Government <OpenMeeting@mass.gov>
To: bpetr@abschools.org

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 2:58 PM

[View this email in your browser](#)



This Month in the Division of Open Government September 2020

Good afternoon,

We are writing to share updates from the Attorney General's Division of Open Government.

Included in this month's edition:

- [Training Opportunities](#)
- [Guidance Spotlight: Accuracy and Detail in Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Recent OML Determination Highlights](#)

Please pass along the information below to your constituencies and to anyone else who might be interested.

As always, you are welcome to contact us at [\(617\) 963-2540](tel:617-963-2540) or

OpenMeeting@mass.gov with any Open Meeting Law questions.

The Division of Open Government is currently working remotely. We request that all correspondence, including Open Meeting Law complaints, public body responses, and requests for review, be sent by email whenever possible.

In partnership,

The Attorney General's Division of Open Government

Training Opportunities

Upcoming Open Meeting Law Webinar Trainings

Tuesday, October 6, 2020, 6:30pm EST

Click here to register

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4617726045599617035>

Tuesday, October 27, 2020, 9:30am EST

Click here to register:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/851027907257713675>

Tuesday, November 10, 2020, 9:30am EST

Click here to register:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3988269932417672715>

Unable to participate in a live training?

Training videos, which feature similar content as live trainings, are available on our website.

Visit: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/open-meeting-law-training-videos>.

Guidance Spotlight: Accuracy and Detail in Meeting Minutes

In this month's Guidance Spotlight, we take a break from several months of guidance regarding remote meetings, and instead focus on the Open Meeting Law's requirement that public bodies create "accurate" minutes of all meetings.

The Open Meeting Law requires a public body to "create and maintain accurate minutes of all meetings, including executive sessions, setting forth the date, time and place, the members present or absent, a summary of the discussions on each subject, a list of documents and other exhibits used at the meeting,

the decisions made and the actions taken at each meeting, including the record of all votes." G.L. c. 30A, § 22(a). When reviewing minutes for compliance with the Open Meeting Law, we look for substantial compliance with the accuracy requirement. By substantial compliance, we mean that the minutes should contain enough detail and accuracy so that a member of the public who did not attend the meeting could read the minutes and have a clear understanding of what occurred. However, the Division has never required that meeting minutes be so detailed as to serve as an equivalent substitute to attending a meeting. In fact, the Division has repeatedly explained that a transcript of the discussions at a meeting is not required, and the minutes do not need to include every remark or opinion presented.

Nonetheless, meeting minutes must include a substantive summary of the discussion on each topic. The Open Meeting Law requires that meeting minutes include more than a statement *that* a public body held a discussion about a specified topic; the Law requires that the minutes summarize the discussion that was held. When summarizing discussions, we encourage public bodies to include dissenting or minority opinions whenever possible. Where significant debate on a matter occurs and it is clear that one or more members of the body and/or the public disagree with the decision ultimately taken by the public body, public bodies should note the opposing viewpoints in the meeting minutes. While it is not necessary to record the comments of every speaker, and we acknowledge the difficulty of doing so where there are many speakers whose remarks may even overlap, if a particular individual speaks at some length or is the only one to offer an argument for or against a proposal, that person and his or her comments should be identified in the minutes.

Additionally, to be "accurate," meeting minutes must accurately reflect the discussions that took place during a meeting. The Open Meeting Law does not require that the statements contained in meeting minutes be factually true. To the contrary, because the minutes must accurately capture the discussions that actually took place, it is inappropriate to include information in meeting minutes that was not discussed at a meeting even if the information is accurate, and it likewise is inappropriate to correct factually inaccurate statements that were made at a meeting, unless clearly identified as an editor's supplementary note.

Finally, the Open Meeting Law's "accuracy" requirement – and the level of detail required – applies equally to minutes of open sessions and executive sessions, as well as to minutes of special meetings, retreats, workshops, and any other gatherings that fall within the Open Meeting Law's definition of "meeting."

Recent Determinations about Meeting Minutes

- **OML 2020-53** Ware Board of Selectmen
- **OML 2019-167** Weston School Committee
- **OML 2020-62** Sandisfield Board of Selectmen

Our recent determinations about meeting minutes, along with all of our other determinations, can be found on our website at <https://www.mass.gov/the-open-meeting-law>.

Recent OML Determination Highlights

OML 2020-111 – No violation found where a public body provided the public with access to its meetings via Zoom. Internet-based Zoom access qualifies as "adequate, alternative access" to a meeting, in accordance with the Governor's March 12 executive order.

OML 2020-114 – No violation found where the public bodies provided real-time access to their meetings, but required that public comment be submitted by email or phone, to be read aloud during the meetings. The Open Meeting Law does not require that a public body provide opportunity for public comment during meetings, but rather gives discretion to the chair of a public body to set restrictions on public participation.

OML 2020-115 – Violation found where a public body met in person, but did not allow members of the public to physically attend the meeting, and failed to provide real-time access to the meeting via alternative means.

Open Meeting Law determinations may be found at the Attorney General's website,
<https://www.mass.gov/the-open-meeting-law>



Copyright © 2020 Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, All rights reserved.
You are receiving this email because you have expressed interest in receiving updates from the Division of Open Government and/or your constituencies work with the Open Meeting Law.

Our mailing address is:
Massachusetts Attorney General's Office
Division of Open Government
[1 Ashburton Place, 20th Floor](#)
[Boston, MA 02108](#)

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).



Beth Petr <bpetr@abschools.org>
To: AB School Committee <abrsc@abschools.org>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 3:03 PM

[Quoted text hidden]