

JOINT ACTON PUBLIC (APSC) and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL (ABRSC) and
ACTON-BOXBOROUGH TRANSITIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABTSC) MEETING MINUTES (approved 10-3-13)

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 10, 2013
7:30 p.m. Joint APSC/ABRSC Executive Session
7:45 p.m. Joint APSC/ABRSC/ABTSC Open Meeting

Members Present: Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppolino (7:32),
Kim McOsker, Paul Murphy, Maria Neyland, Deanne O'Sullivan (7:40),
Kristina Rychlik

Members Absent: none

Others: Don Aicardi, Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Liza Huber, Steve Mills,
Beth Petr, approximately 50 students/parents/coaches

The Acton-Boxborough Regional and Acton Public School Committees were called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Maria Neyland and Dennis Bruce, respective Chairs.

1. JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:31 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

(YES – Bieber, Brolin, Bruce, McOsker, Murphy, Neyland, Rychlik)

Maria Neyland declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board and the Committee would return to open session.

At 7:31 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton Public School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

(YES - Bruce, McOsker, Murphy, Rychlik)

Dennis Bruce declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board and the Committee would return to open session.

At 7:52 p.m., the Committees were polled and voted to go out of Joint Executive Session.

JOINT APSC/ABRSC/ABTSC OPEN BUSINESS MEETING

2. The ABTSC was called to order to begin the Joint Open Meeting at 7:54 p.m. by Chairperson Maria Neyland.

3. Chairmen's Introduction

1. First Day of School Report

Dr. Mills described a very smooth opening to the school year. JD Head reported on the town's water main construction on Hayward Road that has caused some frustration for some families. It will last several weeks. Information was emailed to families and is posted on the school website.

2. MA State Supreme Court Review of Pledge of Allegiance case

Dr. Mills appeared in MA State Supreme Court on September 4th with Attorney Geoffrey Bok as a defendant in this appeal. He said that \$60,000 of taxpayers' money has been

spent on this case over the past three years so far. The Superintendent stated that “It is completely a non issue if a student does not participate in saying the Pledge of Allegiance in our schools.” The Court’s decision is expected in a few months.

3. Superintendent’s Retirement Announcement

Dr. Mills announced that he intends to retire at the end of this school year after 36 years in public education. He is very grateful that he has been trusted as our School Superintendent over the past four years. He wants AB to be able to hire a new Superintendent sooner rather than later for next year. This is a vitally important task.

A Joint School Committee meeting will be held at the APSC meeting next Thursday to begin the search discussion. Maria Neyland asked the Committee members to consider participating on the Search Committee and if interested, contact Dennis Bruce or Maria. An important question will be whether or not to do the search in house or hire a firm to do it for approximately \$10,000 - \$25,000. MASC was used for the 2008 search.

4. Statement of Warrant and Approval of Minutes

APS Warrant #201405 dated 9/3/13 in the amount of \$158,116.62 was signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures.

AB Warrant #14-005 dated 9/5/13 in the amount of \$2,967,877.69 and #14-005A dated 9/5/13 in the amount of \$127,911.46 were signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures.

The minutes of 8/22/13 were approved by the three School Committees as amended.

5. Public Participation - none

6. PreK – 12 Regionalization

1. Transitional Administrative Team Weekly Meetings Update

Dr. Mills reported that D. Mosche, Tess Summers, Peter Ashton, and JD Head are working on the Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA). Revolving Accounts are included as well as the debt. Boxborough is also working on their IMA. Dr. Mills will bring a list to School Committee of where savings will come from including positions that will be cut.

Marie Altieri outlined the Blanchard Principal search process. Because Dr. Bates is principal and superintendent, a principal will need to be hired for next year. Dr. Mills and Dr. Bates will appoint the finalist, hopefully by December.

This year’s vote on the FY15 School Calendar includes reconciling the two calendars of Blanchard and the Acton elementary schools, including early dismissal on Thursday afternoons. JD Head is hopeful that he can get to one tier for all of the elementary schools and one for Junior High and High School. Dr. Mills said that community input is needed, although he and the School Committee will make the decisions. A survey to all staff and parent/guardians will be done regarding religious holidays, starting before or after Labor Day, and early release on Thursday afternoons.

Brigid asked that the survey carefully explain the differences between Acton and Boxborough regarding the early dismissals on Thursdays and having no school on the religious holidays of Good Friday, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It was emphasized that the majority survey results may not “rule”, but will be part of the information that the Superintendent and School Committee consider. They will also review the information collected around religious holidays in the past. Kristina Rychlik offered to help the Central Office staff put together the survey, as it relates to the outreach committee.

2. Financial Oversight Subcommittee Update

Mike Coppolino reported that the first meeting is tomorrow night. Members include: Vince Amoroso (Boxborough Board of Selectmen), Jim Ham (Boxborough Finance Committee), Bob Evans (Acton Finance Committee), Janet Adachi (Acton Board of Selectmen), Maria Neyland, Mary Brolin and Mike Coppolino.

3. Transitional Policy Subcommittee Update

Maria Neyland, Mary Brolin and Kristina Rychlik met last week. There are 221 policies and procedures to be reviewed to reconcile Blanchard's policies with APS/ABRSD. The Transitional School Committee will vote on the subcommittee's recommendations.

**7. APS/AB Educator Evaluation Contract Language Side Letter – APSC/ABRSD
RATIFICATION VOTE**

Marie Altieri said that they have been working on this language for 2 ½ years. It was piloted last year with a one page side letter and this year the contract language must be submitted to the State. There are many regulations involved. There was a comment period and now the two School Committees are being asked to vote on the longer side letter. The AEA will vote to ratify at their next meeting.

ABRSC VOTE

Mary Brolin moved, Michael Coppolino seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to ratify the APS/AB Educator Evaluation Contract Language dated 9/10/13 as proposed.

APSC VOTE

Paul Murphy moved, Deanne O'Sullivan seconded and it was unanimously
VOTED: to ratify the APS/AB Educator Evaluation Contract Language dated 9/10/13 as proposed.

8. ABRSD Track Renovation Update

Dr. Mills outlined the fundraising effort that is in full force. ABYS has donated \$25,000. The group still needs to raise approximately \$100,000 more to make the target. JD Head needs the full amount to be raised in about a month to make the project bid deadlines. There is a 10-20% cost saving if the project is done now, during the winter, instead of next summer. JD, Steve Desy, Andrew Shen and JoAnn Campbell are discussing the Fall sports calendar and schedules. They are meeting on Friday with the stakeholders. They will probably advertise the job in the next week or so and award the project in about a month. The money must be in hand to make an award even though they are not spending it yet. Kim McOsker saw a track covering to protect the surface when people walk over it. JD will keep this in mind.

9. School Committee Member Reports

1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG)
 - i. Next meeting is 9/12/13
2. Health Insurance Trust (HIT)
 - i. Next meeting is 9/26/13
3. Acton Board of Selectmen

Paul Murphy reported on a lengthy discussion regarding a possible new Senior Center. Interest is being solicited from the public. Dennis Bruce reported on the Selectmen's discussion of combining Acton's polling places. This issue was tabled in the past but the Town Clerk is looking into it again. A meeting has been requested with Steve Mills and Steve Ledoux as well as others involved to try to make the voting process easier. Dennis stated that he and the School Committee will

work with the Town and School Administration on this. Dennis will schedule a meeting with Steve Mills.

10. FY15 Budget Planning Timeline

Don Aicardi emphasized that next year's budget process will be very different from the past. He and his staff are currently working on building a new chart of accounts for the new region. This will be sent to MUNIS for testing and implementation in late October. He expects the first FY15 Budget Presentation to be made to the Transitional School Committee on 12/19/13. Budget Saturday will be January 25, 2014.

11. Recommendation to Accept Gift from the Dan Rinaldi Heart Fund and Monday Night Quarterbacks to fund Assistant Football Coach

ABRSC VOTE

Kim McOsker moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to accept this gift with gratitude.

NEXT MEETINGS:

- September 19, 7:00 p.m. Acton Public School Committee meeting, Junior High Library
- October 3, 7:30 p.m. Joint ABRSC/ABTSC Meeting, Junior High Library

The ABRSC, ABTSC and APSC adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda