

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)

Approved Minutes

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 20, 2018
7:00 p.m.

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

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson Diane Baum.

2. **Chairman’s Introduction**

3. **Public Participation**

Per policy BEDH, members of the public may speak for up to 2 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.

Terra Fredrichs spoke about land use and road design. She asked the School Committee to consider a Land Use subcommittee to see how these decisions affect kids. An Acton pedestrian safety committee is being formed and she wondered if there is community involvement. She described a current debate about whether Acton roads should be “fast” to profit economic growth, or “slow” for the benefit of people. She urged the Committee to look into these cumulative planning issues, especially due to the recent pedestrian accident.

Dr. Leah Abraham expressed frustration about her daughter’s experience coming home on the bus the first day of school. The bus was very late several times during the first week. Mr. Light told her that the bus route was being run backwards in the afternoon to try to minimize students’ ride time who are at the ends of the route, although that is not how it is printed on the website. Mr. Light said he would get back to her at the end of this week.

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

4.1. Meeting minutes of September 6, 2018 – **VOTE**

Amy Krishnamurthy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and the minutes were approved as amended to correct the date of the next Committee meeting. All votes were “yes” with exception of Michael Bo who abstained.

5. **Student Representatives Update**

Representative Michael Cheng spoke about the later start times this year and how much students appreciated it. He spoke about the recent two Jewish holidays and felt that the teachers are more aware of the homework policy now than they have been in the past. Michael gave a shout out to the hundreds of student athletes at the Junior High and High School. He also noted the recent student activities fair that took place at the High School.

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

The Superintendent updated the Committee on his Entry Plan. Visits to each of the schools have been scheduled for every month of the year. Student, family and faculty forums are also being planned now. Mr. Light is working with SEPAC to find a date that he can meet with them. He looks forward to working with the new Capital Subcommittee. Several goals include reviewing and confirming the scope of the draft 5 Year Capital Plan presented by Interim Superintendent Bill McAlduff last spring and expanding that scope for what was not included, including the total dollar amount needed for all of our buildings. This would include a system for monitoring progress and appropriate funding sources.

Our current Building Project Manager, Skanska, has agreed to be a consultant to this capital planning process. Mr. Light feels this will be very valuable because they have professional cost estimators on staff and are very familiar with our district. They will also help put out a Request for Proposals to help manage these projects going forward.

The Leary Field lighting project is behind schedule due to permitting followed by some slow work. JD Head has been communicating with the contractor. If it is not complete in a week, portable lights will be brought in.

7. **Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Presentation – Co-Chairs Amanda Bailey, Carrie Weaver**

Diane Baum welcomed Amanda and Carrie and explained that State Law mandates the establishment of Special Education Parent Advisory Committees in our public schools. The goals and priorities for the school year were presented including a focus on outreach and engagement with the community. A survey is planned to follow up on previous survey findings, particularly involving communication. There will be a focus on Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), parent/guardian education and increasing opportunities for meaningful inclusion across domains. The next meeting is October 3rd. A member appreciated that Understood.org was mentioned as an excellent simulation resource for people trying to understand what students with certain disabilities experience.

8. **School District 2018-2019 Goals - First Read – Peter Light**

Members comments/questions included:

Goal #1:

- The School Wellness Advisory Committee is required under the District Wellness Policy ADF, which outlines who is on it and how it is monitored. Dawn Bentley is the Coordinator this year. Families will be sent information soon regarding participation, as well as student representation, staff reps, nurses and some school leaders. The Committee meets 4 times a year.
- Because many children use devices to read, it was requested that “device-free time” be reconsidered to acknowledge that there are many ways to read.
- Stakeholders include the students, families, faculty and administration.

Goal #2:

- Regarding goal action #4 about viewing homework “through an equity lens”, Deborah Bookis explained that this means the homework is clear to all students and they have the necessary materials at home so they can complete it independently.
- The significant differences in PTO funding at the various schools was noted as an issue that will need to be addressed in the future.

Goal #3:

- A suggestion was made to clarify some of the educational and MSBA jargon in this goal, perhaps by adding links although that has not been done in the past.

General Comments:

- Mr. Light assured the Committee that practices would be adjusted based on the data as the year goes along and the Committee will be kept informed. This is why “Monitor Implementation and Adjust Practice as Needed” is a subheading for all three of the goals.
- There was some confusion about formatting regarding the subheader “Previous Strategic Actions” on goal 1 compared to goal 2. Goal 2 has information above and below the subheading, where Goal 1 does not. Mr. Light responded that none of these goal actions are new. They all grew out of previous work. For example, the district wanted to increase the diversity of our work force so it was made a goal which looks new, but is not. Goal actions may not have the exact same verbiage as previous actions because they change over time. Previous strategic action implies there is a before and after. It was suggested that an additional subheading could be added to all 3 goals to delineate between the present and the previous goal actions.
- Although implementation is the focus this year, an ultimate goal is student wellness. The Committee discussed the variety of student survey data that has been collected recently. Mr. Light reminded the Committee that concurrent with the district’s work, his entry plan includes meetings with students and families. In late December or early January he will share what he has heard from these stakeholder groups and that will inform the next step and growth of this strategic plan. Additional focus is on how our students are experiencing school and what they need. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) results will be coming out and a Challenge Success survey will be done this spring. The annual Senior survey at the High School will also be done and all students will be surveyed on sleep, start time, homework and wellness, so there will be lots of data for review.

9. **Subcommittee Reports** – *Diane Baum*

9.1. Building– *Mary Brolin*

Several important products are due to MSBA soon. The Preliminary Design Program will provide a lot of information that will feed into our design. A key component of this is the Educational Program. The Educational Program will be compiled using the Dore & Whittier work, extensive new visioning work, and district input including our policies, mission and vision. Arrowstreet will support this work. This is a critical piece because it will drive education for our students for years to come. The Educational Program will be in the School Committee packet for the October 18th meeting and the Committee will need to vote it at the November 1 meeting because it is due to MSBA by November 7. This document will become part of the larger Preliminary Design Program Report which is expected to be approved by the Building Committee by November 7. Subsequent to that, work will be done on the preferred schematic report. This needs to be at MSBA by January 2. Mary stressed that there are some tight timeframes coming up and there is a lot of information on the website if people have questions. (From the District tab at the top of abschools.org, click on the Superintendent’s page, then the Building Project link on the left side. To find the previous extensive work done by Dore & Whittier, click on the Capital Planning link instead of the Building Project.)

Mary Brolin offered to meet with any new School Committee members or anyone who is interested, to explain the Building Project process if they have questions about this process. People should let Mary know by Monday. Mary cautioned that the timeline information in the packet is updated frequently, so the posted material is kept up to date and the best reference.

It was noted that all of the work done in recent years with Dore & Whittier has been shared

and used by Arrowstreet. This has really facilitated steps moving forward. It was asked if there was a graphic that could add School Committee meeting dates to the MSBA schedule found in the packet.

9.2. Budget – *Amy Krishnamurthy*

The first meeting was September 17. The agenda included review of the charge and process, updates on FY18, FY19 and FY20 budget process, ALG/BLF and Finance Committee updates and the Capital Planning Process.

9.3. Policy – *Amy Krishnamurthy* –

October 3 will be the first meeting.

9.4. Protocols – Possible **VOTE** to approve - *Tessa McKinley*

The subcommittee met and incorporated feedback from the First Reading on Sept 6. Mary Brolin moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED:** to approve the ABRSC Operating Protocols as proposed.

9.5. New Subcommittee Appointments – *Diane Baum*

Diane thanked the members who volunteered for these additional subcommittees. She proposed the following assignments:

Calendar – Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Eileen Zhang

Capital – Diane Baum, Adam Klein, Paul Murphy

Negotiations – Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Paul Murphy

Mary Brolin moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the appointments as presented by Diane.

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

The Boxborough Board of Selectmen met and agreed that the May 21 vote on the ban will coincide with the usual election.

Angie Tso reported that the Acton Board of Selectmen and Police Chief met regarding sidewalk and pedestrian safety following the recent accident. The sidewalk committee, chaired by Selectmen Peter Berry, is looking for more volunteers. The Town needs to look overall at where the major safety issues are. There may be a public hearing on this issue.

Amy Krishnamurthy reported that the Acton Finance Committee met and will be sharing their Point of View (POV) document with the School Committee soon.

11. **FYI**

Diane Baum highlighted the Building Resilience: A Parent/Caregiver Series with Rana Chudnofsky, Ed.M. on October 3rd and 10th, and the forum to Meet Boxborough's New Town Administrator, Ryan Ferrara, and Superintendent, Peter Light, on October 3.

The ABRSC adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

See attached list of documents used

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LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED

4. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes – Diane Baum**
 - 4.1 Meeting minutes of September 6, 2018 – **VOTE**

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

7. **Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Presentation – Co-Chairs Amanda Bailey & Carrie Weaver**

8. **School District 2018-2019 Goals - First Read - Peter Light**

9. **Subcommittee Reports – Diane Baum**
 - 9.1. Building– *Mary Brolin*
 - 9.1.1. C.T. Douglas Kick-Off Meeting on 9/7/18, Agenda and Timeline
 - 9.1.2. Meeting on 9/12/18, Agenda
 - 9.1.3. Meeting on 8/21/18 Approved Minutes
 - 9.1.4 See presentation posted at:
https://www.abschools.org/district/superintendent_s_office/school_capital_spac_e_planning
 - 9.4. Protocols – Possible **VOTE** to Approve - *Tessa McKinley*
 - 9.5. New Subcommittee Appointments – *Diane Baum*

11. **FYI**
 - 11.1 Building Resilience: A Parent/Caregiver Series, Rana Chudnofsky, Ed.M. October 3rd and 10th 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. The Gallery at Villageworks
 - 11.2 Meet Boxborough’s New Town Administrator, Ryan Ferrara, and School Superintendent, Peter Light, October 3 at 7:00 p.m. in the Boxborough Library, sponsored by the League of Women Voters - Acton Area
 - 11.3 Attorney General’s Open Meeting Law Training in Harvard, November 15 at 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 - 11.4 Acton Nursing Services Flu Clinic for ABRSD students, families & staff October 1, 2 and 3 3:15 – 6:30 PM in the High School Health Office