

## AUBURN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

**School Committee Meeting of Tuesday, May 26, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.**

<https://zoom.us/j/97337071036?pwd=VzRuUUJqNGpZUGFqZHhRTkwra1ZUUT09>

### **In attendance:**

George Scobie  
Jessie Harrington  
Gail Holloway  
Dottie Kauffman  
Meghan McCrillis

Maryellen Brunelle  
Beth Chamberland  
Cecelia Wirzbicki

**Call to order:** Checking that everyone was in attendance (via Zoom); Dr. Brunelle called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

### **REORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Dr. Brunelle asked for nominations from the School Committee members for a Chairperson.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to appoint Mr. George Scobie as the Chairperson for the 2020-2021 school year; Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

Dr. Brunelle then turned the meeting over to Mr. Scobie and he then asked for nominations for the Vice Chairperson.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to appoint Mrs. Jessie Harrington as Vice Chairperson of the School Committee for the 2020-2021 school year; Mrs. Kauffman seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

Both members thanked the Committee for their support and the Committee as a whole agreed that staying with the status quo is the right decision for the District at this time.

### **SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS:**

#### **Dr. Casey Handfield**

Dr. Brunelle shared with the Committee that Mr. Handfield is now officially Dr. Casey Handfield, having defended his dissertation with Johns Hopkins last Wednesday, May 20th. She and the Committee offered their congratulations.

### **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

#### **May 13, 2020**

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to approve the minutes of May 13, 2020; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S MEMO:**

#### **Anticipated Negative Impacts of COVID-19 on the FY21 Budget**

Dr. Brunelle shared a very sobering article about the anticipated negative impacts of COVID-19 on the FY21 budget with the members:

<https://www.iberkshires.com/story/62250/Dire-Outlook-for-School-Budgets-Across-Commonwealth.html>

She noted that regardless of what gets thrown Auburn's way, she had 100% confidence that under the School Committee's and Leadership Team's guidance, the APS will continue to do GREAT things for our AMAZING children and for each other!

Dr. Brunelle promised to share a link to the Heroes Act with Committee members, noting that the Leadership Team will continue to make decisions on how things are going to impact students and their achievement. She noted that Town Meeting is intended to take place as rescheduled to June 2nd at 6:00 p.m. It will take place on the football field. Dr. Brunelle shared that all Town Meeting members have been called last week to ensure there will be a quorum. All will have to wear masks and for those who do not feel comfortable social distancing at the football field, they will be able to stay in their vehicles and get access to the meeting through the radio.

Dr. McCrillis expressed her desire to be present at it, along with Mr. Scobie and Mrs. Harrington who had previously indicated their intention to do so.

#### **Additional School Committee Meetings to be Added in June**

Dr. Brunelle made a recommendation that two additional School Committee meetings be added to the updated School Committee Meeting schedule so that there will be one scheduled per week through the end of June. She noted that they may not all be needed, however, bearing in mind the grim budget predicted for FY 2021, it was better to have these on the schedule for discussions as to how this translates in terms of programming and services.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to add two more School Committee meetings in June, namely June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

Dr. Brunelle noted that she will share preliminary ideas at the meeting of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, to potentially include furlough days, Reduction In Force (RIF), non-renewal of non PTS staff and potential layoffs. She noted that, similar to the question that guides our budget development – namely, how will this impact students and their achievement – so, too, will that question guide us through the potential cuts.

#### **Return to School Working Group**

Dr. Brunelle shared a memo from Commissioner Riley, noting that he has established a Return to School Working group and they began their work on May 7th. The goals of this group are as follows:

The group will help develop a K-12 summer and fall restart and recovery plan. This plan will include guidance on the following topic areas:

- Physical and virtual learning environments
- Teaching and learning
- Operations and business services

- Behavioral health and social and emotional learning

As this group's work continues, Dr. Brunelle will keep you apprised.

Dr. Brunelle also shared she has decided that the District should establish an Auburn Return to Work Group chaired by Superintendent-Elect Handfield. With the need to include a representative or two from the School Committee, she asked if there was anyone interested. Mrs. Harrington, Dr. McCrillis and Mrs. Kauffman all volunteered to serve on it. Mr. Scobie felt that Dr. McCrillis, with her health background, should definitely serve and asked for a motion to that effect.

Mrs. Holloway, noting that it was wonderful that we were doing this on the local level, made the motion and Mrs. Kauffman seconded it. A roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

Mr. Scobie noted that perhaps Mrs. Harrington and Mrs. Kauffman could discuss between themselves who should serve on the Working Group and come back with their decision at the next meeting.

Mrs. Harrington asked what the commitment might be and Dr. Brunelle shared that she anticipated an hour or so a week but that the urgency around it would depend on the Governor and his guidance about what returning to school may look like and when.

### **Staff Recognitions**

Dr. Brunelle shared that the Auburn Public Schools has always believed strongly that the progress made and the successes our students realize come only as a result of concerted efforts of all members of the APS Team, which includes each and every one of us. In recognition of the contributions of our administrative assistants, secretaries, teachers, school nurses, our Food Service staff and all other APS Team members, Dr. Brunelle thanked them sincerely for their daily and dedicated efforts, especially during this extraordinary time of remote learning:

- Administrative Assistants' Day: April 22<sup>nd</sup>
- School Nutrition Hero Day: May 1<sup>st</sup>
- Teacher Appreciation Week: May 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>
- School Nurses' Day: May 6<sup>th</sup>

Dr. Brunelle also thanked all of the other team members whose group was not listed stating once again that it truly is a team effort. Mr. Scobie noted that the entire staff is doing an amazing job and offered his thanks to all, too.

### **Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative Quarterly Report**

Sharing that it was for information purposes, Dr. Brunelle presented the Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative's Quarterly Report for the period of January to March 2020. She also noted that while this report does not need a vote to approve, as a member district, it is required that it be shared with and accepted by the Committee.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to accept the SWCEC's Third Quarter Report for the period of January to March 2020; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

### **Strategic Plan**

Dr. Brunelle shared that, with the closure, the Design Team did not do an update to the Strategic Plan in April, but assured the Committee that Mr. Handfield would likely do one in October if he decides to keep to the same schedule as that which we have been following. She noted that good work has been accomplished on it thus far.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

#### **AHS National Honor Society Induction Ceremony**

Dr. Brunelle shared that the National Honor Society Advisors are holding a virtual induction ceremony on Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. She further noted that some items, such as the lighting of the candles, will obviously no longer be able to take place. The advisors' plan is to still have the "year in review" slide show, Elise Cavanaugh from the Class of 2014 is still going to speak as the Keynote Speaker and they will still honor the Class of 2020.

Dr. Brunelle informed the Committee that new members, as well as senior members (and the new officers who are Juniors) will be in attendance; however, because of Zoom space limitations, Junior members will not be able to be in attendance. Unfortunately, parents/family/friends will not be able to join the meeting live because of the Zoom platform limitations. They will be using Zoom (password protected) and will record it for Junior members and families to see later. She promised to provide the Zoom link to School Committee members who were invited to be in attendance.

#### **Bus Application Deadline**

Dr. Brunelle noted that it was her recommendation that the deadline for bus applications be extended to Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, the last day of school for students, this to allow the office time to process refunds to those that qualify for them.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to extend the deadline for bus applications for the 2020-2021 school year to June 12, 2020; Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Superintendent's Evaluation**

Dr. Brunelle shared with the Committee that she would be happy to prepare her self evaluation for the next meeting; however, with guidance from the Commissioner, she and Dr. Chamberland met with the AEA and since school has been physically closed since March 12<sup>th</sup>, the same performance rating that teachers attained in June of 2019 will now be submitted in June 2020. For teachers new to the District this year, their mid-year Formative Assessment, done in January 2020, will serve as their Summative Evaluation for June 2020. She asked for the Committee's guidance on whether they would like her to complete her self evaluation or would they do likewise and submit her evaluation attained in June 2019.

After tabling the item until such time as Mrs. Kauffman could rejoin the meeting, after the Teaching/Learning Report, and Mrs. Kauffman was able to share her input, Dr. McCrillis made a motion to submit the Superintendent's 2019 evaluation as her evaluation for 2020; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

### **TEACHING/LEARNING REPORT:**

#### **Wrapping Up This Year and Looking to Next School Year**

Dr. Chamberland shared that the Commissioner of Education recently issued a series of Power Standards for each grade level and content area. She noted that our teachers have been working diligently to

provide instruction and review focused on these standards. Report cards will be issued at the end of this school year that will indicate whether a student has received credit or no credit per the guidance from DESE. The elementary students will receive a report card too; however, it will look much different from the usual one. This is being worked on now. Dr. Chamberland will share more information as she receives it. She noted that in the coming weeks, teachers will collaborate to create a plan to address the skills and concepts students may need additional support with when we start back to school. This will ensure that any lagging skills are addressed as students transition to the next grade level. Guidance counselors will also be creating a plan to address social and emotional issues upon students return to school with an emphasis on creating a trauma-informed environment for students. In the short term, principals, teachers and staff are creating virtual building tours for students who will transition to a new school in the coming year. Grade level teams are also creating introduction videos to acclimate students to the staff in the next grade level.

### **BUSINESS/FINANCIAL REPORT:**

#### **Year to Date Budget Report**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a year to date budget report for the Committee's information.

#### **iPad Lease Agreement**

Mrs. Wirzbicki included a memo regarding the new three-year iPad lease and updated the Committee on the key points of the new lease for the Committee.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve the new three-year iPad lease agreement for Auburn Middle School and to put in place a replacement program every three years alternating between the high school and middle school; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

### **POLICIES:**

#### **JFBB, School Choice**

Per your request at the last meeting, Dr. Brunelle included the School Choice policy with an update regarding siblings.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to approve the policy as amended; Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 2:46 p.m., Mrs. Holloway made a motion to go into Executive Session per MGL Chapter 30 Section 21 (a) (3) to conduct strategies for negotiations with union personnel, namely secretaries, instructional assistants and custodians. Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

*Roll call vote:*

*Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes;*

Respectfully submitted,

Ailaine Zautner  
Recording Secretary

**Referenced Documents:** Minutes from 5/13/2020; SC Meeting Dates Schedule; On the Desktop re Return to School Working Group; SWCEC Quarterly Report; AHS NHS Induction Program; YTD Budget Report; iPad Lease Agreement Memo; JFBB, School Choice Policy Amended.