

AUBURN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES from Wednesday, September 4, 2019
School Committee Room, 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance:

George Scobie
Jessie Harrington
Gail Holloway
Dottie Kauffman
Meghan McCrillis

Maryellen Brunelle
Beth Chamberland

Also in Attendance for New Teacher Recognitions:

Casey Handfield, AHS Principal
Gregg Desto, AMS Principal
Susan Lopez, SWIS Principal
Jennifer Stanick, PAK Principal
Marie Mahan, BM Principal
Rosemary Reidy, Director of Pupil Services
(see also below under "Special Recognitions" the names of new teachers who were in attendance)

Call to Order and Pledge: Chairman Scobie

Special Recognitions:

New Teachers

Dr. Brunelle invited the Principals to introduce the new teachers on their staff:

District-Wide: Jennifer Bricher, Social Worker; Amanda Turnbull, Social Worker (not present); Erica Mahan, Registered Nurse (not present)

AHS: Brittany Cronin, Special Educator; George Eisenhauer; Music Teacher; Ashley Kent, LTS Special Educator(not present)

AMS: Kelly Walsh, School Nurse; Danielle LeBoeuf, Science Teacher; Joseph Green, Math Teacher;

SWIS: Jessica Pitsillides, Assistant Principal; Terri O'Donnell, Guidance Counselor; Rhonda Murray, Grade 3 Teacher; Michelle Caplette, Grade 3 Teacher; Brady Dyer, Grade 4 Teacher; Deirdre Keenan, Grade 4 Teacher; Stephanie Fontaine, Grade 5 Teacher; Angela Borda, Grade 5 Teacher; Jackie Quirion, LTS Grade 5 Teacher 2019-2020; Shilo Vosburg, Special Educator;

PAK: Kerri Astrella, School Nurse; Gina Benvenuti, Grade 1 Teacher; Alexa Kennedy, Kindergarten Teacher; Alexandria LaFlamme, Kindergarten Teacher;

BM: Sherri Urena, School Nurse (0.4 FTE) ;(not present)

PAK/BM: Corey Maracuso, Permanent Substitute (not present)

The School Committee Board welcomed the new staff members.

New School Committee Student Representative

Dr. Brunelle introduced the School Committee Student Representatives: returning student and a Senior at AHS this year, Alli Schoenfeldt; and the new representative and a Junior at AHS this year, Aaron Zheng.

Citizens' Comments: No Comments

Student Representatives' Report: Alli Schoenfeldt and Aaron Zheng

Aaron reported he is excited to participate, noting he is in many clubs. Marching Band has been practicing all summer but they were rained out from Old Home Day in Charlton. They are going to the BigE Parade. Science Olympiad and Model UN are meeting. Concert Band starts next Monday.

Alli reported NHS is also starting. Mr. Kennard and NHS members filled bags for a candy fundraiser and their first meeting will be held next week.

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes: Minutes from the meeting of July 30, 2019 were unanimously approved by the Board with a motion made by Mrs. Harrington, seconded by Mrs. Holloway.

Superintendent's Report:

M.A.S.S. Professional Development Committee

Dr. Brunelle shared that she is now a member of the M.A.S.S. Professional Development Committee, representing Worcester County, with meetings taking place monthly to plan pertinent learning opportunities for members of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. This group's first meeting is on October 18th and she reported that she is excited to be a part of this dynamic learning team.

Multi Hazard Plans

Dr. Brunelle shared that, in accordance with Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000, Section 363, the updated Multi-Hazard Plans were signed by Chief Sluckis, Chief Coleman and herself prior to the start of the school year. She thanked them both for their tremendous support and teamwork and likewise thanked the Safety Advisory Team for their ongoing and dedicated support.

Warrant Articles for Special Fall Town Meeting

Dr. Brunelle shared the draft warrant articles for the Fall Special Town Meeting which will take place on Tuesday, October 15th at 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Holloway made a motion to approve the articles are presented; Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Appointment of Board Member to SWCEC

Mrs. McGrillis made a motion to appoint Dr. Brunelle as Auburn's representative to the Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative's Board; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Dr. Brunelle shared that she is serving as Board Chair this year.

Appointment of Board Member to AVC

Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to appoint Dr. Brunelle as Auburn's representative to the Assabet Valley Collaborative's Board; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Acceptance of AED Donation

Dr. Brunelle reported that Webster Five Cents Savings Bank donated \$1,300 to the AED Initiative underway and it was her recommendation that the Committee accept the donation with gratitude. Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to accept the donation, with gratitude, of \$1,300 from Webster Five Cents Savings Bank; seconded by Mrs. Holloway and unanimously approved. Dr. Brunelle indicated that a letter of thanks - signed by both she and Town Manager Jacobson - would go to all donors in the coming weeks. Dr. Brunelle noted this allows us to put AEDs in every location identified as in need. Darcy Cook from Safety Trainers and others will provide free trainings as the goal is to train as many people from across the Auburn community as possible. Dr. Brunelle noted we have a revolving account for updates and maintenance. These donations are being accepted on behalf of the school and the town. A plaque will note those who have donated.

Donation to Bryn Mawr School

Dr. Brunelle reported that Mrs. Mahan had informed her that Bryn Mawr School had recently received a donation of 10 backpacks filled with school supplies from Premeer Real Estate, recommending that the Committee accept the donation with gratitude. Mrs. McGrillis made a motion to accept the donation; seconded by Mrs. Harrington and unanimously approved. Dr. Brunelle pointed out that Mrs. Mahan has already sent a letter of thanks which is included in the packet.

Restorative Justice Research Study

Dr. Brunelle shared that Karyn Ferdella, Auburn High School teacher, is completing an action research project as part of her doctoral studies. The purpose of the study is to “determine whether the restorative justice advisory program for ninth graders is helpful in building strong student-teacher relationships and whether this program helped students successfully navigate the first year of high school.” Prior to conducting any interviews, Ms. Ferdella will get parental approval. Dr. Brunelle and the Committee wished Ms. Ferdella well, with Dr. Brunelle noting she is an outstanding APS Team member.

AHS Marching Band Schedule

Dr. Brunelle shared the AHS Marching Band Schedule with the Committee, noting that they had already most recently played at the Charlton Old Home Day Parade on September 2nd:

- September 2nd: Charlton Old Home Day Parade (it was reported that they could not attend on this day due to rain)
- September 19th: Big E Massachusetts Day
- September 20th: Football vs. Quabbin
- September 21st: US Bands Blackstone
- September 28th: MICCA Preview Show (HOSTING!)
- October 4th: Football vs. Tantasqua
- October 5th: NESBA: Melrose
- October 11th: Football vs. Millbury
- October 12th: MICCA Shepherd Hill
- October 18th: Football vs. Uxbridge (HOMECOMING)
- October 19th: MICCA Wakefield
- October 26th: US Bands New England A Class Championships
- October 27th: MICCA Championships

The Committee wished the Marching Band much continued success, noting the tremendous growth that has been made in a relatively short period of time since their inception! Dr. Brunelle complimented them for their performance on the Opening Day for teachers.

Mrs. Holloway asked about the cancelling of evening events. Darlene Coyle has indicated Auburn is at the Moderate Risk level and we are monitoring neighboring districts. We will continue to carefully monitor the situation, but at the present time this protocol seems appropriate. Mr. Scobie noted our fields are in a good place - away from the woods and swamps - unlike those in some neighboring communities.

Unfinished Business:

SPED Stabilization Fund Withdrawal Request Update

Dr. Brunelle reported that the need to potentially use the SPED Stabilization Fund has been postponed. The placement may come later in the fall and if so, she will return to the Committee at that time to again seek your approval. The Town Manager and CFO have been apprised that there is no need to utilize any funds from this fund at this time.

Class Size Update

Dr. Brunelle provided a Class Size Update as she does annually and assured the Committee that she, Dr. Chamberland and the principals continue to carefully monitor these. If any changes result, she will update the Committee at a future meeting. Mrs. Kauffman asked if we are prepared for an enrollment ‘bubble’. Dr. Brunelle reported that at Bryn Mawr, we do have an extra spot for another classroom if needed next year. This will all be considered during the budget season which we will begin shortly.

Withdrawals and New Registration Numbers by School

Dr. Brunelle reported on the withdrawals, new registrations and the fact that we had - at least to start the year - a net gain of 55 students. She will continue to keep the Committee apprised as fluctuations may continue; we will provide new figures on October 2nd, those as of the October 1st date on which DESE collects data.

Update Regarding Satellite/Galaxy/Asteroids Registrations

Dr. Brunelle reported that the Satellite, Galaxy, and Asteroids' programs continue to be vibrant programs, with strong enrollment numbers across the District. Mrs. Kauffman asked if we ever limit due to numbers. Dr. Brunelle noted that we suspend enrollment for several weeks. Dr. Lopez is concerned about space and we will continue to monitor the enrollment there and in all schools.

Rescind Authorization for Balance of AMS Project

Dr. Brunelle reported that on January 8, 2019 when the Committee rescinded the authorization of \$23,925,235 for the construction of the new Auburn Middle School but not needed as MSBA paid that portion, that the number provided had been incorrect. She recommended, as did Mr. Kazanovicz, CFO, that the Committee amend their original vote to reflect the accurate amount to be rescinded of \$20,185,375. Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to amend the vote of January 8, 2019 that rescinded the value of \$23,925,234 for the Auburn Middle School project, instead rescinding the value of \$20,185,375 that was authorized but not issued for the Auburn Middle School building project; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

New Business:

2019-2020 Goals from the Superintendent

Dr. Brunelle shared her goals for the 2019-2020 school year, seeking the Committee's input as to any suggestions they had or changes they would like to see. There being none, Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to accept Dr. Brunelle's goals for the 2019-2020 school year; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Mrs. McCrillis asked about the school reconfiguration noted in Dr. Brunelle's goals. Is it time to consider a PreK-K school and a Grades 1-2 school. We want to look at it educationally as well as fiscally. We hope to come back no later than February, but hopefully much sooner. The sliding fee scale has helped us to reach more families. All expressed their support in favor of such an arrangement.

Upcoming Negotiations

Dr. Brunelle noted that the collective bargaining agreements for the custodians, instructional assistants and secretaries are set to expire at the end of June 2020. Although no group has yet requested to begin negotiations, she sought input from the Committee whether any members wished to join Dr. Chamberland, Mrs. Wirzbicki and Dr. Brunelle for any of those. The Committee agreed to have those administrators negotiate the contracts, seeking guidance from the Committee prior to and throughout negotiations. Mrs. Kauffman thought it was best to not have representation on the team for the actual negotiation. Mr. Scobie indicated he would be happy with updates, as did all members.

Upcoming Events

Dr. Brunelle highlighted some of the upcoming events, including Curriculum Nights planned at the schools.

Teaching/Learning:

Opening Days Agenda: Dr. Chamberland shared this year we welcomed 17 new teachers to our New Teacher Orientation. The programming included a welcome message from Dr. Brunelle, Dr. Chamberland, each of the school principals and the Mentor Coordinators. The first day welcome for all staff also included a performance by the Auburn High School Marching Band.

Summer Professional Development Update: Dr. Chamberland noted that teachers from all grade levels participated in over 20 diverse professional development opportunities. The topics were generated by teachers to improve the classroom instruction of all teachers at every level and within each content area.

Summer School and Summer Camp Update: Dr. Chamberland shared information regarding Summer School programming, provided through the use of Title One funds, allowed us to support nearly 250 students, entering grades k-6 this summer. Students entering grades 1-6 attended summer school for 4 weeks from 9:00-12:00 each day. Incoming kindergarten students attended a 3 week program from 9:00-12:00 each day focused on school readiness. Surveys of both staff and families were overwhelmingly positive in their response to the program structure and content. Mrs. Reidy, the Director of Pupil Services reported that over 50 students participated in a 5-week summer program

Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition (BRYT): Dr. Chamberland reported that she and Mrs. Reidy, in collaboration with Mr. Handfield and Mr. Desto, identified the need for a program to support students struggling with social and/or emotional issues BRYT equips schools to provide short-term intervention, improve student outcomes, and gets 85% or more of students back to their regular academic schedule quickly and successfully. Students receive counseling support as well academic support and guidance as they work to transition back into the regular school day. The planning and structure of this program is still in its infancy. Later in the fall, Mr. Handfield and Mr. Desto will be invited to share more specific information regarding the implementation of this program as many details continue to be worked out.

Strengthening Families Program: Dr. Chamberland shared that last year, with monies from the Opioid Prevention Grant, guidance counselors and school psychologists from AMS received training on the Strengthening Families Program. Starting in October, 10 AMS families will be invited to participate in this terrific program. Facilitated by the AMS guidance staff and Auburn school psychologists, families will have dinner together followed by a separate session for parents and one for the students, culminating in a group family session. Some of the topics include Managing Stress, Speaking and Listening, Peer Pressure and several others.

State Seal of Biliteracy (SSoBL): Dr. Chamberland noted that students at Auburn High School will have the opportunity to earn the State Seal of Biliteracy on their transcript by demonstrating proficiency in two or more languages. Through this, DESE hopes to recognize the value of language diversity while also providing employers and universities with a method to recognize and give credit to students with a high level of language proficiency. To qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy, students must meet all graduation requirements, receive a score of at least Proficient on the ELA MCAS and obtain an Intermediate-High level score on the ACTFL. There are additional options for attaining the State Seal of Biliteracy for students with special needs and students whose first language is not English.

Business/Financial:

Dr. Brunelle shared the Year to Date Budget report that Mrs. Wirzbicki, offering to answer any questions that the Committee had; there were no questions.

Personnel:

Department Head Job Description

Dr. Brunelle shared the Department Head job description, noting that it had been shared with the leadership of the Auburn Education Association (AEA) who had no issues with it. Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to approve the Department Head job description; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Mrs. Kauffman asked how many we have. Dr. Brunelle noted the various categories for department heads. All in favor.

Policies:

Dr. Brunelle shared that after reviewing the below policies and comparing them with those recommended by MASC, it was her recommendation that they be approved as written,

AA. School District Legal Status

AB. The People and their School District

AD. Mission Statement

BEDD. Rules of Order

BGE. Policy Dissemination

BGF. Suspension of Policies.

FCB. Retirement of Facilities

Mrs. McCrillis made a motion to approve the first seven, as written, Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

ADA, School District Goals and Objectives

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to eliminate this policy as the Strategic Plan for the Auburn Public Schools provides more specific information and this policy (ADA) does not exist in the MASC Model Policy Manual; seconded by Mrs. Holloway and unanimously approved.

With a motion by Mrs. Holloway at 7:35 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Harrington, the meeting adjourned with a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryellen Brunelle, Ed. D.
Superintendent

Referenced Documents:

Minutes from July 30, 2019
Warrant Articles for Fall Town Meeting
Thank you to Premeer Real Estate
Superintendent's Goals
Opening Days Agenda
Year to Date Budget Report
Department Head Job Description
Policies: AA, AB, AD, BEDD, BGE, FCB for approval
Policy ADA for elimination