

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
MINUTES (approved 9/1/16)

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

June 23, 2016
7:00 p.m. Business Meeting

Members Present: Diane Baum, Mary Brolin, Amy Krishnamurthy, Kathleen Neville, Maria Neyland, Kristina Rychlik, Eileen Zhang
Members Absent: Brigid Bieber, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Deanne O’Sullivan
Others: Bonnie Bisbicos, Deborah Bookis, Glenn Brand, Clare Jeannotte, Beth Petr

The ABRSC was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Mary Brolin.

1. **Chairman’s Introduction**

Dr. Brand noted the death this week of Ms. Aiko Mori, Japanese teacher at Douglas for 15 years. Amy Krishnamurthy spoke about how much Sensi Mori was a part of the Douglas community. She will be missed.

2. **Statement of Warrant & Approval of Minutes**

2.1. The warrants were read by the Chair (see attachment) and circulated to the Committee for their review and signatures.

2.2. Maria Neyland moved, Kathleen Neville seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to accept the minutes of the ABRSC Meeting of 6/9/16 as amended.

3. **Public Participation** – none

4. **Recognition of Retiring ABRSD Staff** – *Glenn Brand*

Dr. Brand read the names of this year’s 20 retirees and noted that these staff members have contributed over 400 years of service to our district.

5. **ABRHS Midyear Week Pilot Update** – *JoAnn Campbell*

- 5.1. Summary Memo
- 5.2. Presentation Slides

Dr. Campbell stated that the main goal for this pilot was to help mitigate stress for students, as well as to increase equity across departments, offer timely instructional feedback for student and teachers, and align curricular work with course objectives. She thanked all who worked on the subcommittee. Several sources of feedback were considered. As a result:

- next year’s midyears will be scheduled one week later
- there will be increased time between the December break and midyears to wrap up units/complete other assignments
- clear expectations will be set for assessments/assignments in the two weeks prior
- use of alternative forms of assessments will be encouraged

Maria Neyland recognized that this change helped overall with midyear stress but she asked if staff had considered how much the midterm and final weigh into students’ final grades. In her opinion, the heavy weight of these exams stresses many students. Dr. Campbell replied that that is the reason why midyears are done, to take some weight off the final exam. The students have been taught all along that if midyears are done right, it is not about memorizing content, but how to apply the content. That is different from the past. Some departments need more work on this shift.

Dr. Campbell stressed that they are preparing students for college and to be ready for that kind of process, particularly as they get older, they need to be ready for that kind of assessment. Deborah Bookis added that teachers and administrators are also looking for students to exhibit their learning in different ways, via alternative assessments.

Eileen Zhang spoke in favor of how the midterms were done this year. She has concerns about test grades being too much a part of the final grades. She suggested that perhaps the time spent researching for projects should be as weighted as the test grades. Mary Brolin was not in favor of this change when Dr. Campbell proposed it, but her children were very happy about it.

Kristina Rychlik appreciated that they are getting feedback and will do it again. She stated that freshmen do not know what it was like before. They will feel the benefit at the end of the year. This does take a week out of instruction time though, and Kristina asked if it is hard to make that up curriculum wise. Dr. Campbell replied that it is a good question. This is part of the larger work of the school. Dr. Campbell stated that the Administration has to ask, is covering a large amount of content more important than valid assessment?

6. **Recommendation to Accept 2015 – 2016 Gifts to the ABRHS – VOTE – Glenn Brand**

Kristina Rychlik moved, Maria Neyland seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to accept the 2015 – 2016 gifts to the ABRHS

7. **Self Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) Presentation – Deborah Bookis, Lynne Laramie, Sharon Ryan, Christy Nealon, Betsy Johnston**

Sharon Ryan began the presentation saying, “This makes kids love writing.” Students are engaged and excited about this research-based, 5-step approach involving mnemonics/self talk and models strategies.

School Committee members enjoyed the presentation. One member appreciated how this method builds social and emotional skills into the curriculum. Deborah Bookis noted that teacher collaboration was very important in this first effort. Co-teaching is a special model so children do not distinguish between the 2 instructors. In January, students used an average of 9 words/1 sentence per response compared to May when they used 64 words/4 sentences per response. A new cohort of teachers have signed up to use this method for FY17.

8. **Superintendent’s Annual FY16 Summative Review and VOTE to accept – Kristina Rychlik**

- 8.1. Memo from the Chairwoman
- 8.2. Summative Evaluation Report
- 8.3. Summary of Additional Feedback
- 8.4. FY17 Superintendent’s Salary as outlined in contract dated 7/1/14
- 8.5. Recommendation to Approve Addendum III to Superintendent Contract – **VOTE**
- 8.6. Presentation Slides

Kristina Rychlik explained that the Superintendent’s contract did not have a specified length of the extension, so she and Marie Altieri consulted Attorney Peter Ebb on the wording for the proposed addendum.

Katie Neyland moved and Maria seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to approve the proposed Addendum III to Dr. Brand’s contract.

Kristina Rychlik reviewed the activities that went into the evaluation process for the Superintendent. She read the comments and ratings for each section of the summative review. Dr. Brand was ranked proficient in his four standards and met the overall progress toward his professional practice, student learning and district improvement goals.

Amy Krishnamurthy moved, Maria Neyland seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to accept the Annual FY16 Summative Review for Dr. Brand

Dr. Brand was thanked for his willingness to be so open about this annual process. Kristina Rychlik was thanked for her hard work and thorough job with this important business.

9. **ABRSD FY16/17 Budget Updates**– *Clare Jeannotte*

9.1. FY16 End of Year Update

9.1.1. Financial Status

Clare Jeannotte reported that \$82,000 in Medicaid reimbursement was received yesterday. \$400,000 is expected for excess revenue that will roll into E&D. She does not see any surprises in expenses. A small miscalculation was made in the projections so that has now been fixed. Many of the year end numbers are not firm yet.

9.1.2. End of FY16 Budget Planning

Two year end projects have been identified. Repairing the concrete sidewalks at the High School is a safety issue that will cost approximately \$215,000. The other project is Security at the Administration Building costing approximately \$23,000. Dr. Brand described them as important capital investments. The steps by the Junior High parking lot will also be fixed by the start of school. Clare Jeannotte explained that the District went out to bid on the steps, but the cost of the project from the lowest bid received can be covered from funds that can be redirected from the FY17 capital budget plus FY16 funding. Mary Brolin confirmed the consensus from the School Committee that these plans are acceptable as proposed.

9.2. FY17 Budget Update (*oral*)

Clare reported that the budget has not yet been decided by the State.

10. **Superintendent’s Safety and Security Task Force Report** – *Glenn Brand*

The Task Force’s work was divided into three areas this year: 1. Review of the recommendations from the last Superintendent’s Task Force Report (2013), 2. Review of Current School/Building Safety & Emergency Plans, and 3. Investigation of Alternative Lockdown Protocols. These areas will continue to be a focus in the new school year. There has been an effort to design one handbook for all of our schools, allowing for some customization by each school for their particularities.

11. **Subcommittee Reports**

11.1. Budget – Maria Neyland reported on the meeting held on 6/22/16. They discussed year end finances and the Hager Well situation.

11.2. Policy Consent Agenda (7 policies) –Second Read – **VOTE** – *Brigid Bieber*

11.2.1. **School Committee Meetings and Notification**, File: BE – *Brigid Bieber*

11.2.2. **Empowered Digital Use – Access to Digital Resources**, File: IJND – *Amy Bisiewicz*

11.2.2.1. Empowered Digital Use- FY17 Student Contract, File: IJND-E (exhibit)

11.2.3. **School and District Webpages**, File: IJNDC – *Amy Bisiewicz*

11.2.4. **Student Activity Accounts**, File: JJF – *Clare Jeannotte*

11.2.5. **Regional School District Authorized Signatures**, File: DGA – *Clare Jeannotte*

11.2.6. **Regional School District Bonded Employees and Officers**, File: DH – *Clare Jeannotte*

11.2.7. **Regional School District Audits**, File: DIE – *Clare Jeannotte*

Mary Brolin read the name of each policy in the consent agenda. None were held from the vote.

Maria Neyland moved, Diane Baum seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the 7 policies in the consent agenda as proposed.

11.3. Policy – FIRST READINGS (Second Read/VOTE at meeting on 6/29/16) – *Brigid Bieber*

11.3.1. **Prohibition of Harassment**, File: ACAB, JBA, GBA- First Read

11.3.2. **Evaluation of the Superintendent**, File: CBI – First Read

11.3.3. **Staff Conduct**, File: GBEB – First Read

- 11.3.4. **Fingerprint-Based Criminal History Record Information Checks (CHRI)**, File: ADDB – First Read
- 11.3.5. **Drug Free Workplace**, File: GBEC – First Read
- 11.3.6. **Administration of Medication to Students**, File: JLCD – First Read
- 11.3.7. **Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use by Students Prohibited**, File: JICH – First Read
- 11.3.8. **Retirement of Facilities**, File: FCB – First Read

Maria Neyland reviewed the 8 First Reading policies. The Committee agreed to do these as a consent agenda at the workshop on 6/29/16.

- 11.4. Comparative Communities Study – *Diane Baum (oral)*
Diane Baum contacted 6 Districts and has received input from 2 so far. Most need the summer to respond so there will not be a report until August. Kristina Rychlik asked if it might make sense for the School Committee to see what information is being gathering so they can see if it will be useful. Mary Brolin asked that the information be provided at the workshop to decide if a subcommittee should be established and the data should be presented at a future meeting. Diane agreed with the suggestion.

12. School Committee Member Reports (oral)

- 12.1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Amy Krishnamurthy, Paul Murphy*
ALG is meeting next Thursday. Kristina pointed out that 2 School Committee members are needed, not one and a backup.
- 12.2. Acton Board of Selectmen – *Kristina Rychlik*
The School Committee is asked to nominate a member at large for the Town Capital Improvement Committee – members should give input to Kristina asap if they have any.

13. ABRSC Summer Workshop Agenda for 6/29/16 – Mary Brolin

The Committee discussed the proposed agenda for their annual workshop. They will begin at 7, with dinner at 6:30.

14. Superintendent’s Report/Updates – Glenn Brand

- 14.1. ABRSD Capital Study Public Forum held on June 16: <http://actontv.org/>
Dr. Brand briefly reviewed the slides used for this forum.
He ended the meeting by thanking Dr. Bonnie Bisbicos for acting as Interim Director of Pupil Services for this past year for our District.

The ABRSC adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: Agenda, List of Warrants

NEXT MEETINGS:

Wednesday, June 29 - Annual Workshop at 6:30 p.m. in the Jr High Library (*packet posted Fri, June 24*)
Monday, August 8 - ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library (*packet posted Tues, August 2*)
Thursday, September 1 - ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library