

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING  
Approved Minutes

Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High School

Wednesday, February 28, 2018  
7:30 p.m.

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Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Deanne O'Sullivan, Eileen Zhang  
Members Absent: none  
Others: Beth Petr

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1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7: 30 p.m. by Amy Krishnamurthy, Chairperson.
2. **Chairman's Introduction** – *Amy Krishnamurthy*  
The meeting was taped and will be broadcast next week. Mary Brolin asked that it be sent to Boxborough cable for broadcast as well.
3. **Interview of ABRSD Superintendent Finalist Anthony Parker**

The Committee asked a series of questions of Mr. Parker.

He spoke about how he helped to build a number of new programs in Weston to serve more students, in better ways. He identified school choice in the Acton-Boxborough elementary schools as a growing challenge for our community and something he would have to learn about and address. He had seen some indications that morale might be low in the teaching community and he would work to identify the root cause and improve it. He also heard that the district was trying to attract more teachers of color and keep them teaching here. He would work hard to build relationships with both communities – Acton and Boxborough.

He would foster meaningful inclusive learning environments and opportunities for students in the high needs category as well as all students using by focusing on programming and practices. This would include professional development and articulating expectations. He spoke about a very successful enrichment program called June Academy that he and others established. It was another way of teachers connecting with kids who they might not have experienced them as learners.

Regarding communication, Mr. Parker prefers face to face discussion, although email, letters, regular memos and community forums are all options he would use. He has heard that our staff wants a superintendent that is visibly present so he would focus on that. He would determine a regular schedule and stick to it.

He would work with the principals, Central Office and Finance team to learn what the priorities are in order to develop a new budget. He would not change the process in the first year, but look at what is working and what is not. He would prioritize based on what is best for kids. This includes the building projects because they are good for kids. He learned much about this process in Weston where the Superintendent collaborated with key stakeholders to create and deliver a message. He did not have experience with a long term capital plan as a

district, although he did have one at his High School. He would need his administrative team to guide him in that area.

When asked about how he would balance budget numbers, Mr. Parker said that efficiencies should always be looked for, making sure the outcome on kids won't be affected. They look at current programming and the staff in place, and make adjustments or justify not changing anything depending on the decision.

He would make choices about what we are offering and doing to maintain a healthy work life balance for students and staff. In Weston, that includes no homework or major assignments weekends, or on breaks or holidays. For students it's about the workload and all of the assessments. He described this as an ongoing conversation.

He talked about being the "bad guy" when he pushed to establish an attendance policy at his school. It was difficult, but ultimately an improvement that was accepted.

Regarding the relationship of special education and regular education, Mr. Parker said that teachers often ask about how to meet an IEP - is it the regular education teacher or the special education teacher who is responsible. He feels it is the regular education teacher because the student is in their class and the special education teacher is there to support the classroom teacher.

Mr. Parker thanked the Committee for a very interesting day. (He had been in the district all day meeting with various groups.) He told them that they are doing good work. AB students are articulate and engaging. Despite having some concerns, when he asked the teachers what keeps them at AB, they all said it is a good place to teach and learn.

Amy Krishnamurthy reminded everyone that there will be a similar finalist interview the next night, followed by discussion and probably a decision at a meeting on March 12.

The ABRSC adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: Agenda, Memo with 2 finalists' resumes, List of questions

**Next Meetings** (all in the Jr High Library):

**ABRSC Meeting to interview Superintendent Finalist Peter Light**, March 1 at 7:30 p.m.

**ABRSC Meeting to discuss and vote on the new Superintendent**, March 12 at 7:00 p.m.

**ABRSC Meeting**, March 15 at 7:00 p.m.