

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)  
Minutes (approved 10/3/17)

Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 19, 2017  
7:00 p.m.

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*Members Present:* Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin (7:15 p.m.), Dennis Bruce, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Eileen Zhang  
*Members Absent:* Kathleen Neville, Deanne O’Sullivan  
*Others:* Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Bill McAlduff, Dave Verdolino

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1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Amy Krishnamurthy.
2. **Chairman’s Introduction – Amy Krishnamurthy**  
Director of Finance Clare Jeannotte was thanked for her 3 years of service to the School District and presented with a clock. Members spoke very highly of Clare’s dedication, particularly as AB began as a PreK-12 Region, and wished her well in her retirement.
3. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes**
  - 3.1. The meeting minutes of 9/7/17 were approved as written. Dennis Bruce abstained.
  - 3.2. The warrants were reviewed and signed by the Committee. See listing.
4. **Public Participation - none**
5. **Financial Update – Dave Verdolino**
  - 5.1. Excess & Deficiency (E&D) Certification  
E&D has grown by approximately \$1 million each year.
  - 5.2. Annual Recommendation to set the imprest balance of the 3 Student Activity checking accounts for FY18 – **VOTE**  
The High School is requesting an increase in their amount but it is not relevant until later in the year. When asked when the School Committee will be updated on the auditors’ previous recommendations, Dave stated that they are mostly procedural matters. The other elementary schools do not have Student Activity Funds because they are mostly using their PTOs to fund items that Blanchard uses their student activity fund for.  
Paul Murphy moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,  
**VOTED:** to set the imprest balance of the Student Activity checking accounts for the 2017-2018 school year at the same level as the preceding year, as follows:

Senior High School	\$35,000
Junior High School	\$25,000
Blanchard Elementary	\$ 5,000
6. **ABRSD 2017-2018 Goals – First Read – Bill McAlduff**
  - 6.1. Memo with Summary of this year’s Work Focus and District Wide Goals Update  
The Superintendent walked the Committee through the proposed goals for the school year, to be voted on at the next Committee meeting. Dawn Bentley discussed Goal #2 and referred to Dr. George Batsche’s presentation last year to the School Committee.

Brigid Bieber appreciated knowing when some of these items will be on future School Committee meeting agendas. She asked that future main items be listed with the upcoming meetings dates that appear at the bottom of each agenda.

Dennis Bruce asked about the equity audit and if there are consulting firms that do this because it sounds like a lot of work. Dawn Bentley replied that there are 4 main groups and she has talked to them and has proposals from them. There are also national equity centers and Dawn has connected with our local equity center. They will do a lot of work for no cost and will be a wonderful resource. Dawn is thinking of beginning this at the secondary level. This would start this year with an update to the School Committee by May or June. This is not an issue unique to AB. The question was asked what it means to be culturally proficient. Deborah Bookis explained that they are starting with the leadership of the district to try to understand where they are coming from, and will then move on to work with teachers and students.

There was discussion about whether or not the Massachusetts Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan had been approved and whether non-academic indicators can be included. State ESSA plans may include a non-academic indicator. The Massachusetts state plan has not yet been approved.

Mary Brolin appreciated how the goals were presented to the Committee. It still feels like a lot of work for the district but she likes how it is laid out. Eileen Zhang is concerned about MTSS and because we have so many levels of learners. She asked how we would create equity for all of them and would like to see a plan to take care of that. Eileen would like to see some of this detail. She also spoke about the High School learning time and expressed concern about the Junior High students. She would expect close monitoring of these students if this change is made to over 45 – 60 minutes of learning time.

The Superintendent asked members to send him questions and comments that may come up before the next meeting on this topic. He will share them with the administrative staff so they can be addressed at the next meeting prior to the vote.

7. **School Building Committee Update – Mary Brolin**

7.1. Report on meeting held 9/13/17

The summary from Marie Altieri was shared. They discussed the recommendation in depth specifically the amount, to request \$1.3 million. An outreach plan was discussed including the flyer in the packet publicizing the forum dates for the public. The first one is Oct 17 at Douglas. She reminded everyone that school resources cannot be used to advocate a position on a warrant article. If anyone is interested in having someone come to a coffee to provide information on this topic, please contact Karen Coll in the Superintendent's office at kcoll@abschools.org. Marie Altieri explained that Dave Verdolino spoke with the MSBA about our enrollment information and they said the district could wait for the October 1 enrollment numbers and use those, which is very helpful for the district. The maintenance document is also due to MSBA by Oct 3. All School Committee members were strongly urged to attend at least one of the public forums.

7.2. Discussion of replacement School Committee member from Acton – Possible **VOTE**

Diane Baum asked about the outreach planned. Mary Brolin explained that a video would be produced and posted on the website because a similar video received a lot of views for the DMPCRC forums. She emphasized that community members and groups

would be needed to take on this outreach after the Special Town Meeting for the construction funding question. Bill McAlduff agreed with that process.

Paul Murphy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously,

**VOTED**: to add Dennis Bruce to the School Building Committee.

This person would fill the vacancy created by Kristina Rychlik's resignation.

Amy asked Committee members to let Mary know if they plan to attend a forum to avoid a quorum or be sure it is posted.

### 7.3. FYI

7.3.1. Building Committee Minutes of 8/9/17, 7/12/17, 6/14/17

7.3.2. Special Town Meetings in Acton & Boxborough on Monday, 12/4/17 at 7:00 p.m.

7.3.3. Outreach and Communications

7.3.3.1. Flyer for Fall School Open Houses

### 8. **Coordinated Program Review (CPR) Final Report Update** – Dawn Bentley

The final report has been received. Bill McAlduff stated that for a district the size of AB with 5700 students, to be cited on such a few items is reflective of all of the good work being done here. He congratulated the District on such a fine report. Dawn Bentley reviewed the report. The English Language Program review is the biggest area for work and Dawn looks forward to working with our new director, Maryann Young, on this. Mary Brolin noted that more funding is needed in this area.

### 9. **Possible School Committee Workshop** – Amy Krishnamurthy

Because the Committee could not finish the work started at the summer workshop, Amy proposed another workshop, facilitated by Rob Evans. Dennis asked if the unfinished items support the goals for the year, or what were they about. Amy said the bulk of time was spent discussing things the committee wants to stop doing, start doing and continuing doing. Tessa felt it would be helpful to focus on expectations and working together on the goals. Several members suggested some focus on decision-making and reviewing of structures and what School Committees actually need to do. Collaborating as a team is also important. Follow up from Dorothy Presser from the July workshop will be shared with the Committee.

Mary Brolin invited everyone to the two Open Meeting Law trainings being offered by the Town of Boxborough in the next week or two.

### 10. **Subcommittee Reports** – Amy Krishnamurthy

Boxborough Leadership Forum met and discussed the Special Town Meeting in December. It was requested that the school article be the first one on the warrant. The Town is going out to bid on a potential new Hager Well operator. This could involve the school district. Acton Leadership Group will meet on September 28.

### 11. **School Committee Member Reports** - Amy Krishnamurthy

### 12. **Recommendation to Approve High School Field Trip to Peru 6/27/18 – 7/11/18 – VOTE** – Bill McAlduff

This item was taken out of order after the Chair's introduction because teachers Michael Csorba and Emily Fishkin came to answer questions if they came up.

Brigid Bieber moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,

**VOTED**: to approve the High School Field Trip to Peru on 6/27/18 – 7/11/18. (*Mary Brolin was not at the meeting yet.*)

13. **FYI**

- 13.1. 2017-2018 School Improvement Plans  
Bill McAlduff highlighted this item adding that this year the schools will not specifically present their plans, but they will each present at a meeting about something they wish to share with the School Committee.
- 13.2. ABRSC Meeting Schedule (revised to move 10/5 meeting to Tuesday 10/3 and 11/2 meeting to Thursday 11/9) The permanent superintendent search will be on the agenda for the 10/3 meeting.
- 13.3. ABRSC Members (revised 9/8/17 to include Dennis Bruce)
- 13.4. The Spectrum, ABRHS Newspaper, September 2017 (*brought to meeting*)
- 13.5. Family Learning Series - FY18 Calendar of Presentations
  - 13.5.1. Raising Resilient Children in Challenging Times, Robert Evans, Ed.D. Oct 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Auditorium

The ABRSC adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of documents used: see agenda, list of warrants

**Next Meetings:**

ABRSC, Tuesday, October 3, 7:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library, Topics include: Permanent Superintendent Search Process, VOTE on District Goals for FY18 (packet posted Sept 28)

ABRSC, October 19, 7:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library (packet posted Oct 13)

Agenda posted on 9/14/17 at 5:15 p.m.