

DRAFT
Arlington School Committee
School Committee Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 28, 2016
6:30 PM

*Arlington High School
School Committee Room
869 Massachusetts Avenue, 6th Floor
Arlington, MA*

Present: Paul Schlichtman, Chair, Jennifer Susse, Vice Chair, Jeff Thielman, Secretary, Cindy Starks, Kirsi Allison-Ampe, MD, Jud Pierce, and Bill Hayner

Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent of the Schools, Laura Chesson, Assistant Superintendent's Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Rob Spiegel, Human Resource Director, Alison Elmer, Special Education Director, Ms. Linda Hanson, AEA President and Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant

Open Meeting

Mr. Schlichtman held for a moment of silence for Mr. Roland Chaput who recently passed away.

Public Participation

Ms. Juliet Moir, parent suggested that Arlington Public Schools push forward to ask for a permanent building instead of modular at the Thompson.

Mr. Timur Yontar, Thompson and OMS parent, suggested that a study be done which should include costs, low to high and operating costs to run a large OMS and a small Gibbs school.

Ms. Linda Hanson, President of AEA, APS Teacher, and Mary Cummings congratulated Kathy Bodie and Arlington Public Schools on state funding for AHS with MSBA and noted that parents, community members and town officials need to come together to become vocal and effective advocates for more state funding. (See appendix attached)

Ms. Lisa Newmark, parent of two children at Thompson Elementary School spoke on the enrollment growth at Thompson and requested to the administration they review evidence to do the research on the impact of learning at large schools and would like to hear about the findings.

AHS Seal of BiLiteracy and Guidelines, 2015-2016

Dr. Bodie introduced Ms. Carla Bruzzese Director of ELL, and Ms. Catherine Ritz, Director of Language for APS, are here to speak on AHS Seal of BiLiteracy initiative which is a certificate program that emphasizes proficiency for ELL students and for Foreign Language students. The guidelines, for 2015-2016 were explained. After hearing and supporting the program the committee members said that they would like to see this program at the elementary level at some time.

Today's Students, Tomorrows Teachers Update

Mr. Rob Spiegel spoke about the process of Arlington participating in the Today's Students, Tomorrows Teachers (TSTT) program and the uncertainty of the program. Lexington and Andover withdrew which left only Brookline and Arlington and one student remaining. The founder of the program, Dr. Perkins would like to continue with the program and has reached out to other districts. We are waiting for other districts in our area to make this program worthwhile, since the biggest part of the program is the money, and the time to organize the programs. Most agree it is sad to see the uncertainty of the program.

Vote for Approval: Second Read of 2016-2017 APS School Calendar

Dr. Bodie provided the second read of the 2016-2017 Arlington Public School Calendar for 2016-2017. It was noted that the calendar will be brought forward in the spring with updated dates for parent conferences and early release dates at the secondary level. The Arlington Education Association and Community Relations will do a joint survey for parents and teachers after the February break on future school calendar's. It was also suggested that principals not schedule important forums, and events on Thursday evenings, so School Committee members can attend.

Mr. Jeff Thielman moved approval of the 2016-2017 APS School Calendar as is and noted, additional events will be added in the spring of 2016, seconded by Ms. Cindy Starks.

Voted: 7-0

FY 17 Budget: What are Arlington Public Schools Priorities?

Dr. Kathleen Bodie asked our district leaders what their needs were and provided the School Committee members with that information with a breakdown of the money too. Ms. Diane Johnson is working on the budget documents and once completed they will be posted to our website, which will be at the end of next week. Dr. Bodie discussed the governor's budget numbers, Kindergarten grants, and chapter 70 funds, and then informed the committee that our town manager needs our bottom line budget number and should be voted on tonight.

Mr. Thielman moved that the School Committee acknowledge the FY 17 total Town Appropriation of \$57,001,333 for Arlington Public Schools, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 5-2, Mr. Hayner and Mr. Schlichtman voting No

After hearing statements from each of the members on the budget appropriation number and how this will impact each of the schools, the sense from the committee are the concerns that service could be cut, and that the members acknowledge the total appropriation number but don't accept it. The committee would like parent, and community input on the school budget and Dr. Allison-Ampe, Budget Subcommittee Chair will send out an announcement informing everyone on additional budget discussions.

MSBA Board Decision Regarding AHS

Dr. Bodie informed everyone she attended the Massachusetts School Building Authority Board meeting, yesterday, where The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Board voted unanimously to move Arlington High School forward in the school building grant program process. This past year, there were 97 applicants to the MSBA grant program of which Arlington

was among the 26 districts selected to partner with MSBA to address building deficiencies in one of their district schools. This vote is the first step with another formal vote to come at a subsequent MSBA Board meeting. Kathy said she looks forward to working with MSBA.

Superintendent's Report K. Bodie

Dr. Bodie expressed her gratitude to Town Meeting Members in supporting Stratton and Thompson Elementary Schools and is happy to move forward with the Stratton project and that we received funding for the modular at Thompson School next year. Dr. Bodie attended the MLK, Jr. event and said we received a declaration of 50 years of METCO. Dr. Jean Maguire, Mr. Pereira and our current METCO Director Margaret Thomas were all honored at this event. Dr. Chesson updated the committee on the Professional Learning Network where our staff visited and collaborated with teachers in Wakefield Public Schools. Dr. Bodie said ACMI plans to do a series on Black History in the Month Feb and would like to invite the School Committee and public to attend. On February 24, PARCC will be the topic at the Thompson Elementary School from 7 to 9:00 PM; all are welcome, especially for 3, 4, and 5th grade parents. The Bishop parents will do a Computer Base Testing and a separate presentation. Kindergarten Registration will begin in March and parents/guardians will receive letters with additional information after February 9th.

Consent Agenda

All items listed with an asterisk are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so requests, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence: Approval of Minutes: Approval of Regular School Committee Minutes from Sept 24, 2015 December 10, 2015 and January 14, 2016 meetings Approval of Warrant: Approval of Warrant #16100, dated 1/7/2016, Total Warrant Amount \$655,561.25 and Approval of Warrant # 16104, dated 1/14/2016 Total Warrant Amount: \$218,775.25,

Ms. Susse moved to approve the Consent Agenda: Approval of Minutes: Approval of Regular School Committee Minutes from Sept 24, 2015, December 10, 2015 and January 14, 2016 minutes and the Approval of Warrant: Approval of Warrant #16100, dated 1/7/2016, Total Warrant Amount \$655,561.25 and Approval of Warrant # 16104, dated 1/14/2016 Total Warrant Amount: \$218,775.25, seconded by Ms. Starks, but Dr. Allison Ampe pulled the January 14, 2016 minutes.

Voted: 7-0

Mr. Thielman moved to approve the January 14, 2016 School Committee Minutes, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Voted: 6-0-1, Dr. Allison-Ampe abstained

Subcommittee & Liaison Reports & Announcements

Policies & Procedures Jud Pierce (Chair)- next meeting 2/1 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Budget Kirsi Allison-Ampe (Chair) KAA had meeting yesterday, how to present budget will meet again.

Facilities Cindy Starks (Chair) will hold meeting on February 9, 2016, to discuss how to handle enrollment challenges and provided a timeline, with operating costs and bring it forward to the Enrollment Task Force on February 23 after the subcommittee members and superintendent fills it all in on February 9th.

District Accountability, Curriculum/Instruction & Assessment Jeff Thielman (Chair) presented for the First Read of Superintendent Evaluation Process and Procedures 2015-2016. The second reading will be in two weeks, all comments please send to Karen Fitzgerald.

Community Relations Jennifer Susse (Chair) discuss Parent Satisfaction and Engagement Survey from 2014 spoke about the Survey for teachers/parents on school calendar and the upcoming PARCC presentation on Feb 24 and said the District lines are a valuable thing and said to expand buffer zones would take a year or so but the feelings from the community.

Executive Session Minute Review Subcommittee Voted 5/28/2015 Mr. Hayner is willing to go through the minutes with Town counsel in April.

Warrant Committee - Voted 4/9/2015 Bill Hayner (Chair)

School Enrollment Task Force-Next meeting is February 23rd.

Executive Session

Mr. Jeff Thielman moved to enter into Executive Session at 8:49 PM to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with union and/or nonunion personnel or contract negotiations with union and /or nonunion in which if held in an a open meeting may have a detrimental effect, and to conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, in which if held in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect, Collective bargaining may also be conducted, and Discuss the AEA, Unit C, Administrative Assistant Contract update, and negotiations for Non-union personnel, and exit only to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Jud Pierce.

Roll call: Unanimous 7-0

Adjournment

Mr. Thielman voted to exit and adjourn at 9:49 PM, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Roll Call: Unanimous

Voted: 7-0

*Respectfully submitted by
Karen Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee/jt
2/10/2016*

Attachment: Linda Hanson remarks to School Committee on 1/28/16

- Congratulate Dr. Bodie and everyone who worked on the application for state funding for the high school, on successfully attaining entrance into the next level of MSBA funding. That's incredibly exciting! I am sure we will be hearing more about that later tonight.
- This state funding for our school building actually leads me to a topic I want to spend a few minutes talking about this evening.
- Like a lot of people, I have been thinking about the congruence of all of the costs of maintaining a high quality education in Arlington – for the buildings, the personnel, the programs and the curriculum materials.
- Like all of you, I have and will continue to participate in the many important meetings to attempt to come to a consensus to find the best way forward within the financial limitations we face.
- While we have been extremely focused most recently on working with funding decisions constrained by our local resources, the more time I have spent looking closely at the issues before us, the more I am convinced that increasing funding at the state level by raising more revenue is the only thing that will really get us to where we need to be.
- I know you are thinking along the same lines, and it was great to see our local representatives at the last School Committee meeting. They are all strong advocates of our schools.
- But it is pretty clear, that without strong and impassioned advocacy, we will continue to have to rely on regressive local property taxes to fund our schools.
- I want to personally commit to expending time and energy in the upcoming months to help the parents that are so committed to educational excellence in our schools understand that in order to have smaller class sizes, neighborhood schools, differentiated curriculum, high achievement, and exciting learning experiences for our students, we will need to become vocal and effective advocates for more state funding.
- We will need to mobilize parents, community members, and town officials both inside Arlington, and more importantly, across the state.
- We have opportunities to do this before us now. The failure to capitalize on these initiatives, and the failure to redirect some of the local energy to state level solutions, will leave us all with less than we would like to see.

- We need to engage our friends and neighbors, and our respective organizations around the concrete initiatives that we have before us.

1. Charter School Funding Formula

- a. Arlington is currently losing \$100,000 to charter schools. This total reflects the amount of Chapter 70 aid that will be diverted from the school district to charter schools. This amount is for 8 students who live in Arlington and attend a charter school. It may be a small number compared to what we need, but it represents about one and a half teachers. We need to support the Senate's efforts to revisit and revise how charter schools divert money from local school districts. Clearly more urban communities are suffering even more. Our neighbors to the north and east are affected to a much greater extent. Medford is slated to lose \$4 million to charters, and Somerville \$7 million in FY16.

2. Foundation Budget

- a. If new formulas are used from the Foundation Budget Review Committee, Arlington would net an additional \$3.6 million for our schools. Our local reps talked about a phase in idea over four year. Our current governor and Speaker of the House say we can't afford it and that new revenues to support the formula adjustments are not on the table. Without active, vocal, and organized support, we risk this report ending up on a shelf.

3. Fair Share Millionaire's Tax – add a 4% surcharge to income over \$1 million

- a. Estimated \$1.5 billion annually in new revenue for both public schools and transportation (4,000 people – a fraction of 1% of the population)
- b. This proposed legislation needs to get through two Conventional Committees of the joint legislature in order to be put on the 2018 ballot.

Even if we raise significant new revenues in Arlington through property tax overrides and debt exclusions, we will not be able to afford the combination of new buildings and funding for the operating

costs of a well-resourced education system in Arlington without state-wide changes in taxation and policies.

If we are unable to capitalize on these opportunities, we will lose the chance to shift the conversation on education. There are some concrete initiatives that we have worked hard to produce, but if we can't carry them over the finish line, we will find ourselves back here having the same conversations again and again.

I know I am preaching to the choir in this room, but I want to encourage us all to commit to educating our friends, community members, and our respective organizations (MTA, MASS, MASC, MMA) about the benefits of working together to make legislative changes at the state level that would allow us to build and maintain the type of educational programming we would all like to see in Arlington and across the state.