

*Arlington School Committee
School Committee Regular Meeting
Thursday, February 28, 2019
6:30 PM
Arlington High School
School Committee Room
869 Massachusetts Avenue, 6th Floor
Arlington, MA*

Present: Kirsi Allison-Ampe Chair, Len Kardon Vice Chair, Jennifer Susse, Secretary, Jeff Thielman, Paul Schlichtman, Jane Morgan, and Bill Hayner.

Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D. Superintendent, Rob Spiegel, Human Resource Director, Jeff Thielman Roderick MacNeal, Jr., Assistant Superintendent, Michael Mason, Chief Financial Officer, Rob Spiegel, Human Resource Director, and Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant, and Julia Keys, AEA Representative.

Absent: Alison Elmer, Director of Special Education

Mr. Thielman entered the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Ms. Morgan entered the meeting at 6:37p.m.

Open Meeting

Dr. Allison-Ampe opened the regular meeting immediately after the Public Hearing on the FY 20 Superintendent's Proposed School Budget at 6:36 p.m.

Public Participation

None

Start times Discussion

Dr. Bodie addressed the potential change in start times for the high school and the middle schools and said other schools in the Middlesex Leagues had changed their earlier start times to 8:30 a.m. but all districts did not do it yet. Dr. Bodie's recommendation would be to make the change in September of 2020. There is still more to work on logistics, contractual issues, more time to plan for teachers and parents, but she would like to get a sense from School Committee on the next steps on this process and make a plan before we make a decision. A survey was sent out to parents and teachers to take a look at start times and some holidays to find ways to avoid ending school in late June. The survey showed that issues need to be addressed but there is movement on supporting the later start time.

Ms. Susse said it makes sense for School Committee to vote on a motion of support if we agree and negotiate contract and proposes a motion.

Ms. Susse motion that the School Committee supports the move to make new start time pending successful negotiations, with the union, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Mr. Hayner supports the concept of the motion but will not support if the change will happened once the union approves the start time change. Dr. Allison-Ampe said that we cannot go into the start time change immediately.

Mr. Kardon said he will make a motion to support start time to be 8:30 a.m. for middle school and high school next year. He stressed that the committee has spoken about start time changes for three years and said Dr. Janger wants it too. Mr. Schlichtman spoke on the motion regarding the contract and said School Committee can make the change and can do it in September with a notice and a vote tonight. He is concerned this is too short of a notice, and not sure he will go for it. He said the initial survey came in favoring the change and now people are unhappy with this. Concerned about it and not willing to hold off if it's good for the kids. He knows it's difficult for kids and parents and to get day care etc. but he is willing to listen and supports Mr. Kardon.

Ms. Susse said she can withdrew her motion and support Mr. Kardon's motion. The survey shows that parents and teachers are in favor of the change and evidence shows this is the single most important thing we can do for physical, social-emotional and academic help for our children.

***Ms. Susse withdraw her motion.** Ms. Morgan inquired if any faculty attended or emailed the committee to express concern on the later start times. After a community outreach meeting and Dr. Bodie attending three faculty meetings, Dr. Bodie said she heard from many parents, teachers, as well on concerns of traffic challenges on later start times. Also, pending a successful override, we will be begin construction at the high school. Dr. Bodie is in favor of the start time change but recommends putting it off until September 2020.*

Mr. Kardon made the motion to move that start time for middle school and high school to 8:30 a.m. beginning September 2019, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Mr. Kardon understood when he joined the School Committee three years ago we had a plan to accomplish to a later start for middle and high school students. It was clear to him that it would be discussed before the contract was ratified. Mr. Kardon said the committee asked for this and since the committee controls the start times and traffic issues will always be there, he wishes we voted this back in December instead of February, therefore, he said we need to notify the families of the new start time now and move forward with the motion.

Mr. Hayner asked how many other districts moved the start times around, Dr. Bodie replied half of the districts did. Ms. Morgan supports Mr. Kardon's motion and appreciates having this deadline. Mr. Schlichtman is very comfortable supporting the motion as a First Read, and said if in two weeks we receive evidence that this will not work he may not vote the change. Dr. Bodie said it may be very difficult to implement this motion with everything else that is happening in the district and mentioned Dr. Janger supports deferring this one year as well. Dr. Bodie said she would like to look at a schedule and come up with creative ideas to implement the time change. Mr. Thielman supports this idea but wants it to work well in the district and was curious how each principals feels about it.

Mr. Thielman would like School Administration to attend the next School Committee meeting with a plan to open the school day at 8:30 a.m. and see what the staff schedule would look like. He invited everyone back here in two weeks and wants a strategy and said there is a lot of thinking going into start time and the start day. Ms. Susse supports the motion and deadline and would like teachers to join them and hear from them at our next meeting. Mr. Thielman asked our middle school teacher, which is our AEA representative, Ms. Keys, to speak to the later start time. Ms. Keys said the survey results were split and that it is very late in this school year to make the change for next September for teachers now to get into extended after school care programs for their own children, and it would be hard for many to change. Mr. Hayner suggested staggered start times to help with bus schedules. Mr. Kardon will welcome a plan with adjustments. The School Committee members would like all materials ahead of time and not at the meeting.

Dr. Bodie said this is fairly unrealistic and that plans take longer and the effects of the change will impact contract issues, negotiations, preschool applications. She understands the strong sentiment to make change and a reasonable way to look at it is to put it in a motion, but have it begin in September 2020.

Mr. Spiegel spoke to the start time change as a parent, and understands it's hard to wake kids up early in the morning, but he is concerned on retaining qualified staff here in Arlington. He spoke on the issues on commute times for teachers. The time change will increase commute time at the end of the day, and effective work day and contract will remain the same but commute will mean less time with family, and the teachers cannot attend meetings now to discuss this issue, doesn't want to lose teachers and wants to keep good staff here.

Dr. Allison-Ampe will be voting against it understands that Mr. Kardon is frustrated and agrees to have the administration move forward with it but this is not the right way to do it.

Dr. MacNeal wants to echo Dr. Bodie and do a well thought out plan on later start times. He said the administration has been working on MCAS and other initiatives and are working hard to always do what is best for our children, but it would be difficult to have a plan in two weeks. Mr. Hayner said he needs a deadline and date specific. Mr. Hayner hears what Mr. Spiegel and Dr. MacNeal are saying but would like to know when a plan would be ready and when the start time change will happen.

Dr. Bodie's recommendation would be that we move in the direction to create a plan of staggered or not later start times and to be creative. She wants to retain staff and asking everyone all work together with administration, teachers, and parents and do what makes the most sense for Arlington Public Schools, and to begin the start time change for September 2020.

Mr. Thielman said if the vote passes the committee will direct the superintendent to develop a plan on staggered start times.

Voted: 5-2 Mr. Thielman and Dr. Allison-Ampe voted No

Mr. Kardon said the vote is 5-2, if administration thinks the start time should be 8:25, 8:35 this can be discussed in two weeks. He would like Dr. Bodie to come to them in two weeks with other adjustments and have administration come up with start time in two weeks. Mr. Schlichtman is open to September 2020 start of the new time if evidence is presented at the next meeting which shows to wait. Mr. Schlichtman urges people to come to our next School Committee meeting with evidence and get the ball rolling and get as much information on the table to make this happen this year or next. He can wait a year if he sees clear evidence, but right now he does not see the evidence to wait. If anyone has concerns pro or con he encourages them to attend the meeting.

FY 2020 Budget discussion

Mr. Kardon provided an update on the Long Range Planning meeting. He suggests to hold another Budget Subcommittee meeting to address additional request for money to bring forth to the Long Range Planning meeting. Dr. Allison-Ampe asked if the community has seen this five year plan and would like to have community feedback. Mr. Kardon will present the five year plan to some of the PTO's and will have a community wide meeting in March and collect the feedback.

Dr. Bodie said her recommendations are included on what the schools need over the next five years and has developed good strategies to maintain and improve our schools. The multiyear plan includes her requests, and asked the School Committee members if they agree with her recommendations they can vote the FY 20 Budget on March 14, 2019 and then bring it forward to the Finance Committee.

Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Mason presented the Monthly Financial Report for period ending January 31, 2019, prepared by Liz Montes and spoke on the general funds, town appropriation, state funding, grants and revolving accounts reports. The committee discussed a few budget line items.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Bodie said students from the senior class were not happy with her decision to hold school today due to the snow but the decision is made in the morning. Kathy said if students cannot get to school due to snow it is an absence, but excused.

Dr. Bodie wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of the recommendation of the Kindergarten Steering Committee that the last days for Kindergarten students will be on June 13 and there was some confusion of it being a half day but it will be a full day of school. This last day for Kindergarten students will change if we have a snow day. The after-school programs found this error when looking at our calendar since they want to run after school programs.

Dr. Bodie mentioned some wind damage at the schools. Some good news is that we have extra money from our Out of District Tuition and it will go back into our schools.

The Kindergarten enrollment numbers for 2019-2020 is at 426 and our own projections were at 536 but parents continue to call and register since we don't have a deadline on when to enroll.

Dr. Bodie provided an update on athletics teams: boys' hockey team made super 8, first game Sunday, 4:15 at Tsongas Arena. The girls hockey lost last night, girls cheering made Regionals and Boys' Basketball will play on Friday at Belmont 7:00, and girls basketball team made it to playoffs. Congratulations to them all.

Mr. Thielman said the AHSBC cut the high school budget to \$291 million. There will be a Special Town Meeting on April 29 and then a Town wide vote on June 11. If all passes then the design phase will begin during the summer and break ground sometime in 2020. The AHBC have met with tree, open space, capital committees and many other committees in town, to get word out and answer questions. Busy time. Capital planning went well. Very complimentary of all the work.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Susse moved to approve the Consent Agenda Approval of Warrant: Warrant Number 19154 Dated 2/14/2019 Total Warrant Amount \$961,618.77, and Approval of Minutes: Regular School Committee minutes 2/14/2019, and Approval of Trip: None, seconded by Mr. Schlichtman.

Voted: 7-0

Subcommittee/Liaison Reports/Announcements

Budget: Len Kardon, Chair already discussed.

Community Relations: Jennifer Susse, Chair meet at Café Nero and plans to hold a subcommittee meeting to discuss appointment for Human Rights Commission, also ask Dr. Bodie to request applications to serve on school calendar committee. Remind everyone that the last day of school for 2020/201 will be June 29, therefore, discussions should begin.

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Accountability: Jeff Thielman, Chair will hold a meeting on Thursday, March 7 at 5:00 p.m.

Facilities: Bill Hayner, Chair no report.

Policies & Procedures: Paul Schlichtman, Chair said the Policy Manual is online under School Committee and MASC websites and plans to hold a P&P meeting soon.

Legal Services Review: Bill Hayner, Jeff Thielman, no report

Arlington High School Building Committee: Jeff Thielman, Kirsi Allison-Ampe, already reported.

Gibbs Committee: Jane Morgan, no report.

Liaisons Reports, no report

Announcements: Dr. Allison-Ampe read the Policy BDA School Committee Organizational Meeting: Approximately one month prior to the School Committee Organizational Meeting,

school committee members interested in officer positions will notify the administrative secretary and/or chairperson. Those interested should send notice before March 14.

Future Agenda Items, Mr. Kardon wants to see the Technology Plan. Ms. Susse would like to hear new curriculum from Social Studies Director. After Mr. Kardon asked for clarification on Social Studies curriculum changes, Mr. Schlichtman read the policy and Dr. Bodie informed the School Committee that the State made curriculum changes, which supersedes our policy. Mr. Hayner would like the Vietnam trip added to the Consent Agenda for a vote at the next meeting.

Executive Session

Mr. Hayner moved to enter Executive Session at 8:06 p.m. 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 open meeting, may have a detrimental effect. 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 to discuss the contract for Superintendent Kathleen Bodie, seconded by Mr. Schlichtman.

Roll Call: unanimous

Voted: 7-0

Correspondence Received:

Warrant dated 2/14/2019 Warrant Number 19154 Total Warrant Amount \$961,618,77

School Committee minutes 2/14/2019

Legal Spreadsheets January 2019

Superintendent's Newsletter

HRC Opening email 2 22 2019

Monthly Financial Report

Policy BDA School Committee Organizational Meeting

Adjournment

Mr. Hayner moved to adjourn at 9:01 p.m. seconded by Ms. Susse.

Roll Call: unanimous

Voted: 7-0

Respectfully submitted by

Karen M. Fitzgerald

Administrative Assistant

Arlington School Committee/js