

Arlington School Committee
School Committee Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 26, 2019
6:30 p.m.
Arlington High School
859 Mass Avenue, 6th Floor
Arlington, MA

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

Roderick MacNeal, Jr., Assistant Superintendent, Rob Spiegel, Human Resource Director, Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant, and Marion Nolan, AEA Representative.

Absent: Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D. Superintendent, Michael Mason, Chief Financial Officer, Alison Elmer, Director of Special Education

Mr. Thielman arrived at 7:07 p.m.

Ms. Morgan arrived at 7:18 p.m.

Open Meeting

Mr. Kardon opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and said Dr. Bodie was in Japan this week for the 35th anniversary celebration. Mr. Mason was ill, Ms. Elmer was unable to attend, and Ms. Morgan and Mr. Thielman will be arriving late.

Public Comment

None

Overview of School counseling and Introduction of New Counselors

Sara Burd reported on the change to School Counselor new name, which deletes guidance out of their title. Kathy Hirsch and Danielle Rakowsky, AHS School Counselor's, said they have collaborated as a team over summer rewriting the high school and middle school mission statements.

High School Mission

The AHS School Counseling Department fosters overall wellness, academic and career success and life skill development. We collaborate in empowering students to reach their fullest potential. We support the social-emotional well-being of students through building healthy and diverse relationships and setting personalized goals. We promote the development of self-advocacy skills including the ability to access supports, counseling, academic help and self-awareness around areas of strength and weakness. The department focuses on developing life-long learners, resiliency and intellectual curiosity as the whole student prepares for an ever changing global community.

WHOLE Student, ALL Students

Middle School Mission

Counselors provide a nurturing environment that supports the growth of students into socially responsible, independent, and collaborative community participants. Counselors prepare lifelong learners for the world by helping to promote intellectual curiosity, and develop cultural proficiency and healthy relationships. Counselors work with students, parents, faculty, and the community to advance social emotional skills, develop resilience, and foster the mental and physical well-being of the whole student.

Supporting Well-Being, Growth and Resilience

Sara Burd provided documentations on the qualification of school counselors and said they hold a master's degree, meet the state certification/licensure standards, fulfill continuing education requirements and uphold American School Counselor Association (ASCA) ethical and professional standards. They are certified/licensed educators who improve student success. She also said the Counseling Department is fully staffed, and she provided a video with each of the School Counselors. Ms. Burd said a new monthly News Counseling Newsletter was recently created.

Committee members wanted to hear more on the differences of school counselor, social worker and school adjustment counselors. Elementary level have social workers and provide counseling and some offer special education services, per IEP's. The Ottoson Middle School has 4 school counselors, Gibbs School has 2 school counselors and Arlington High School has 6 school counselors and 2 social workers. Some of the high school and middle school counselors have dual roles as adjustment counselor and social worker. All are qualified but we use them in different ways. The difference of the roles were explained that the school adjustment counselor and social worker meet with families, students, and run small groups, for students and the community and school counselors are working on schedules, college applications.

Review the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS).

Karen Koretsky, Director of Arlington Youth and Health Coalition, Cindy Bouvier, Retired and part time Director of Health and Wellness and Student Support, Sara Burd, Director of School Counseling and Social and Emotional, presented the Youth Risk Behavior Survey results administered to Arlington High School, Gibbs and Ottoson Middle School Student in April 2019. The results are compared with other Districts which refers to them as students in the Middlesex League.

Ms. Koretsky reported the survey showed that Substance use of Alcohol, has stayed the same as in 2017, but showed our students were less likely to drink than their Middlesex League counterparts. We need to continue to educate parents and students and create policies and procedures to help reduce access and use.

Ms. Koretsky reported the survey showed that Substance use of Marijuana has increased. Over half of AHS see no risk for harm when using marijuana once or twice a week. We need to

enhance the education of middle school students before use and have conversations about perception of harm.

Ms. Koretsky and Ms. Bouvier reported the survey showed Tobacco/Nicotine/Vapes usage. AHS rates of lifetime tobacco use remains the same as 2017, but the current use of e-cigarettes rose from 8.3 % in 2017 to 22.6% in 2019. Many see themselves at moderate risk for harming themselves using e-cigarettes yet they still do it. Our students have been provided Tobacco support over the years, and we helped change the climate in school. Currently launching a vaping cessation group in October. The high school and middle schools do not suspend for a first violation but rather engage in student in education, risk assessment and support.

Ms. Koretsky and Ms. Bouvier showed the survey results of Personal Safety, Sexual Health, Nutritional Health, and Mental Health issues. Ms. Bouvier reported the survey showed Sexual Health of AHS students who ever had sexual activity has dropped since 2017, but STD are on the rise. Ms. Bouvier said we will look at the sexual education program and help reduce the number of those having unprotected sex and stop the spread of STDs.

Ms. Koretsky reported The Mental Health survey showed 82.6% AHS students report feeling overwhelmed. AHS students fared the worst in this category out of all other districts. 82.6% have healthy activity and 82.9% talk to at least one parent or adult family member who is important to them.

11 % of students report serious thought of suicide which has decreased from previous report.

15.3% of students report wanting to do something to injure themselves.

25.7% of students feel depressed or sad.

61.3% of students do have an adult to speak with.

Ms. Koretsky and Ms. Burd will continue to promote resources for suicide prevention and destigmatize mental health.

The committee members were concerned with areas of the report and wanted to make sure protocols were in place for the opt out for parents and curious about the data and why some districts reports are less and asked if we can look at their data and borrow their ideas and compare what are we doing in these areas where they are different. The committee members inquired if the data may be broken down by gender. They questioned if we could use some of the anti-tobacco successful programming and apply it to vaping programming for students. Students who have thought of suicide was a huge concern and the committee wants to make sure students know of resources are available to help them, and know many staff have been trained in mental health first aide, so they do have people they can go to for support. The full will be made available on our website.

District Goals 2019-2020 Department Smart Goals

Dr. MacNeal presented the smart goals, which go under the district goals of 2019-2020, and cover Goal 1.1, Goal 1.2 and Goal 2.1, for the elementary and secondary level on curricula and resources. Some of the highlights included the following:

Goal Objective 1.1

Students will engage in curricula that are designed to support the district's vision of student as learner and which emphasizes transferable skills such as global and cultural awareness, creativity, collaboration, responsibility, communication and critical thinking, remain in alignment with state standards, are coherent within each discipline, and can be measured by common and state assessments

Elementary K5- ELA

Goal for Grade 3: During the 2019-2020 school year, all grade 3 teachers will implement Lucy Calkins' Readers Workshop units of study, "Building a Reading Life" and "Character Study". In addition teachers will pilot the Lucy Calkins' Readers Workshop nonfiction unit in all elementary schools. The introduction of these units will further the overall implementation of the Reader's Workshop instructional format in grades 1-5 and highlighted the new

Goal for Grade 5: During the 2019-2020 school year, all grade 5 teachers will implement the Lucy Calkins Interpretation Book Club Unit. This unit was piloted during the 18-19 school year. The adoption of the unit across the district will continue the implementation of the Reader's Workshop Instructional format for grade 5.

These goals help with reading alignment in grades 1-5.

Elementary K-5 Science

Rationale:

- K: This will help to align instruction in the science practices as outlined in the 2016 Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework.
- Grades 1-5: So the data can be analyzed for consistency across buildings to give insights into strong and weak areas of the curriculum and time on instruction and so that the data will be used to adjust instructional practices.

Goal for Kdg: During the 2019-2020 school year, kindergarten teachers will use the "Tools of the Mind" Science Manual for science instruction.

Goal for 1-5: During the 2019-2020 school year, students will be assessed using new draft common assessments at the end of each unit and data will be entered into the Data Bank and shared with the Science Curriculum Director.

Secondary (6-12): Computer Science

Rationale: The three core reasons for the modifications are: 1. to meet the standards of the new DLCS Frameworks; 2. to provide opportunities for Project Based Learning; and 3. to embrace the concept that coding skills can serve as the glue for higher level integration of content areas.

Goal: During the 2019-2020 school year, OMS/Gibbs computer science teachers will continue to revise the computer science curriculum offered in grades 6-8. Grade specific courses will be created for the seventh grade and eighth grade to complete a developed and vertically aligned independent courses for each grade 6, 7 and 8.

Secondary (6-12): History and Social Studies

Rationale: Vertically and horizontally align research skills and practices throughout the district; strengthen students' ability to "observe, analyze and synthesize information from a variety of sources to enhance existing understandings and construct new knowledge" (APS Vision of Student as Learner).

Goal: Teachers in grades 6-11 will provide direct instruction in a specific research skill. Teachers will provide students with the opportunity to practice that skill as well as be assessed and given feedback on progress in that skill four times during the year through a common research performance task before the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

Secondary (6-12): Science

Rationale:

Grades 6-8: To enhance instruction for teachers.

Grades 9-12: PBL engages students in increasingly self-motivated learning and is more likely to involve real world applied problems.

Goal for 6-8: During the 2019-2020 school year, students in grades 6 and 7 will use the new iScience textbook and electronic resources, a set of curriculum resources newly acquired through McGraw-Hill Publishers. This program contains resources for student use, as well as tools and strategies to enhance instruction for teachers. Project Based Learning (PBL) activities will be piloted in several units from the new iScience resources. Progress with PBL implementation will be monitored by the Science Director to inform future implementation of PBL activities.

Goal Objective 1.2

Students will develop their social and emotional (SEL) skills through age-appropriate SEL instruction that includes an awareness of cultural bias, and by learning in classrooms where responsible decision making, empathy, and the importance of positive relationships are the norm.

Elementary (K-5): Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Rationale: SEL efforts in the district have been varied and random in implementation without measured impact on student outcomes. Mapping competencies and practices will allow for the beginning of a district-wide system of SEL provided with fidelity and equal access.

Goal for PreK-2nd: By June 2020, high quality SEL instruction and practice for all students in grades PK-2 will be comprehensively mapped, identifying where students have access to the five SEL competencies through both direct instruction as well as embedded classroom application. Weaknesses in the analysis will be addressed through Goal 2.1. A similar analysis for grades 3-5 will follow in the 2020-2021 school year.

Goal Objective 2.1

Professional learning for educators will reinforce targeted components of the academic curriculum, social emotional competencies and pedagogy, and will emphasize culturally responsive and data-informed instructional practices that support student learning and growth.

District (K-12): Cultural Literacy

Rationale: To increase the cultural literacy of staff within the district.

Goal: During the 2019-2020 school year, all district staff will participate in ten hours of professional development focused on cultural literacy and culturally responsive instruction. Six of the hours will be provided during the professional development day on November 1.

Goal: During the 2019-2020 school year, members of the District Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team will work with an outside consultant to create a mission and vision statement. The result of such work will also include setting short term and long term goals for the district with regard to the district's focus on fostering diversity, equity and inclusion.

Dr. MacNeal pointed said these are an overview of the highlights of SMART Goals to help point out the action of the District Goals and help assess and making sure we are providing a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students. The S.M.A.R.T goals conform to the following criteria: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely.

Mr. Hayner appreciated the SMART goals. Mr. Hayner was concerned with cultural bias being pulled into Social Emotional Learning and would like it to be part of the curriculum plan for students and staff. Dr. Allison-Ampe appreciated the presentation and sees approaches on initiatives, that some are new and some ongoing, but questioned if this approach is working and how is it measured and how is it achieved. She would like to see the measures of success and the reasons we are doing it. Ms. Susse would wanted the evidence to identify problems and find ways to solve it and show this in the goals. She wanted to restructure the language of the goals, and to align it with the standards. She would want to see how we accomplish the goals and what is the focus, how are staff spending their time and what is the vision on what we want Arlington to become.

Ms. Morgan after hearing about the new assessment called DIBELS/Acadience phoneme segmentation fluency and nonsense word fluency assessments for 2019/2020 she pointed out that starting a new assessment is not a goal. If 80 percent of students can read, and we want 90 percent of students to read then that would be the goal. She suggested seeing the growth of the needle moving and knows that it cannot all be accomplished in one year but would like to see how they are achieving over time. Mr. Schlichtman said he had issues in this context, who is your audience, and why are you doing it. He suggested that the goals be like a lesson plan and what do we want School Committee to know and do. Mr. Thielman suggested to think of measure outcomes and where do they want to be at the end of the year or where do they want to be in five years. Mr. Kardon suggested going back to a five year plan and that we need to come up with strategic goals, with more outcome and multiyear goals. Mr. Kardon suggested bringing these to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment and Accountability subcommittee.

Facility Report

Facility Report is in Novus.

Enrollment Projections

The committee members suggested including enrollment projections to the agenda since many parents expressed concerns on space issues. Mr. Thielman said the previous Enrollment Task Forces was created due to space concerns at the Hardy and Thompson School. The group included the superintendent, town manager and community and committee members and the outcome of this was an expansion of Hardy and Thompson Schools. Dr. Allison-Ampe as chair of Budget Subcommittee offered to look into enrollment projections, numbers, facility and space relations to buffer zone. She said she will sit down with the administration and discuss a plan.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. MacNeal appreciated the Jazz Band and Chorus Directors who attended Town Day. Dr. MacNeal reported out on the AHS Athletics. We currently have 459 student athlete participating in over ten different sports, cross country and soccer have the biggest participants. The AHS pep rally is scheduled for October 22 and he announced Mr. Barrett retired last June as out long term golf coach.

Consent Agenda

On a **motion** by Mr. Schlichtman, **seconded** by Mr. Thielman, it was **voted** to approve to the Consent Agenda, Warrant 20049 dated 9/17/19 \$719,397.58 , Approval of School Committee Regular minutes of June 13, 2019 and September 12, 2019, seconded by Mr. Thielman. **(7-0)**

Policy:

No policy items on the agenda

Subcommittee/Liaison Repots/Announcements

- **Budget:** Kirsi Allison-Ampe, chair held a meeting this morning. Since Mr. Mason was ill no deep budget calendar changes were made. The committee will meet with administration and every other month.
- **Policies & Procedures:** Paul Schlichtman chair, no report
- **Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Accountability:** Jane Morgan, chair, no report
- **Community Relations:** Jennifer Susse, chair, needs a meeting to interview five Transportation Advisory applications. She would like to propose to hold three School Committee Chats, the first Saturday of November, February and May.
- **Facilities:** Bill Hayner, chair, met on September 18 to discuss meetings with all PTO. Next meeting with be October 16
- **Legal Services:** Bill Hayner chair, no report.
- **Arlington High School Building Committee:** Jeff Thielman, Kirsi Allison-Ampe reported they will meet next Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.
- **Calendar Committee:** Jennifer Susse, no report
- **Election Modernization Representative:** Jennifer Susse, missed last meeting.
- **Superintendent Search Process:** Paul Schlichtman, chair, will schedule meeting.

- **Negotiations Subcommittee AEA:** no report

Liaisons Reports

Mr. Thielman said Jud Peirce did outstanding job in RACE

Dr. MacNeal said Schools are closed on Monday, Sept 30

Future agenda

Updating on issues on early start

Put delegate assembly on agenda

Executive Session

None

Correspondence Received:

- Warrant dated 9/12/2019
- June 13, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes and Sept 12, 2019 Regular Minutes
- SC approved appointment letters
- New Hire chart, R. Spiegel
- Facility update report.
- Arlington District Goals 2019-2020 Dept. Smart Goals Presentation
- YRBS Presentation

Adjournment

On a **motion** by Mr. Thielman, **seconded** by Mr. Hayner, it was **voted** to adjourn at 9:13 p.m.
(7-0)

Respectfully submitted by
Karen Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee