

Arlington School Committee
School Committee Regular Meeting
Thursday, December 19, 2019
6:30 PM

Arlington High School
School Committee Room
869 Mass Avenue, 6th Floor
Arlington, MA 02476

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

Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D. Superintendent, Roderick MacNeal, Jr. Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent, Michael Mason, Chief Financial Officer, Rob Spiegel, Human Resource Director, Alison Elmer, Director of Special Education, Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant, Julia Keyes, AEA Representative and Manjot More, student representative.

Mr. Mason arrived 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Thielman arrived at 8:01 p.m.

Open Meeting

Mr. Kardon welcomed everyone to the meeting and said Mr. Thielman will be arriving late.

Public Comment

None

Approval of Pathways Academy Plan

Ms. Michelle Gougeon, Executive VP/COO McLean Hospital and Laura Mead, Educational Administrator said they have come tonight to ask the Arlington School Committee for approval to relocate their Pathways Academy program from the Belmont campus to Arlington.

Ms. Gougeon and Ms. Mead provided an overview of the Pathways Academy program and gave an overview of the Arlington operations. They said they have run out of space on their Belmont campus and the former Germaine Lawrence property in Arlington will let Pathways Academy relocate two residential programs they have built around behavior therapy, social and emotional learning and to have classrooms organized for children with goals. The children will not be part of the Arlington school system, all programs are all inclusive and on site. Dr. Bodie mentioned that Dr. MacNeal, Ms. Elmer and Ms. Hoyo met with Ms. Gougeon, Ms. Mead and discussed science lessons, and professional development, resources and said they could have a partnership going forward. Dr. Bodie recommends approval of the program.

On a **motion** by Mr. Hayner, **seconded** by Mr. Schlichtman, it was **voted** to approve the relocation of the Pathways Academy Program to Arlington, MA. (6-0)

Elementary FY 21 Budgetary Needs Request

All seven elementary principals, Michael. Hanna, Karen Hartley, Karen Donato, Kate Perez, Mark McAneny, Thad Dingman, Stephanie Zerchykov and curriculum directors, Susan Bisson,

Sam Hoya, Sara Burd thanked everyone for the opportunity to speak on budget priorities. The following budget priorities on the elementary level was presented.

Budget priorities: Elementary Level, December 19, 2019
Superintendent Bodie, Assistant Superintendent MacNeal and Members of the School Committee,

Introductions of Principals:

Thad Dingman, Dallin Elementary School, Karen Donato, Thompson Elementary School, Mark McAneny, Bishop Elementary School, Karen Hartley, Peirce Elementary School, Michael Hanna, Stratton Elementary School, Stephanie Zerchykov, Brackett Elementary School, and Kate Peretz, Hardy Elementary School.

Thank you everyone for the opportunity to have this conversation about our schools. We are grateful for the continued support of our work, as well as the opportunity to provide leadership in a district that values a high quality educational experience for children. From all that we've experienced in Arlington, this fact has been unwavering.

We would like to open this year with a short expression of appreciation for the financial support of our initiatives from last year. We have a story to tell, and it begins in FY20. In the first year of the multi-year plan, school funding was provided for many things. We would like to highlight three areas that we found especially important to our work.

These are:

- Increased staffing of specialists in the areas of art, music, PE, and library
- Additional Assistant Principals
- Additional Coaches to support our curriculum.

An increase in specialist FTEs was the greatest investment at the elementary level last year. The impact of this investment was immediate and very positive. Right away, we heard from teachers that the set and predictable daily schedule, with regular and reliable common planning times, was making planning at the start of the year much more efficient and productive. The additional time to work as a grade level team with administrators has also been incredibly effective in supporting collaborative practices. We spent the first part of the year establishing our goals and expectations for these ACE Block times. ACE stands for Assessment, Collaboration, and Evidence (as taken from the Data Wise text). We have established norms, created shared goals, and have begun using data collected in classrooms to improve teaching and learning from kindergarten to grade 5. This has been a key criteria for success when it comes to our goal of narrowing the achievement gap and meeting the needs of all learners in a community that is becoming increasingly more diverse and complex as the years progress.

The new schedule and the addition of several specialists at the elementary level also means we are able to offer enriching opportunities for our students while we meet as adults to discuss their needs. In kindergarten through grade 3, the students are

participating in an additional quarter of music, art, PE, and library. At the upper levels, students are now a part of digital literacy classes and a grade level chorus. We hope to continue to expand this part of the day in the years to come to include greater choice for our students. We are appreciative that our specialists, librarian, and digital learning instructor are creating engaging programming to deliver to our students each week. Assistant Principals support our schools in many important ways. They will continue to be critical to the development of our new school structures and schedules, especially when it comes to the added ACE Blocks and the time it takes to look at data and make sound decisions that target our sub groups and individual students in their learning. The addition of coaches over several budget cycles, in particular for social studies and science in this past year, are also critical resources for us as we work toward meeting our instructional goals. Coaches have been invited to ACE blocks, have developed lessons to be used in classrooms, and have promoted grade level professional development in addition to working 1:1 with educators. The “A” in ACE is for assessment, and our coaches are working very closely with teachers to assess students and use this data to inform instruction. Some of these assessments are new, and the coaches are providing support, as well as a critical eye and opinion, so the data is helpful and not simply more work for both adults and children.

This year, the elementary principal team continues to approach budget requests with a multiple year view. Rather than look at FY21 in isolation, we once again considered the district priorities, requests from our faculty, our leadership emphases, funding commitments from last year, and the resources that we have and need to support students and teachers in demonstrating success and high achievement. We emphasize a vision for how our elementary schools can and should be resourced so that we can say we are leading Safe and Supportive Schools for all students, schools where high quality teaching and professional learning are a priority; schools where each child has the opportunity to achieve at a high level, and all families in the town are benefiting from their investment in our schools.

Our budgetary requests are designed to enhance and support the work we have already started, and continue that work with some additions. Any changes we are suggesting in the multi-year plan are based on what we have learned so far during this school year. We are very much aware that we must be financially conservative in our requests. Any suggestions for an increase are made with an overall vision of student success that includes social-emotional and academic development.

While we work on all areas of the curriculum every day, and our goals cover all curricular areas, our focus at this point in time is literacy. The data we have collected, both summative and formative, points us to reading and an ever increasing sense of urgency over our ability to narrow the achievement gap in reading. Working together with our reading departments, special educators, and general education classroom teachers, we are using assessments to target individual needs at the elementary level. Our first graders have already been assessed using new methods and targeted lessons have been used in classrooms that were introduced by our literacy coaches. We are creating a wealth of data to support our practice, and the time now allowed to us to talk

about this data and make decisions about next steps for students is invaluable. A restructuring of some of our reading department staff is needed at this time to fully support this programming. Our plan would bring our highly qualified reading staff into alignment with more equitable staffing ratios at each elementary school.

The budget requests are listed here, with the Line Items from the current 5 year plan, as applicable. The first four items are requested for FY21 (APs, reading support, and administrative staff). The remaining items on the list are put forward for your consideration in FY21 and beyond. Equity in staffing between departments and at schools, should be considered as we move forward.

Elementary Staffing Model & Increase in FTE (prioritized by enrollment and building/district administration)

FY 20 (funded) FY 21 (request)

Assistant Principals:

(Line Item 44)

1.5 FTE Total: 2.0 FTE Total:

Reading Department Staff - 2.1 FTE

Administrative Support

(Line item 35)

-1.0 FTE

BSPs (Behavior Support Specialists) - 2.0 FTE

Math Interventionist

(Line Item 43)

- 1.0 FTE

BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst) - 1.0 FTE

Special Education Learning

Specialists (Line Item 36)

- 1.0 FTE

Full time Occupational Therapists

(Line Item 27)

.4 FTE .5 FTE

The staffing model we are presenting considers the day to day experience of our students and teachers, and also the district priorities that we are supporting as an administrative team. Highest on the list are:

- Equity amongst schools as it relates to literacy support and
- Assistant Principals
- We believe the overall needs of our schools are also continuing to grow as enrollment increases. What will be important to continue to consider are the need for:
- Increased administrative support due to continued student growth and daily building demands, including building safety
- Aligned, high-quality instruction that supports significant and ongoing curriculum reform and improvement
- Continued focus on Safe and Supportive Schools (SASS).

We believe the items listed are of the most immediate need in terms of staffing

requests. We continue to support the multi-year plan in the ways it addresses other areas such as salary increases, materials and professional development. Here are some additional programming requests that would strengthen curriculum and instruction that we are also considering:

- 1.0 ELL Teacher
- 1.0 Library Media Specialist
- 1.0 Digital Learning Specialist
- 1.0 Social Studies Coach, Elementary Level
- 1.0 Science Coach, Elementary Level
- 1.0 Literacy Coach, Elementary Level
- 1.0 Math Coach, Elementary Level
- 1.0 Physical Therapy Assistant
- 0.5 Team Chair, Elementary Level

One last request is to highlight the continued need for a review of staffing at the classroom level and within our special education department. These line items are in the multi-year plan and we ask for your continued support in maintaining low and equitable numbers across our schools.

We can now take a moment to continue the conversation and answer questions, and also speak about the experiences in our schools that may underscore the importance of each staffing request.

After the budgetary needs were presented Mr. Kardon, Ms. Morgan and Ms. Susse all inquired about the priorities of the items, equity at each school, the enrollment growth and since the assistance principals were not a full time ask in the prior year, what would we give up to get them at full time. After a brief discussion, Dr. Bodie said she will work with the administrations during January to prioritize the budgetary requests for FY 21.

AEA Elementary FY 21 Budgetary Needs Requests

Marion Nolan presented the following AEA 2020-21 Menotomy/Elementary Budget Requests

Menotomy Preschool

A. An additional.....

- 1.0 FTE BCBA
- .5 FTE SLP
- Rationale : Due to the return of a seventh Preschool class, an increase of caseload, and
- to best meet the needs of the students

Elementary

- An additional.....
- 1.0 FTE EL teacher at Bishop
- 0.4 FTE EL teacher at Dallin

Rationale: Allow push in and differentiated instruction. Also to meet the district's goal of cultural competency .

B. An Additional 1.0 FTE Learning Specialist at Peirce

Rationale: To have at least three learning specialists at each elementary school (K-1, 2-3, 4-5). This will also create equity.

C. Additional 1.0 FTE Occupational Therapist

Rationale: At the elementary level, the OT demands have increased. In order to meet demand, an additional 1.0 OT is necessary to ensure IEP compliance and to ameliorate scheduling and travelling challenges.

D. TA in all grades 1-2 with 22 or more students

TA in all grades 3-5 with 24 or more students

Rationale: To meet the needs of all behavioral, academic, and social/emotional needs of all students. As we raise the expectations of students and with the increase of students with Special and social/emotional needs, students and teachers need a greater support system.

E. Additional 3.5 FTE Team Chairs

Rationale: To meet the needs and demands of increasing job duties and increase of students; at this time, most chairs are split between two buildings. The CPR indicates that we need to strengthen our procedural compliance in special education across the District. Team chairs who are assigned to only one building will have more direct contact with staff for training purposes, and reduced caseloads would lend themselves to the timely completion of all required paperwork, since chairs would have more time to do it.

F. More Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs)

Rationale: Students with behavioral challenges require the establishment of safety and behavior plans that have to be regularly and consistently implemented and revised. BCBAs are overseeing the Behavioral Support Paraprofessionals (BSPs), whose numbers have expanded and are now in many elementary buildings full-time. Additional BCBAs would ensure that Teams are effectively responding to the social-behavioral needs of students; as Arlington's population grows, so does the variety of needs that students have when they enter the school setting.

G. Materials for The Great Body Shop Curriculum

Rationale: Physical education teachers have taken over the Great Body Shop curriculum and updated materials are needed to carry out the program in grades K-3. Classroom teachers in grades 4-5 will continue to teach the GBS program to their classes and updated materials are also needed.

H. Increase of Social Workers

Rationale: Due to an increase of students with social and emotional needs. An awareness of these needs warrants staff who can be available for not only direct scheduled service, but also for crises or situations in which an immediate response is necessary.

I. Increase of Learning Specialists

Rationale: To ensure that students are able to access a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment- in their home school and in a general education classroom placement- an increase of learning specialists district wide is necessary. This is furthermore required by an increase in reading instruction that special education is assuming, which historically has been absorbed by the reading department. The special education department has spent considerable time and resources on reading professional development, but no increase in FTE has been made to reflect an increase in reading instruction by special education at the building level.

J. Additional 3.0 FTE Reading Teachers

Rationale: Create equity among the elementary schools. Also to meet the demands of the growing student population.

K. Mounting projectors across all schools and classrooms

Rationale: Teachers should not have to wheel projectors in and out of the classroom. Cords running across the classroom causes a safety hazard. All classrooms, including those of interventionists, should have its own mounted projector.

Many of the most urgent requests from our teachers this year involved capital improvements, which we realize are budgeted separately. Given that, our staff would like to remind the School Committee that there is still a need for roof repairs, air conditioned spaces in schools, replacement of worn out or broken classroom furniture, and pest mitigation. As some buildings have been renewed or expanded with new furnishings, the inequities between classrooms has become more noticeable. We hope you will work to ensure all teachers have access to safe classrooms of comparable quality. This will also help reduce the non-reimbursed out-of-pocket teacher expenditures.

After the budgetary requests were heard, Ms. Morgan asked if the committee has seen the technology plan yet. Dr. MacNeal said the technology plan was done last year for three year plan and that there is always work to do, and that he meets regularly with the union to discuss any concerns.

Approval of Student start date and February and April vacation weeks on the Arlington Public School Calendar 2020-2021

Mr. Kardon said that the School Committee will approve the start date and school vacation dates for Arlington Public Schools calendar for 2020-2021.

On **motion** by Dr. Allison-Ampe, **seconded** by Mr. Hayner it was voted to approve the APS School Calendar for 2020-2021 start date of Tuesday, September 8 for Grade 1-12 and open house for Kindergarten students, and approved school vacation dates beginning February 15, and April 19, 2021. (6-0)

Professional Development Day Update

Dr. MacNeal presented a follow-up on a very successful November 1st Professional Development Day. The Keynote speaker for the day was Dr. Liza Talusan who had presented at forums throughout the district. The feedback provided will drive the professional development for next year

Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Michael Mason presented the report to the full committee. The committee member inquired about certain line items in the budget.

Superintendent's Report

AHS Building Project Update

Dr. Bodie discussed the cost gap and reviewed the schematic designs of the high school building project. The AHS Building committee held many meetings over the last six weeks regarding the project decisions and many hard choices needed to be made. The timeline is the same and preconstruction will begin in October, but in February the committee will hold a forum to go over the project and communicate the details to the voters.

Dr. Bodie would like to wish the community, parents and students most joyous holiday season! Leave this year with a lot of gratitude from the community and appreciate the override. Thank you.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Schlichtman **moved approval of the Consent Agenda**

*Approval of Warrant: Warrant Number 20114, Dated 12/17/2019 Total

*Amount \$1,655,306.86

*Approval of Minutes: Regular School Committee Minutes 12/12/2019

*Approval of Trips: Nagaokakyo also Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, and Nara Japan Homestay July 4, 2020 to July 14, 2020.

Seconded by Mr. Hayner, **voted** 7-0

Policy: BE, BEDB, KF-E

On a **motion** by Mr. Schlichtman, **seconded** by Mr. Hayner, it was **voted** to approve the second reading of policy BE School Committee Meetings. (7-0)

On a **motion** by Mr. Schlichtman, **seconded** by Mr. Hayner, it was **voted** to approve the second reading of policy BEDB Agenda Format Prep and Dissemination as amended. (5-1-1)
Mr. Thielman voted No, Ms. Susse abstained.

On a **motion** by Mr. Schlichtman, **seconded** by Mr. Hayner, it was **voted** to approve the second reading of policy KF-E Fee Structure for Rental of School Building Space. (7-0)

Subcommittee/Liaison Reports/Announcements

- Budget: Kirsi Allison-Ampe (chair) next meeting at Jan 9 at 8:30 am.

- Policies & Procedures: Paul Schlichtman (chair) just adopted three policies.
- Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Accountability: Jane Morgan (chair) will need to meet in New Year to tackle SOA plan which Dr. Bodie is working on. Will have subcommittee meeting January/February to review draft and will meet to review schedule of plan which is due April 1.
- Community Relations: Jennifer Susse (chair) will do doodle mid-January
- Facilities: Bill Hayner (chair) will attend Dallin PTO Dallin, January 28 at 7 p.m.
- Legal Service, Bill Hayner chair), Jeff Thielman
- Arlington High School Building Committee: Jeff Thielman, Kirsi Allison-Ampe
- Calendar Committee: Ms. Susse, held meeting with community on December 11, 50 people showed up, held small group discussion, and shifted discussion, and also received 100 emails with their thoughts and prefaces and meet again on December 18 and looked at comments and need more time. The will come back to full School Committee in April, will look at calendar format. Mr. Kardon wants to give parents one year notice on changes. Dr. Bodie said it is a contractual issue and Ms. Julia Keyes said the union is not open to discuss contract for two years.
- Election Modernization Committee: Ms. Susse met and discuss warrant articles, one on changes the way Town Meeting members are elected and those with most votes get longer terms.
- Superintendent Search Process: Paul Schlichtman held a meeting today at 5:00 with Mr. Koucher, MASC and discussed RFP, timeline and would the subcommittee made a motion to draft of the RFP mid-January
- AEA Negotiations: Len Kardon and Paul Schlichtman (chair)
- Liaisons Reports
- Announcements
- Future Agenda Items
Special Education LABB inclusion report and hoping to get report before February, Dr. Bodie agreed.

On a **motion** by Mr. Hayner, **seconded** by Mr. Thielman it was voted to disband the Legal Services Subcommittee. (7-0)

Executive Session

None

Correspondence Received:

Warrant 20114 dated 12/17/2019

School Committee Regular Minutes 12/12/2019

Pathways Academy documents

Out of State - International Travel Application Nagaokakyo, Japan, July 2020

APS Elementary FY 21 Budget Needs Request

AEA 20-21 Menotomy/Elementary Budget Request

BE School Committee Meetings second Reading

BEDB Agenda Format Prep and Dissemination edits for second reading

KF-E Fee Structure for Rental of School Building Space, second Reading

Approval of Student start date and February and April vacation weeks on the Arlington

Public School Calendar 2020-2021
November 1 Professional Development Day Presentation

Adjournment

On a **motion** by Mr. Thielman, **seconded** by Mr. Schlichtman it was **voted** to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. (7-0)

Respectfully submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee