

**ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Arlington School Committee**  
**Special School Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday, August 24, 2021**  
Approved:

Conducted by Remote Participation <https://www.mass.gov/doc/order-suspending-certain-provision-of-openmeeting-law/download>.

Attendees: School Committee Members: Bill Hayner, Kirsi Allison-Ampe, Liz Exton, Len Kardon, Paul Schlichtman, Jane Morgan, Jeff Theilman. Arlington Public Schools Administration: Elizabeth Homan, Superintendent, Roderick MacNeal, Assistant Superintendent, Rob Spiegel, Director of Human Resources, Michael Mason, Chief Financial Officer, Alison Elmer, Director of Special Education, Liz Diggins, Administrative Assistant. Other Attendees: Brian Corcoran, Public Comment

**Open Meeting**

Mr. Hayner opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and read the Governor's orders and confirmed the attendance of those listed above.

**Public Comment**

Introduction by Mr. Hayner of public comment by Brian Corcoran – Mr. Corcoran thanked Dr. Homan for her Plan. Spoke about mask mandate and believes that masks are not effective. Spoke of various studies done of masks and distances.

**6:45 p.m. APS Pandemic Recovery Plan and Presentation** updates by Superintendent Homan. – Superintendent Homan provided an update on her plan since the last School Committee Meeting.

**Communications** – District, school and staff forums are continuing. New and remote student tours are happening. In person and/virtual tours will start at the beginning of the year.

**Vaccinations** are expected to be required of all staff. APS and DOH and Human Services will coordinate the clinics through the year. Consent for continued pool testing with a new vendor means a new form; a working plan will streamline the process. Some cohorting measures will be in place PreK-6: e.g., striving for at least 3 feet distance, assigned seating, in-door seating for lunches with minimum of 6 feet with outdoor options as much as possible, outdoor instruction prioritized, etc. Playing outdoors is unmasked. Protocols for illness and stand-alone symptoms have been updated. Travel recommendations have been added to the Superintendent's Plan and are suggestions/recommendations and should not prevent a student from returning to school. Post-travel quarantine will NOT be required. Close contacts of an infected student may remain in school if they agree to Test and Stay. If a student does NOT choose to Test and Stay they need to stay out of school for 7 days, returning on day 8. Asynchronous work for students will be provided. Dr. Homan suggests that School Committee members and parents review the Quarantine and Isolation – positive and symptomatic situations. Positive cases of Covid-19 will be handled and reported to close

contacts immediately. An FAQ document will be published with a recovery plan and posted on the website.

Ms. Morgan thanked Dr. Homan and discussed a few disappointments – microclimate, student/staff exposure, vaccination requirement for adults and volunteers in the buildings.

Mr. Kardon thanked Dr. Homan and asked for definitions of close contacts – it came from DESE guidance per Dr. Homan. Surprised no tents at the schools; hopes it wasn't about the cost. Dr. Homan says costs is a factor and felt the cost vs. what they get for it was not worth it.

Dr. Allison-Ampe pointed out that the travel recommendations in Dr. Homan's plan do not align with the CDC travel recommendations and asked for clarification. Dr. Homan said there was a lengthy discussion and safety was a big factor. There was no support on the deciding committee to suggest a different protocol/change the decision. Dr. Ampe asked if travelers could be put into the Test and Stay Program. Julianna Keyes says not enough staff for that process.

Mr. Schlichtman thanked the Superintendent for her report and updates. Middlesex League – student athletes over 12, draw up a policy requiring proof of vaccination of the athletes in the Middlesex League so that all opposing teams are vaccinated as well.

Ms. Exton suggests more consistency at all schools for lunches outdoors. She agreed tents last year didn't work and supports Dr. Homan's Plan. Commends nurses and staff for their direction and work and ensures families they WILL be informed as necessary. Feels travel guidelines for kids under 10 fell in a grey area by State last time. Felt too much staff resources would be needed for Test and Stay after travel. Would like to pursue vaccination for extracurricular activities.

Mr. Thielman says Dr. Homan and team have done a great job on the Plan. Recovery Plan PDF – are we adopting the plan? Dr. Homan responded yes. Asked for clarity on the process. Mr. Hayner explained the process of approval. Dr. Homan asks for adoption of the Plan as is and updates be brought to the Committee as needed using the authority previously discussed. Ms. Morgan doesn't believe the School Committee has to weigh in when the State makes the rules but when the District is deviating from State guidance the School Committee should weigh in. Mr. Thielman agrees with Ms. Morgan's suggestion but also has a great confidence in the Administration to make decisions when things evolve and they need to pivot in the moment. Mr. Thielman talks about the first six weeks of school and asks for a report from that data/analysis. Ask Dr. Homan if she will supply an outcomes report. Referred the question to Dr. MacNeal. Specific dates of the reporting will be given in the future and overviews of the findings will be provided. Action steps will be reflected in the goals from the curriculum leaders that are set.

*A motion was made by Mr. Thielman to approve the APS Pandemic Recovery Plan and Presentation/Superintendent's Plan and seconded by Mr. Schlichtman.*

Roll call vote: Ms. Morgan yes, Ms. Exton yes, Mr. Thielman yes, Mr. Kardon yes, Mr. Schlichtman yes, Mr. Hayner yes. Dr. Allison-Ampe yes.

**7:25 p.m. School Committee Chat Dates, 2021-2022 (Liz Exton)**

Ms. Exton reports that we now have 12 dates, significantly less than last year. Saturday at 11 a.m. seems best with two weekday chats for flexibility. She will be recruiting members to attend these virtual chats. No approval/vote needed by School Committee.

**7:30 p.m. Superintendent's Report (Liz Homan)**

***-Enrollment Report –***

New enrollment materials submitted. Many more students in grades 1 and 2 have enrolled in the past two weeks. OOD placements now included. Additional analysis was provided by Mr. Mason who then presented his report information. Mr. Mason discussed the analysis vs. projection reports. 40% have returned. Ms. Morgan asked if the student enrollment student forms are complete for the 6015 total but not part of the 6175s – Superintendent responded yes. Mr. Kardon asked about an elementary position that was vacant. Ms. Homan responded the position is not being filled. Mr. Schlichtman asked if Members would be notified about any significant changes that are expected between now and the opening of school and Mr. Mason responded absolutely.

***-Administrative Hiring Update-***

Dr. Homan announced that Richelle Smith is the new Director of METCO Program.

Mr. Schlichtman asked for an update on flooding – Dr. Homan reports no major flooding to buildings due to Henri, but the week before AHS and Gibbs had some flooding and require some plan/work to prevent future flooding. Dr. Ampe asked about AHS parking lot flooding and wondered if catch basins, filling and flooding, becomes an environmental issue? Is it a maintenance problem or a capital issue? Dr. Homan will be following up with Public Works. Not sure how typical but understands it is an unusual day and occurrence. Mr. Thielman suggests that Dr. Homan reach out to the Design Team to take a look at this issue and see if we need to do anything in particular about the AHS flooding issue. Mr. Hayner suggests that the Town has issues with flooding in the past.

**7:45 p.m. Consent Agenda**

Approval of Warrant, #22021, 8/17/2021, \$509,095.39

Minutes 8/10/21

Minutes 8/12/21

A motion was made to approve all consent agenda items by Liz Exton, seconded by Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe

Roll call vote: Ms. Morgan yes, Ms. Exton yes, Mr. Thielman yes, Mr. Kardon yes, Mr. Schlichtman yes, Mr. Hayner yes. Dr. Allison-Ampe

**Subcommittee/Liaison Reports/Announcements**

- Budget – Kirsi Allison-Ampe – Meeting upcoming on September 1.
- Community Relations - Liz Exton – None
- Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Accountability, Len Kardon – Are people interested in exploring changes at Gibbs?

- Facilities, Jeff Thielman – Flooding and impact can be discussed in a subcommittee meeting.
- Policy & Procedures, Paul Schlichtman – No report
- Arlington High School Building Committee, Jeff Thielman, Kirsi Allison-Ampe – A meeting will be held on Thursday, August 26 and then again to September 14
- Liaisons Reports - none
- Announcements - none
- Future Agenda Items - none

8:05 p.m. A motion was made to move into Executive Session by Mr. Schlichtman, seconded by Dr. Allison-Ampe.

Respectfully submitted by:

Elizabeth M. Diggins  
Administrative Assistant  
Arlington School Committee