

## **ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*In accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts General laws, Chapter 30A, Section 20, notice is hereby given for the following meeting of the:*

***Arlington School Committee  
School Committee Regular Meeting  
Thursday, September 23, 2021  
6:30 PM***

***Open Meeting: Mr. Hayner opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and confirmed the following attendees: L. Exton, K. Allison-Ampe, L. Kardon, J. Morgan, P. Schlichtman, J. Thielman, E. Homan, M. Mason, R. Spiegel, R. MacNeal***

*Mr. Hayner made a change to a word in the agenda from litigation to “for negotiation purposes only.”*

### ***6:35 p.m. Public Comment***

There were no public speakers at the meeting

### ***New Hire Introductions***

Dr. Homan welcomed all the new hires to AHS Administration – some new, some changed status from part time to full time and some changed positions.

### ***Summer School Report – R. MacNeal***

Dr. MacNeal presented an overview of the Summer Learning Program. Despite challenges in the spring they were able to fully staff the Program. Praised the teachers for their work with the students. This was an in-person and remote Program for ELA and Math. Also conducted an ELE Program which was all virtual. Ms. Exton asked if any survey/feedback requests were done on the Program. A survey was sent out and most (only 4 families excluded) thought it was great. There will be a focus on communication for next year. No one expected that the road construction would be happening in the area when they applied for the permit to use the space. They hope to start looking for staff in December to try to avoid the problem of not enough staff for next year. Dr. Ampe wondered if students who got D's could participate rather than just students who failed. Dr. MacNeal responded that the D still gives the students credits and he'll speak with Dr. Janger about such a Program. Dr. Ampe also asked about the extended school year numbers – why so many fewer kids in the HS? Alison Elmer responded. Ms. Morgan asked for assurance that all programming will return to in-person instruction in 2022. Dr. MacNeal responded that they will do everything in their power to have the in-person learning. Mr. Kardon wondered if the current model could be examined to see if it's the most effective and

suggested the Committee at least think about it. Mr. Schlichtman asked what other resources the Committee might need to provide for next year. Dr. MacNeal will think about any other resources that might be needed. Dr. Homan mentioned maybe extending some additional resources to the High School. Mr. Hayner asked Dr. MacNeal to pass along their thanks to all the people who worked this summer in the Program

### ***Revised Handbooks – R. MacNeal***

Handbooks for voting/approval by the School Committee so that they can be posted to the website. Dr. MacNeal asked for comments or questions about the handbooks

### ***Elementary Level, Gibbs, Ottoson and AHS***

- Ms. Morgan's concerns on dress code were dealt with immediately by Dr. MacNeal and Dr. Homan
- Mr. Kardon discussed increasing 6 to 7 absences due to Covid-19 and this will be revisited.
- Doctor notes required – Can Administration give consideration to a kid being really sick and not needing a doctor's note?
- Dr. Ampe discussed Page 9 – homework – and asking to rephrase to sound more inviting. Currently makes it sound like reading is too much like work.

### ***Superintendent's Goals***

Dr. Homan discussed her goal setting which has been on-going over the past weeks. Dr. Homan discussed her self-assessment with the skills she brings to her work and the challenges she sees ahead. Her skills: commitment, desire, experience, reflective stance and willingness to hear feedback. Some challenges discussed to ensure entry plan, prioritize technical requirements, balance demands, to welcome voices that have previously been marginalized. Dr. Homan spoke to her goals and how they are based on identifying the Immediate District Needs, the data that informed that and the goal it leads to. During her listening sessions it was clear that we need to build a collaborative and equity-focused leadership culture. Dr. Homan displayed a scaled score from 2017-2021 and the equity disparities. Dr. Homan discussed her Goals with key actions, evidence and outcomes expected. Dr. Homan spoke on how she will ensure a safe and supportive pandemic return and recovery to minimize absenteeism. Goal 4 – Professional Practice New Superintendent Induction Program and Deeper Learning D.

During the Q&A, Mr. Kardon asked that if Dr. Homan is pulled in too many directions she should discuss with the Committee and if she feels overwhelmed the SC supports her to keep things sustainable. Dr. Ampe echoed Mr. Kardon's and Ms. Morgan's suggestions to avoid burnout for Dr. Homan – do less, do well. Thinks assessment and goals are great. Mr. Schlichtman said this plan is ambitious and distractions happen. Says we can take a look at it again when everyone knows each other better. Mr. Thielman offered his full support for Dr.

Homan's goals. Mr. Schlichtman moved receipt, Mr. Thielman seconded, all members agreed unanimously. Mr. Hayner thanked Dr. Homan for her communications during this difficult week. Dr. Homan thanked everyone!

### ***ESSER III Spending Plan***

Dr. Homan shared her ESSER III slides and discussed the ESSER III funds of \$1,133,653. She discussed the community outreach to inform planning and a timeline. She needs the Committees approval for the plan. She offered a very initial draft of what she plans to prioritize. The survey participation included over 800 families/staff. Initiative B (Support to Ensure Student Access to Consistent and Equitable Instruction) was the most selected option (66.2%). Feedback included some trends: directly applicable to classroom instruction, a common language around anti-racism, diversity, gender identity, etc. There were requests to focus on social emotional learning/mental health – providing staffing and making sure teachers feel empowered to do the work, rather than hiring consultants. Lots of requests specifically for staff. Staffing is challenging because they require including them into a budget three years down the road. Dr. Homan presented the Early Warning Outcomes – falling behind academically in school – and the supports that may need to be put in place. Academic outcomes of the Plan B option included closing achievement gaps, significant gains in ELA and Math, supporting students with IEPs.

The team came up with 4 core initiatives: Comprehensive Equity Audit and Strategy Development, Expanding Teacher Leadership Capacity System-wide, Resources to Support Engagement, Mental Health, and School Culture and Acceleration and Improvement of APS Coaching Models.

Preliminary Spending Plan was presented by Dr. Homan for a three-year period.

During the Q&A, Mr. Schlichtman commented that he found the report very thoughtful and felt equity percentages should be watched. Glad to see that we are working on diversity, equity and inclusion. Mr. Kardon thanked Dr. Homan and the team for putting this together and asked about the coaching model audit – is it internal or external? Dr. MacNeal discussed that a consulting team has been contracted to work with them to focus on creating a shared vision. The meetings are ongoing. The goal is to create a shared vision and foster that relationship for it to be a productive partnership. Dr. Ampe thinks the program is great and cohesive. She is curious whether any aspects of the mentor program should receive any of the information from this or be used as a tool with the teachers we already have. Should the already existing mentor program include any of these new and different things being suggested? She doesn't see any connection between the existing and new Program. Dr. Homan reports that they have ideas on how to do this. Ms. Morgan wanted to share that she is excited to see how this coaching model works and appreciates how challenging this work is and how hard it is to take exceptional teachers and have them become effective coaches. Ms. Exton is excited about the coaching piece and has herself benefitted from it. She wants us to be able to hang on to the teachers they are coaching rather than having to start over with new teachers every year. Dr. Homan reports that retention is a big

part of the conversations that they have. Mr. Hayner asked if ESSER requires a vote – none required. AEA supports Option B and likes the idea of the teacher development among the equity issues.

Mr. Schlichtman moved to receipt, seconded by Mr. Thielman. Roll call vote, Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Kardon, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner - Unanimously approved.

### ***Monthly Financial Report***

Mr. Mason reports that nothing has changed with the reports that were distributed. Reports are earlier than usual so some of the variances are larger. SC Member brought to Mr. Mason's attention Teacher's Salaries, Maintenance Salaries and the Special Ed out-of-district expenditures. Mr. Mason spoke on the variances of the teacher's salaries – numbers will be fine-tuned in the next report. Some positions are still open and there will be others. Facilities Dept. hiring difficulties. Out of District tuition entry has not yet been made/moved over. Mr. Mason hasn't provided a report this early in the past so any confusion will be clear in the next report. Mr. Schlichtman voiced confusion on the 2022 report showing numbers for fiscal 2021. Mr. Mason explained the process and the reflection of the report in question. Dr. Ampe asked Mr. Mason about the tuition to other schools – he explained that the journal entry has yet been made. Mr. Mason said that will clear in the next report. Ms. Morgan had the same question as Dr. Ampe and thanked Mr. Mason.

A motion was suggested by Mr. Hayner to accept and approve the grants (Esser II, Title I, Title IIA, Title IVA and METCO) according to the approved FY22 budget. Dr. Ampe so moved, Ms. Morgan seconded. Dr. Ampe pointed out that the grants were discussed at budget subcommittee and they were approved, however language was changed so they didn't have the motion to present to the full SC. Roll call vote, Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Kardon, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner - Unanimously approved.

A motion was suggested by Mr. Hayner to accept and approve ACTNow, so moved by Dr. Ampe, seconded by Ms. Morgan. Roll call vote, Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Kardon, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner - Unanimously approved.

A motion was suggested by Mr. Hayner to accept and approve the use of the Symmes Memorial Fund and Sanborn Foundation Grant, so moved by Mr. Schlichtman, seconded by Ms. Morgan. Roll call vote, Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Kardon, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner - Unanimously approved.

### ***Supported Learning Center SLC – D (held at Peirce School)***

Ms. Elmer and Principal Andrew Ahmadi presented. Ms. Elmer described the history of the program development. Designed for students identified with specific learning disabilities in reading/writing/language impairments. The approach to target student deficits in key foundation areas (accuracy, retrieval, oral language comprehension). Students who fit this profile are

students with average or above average cognitive skills with a learning disability/disabilities and language based deficits so severe that they cannot access grade level curriculum and make progress towards their IEP goals with more inclusive special education supports. Student profile: cognitive, language, academic inefficiencies. Specific to this Program is that it is multi-sensory, explicit, sequential, cumulative and structured. Current staffing of the Program was summarized by Ms. Elmer. Located at Peirce School, serving grades 3 & 4, intended growth to grade 5 next year. 12:1:1 regulation limit.

Q&A offered to the committee. Mr. Kardon asked if this Program requires a reading specialist. Ms. Elmer explained how the determination is made. Most often the intervention includes Wilson but others are delivered by special educators. They are waiting on a reading license for specialist in Massachusetts (she's from California). Mr. Kardon suggests that Principal Ahmadi work with other principals on this program development. Mr. Kardon would like to be informed about development programs like this in the future. Dr. Ampe asked how we helped these children before we had this Program. Elementary Educators worked really hard/deeply in this work over the past four years. Ms. Morgan was surprised when she heard of the Program (found out on the website). Hopes the district continues and lets the community know about the Program; those who know are very pleased. Ms. Morgan asked about the facilities fees. Ms. Elmer discussed identifying students earlier, the plan for K1 & 2 – no plan. Mr. Ahmadi feels students have been integrated well including their meals, snacks, recess, specialist classes and the students are making connections across classroom, and teachers work together in a shared curriculum. Mr. Ahmadi is proud of the kids and the faculty. Ms. Morgan thanked Mr. Ahmadi and his faculty for having the Program at Peirce. Ms. Exton wants to know if this program will still exist when 5<sup>th</sup> graders move to Gibbs – just as a comment not for discussion. Mr. Hayner would like this reinforced to the community. Mr. Hayner thanked Ms. Elmer and the entire staff at Peirce.

### ***Licensed Practical Nurse Job Description***

Mr. Spiegel discussed that this is a need recognized as a need for students in the district and the nurses are stretched. Identified to help out particularly in one of the buildings and assist the school nurse in other areas. Adding a licensed practical nurse as a new job is a less expensive option although we are still looking for school nurses. Mr. Hayner moved to accept this position, Mr. Schlichtman moved to accept, Mr. Thielman seconded. Mr. Hayner questioned the hourly rate and asked Mr. Spiegel and the nurse see the rate as the rate for this position in Massachusetts. They see this as a full-time job. Ms. Morgan thinks this is really important and is concerned about the nurse staffing right now and wants to support the nurses and recommends approving this position. Mr. Spiegel agreed that every district is in need of nurses; we are not unique in these staffing challenges. Discussion continued on the critical need of nurses and how much we are asking of the nurses at this present time and this past year especially. Dr. Ampe asked if it's OK we do this – have someone who isn't a school nurse. Mr. Spiegel responded that

the law allows for this. Roll call vote: Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Kardon, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner – The position was approved unanimously.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Homan reported on a donation we received from National Grid – Sanitizing wipes – full pallet for all schools.

Reopening Update – Ventilation Protocols and Procedures will include additional human and technical checks of the ventilation systems. Hardy School had possible school-based Covid-19 spread (10 individuals), AHS was dismissed early on 9/23 due to a blown transformer. Pooled testing continues and additional support from CIC Health reports and an addition of 5 new hands on deck to help with pool testing. We have the Covid-19 dashboard up and running with updates at least once a week with new case counts.

Enrollment Update – Net changed from 2020 to 2021 in the new report. This newest info includes withdrawals and students who didn't show up. We had a drop in the enrollment projected increase for this year to 130 additional students compared to October 1, 2020.

No questions from the School Committee.

### **Remote Participation Study Committee Appointment**

Mr. Hayner entertained a motion to support the appointment of the School Committee Chair to the Remote Participation Study Committee. The motion was so moved by Mr. Schlichtman, seconded by Mr. Kardon. Mr. Hayner was appointed as SC Member on Remote Participation Study Committee. Roll call vote: Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Kardon, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner – The appointment was approved unanimously and members thanked Mr. Hayner.

### **Discussion of Belmont SC Letter: RE: Vaccine Requirement to attend School**

Mr. Schlichtman explained that Belmont sent this letter regarding vaccines and discussed the various vaccines required to attend school and various summer camps. Mr. Kardon commented that he is not aware of anyone will not lobby or vote for this mandate.

A motion was made by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Dr. Ampe to Support the Belmont School Committee Letter for vaccine requirement for school attendance.

Roll call vote: Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner – The School Committee approved to support this vote, with the exception of Mr. Kardon, who voted against. (6-0-1)

### **Consent Agenda:**

Warrant #: 22052, Warrant #:22042, School Committee Minutes, August 24, 2021, August 9, 2021. A motion to approve was made by P. Schlichtman, seconded by Dr. Ampe. Roll call vote: Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Kardon, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner. Approved unanimously.

#### Policy EBC – Supplemental – First Read

Mr. Schlichtman explained the amendment and language. With consultation with counsel the Superintendent has recommended the new language in the version before the School Committee. The second read will be prepared for a vote. Mr. Kardon would prefer that we follow our health authority and has not heard anyone should require a vaccination. He will not support this right now. We should defer to the Superintendent for policy rather than bringing our own policies to the Committee. Ms. Exton wants clarification of “age eligible.” Mr. Schlichtman asked the Superintendent for her input. She has a level of hesitation to require a vaccination that is not FDA approved. Dr. Homan explained the various exclusions. If School Committee supports this, Dr. Homan understands and would support as well. Liz Exton has reservations about supporting this for under 16. Mr. Thielman would like the Policies and Procedures team to explain the goal of this supplement. Mr. Schlichtman explained how this supplement came to be/the thinking behind it. Dr. Ampe is open to changing to follow FDA requirements; requiring vaccine for athletics-thinks it’s reasonable to require students to vaccinate to participate because they are at a high risk of being infected. This would keep more kids in school. Ms. Morgan feels we have an obligation to protect the staff, coaches, other athletes, participants, wants the activities to be available to students so we don’t want to see spread. We need to do what we can to vaccinate, with medical exemptions identified, of course.

Mr. Schlichtman will present this for second read at next meeting.

#### **Subcommittee/Liaison Reports/Announcements**

Budget – Meeting scheduled for Monday at 10:30 a.m. on Zoom

Community Relations – Liz Exton reports the first chat is scheduled for Saturday, 9/25 @ 11 a.m. with Jane Morgan, grades 6-12 especially.

Curriculum – No report.

Facilities – Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September. Playground report – proactive plan for improvements to the playgrounds. Waiting on a report from Mr. Mason and Dr. Homan which projects. Analysis of middle school – to dialogue statement of interest for a middle school. This is how we start with an outside consultant.

Policies and Procedures – Discussed COVID policy and brief mention for future meeting.

AHS Building Committee – Meets again on a future date in October via Zoom.

No Liaison Reports or Announcements.

Mr. Hayner requested to entertain a motion to go into Executive Session and informed all that the meeting will not resume after Executive Session.

Roll call vote: Dr. Ampe, Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Kardon, Ms. Exton, Mr. Hayner. Approved unanimously.

9:15 p.m. Meeting Adjourned