

## **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, December 16, 2021  
6:30 PM  
DRAFT Minutes***

***Conducted remotely via Zoom***

### **6:30 p.m.**

The regular school committee meeting was called to order by Mr. Hayner at 6:30 p.m. and he confirmed the attendance of the following Ms. Exton, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Dr. Homan, yes, Dr. MacNeal, yes, Mr. Spiegel, yes, Mr. Mason, yes, Ms. Elmer, yes, Ms. Keyes, yes, Ms. Carmody, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes. The minutes from the regular meetings on November 18, 2021 and December 2, 2021 were approved.

Additional panelists included: D. Perry, K. Donato, S. Hoyo, N. Schwartz, K. Peretz, M. McAneny, B. Pappazisis, C. Bruzzese, D. Sheehan, O. Goodrich, S. Burd, J. Schlenger, M. Pierre-Maxwell, M. Coleman, C. Bouvier, M. Hanna, A. Ahmadi, M. Credle Thomas, B. Meringer, J. Dunn, S. Burd, S. Zerchykov and S. Keane ACMI.

### **6:31 p.m.**

#### **Public Participation**

No public participation was requested.

### **6:34 p.m.**

#### **AHS Student Rep – M. Carmody**

Holiday spirit week next week to kick off the upcoming vacation week to get everyone in the spirit and boost morale. Battle of the Bands is back and will be held on January 28 at the Regent Theatre.

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

#### **Budget Requests Report – E. Homan**

Dr. Homan reported that the Budget Request Report has been submitted to the School Committee. She thanked everyone for the efforts on preparing these budgets and explained that all of the leaders were all in attendance and waiting to answer any questions that the Superintendent or Mr. Mason could not answer. Dr. Homan then provided a brief update on the report and opened the time to a Q&A for the School Committee Members. Questions evolved around the additional new positions in the report, including the internship position moving from a .2 to a .4, an elementary math program coordinator and the registrar position (new) due to an

increased workload. These questions and specific Budget Request Report line item questions were answered by the administrators/leaders. Dr. Homan explained that this is very preliminary document showing every request that came in and noted that they have not accounted for efficiencies (yet) and have not identified items that may be covered by grants. A specific question on the substantial facilities projects arose and M. Mason addressed the question directly.

**7:24 p.m.**

**Peirce School Improvement Plan – A. Ahmadi and O. Goodrich**

Mr. Ahmadi introduced himself and thanked Dr. Homan for the opportunity to present and also thanked the School Committee for approving Assistant Principals for the district. Mr. Ahmadi then introduced to the Committee Members to his Assistant Principal, Ms. O. Goodrich. Mr. Ahmadi presented his agenda and welcomed questions at the end of his presentation. Mr. Ahmadi described the Peirce community as a tight-knit, growing community. His ACE blocks were presented as one of the wins for the school this fall. He plans to build on strengthening their focus on math instruction, early literacy and equity and school culture. The Peirce Panorama Survey Results showed an increase in all categories. The Peirce School key initiatives and action steps were summarized and then opened for questions from the Committee. Mr. Schlichtman thanked the Principal for a very good report. Mr. Thielman agreed with Mr. Schlichtman and also asked about spacing considerations of the Building. All space is being utilized and some adult work space consolidated. One more section added would create a loss of an Art Room. Dr. Homan noted that they are not in a position to lose the Art Room or a specialist room. It's being handled. Mr. Kardon asked about increased enrollment given the new building opening in the area. Dr. Homan thanked the Peirce Team for their very nice job.

Motion to accept made by Mr. Thielman, and seconded. Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Ampe, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Ms. Exton, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Mr. Hayner, yes.

**7:45 p.m.**

**Brackett School Improvement Plan – S. Zerchykov and Ms. Schwartz**

Ms. Zerchykov explained how wonderful it is to greet the Brackett School community in the morning and how she feels she has the best job in the World. She feels the Community is a very important and driving force of their work. She introduced and expressed her gratitude for her Assistant Principal, Ms. Schwartz who was also present in the meeting. Principal Zerchykov asked members to reflect on the prior year using the report in front of them and thanked them for their previous support. Principal Zerchykov shared "Brackett at a Glance" to the Committee. She noted the dedication to improving literacy instruction, mathematics needing improvement high needs subgroup.

The Assistant Principal then took over the data presentation. Ms. Schwartz acknowledged and gave praise for all the hard work everyone is doing and presented the building priorities for the Brackett including their first priority – focusing on literacy. Ms. Schwartz discussed the details and explained how the reading needs could be targeted. Brackett's second school based priority is Mathematics. There was some decline in student achievement – they want to pay close attention to participation and enrichment activities. The third priority this year is focused on the

high-needs (risk) population (e.g., Special Ed, low socio-economic subgroup, non-native speakers). Key initiatives and action steps included a more detailed plan for the Literacy, Mathematics and Equity and Culture. Ms. Zerchykov then shared the resources they have and need to support their success in these areas of focus.

The presentation was then opened up to questions and comments. Questions on SEL were answered by Ms. Schwartz and Mr. Schlichtman acknowledged the delight of the morning greetings of the Brackett Community by the principal

Mr. Hayner moved to receive the plan and it was seconded. Roll call vote: Ms. Exton, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Ampe, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes and Mr. Hayner, yes.

### **8:00 p.m.**

#### **Monthly Financial Report – M. Mason**

Mr. Mason thanked the School Committee for allowing him to postpone his presentation from last week to this week. He started his presentation with the Financial Reports for that period which included the COVID-19 grant and the Electric Bus Grant. He discussed the yearly spending for the period ending November 30. Vacant positions reflect some of the reason for the balance in the budget. Grants are in-line as far as spending. We have awarded a vendor to manufacture the two new buses – will take approximately nine to 12 months.

The three grants for which approval is being requested by the School Committee are: Safe and Supportive Schools competitive grant, a smaller grant on the Secretaries Advisory Group on Environmental Education and the Esser III Grant.

A motion to accept all three grants was made by Dr. Ampe and seconded. Roll Call, Ms. Exton yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Mr. Schlichtman yes, Dr. Ampe, yes, Mr. Hayner, yes.

The End of Year Report was then discussed and Mr. Mason asked for questions. Dr. Ampe asked about the large amount for Computer Software which is due to the increased use of software (which we started to do when we went remote) and noted that these subscriptions are continuing.

### **8:07 p.m.**

#### **Superintendent Goals and Formative Assessment Update**

Dr. Homan discussed her District Improvement Goals and described the status of these goals (in progress or completed). She outlined how she will compile the information and present the information at the upcoming meeting in January. This presentation discussion is to ask questions and learn how the SC would like the information presented to them. A discussion took place on how this presentation will take place and whether or not the Committee should make their own document that contains all information with each member's comments. Narrative feedback is to be provided in advance that would be part of public record and that was the plan. Numerical rankings or quantitative feedback was not being done – but rather qualifying feedback instead.

Mr. Thielman agreed not to do anything numerical, but rather comments to be used. Dr. Homan and Mr. Hayner will prepare a form that the SC members can use.

### **8:16 p.m.**

#### **Superintendent's Report – E. Homan**

COVID update – lighter cases this week. Town side statistics show a significant uptick. Transmission in schools is not a concern as the protocols in place are working well. Timeline testing for next week has been adjusted accordingly. No relaxation on protocols being considered at this time.

Vaccination rates in the schools was presented. Younger students are included in the chart. The AHS Winter Concert was held on 12/15 – a smashing success!

AEF Foundation – an invitation to apply in January

APS was awarded \$42,821 for a FY22 Teacher Diversification Pilot Program

APS Equity Audit was held today on 12/16/21 with vendors.

TikTok Threat – Superintendent sent out a note to families that we will be vigilant and take it seriously and have increased police presence.

Open Positions – still 36 open. WBUR reported that there are massive shortfalls in staff in education nationwide

Snow Days – will be kept snow days – not remote learning – and the commissioner agrees!

If it's a challenging winter we can consider remote learning if we need to.

Enrollments – report doesn't show any significant changes.

Mr. Thielman thanked Dr. Homan for her presentation and asked about hiring strategies to fill the open positions. Dr. Homan discussed creative solutions and Mr. Spiegel mentioned two new hires as of today. Mr. Spiegel pointed out that this is a nationwide staffing shortage and they are posting in different places, word of mouth; it's a challenge everywhere. Ms. Keyes asked for recent college students to consider being a substitute teacher. Mr. Schlichtman asked parents to consider as well. Contractors/Agencies are covering services.

A school committee member asked about the continuation of the mask policy in the district moving forward. Dr. Homan also explained the COVID-19 policies and procedures and noted that we identify close contacts in the school only, not outside the schools. Families should call the school if they need more explanation. Additional COVID questions and protocols were discussed with various School Committee Members and the Superintendent.

### **9:00 p.m.**

#### **First Read – Draft School Committee Regular Meeting Dates – 2022/2023 – P. Schlichtman**

A motion was made by Paul Schlichtman, and seconded, to accept the first read of the (21) dates presented for the School Committee Meeting dates for 2022-2023 academic year. 19 dates are required to be regularly scheduled dates.

### **9:15 p.m.**

#### **Consent Agenda**

Warrant, 22126, \$776,813.02, 12/7/2021

Stratton Revised SIP, 12/13/2021

SC Regular Meeting Minutes, November 18, 2021  
SC Regular Meeting Minutes, December 2, 2021

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Thielman and seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Exton yes, Dr. Ampe, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes Mr. Thielman, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Hayner, yes

**8:39 p.m.**

**Subcommittee Reports (B. Hayner)**

Budget – Kirsi Allison-Ampe, Chair – nothing to report at this time. Meeting again in this coming year.

Community Relations - Liz Exton, Chair – Chat was held on Saturday and it went well.

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Accountability – Len Kardon, Chair – Meeting early in January, 2022

Facilities – Jeff Thielman, Chair – No report

Policy and Procedures – Paul Schlichtman, Chair – No report

Arlington High School Building Committee, Jeff Thielman, Chair – Held a very successful forum on 12/15. The link to the program is on the ACMI website so people can watch it. The meeting was successfully translated in a number of languages.

Liaison Reports

Announcements

Future Agenda Items

**8:41 p.m.** Meeting was adjourned for Executive Session

**Adjournment**

A motion was made to leave Executive Session and seconded. The Committee will not return to the Regular Meeting after Executive Session.

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

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Elizabeth M. Diggins**

**Administrative Assistant to the School Committee**