

**AUBURN SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES from Wednesday, January 8, 2020**  
**School Committee Room, 7:00 p.m.**

**In Attendance:**

George Scobie  
Jessie Harrington  
Gail Holloway  
Dottie Kauffman  
Meghan McCrillis

Maryellen Brunelle  
Beth Chamberland  
Cecelia Wirzbicki

Kristin Mayo  
Alicia Lapomardo

Sherri Watson  
Kim Sicurella  
Karin Graves

**Call to Order and Pledge:**

At 7:00 p.m., Mr. Scobie, Chairperson, brought the meeting to order and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting; there being none he asked that everyone join him in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Citizens' Comments:** None

**Student Representatives' Report: Ali Schoenfeldt and Aaron Zheng**

Aaron was not able to attend the meeting due to a prior commitment at AHS. Ali, after wishing everyone a Happy New Year, gave his report on his behalf:

Aaron noted that the winter season has been a relatively slow period for clubs; however, there is a new Indoor Marching Band Program which is split into two different clubs - the Concert Percussion program and the Winter Guard program. Both have started rehearsing and planning their shows.

Ali reported that the NHS had a successful soldier package delivery; students in all classrooms filled boxes of non-perishable food items for the AYFS Food Pantry and boxes of toys for the holidays. Ali noted how great it was to see everyone participate in the season of giving.

Ali also noted that the NHS eligibility lists are out for application and March NHS Induction. The AP Government class, with Mr. Kennard, has a "We The People" competition on January 25th, with a showcase being held next week. Lastly, Ali noted that play auditions were being held this first full week in January.

**Minutes:**

December 18, 2019

Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 18th meeting; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S MEMO:**

**Strengthening Families**

Dr. Chamberland, along with School Psychologists, Kristin Mayo and Alicia Lapomardo, and AMS Guidance staff, Sherri Watson, Kim Sicurella and Karin Graves, were in attendance to provide a presentation on the "Strengthening Families" series of workshops that were recently held at Auburn Middle School.

Dr. Brunelle reminded the Committee that funding for this program was received through the Attorney General's Office, namely the Youth Opioid Prevention Grant. Dr. Brunelle thanked all of those involved.

Mrs. Mayo made the presentation on behalf of the team. She stated that it was with some trepidation that they started as this was venturing into uncharted territory; however, they could not be more pleased with the way things worked out. She stated the benefits have been wonderful. She gave kudos to Mrs. King and the Food Service staff for the dinners they provided for and for the lovely way in which they were presented, starting each session off in just the right way.

#### **Preschool Sliding Fee Scale**

As per the discussion at the December 18<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting, Dr. Brunelle provided an updated Preschool Sliding Fee Scale with her recommendation that the Committee approve it as presented. Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to do so; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

#### **Assabet Valley Collaborative Annual Report, Financial Statements and Letter From Auditor to AVC Board**

For information purposes, Dr. Brunelle presented the Assabet Valley Collaborative's FY 2019 Annual Report, as well as the FY 2019 letter from the Auditor to the Board of Directors and the FY 2019 Approved Financial Statements. These documents do not need a vote to approve, but as a member district it is required that they are shared with and accepted by you.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to accept the FY 2019 Annual Report of the AVC, the FY 2019 Letter from the Auditor to the Board of Directors of AVC and the FY 2019 Approved Financial Statements; Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### **ENCORE Program 2020-2021**

Dr. Brunelle shared that prior to the holiday break, a letter was sent to the following businesses in Town, introducing them to the ENCORE program that will be in place for the 2020-2021 school year, and asking if they would be interested in supporting it. The businesses that the letter was sent to are:

Anytime Fitness	Arcade Snacks	Auburn Fire Department
Auburn Food Service	Auburn Police Department	Auburn Public Library
Auburn Town Hall	Bell's Nursery	Brookdale Eddy Pond
Collinswood K9 Services	Farmer's Daughter	Life Care Center of Auburn
O'Reilly Auto Parts	T.J. Maxx	Weepin Willie's

Dr. Brunelle stated that she and the team are very excited about this program that will have 5 West Street as it's home base.

#### **High Honor and Honor Roll Letters - Trimester I**

Dr. Brunelle shared a sample High Honor Roll letter and an Honor Roll letter that was sent to those deserving students at AMS and AHS, this in recognition of their commitment to excellence, hard work and strong efforts. Dr. Brunelle noted that it gives both Dr. Chamberland and she a great pleasure in recognizing our students in this way.

#### **Primary Configuration Team Update**

Dr. Brunelle shared an update on the Primary Configuration Team that was formed to include staff, parent and administrator representatives as well as a School Committee member/parent. She noted that the team met on November 20<sup>th</sup> and December 9<sup>th</sup> and will meet again on January 9, 2020. The purpose of this team is to review our current programming and the locations of the same. They will also consider the financial impact of any potential changes as well as, and most importantly, the impact on students and their educational programming.



Dr. Brunelle noted that the team hopes to have a recommendation for an upcoming meeting. She did state that the team will not be dismantling neighborhood schools but it remains their desire to have the preschool as a cohesive unit. She reiterated that students and their needs are always at the forefront of any decision making.

#### **Donation to AHS Preschool Program**

Dr. Brunelle shared that Sarah Lemovitz, Preschool Nurse/ABA at AHS, had received a donation in the amount of \$50.00 from Walmart in North Oxford to help towards clothing supplies for the preschool students. A thank you letter to Walmart was included in the packets and it was her recommendation that you accept this donation with gratitude.

Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to approve with gratitude the donation in the amount of \$50 to the AHS Preschool program from Walmart; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

##### **Warrant Article for Special Town Meeting on January 21, 2020**

Dr. Brunelle shared that Mrs. Wirzbicki attended the Finance Committee meeting on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, and was pleased to report back that the Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve the re-purposing of the AHS CIP, the warrant article the Committee had previously unanimously supported.

##### **Special Town Meeting Reminder: January 21, 2020**

Dr. Brunelle noted that with the Special Town Meeting scheduled for January 21, 2020, it was her recommendation that a short School Committee meeting be held prior to it, at either 6:00 or 6:30 p.m. in the AHS Guidance Office Conference Room.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to hold a School Committee meeting prior to the Special Town meeting, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the AHS Guidance Office Conference Room; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. Later in the meeting, this motion was amended by Dr. McCrillis, seconded by Mrs. Holloway, to hold the meeting starting at 6:00 p.m. instead of 6:30 p.m.

#### **FY 2021 Draft Budget**

Dr. Brunelle reminded the members that the draft budget must be sent to the Town Manager by the second Monday in January which this year is January 13<sup>th</sup>; therefore a vote would need to be taken at the meeting. As noted at the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, it was her recommendation that we send forward the amended draft budget of \$27,832,657.65, which is an increase of \$898,500.65 or 3.34%. In the memo to Town Manager Jacobson and Chief Financial Officer Kazanovicz, Dr. Brunelle will note that budget reduction scenarios have been drafted that bring the draft budget to 2.39% and while she recognizes that the School Committee may not yet be in favor of those reductions as presented and which are subject to change, we are hopeful that Chapter 70 monies, to include a potentially positive impact of the Student Opportunity Act, may not require that they be made. More will be known when Governor Baker's draft budget is announced on January 22nd.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to send forward the FY 2021 draft budget to the Town Manager of \$27,832,657.65 which reflects an increase of 3.34%, noting that budget reduction scenarios have been drafted; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **Superintendent's Scholar**

Dr. Brunelle shared with the Committee that she had the pleasure of attending the Worcester County Superintendents' Association Scholars' Luncheon on January 7th with Mr. Handfield and Auburn's



Superintendent Scholar, Maura Anish. She stated that it was a tremendous ceremony and left many feeling that they didn't accomplish nearly enough in high school!

### **Superintendent Search**

With Dr. Brunelle's impending retirement at the end of the current school year, Dr. Brunelle reminded the Committee that they need to discuss the Superintendent Search, deciding if they wanted to conduct an internal search only or an internal/external search and set a timeline for the process.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to conduct an internal search only; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The timeline approved by the Committee was to post the position on January 9, 2020 with a closing date of January 23, 2020.

After reviewing a copy of the job description for Superintendent of Schools and based on Dr. Brunelle's recommendation not to change or update anything on it, Dr. McCrillis made a motion to approve the job description for Superintendent of Schools as presented; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

There will be discussion regarding the interview team held at the School Committee meeting of January 21st, prior to the Special Town Meeting.

### **School Choice for FY 2020-2021**

With the FY 2021 Draft Budget being prepared with School Choice offsets, it was Dr. Brunelle's recommendation that we continue with the same levels as in FY 20 – 52 at Auburn High School and 30 at Auburn Middle School – for the 2020-2021 school year.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve School Choice at Auburn High and Middle Schools at the same levels for the 2020-2021 school year; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

### **School Calendar for FY 2020-2021**

Dr. Brunelle noted that, as is typically done, at an upcoming meeting the Leadership Team will bring forward a recommended calendar for the 2020-2021 school year. Dr. Brunelle asked for the Committee's guidance or recommendations that they would like to share, particularly whether they would like to keep the full week of vacation in February or not. This item was then tabled and will be added to the January 21st agenda for further discussion.

### **TEACHING/LEARNING REPORT:**

#### **January 17, 2020 Half Day of PD for Faculty**

Dr. Chamberland reported that on January 17th, teachers and staff at each of the schools will participate in professional development on a variety of topics. The elementary teachers will delve in to Go Math to further refine their instruction by reexamining the assessments, ensuring that the appropriate manipulatives are utilized, while also identifying structured practice time for previously taught skills. The middle school teachers will continue to build upon the work they have already begun related to the school wide advisory block to ensure the needs of students are met. At the high school, there will be continued emphasis on restorative circles and student engagement. Dr. Chamberland and Mrs. Reidy will be working with all of the special educators regarding the use of specialized content instruction in the classroom and guidance counselors will continue to refine their understanding of trauma and its impact on student learning.

### **Preschool/Kindergarten Registration**

Dr. Chamberland reported that Preschool and Kindergarten Registration will take place on February 6th from 3:00-7:00 p.m. in the Presentation Room at Auburn High School. She noted that this is the second year using the online registration process for all new students and we continue to see



improvements in the efficiency of this process. iPads will be available for families that evening to complete the process.

#### **BUSINESS/FINANCIAL REPORT:**

##### **Year to Date Budget Report**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a year to date budget report as of January 3, 2020.

##### **Bus Application for FY 2020-2021**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a copy of the bus application for FY 2020-2021 and sought the Committee's approval of it. She noted that the fee remains at \$100 for those students who have to pay (Grades 7 through 12 and Grades K-5 who live less than 2 miles from the school they attend) with a family cap of \$250. The late fee remains at \$100 per child, no cap. The due date remains as June 1<sup>st</sup>, the same as for this current year.

Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to approve the bus application for the 2020-2021 school year; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

##### **Project Bread Breakfast Grant**

Mrs. Wirzbicki reported that she was recently notified by Mrs. Janice King, Food Service Director, that she had received \$5,000 in grant monies from Project Bread, \$2,500 for Auburn Middle School and \$2,500 for Auburn High School, this to supplement \$5,000 in grant funds previously received to purchase breakfast carts at those schools. She hopes to have them up and running by March of this school year.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to accept with gratitude the grant funds from Project Bread in the amount of \$5,000; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

##### **Food Service Intern**

Mrs. Wirzbicki reported that Mrs. King had notified her that she will once again have a Food Nutrition Intern working with her from January 7<sup>th</sup> through March 10<sup>th</sup>. Adele Mayer is a student at U-Mass Amherst and will be working on nutrition information data entry and working to market our school nutrition program.

##### **National School Lunch Program Targeted Administrative Review Follow Up Agreement**

Mrs. Wirzbicki reported that Dr. Brunelle was recently notified by the Office for Food and Nutrition Programs at DESE that they found the administration and operation of our food service program met with all program requirements at the time of the review. They extended their appreciation to Mrs. Janice King, Food Service Director, as well as the entire staff of the Auburn Public Schools for their cooperation and assistance during the course of this review. Dr. Brunelle and the Committee also commended Mrs. King and her staff for the hard work that they put in for the review.

#### **POLICIES:**

##### **ACAB, Sexual Harassment for Update**

Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to approve the above-named policy as presented; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 8:05 p.m., Mrs. Holloway made a motion to enter Executive Session per MGL Chapter 30, Section 21(a) (2) to conduct strategies for negotiations with union and non-union personnel; Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. A roll call vote was taken:

Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - Yes; Mr. Scobie - Yes

Respectfully submitted,



Ailaine Zautner  
Recording Secretary

**Referenced Documents:**

Minutes from December 18, 2019	Preschool Sliding Fee
AVC Annual Report, Financial Statements, Letter from Auditor	
ENCORE Program Brochure	High Honor/Honor Roll Letter - Tri 1
Thank you for Donation to Preschool	Superintendent Draft Posting
Superintendent Job Description	Year to Date Budget Report
Bus Application for 2020-2021	Letter from DESE re Food Service Targeted Review
Policy ACAB for Update	