

AUBURN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES from Wednesday, May 13, 2020
Zoom Virtual Meeting, 2:00 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/99865863907?pwd=c1psbk01T1YzaGgod2RvejNqZlU5UT09>

In attendance:

George Scobie
Jessie Harrington
Gail Holloway
Dottie Kauffman
Meghan McCrillis

Maryellen Brunelle
Beth Chamberland
Cecelia Wirzbicki

Call to order: Checking that everyone was in attendance (via Zoom), Mr. Scobie called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 22, 2020 and April 27, 2020

Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 22nd and April 27th School Committee meetings; Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

SUPERINTENDENT'S MEMO:

Appointment of Civil Rights Coordinator for 2020-2021

Noting that each school district must have a Civil Rights Coordinator, to whom staff or parents may register a complaint if they believe their civil rights have been violated, Dr. Brunelle stated that it was her recommendation, as well as Superintendent-Elect Handfield's, that Dr. Elizabeth Chamberland, Assistant Superintendent, serve in this capacity for the 2020-2021 school year.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to appoint Dr. Elizabeth Chamberland as the Civil Rights Coordinator for the Auburn Public Schools for the 2020-2021 school year; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

Appointment of Title IX Coordinator for 2020-2021

Dr. Brunelle stated that, likewise, each school district must have a Title IX Coordinator, to whom staff or students may register a complaint if they have been sexually discriminated against. It was her recommendation, as well as Superintendent-Elect Handfield's, that Dr. Elizabeth Chamberland, Assistant Superintendent, serve in this capacity for the 2020-2021 school year.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to appoint Dr. Elizabeth Chamberland as the Title IX Coordinator for the Auburn Public Schools for the 2020-2021 school year; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

School Committee Meeting Dates for Remainder of 2019-2020 and for July and August 2020

Dr. Brunelle provided an updated schedule of School Committee meeting dates for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year and also an updated schedule for next school year too.

Mrs. Kauffman made a motion to approve the updated School Committee Meeting Dates for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

Update on Closure of School Fields

Understanding that individuals were seen at Auburn High School recently, Dr. Brunelle noted that some additional measures have been put into place to attempt to eliminate the same going forward: in addition to gates being locked and the School Committee's written decision being posted at the entrance to every gate, saw horses, with signs that read "Fields Closed" have been placed at the entrance to Auburn High School. These have been placed so as to only partially block the entrance because, as per her discussion with Chief Coleman, the entrances cannot be fully blocked as emergency vehicles need to have access at all times. The "Field Closure" notice has also been shared with Auburn Mass Daily and the Auburn News for publication. Dr. Brunelle notified the Committee that because individuals have been jumping the fences due to the gates being locked, repairs have had to be made to a section of the fence.

Dr. Brunelle also noted that on Monday, May 4th, she had a discussion with Town Manager Jacobson and Chief Sluckis to confirm that should individuals be seen on the fields, the Auburn Police can be called and will respond by going to AHS and asking the individuals to leave.

Dr. Brunelle shared that she has been checking intermittently this week (week of May 4th) and has not noticed any issues.

She stated that the APS take the health of our children seriously and the wear and tear on the fields is costly to the District. We are doing what is right as far as safety goes. The School Committee agreed.

Payment of Hourly Wages from Revolving Accounts

As promised at the April 27th School Committee meeting, Dr. Brunelle noted that this agenda item has been added to reconsider whether or not to continue to pay the staff of the Before and After School programs after May 15th, noting that should be Before/After School programs not reopen in the fall, there is no way that wages can continue to be paid.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to continue to pay the staff of the Before and After School programs for their weekly hours through June 12th; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

Seeking Commissioner's Review of Out of District Costs

Dr. Brunelle provided a copy of a letter which Auburn has signed - along with numerous other Commonwealth school districts - seeking Commissioner Riley's review of out-of-district tuition costs in light of the extended school closures due to COVID-19. As detailed in the letter, we are hopeful that there will be a reduction in those charges for this final quarter of the school year as it would seem their costs

are lower. I would ask that you vote in support of this letter and we will keep you apprised if anything results from this.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to vote in support of the letter seeking the Commissioner's review of out-of-district tuition costs and adjusting them to reflect the changing circumstances of this extended school closure; Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

Upcoming Meetings

Dr. Brunelle noted that she was in attendance, virtually, at the Board of Selectmen will be meeting on Monday May 11, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. regarding the School Department Warrant Articles for the Annual Town Meeting.

Likewise, she will be in attendance, remotely, at the Finance Committee will meet on Wednesday May 13th at 7:00 p.m. for the same reason. She will keep the Committee apprised.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Last Day of School for Grades K - 11

Dr. Brunelle shared that, as per Commissioner Riley's updated guidance, all students must either go to the originally planned 185th day of school or for those districts that continued remote learning during the formally planned April vacation, Tuesday, April 21st through Friday, April 24th, must go to the originally planned 181st day of school. She informed the Committee that the last day for students in the Auburn Public Schools, therefore, is Friday, June 12th and, in keeping with the AEA contract language, that the maximum number of days be 185, the staff members' last day of school will be Monday, June 15th.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve Friday, June 12th as the students' last day of school and Monday, June 15th as the faculty's last day of school; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken.

Roll call vote:

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

Letter to Class of 2020 Graduates

Dr. Brunelle shared with the Committee a letter from Mr. Handfield to the Class of 2020 graduates updating information on their senior activities and graduation. She will continue to keep the Committee apprised of any changes to the schedule of events provided by Mr. Handfield as we continue to follow Governor Baker's guidelines.

Class of 2020 Last Day

Dr. Brunelle shared that the Class of 2020's last day is Friday, May 15th and, as per the letter from Principal Handfield, the students will celebrate with a short parade from Horgan Arena to AHS, complete with police escort.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to approve the Class of 2020's last day of school being Friday, May 15th; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

High School Graduation Plans

Dr. Brunelle shared that in recent communications with Principal Handfield, AHS has set the Class of 2020 graduation date as Friday, July 31st. Mr. Handfield is working closely with the class officers and class advisors to design a fitting tribute that also follows all recommended guidelines. Until further guidance is received from Governor Baker, those plans cannot yet be finalized, but as the date approaches they will continue discussions and Dr. Brunelle noted she would keep the Committee apprised. She added that, as always, the School Committee's participation would be greatly appreciated.

8th Grade Graduation Plans

Dr. Brunelle shared that, similarly, Mr. Desto and Mr. Carlson are working with the 8th grade team to plan a fitting tribute for the 8th graders before they head off to High School, likewise in keeping with all recommended guidelines. As those plans continue to develop, Dr. Brunelle noted that she would continue to keep the Committee apprised and their participation at this event as well would be appreciated.

Step Up Day Plans

Dr. Brunelle shared that in the District's ongoing efforts to maintain as much "normalcy" for our students at this most unusual time, the Leadership Team is working together to prepare alternate Step Up Day plans to assist students in transitioning to the next grade level. As those plans evolve, she will continue to keep the members apprised.

NEW BUSINESS:

FY 2021 Potential Budget Reductions

Dr. Brunelle shared that, at the request of Town Manager Jacobson and Chief Financial Officer Kazanovicz, the Leadership Team is engaging in discussions regarding potential reduction scenarios. She noted that these internal discussions are simply that – discussions – but in anticipation of probable state revenue reductions, they are having these discussions now to best position the District once the state's numbers are known. She further noted that no changes will be made to the budget without the Committee's full knowledge, discussion and approval. As these discussions develop, she will continue to keep you apprised.

School Choice at AHS

Dr. Brunelle noted that she is seeking the Committee's approval to add 15 school choice slots at AHS for 2020-2021. She noted that while this will certainly help with the anticipated budget challenges, more importantly and after reviewing with the principals of both AMS and AHS and with Dr. Chamberland, because Bay Path accepted 49 grade 8 AMS students and another 8 have been accepted to private schools, the 2020-2021 Grade 9 class is only expected to be approximately 160 - which is 40 or so less than typical - so there will definitely be space available for these extra fifteen students. She noted that they would like to start with 15 and wait to see if all who were accepted to Bay Path and private schools confirm they will attend those schools, so she may return with an updated recommendation at a future date. She noted that the Leadership Team is not recommending any school choice slots be added at AMS at this time.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to approve the addition of fifteen (15) school choice slots at Auburn High School; Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

Mrs. Harrington expressed her concern regarding the sibling rule and could the School Committee's policy on School Choice be revised to update that it might always be possible to accept siblings depending on space in that grade level. Dr. Brunelle noted that the School Choice policy would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Auburn School Committee Resolution

Dr. Brunelle noted that, using the resolution originally prepared by the Boston School Committee, it has been altered it to fit the current circumstances here in Auburn, being hopeful that as a School Committee, the members would consider adopting it so that we may send it to our state and federal legislators. As noted, it seeks additional financial support to assist us in educating our students during these most unusual times.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to approve the resolution from the Auburn School Committee and send to state and federal legislators to seek their support of additional funding for education; Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

Bus Fee Refund

Mr. Scobie informed the Committee that it was his opinion that we refund families \$25 per paid bus application in the 2019-2020 year, this as a reduction in the fee for the 2020-2021 year. There was discussion around the topic and it was decided to inform parents of this in a stand-alone One Call on Monday, May 18th, noting that parents can choose to leave the refund in the bus transportation account if they opt not to take it, this due to the financial restraints facing the District as a result of the Coronavirus and because \$100,000 has already been set aside in the FY21 budget as an offset from that account.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to refund families \$25 per paid bus application in the 2019-2020 school year; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

Dr. McCrillis - Yes; Mrs. Kauffman - Yes; Mrs. Holloway - Yes; Mrs. Harrington - No; Mr. Scobie - Yes;

Donation to Food Service Program

Dr. Brunelle shared that the Food Service Program was the recipient of a COVID-19 Rapid Response Grant from EOS Foundation in the amount of \$3,245.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to accept with gratitude the COVID-19 Rapid Response Grant from EOS Foundation to Auburn Food Services in the amount of \$3,245; Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

TEACHING/LEARNING REPORT:

Update on Remote Learning Plans

Dr. Chamberland shared that on April 24th, the District received updated guidance from DESE outlining the guidelines for Remote Learning upon the determination that we would not return to class this school year. Since the closure began, DESE has asked that our work be guided by three principles: the safety and well being of students, families and staff; equity needs to be a top consideration in all planning efforts; and we must focus on maintaining connections between school staff, students and families. The new guidance adds several items to these principles: Prioritize meaningful connections with educators and peers; provide engaging core instruction focused on the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade; offer opportunities for enrichment, exercise and play; and ensure that programming is accessible and communication is streamlined for students and families.

Dr. Chamberland noted that she was pleased and proud to report that Auburn teachers, in collaboration with all professional staff members and support staff, were already providing much of what the

Commissioner outlined in the new guidance. She added that to ensure we were doing all we can to support our students and families, teams in all of the schools have revised their Remote Learning Plans to more fully encompass these requirements. She noted that some of the changes include: more frequent recorded lessons, instructional emphasis on the 'power' standards identified by DESE, additional small group supports, expanded opportunities for exercise, art, music and other enrichment programming, teacher office hours, advisory blocks, counselor sessions, coordinated communication with families and a robust tracking protocol at each school to ensure we are engaging all students.

Professional Development Offerings During the School Closure

Dr. Brunelle shared that in an effort to support the teachers' ongoing need for Professional Development Points and to further the knowledge base of our support staff, we have offered a variety of professional development options to staff during the school closure. All of the offerings have been free and have addressed professional learning to support special education students, EL students, students who have experienced trauma and to further the technological knowledge of teachers. Sixty staff members have registered for WIDA online learning to better support our EL students, with many of the 60 participants completing multiple courses toward the 15 required PDPs needed for recertification.

Universal Design for Learning: Theory and Practice is an online book study Dr. Chamberland is facilitating for nearly 40 staff members to better support the needs of all students in the learning environment, providing 10 PDPs toward their required 15 for recertification. Apple Teacher-a badging process to teach all of the various accessibility and teaching tools available in an iPad has been completed by nearly 30 staff members with many still in process. Over 50 staff members have also read and responded to and reflected on a variety of articles: Using Correct Mathematical Language Across the Grades, How Did You Get To Harvard, Helping Ease Student Anxiety, and Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies. She noted that staff has also requested training on social-emotional learning and in response, we offered Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools (6 hour course) and a video series on the Impact of Trauma on Learning. Dr. Chamberland stated that the participation has been terrific and staff from all areas of the District has participated.

Building Entry for Staff and Student Material Pick Up

Dr. Chamberland shared that in response to requests from staff to retrieve items from the school buildings, staff were sent a survey to determine a convenient entry time that offered daytime, evening and weekend options, while also asking the amount of time they would need to do some critical tasks such as basic organization of teaching materials, gathering of student materials determined to stay at school as well as to gather items to send home to students. Principals created schedules based on the times requested by staff and were also designed to ensure safe social distancing by limiting the number of staff in the building at any given time and also using multiple entry and exit doors to limit contact between staff. As of Friday, May 8th, all staff who wanted to enter the buildings has done so. Allowances were made for any staff with extenuating circumstances that could not enter the building and we thank the many volunteers who stepped up to help their colleagues organize materials. Dr. Chamberland shared that starting next week, principals will be creating schedules for students to pick up items that have been organized in individual bags. Students will not enter the buildings as all materials will be distributed outside. Dr. Chamberland noted that this will not allow the custodians to begin the deep cleaning process in classrooms to prepare for the end of the school year. She thanked all staff members for their dedication and contribution to this process.

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

Dr. Chamberland shared that the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund), authorized under section 18003 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), provides districts with emergency relief funds to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools. The district allocations for ESSER funding are calculated based on the proportion of Title I, Part A funds each district received in FY20. She shared that the Auburn Public Schools will receive \$156,025 from this fund to be used to offset funding in the FY21 school year. Dr. Chamberland noted that these funds can be used for a wide variety of purposes, including but not limited to educational technology, mental health services, diagnostic

assessments, summer learning, professional development, activities necessary to respond to COVID-19 and they are not subject to supplement not supplant provisions.

BUSINESS/FINANCIAL REPORT:

Year to Date Budget Report

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a year to date budget report dated May 7, 2020.

Transfers

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a listing of transfers both within the Series and between the Series. She requested the Committee's approval of those between the Series.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve the transfers between the Series as presented by the Business Manager; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

Omnibus Transfers

Mrs. Wirzbicki requested that the Committee grant Omnibus approval to make transfers as we work to close out FY 2020. She noted that she will work closely with Dr. Brunelle to make such transfers and they will be shared with the Committee after the fact.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve the granting of Omnibus approval to make transfers through the close out of FY 2020; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Roll call vote:

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

Revolving Account Update

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a Revolving Account for the Committee's review.

AA Bus Contract Amendment

As mentioned at the April 27th meeting, Mrs. Wirzbicki provided the amended AA bus contract stating that it was her recommendation the Committee approve it as presented.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to approve the amended AA contract as presented; Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Roll call vote:

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

Bus Application Reminder

Mrs. Wirzbicki shared that as of Wednesday, May 6th, 530 bus applications have been received, with at least 1,000 more anticipated. She gave another reminder to the audience that the June 1st deadline is fast approaching and families should get their bus applications in to West Street.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 3:18 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 and per Chapter 30, Section 21(a) (3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken.

Roll call vote:

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

<https://zoom.us/j/99865863907?pwd=c1psbk01T1YzaGgod2RvejNqZlU5UTo9> ended.

Respectfully submitted,



Ailaine Zautner

Recording Secretary

Referenced Documents:

Minutes from April 22 and 27, 2020

Updated Schedule of SC Dates for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021

Letter to Commissioner re Review of Out of District Costs

Letter to 2020 Graduates from Mr. Handfield

Auburn School Committee Resolution

Year to Date Budget Report

Transfers

Memo re Omnibus Transfers

Revolving Account Update

AA Bus Contract Amendment