

**MINUTES**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Location: School Committee Room**  
**September 17, 2020, 6:00 p.m.**

**In attendance:**

George Scobie  
Jessie Harrington  
Gail Holloway  
Dottie Kauffman  
Meghan McCrillis

Casey Handfield  
Beth Chamberland  
Cecelia Wirzbicki

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Scobie called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and asked everyone to join him in the Pledge to the Flag.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS:**

Dr. Handfield explained that Citizen's Comments will be addressed via Zoom if the person has emailed Mrs. Zautner prior to 3:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting and indicating the reason for asking to be heard at Citizens' Comments. There were none on this day.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS:**

**MINUTES:** 9/2/2020 for Approval

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 2nd meeting; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**Multi Hazard Plans**

Dr. Handfield reported that he, Chief Sluckis and Chief Coleman had reviewed each school's Multi-Hazard Plan prior to the start of school and each had signed them in support. He offered his sincere thanks to both Chiefs as well as to the Safety Advisory Committee for their tremendous ongoing efforts!

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Opening of School**

Dr. Handfield noted that the new school year, as everyone knew, started remotely on September 16th, with a herculean effort being needed from all to get us to that point. For the most part, he noted that he was pleased to say that things are running smoothly. However, there are sure to be bumps in the road and hiccups through the first couple of weeks, but he stated that he was extremely proud and grateful for the hard work of our school community (both students' families and the APS family) to get us open, as well as the assistance of Town Manager Jacobson, CFO Kazanovicz, Darlene Coyle and the Auburn Department of Public Health, and last, but not least, Chief Coleman and Chief Sluckis. We could not

have done this without them. It should go without saying that we are moving to rectify issues as soon as we can, but so far, so good, considering what we are dealing with during a global pandemic.

The Committee agreed that this was good to hear when so many more things could be going wrong.

### **Auburn Public Schools Return and Readiness Guide**

#### **(Commissioner's Letter to School Committee)**

Dr. Handfield shared a letter from the Commissioner discussing the use of the "Metric Map" in making decisions related to changing educational approaches during COVID. The Commissioner is recommending that information across 3 weeks be used in conjunction with other factors if a change in educational approach is being contemplated.

Dr. Handfield noted that the hope is that when we reach the 2-1-2 mode in October, we will be in that mode through at least the first trimester. We do not want to rush into anything too fast.

#### **(Classroom Cleaning Materials)**

Dr. Handfield shared the following email from Mr. Fahey regarding what each building will be receiving to do the cleaning in between classes, and the information sheet on the cleaner being used. It is a hydrogen peroxide base, similar to what the cafeteria uses to disinfect tables. It is environmentally friendly, does not require the use of gloves or eye protection, and does not contain harmful fumes.

*From: **Fahey, Joe** <[jfahey@auburn.k12.ma.us](mailto:jfahey@auburn.k12.ma.us)>*

*Date: Tue, Sep 15, 2020 at 8:23 AM*

*Subject: classroom cleaning update*

*To:*

*Hi All,*

*District-wide we hired 2 part time custodians to help us with our disinfecting of our buildings: Todd Bailey and Jose Torres. They are stationed at AHS and the Intermediate School. We will be juggling them around to all buildings when needed.*

*As you all know, each classroom will be cleaned using our microfiber system that we have installed and have had training over the summer. We also will be using:*

- *Each classroom will have a reusable tub of disinfectant wipes.*
- *Each classroom will have hand sanitizer.*
- *Each classroom will have a label spray bottle to wipe down anything. This product is safe to use.*
- *This is the same product that our food service uses to wipe down the our cafe tables*
- *Please see the safety data sheet below.*
- *Also all of our product information will be posted on our website.*

*Any questions please let me know.*

*Joseph Fahey*

Covid Custodians!

**(ATC Air Report)**

As part of our demonstration of safety for all of our faculty, staff, and students, Dr. Handfield shared that we are checking the air quality and HVAC systems on a regular basis in our buildings. He included the first report from ATC, Associates for the members and noted that we are in great shape. We have had an on-going plan to inspect and maintain our HVAC systems as stated in our last meeting; this confirms our work on this issue. We are having monthly visits from ATC, and Mr. Fahey will monitor things weekly as well as check-in with staff in the buildings.

Dr. Handfield reiterated that we are in great shape in large part due to the diligence of Mr. Fahey and his team of custodians.

**(Atmos Air Units)**

Dr. Handfield shared that the bid for the Atmos Air units had been awarded to Trumbull-Campbell Associates, Incorporated in Newburyport, Massachusetts. They are also the company that installed the HVAC equipment at the middle school. They are a highly reputable company. The purchase order is out and we will be taking receipt of these units as they are shipped to us. There are 275 units on the way and we will start installing them in the elementary schools first, followed by the middle and high school. We expect them to be in no later than the end of October which coincides with flu season. Dr. Handfield stated that he would like to make it known that we are installing these units and taking action on the filters in our buildings as an extra layer of protection for our school community. Although many school districts are following the same path we are, it is not mandated we do this. Finally, he thanked Seaman Engineering for their work with us to make sure our faculty, staff, and students have the best air quality we can provide in our buildings.

**Results of Invitation to Bid for Bi-Polar Air Purifier Ionization Units and One Monitoring Device**

Mrs. Wirzbicki asked for a motion to approve the bid results with Trumbull-Campbell and to enter into a contract to procure these units for use in the District classrooms. Dr. McCrillis made the motion; seconded by Mrs. Holloway and unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Food Service USDA Grant**

Dr. Handfield shared that the USDA announced on September 6th that it will subsidize meals for ALL students through a grant program that goes through December 31st. He noted it could be extended beyond that time frame, however, we do not know that right now. He also noted we are continuing to feed our families who are food insecure through the Meals To Go program that we started at the end of last year. He thanked Food Services Director Janice King for her incredible work on this initiative on behalf of our students and families.

The Committee gave kudos to Mrs. King as well as to Dr. Chamberland and Mrs. Wirzbicki. They stated that they all know the role good nutrition plays in learning.

**Southern Worcester County League Athletics Statement**

Dr. Handfield shared a statement from MIAA in response to their allowance for interscholastic athletics, with the Southern Worcester County League beginning the fall preseason activities on October 5th.

Teams will play in a “pod style” format and adhere to the medical advice and rule changes adopted by the MIAA. The exception to this is football and fall cheer. These sports will play in the “Fall 2” season that will run at the end of February - early April. He noted that Mr. Delongchamp and Mr. Davis are working on this right now. They are preparing a PowerPoint which will be shared with the School Committee on September 30th.

### **Student Representatives to School Committee**

Dr. Handfield shared that Junior Jasmine Gates will be joining Senior Aaron Zheng as the second student representative to the School Committee. They will attend their first meeting on Wednesday, September 30, 2020.

### **Reduction in iPad Fee**

Dr. Handfield shared that, this year, we are offering 1:1 iPad programming to all of our students in the Auburn Public Schools almost 3,000 iPads in circulation. As a result of the increase in circulation, he noted we are seeking to provide families with a break in the insurance they can purchase to guard against damage. Normally, we have charged \$50 for this insurance, however, this year we would like to charge \$25.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to reduce the iPad insurance fee from \$50 to \$25 dollars for the 2020-2021 academic year and reassess it again next year; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved with the Committee noting that it is good that we can do this for families at this time. The question was also posed, do we need to add additional IT staff if we keep a 1:1 initiative into next school year. Dr. Handfield shared that, depending on final budget numbers (which will be known around September 30th), we may be able to bring one more IT staff member on board this year.

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

#### **ZippSlip Update**

Dr. Chamberland shared that on Wednesday, September 9th, the District launched ZippSlip with staff. Each staff member registered their account and has been able to complete the COVID 19 form. We have been monitoring staff completion and will continue to do so and share information with nurses when applicable. This past weekend, registration information was shared with families. We are calling ZippSlip our first line of defense in keeping students and staff healthy as we return to school. Dr. Chamberland shared that so far it is going well and will be well worth the effort of getting everyone up to speed. The Committee asked that they get a report regularly on the data the District is getting from ZippSlip.

### **Cohorts, Student Placement & iPads**

Dr. Chamberland reported that principals shared cohort assignments, classroom assignments and schedules with all families at the end of the last week. She thanked the principals, assistant principals and many teachers and support staff members who worked tirelessly and diligently to balance parent requests, sibling assignments and busing needs along with the academic needs of students, stating that it was an enormous task - biggest math problem ever seen - and one that we will continue to fine tune as we get closer to the start of in-person school. She added that all schools have distributed iPads and chargers to students for use on the remote days of school.

Dr. Chamberland noted that the District received a grant for 50 hot spots and with several families having intermittent connectivity; these hot spots should help greatly. Mr. Bouvier and Mr. Marchand are currently working on that.

### **First 10 Days**

Dr. Chamberland shared that the first 10 days of school allowed staff to receive training related to COVID 19 as well as other medical discussions that normally take place, like allergies and the use of EPI pens. Additionally, staff received training on ZOOM, Nearpod, Schoology, Google Classroom, and Seesaw. Teachers and staff also worked to prepare orientation activities for students related to their classrooms, the technology platform they would be using and just getting to know one another. Intermingled with all of this were Mindfulness and Self Care activities for staff. She noted that all of this was very well received as the staff needed to get ready for this. They are now feeling very prepared with the tools they need to teach in this environment. Dr. Chamberland also noted that parents have really stepped up.

The Committee expressed their sympathy for what the APS Team has been through and was super impressed and very thankful for all of the staff and the hard work they have put in.

**BUSINESS/FINANCIAL REPORT:**

**Year to Date Budget Report as of September 15, 2020**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a year to date budget report.

**Transfers between the Same Series dated September 15, 2020**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided budget transfers between the same series for the Committee's information.

**Revolving Account Update**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a listing of revolving account balances as of September 15, 2020 for the Committee's information and acceptance.

**Recommended Motion:** Mrs. Harrington made a motion to accept the list as presented; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously accepted.

**Adjournment:** At 6:50 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, Dr. McCrillis made a motion to adjourn for the evening; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ailaine Zautner  
Recording Secretary

**Referenced Documents:**

Minutes from September 2, 2020  
Commissioner's Letter to all School Committees  
ATC Air Report  
SWCL Athletic Statement from MIAA  
Year to Date Budget Report  
Transfers  
Revolving Account Update