

**MINUTES**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Location: 5 West Street, School Committee Room**

**April 26, 2023 6:00 p.m.**

**In Attendance:**

Jessie Harrington

Meghan McCrillis - arrived at 6:05pm

Gail Holloway

Brooke Wrenn

Samantha Raphael

Beth Chamberland, Superintendent

Ceceila Wirzbicki

Daniel Delongchamp, High School Principal

Karen Ballway

Lisa Healey, High School Teacher/JV/Freshman Math Team Advisor

Tucker Benton - Student

Ivy Bowser - Student

Lena Huynh - Student

Kayla Alvarez - Student

Gabi Morris - Student

Keyshia Thach - Student

Kaden Wood - Student

**Absent**

Alan Keller

**Zoom**

Ally McGill

Kate & Mark Bowser - parent, 9 Garden Street  
Willow Bowser - student & sibling of Ivy Bowser

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Jessie Harrington called the meeting to order at 6:01p.m.

Brooke Wrenn read out loud the Auburn Public School Vision & Commitment.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS:** None

**SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS:**

Dr. Chamberland:

Don Covell passed away on April 16, 2023 after a long battle with Multiple Myeloma. Don served as an Auburn High School custodian from 2004 until he retired in 2019. Don was born in Worcester and raised and educated in Northborough. He was a graduate of Algonquin Regional high school, attended Northeastern University in Boston, and received his bachelor's degree from Worcester State University. Don was an avid swimmer, piano player, loved hunting, gardening, playing sports, and home improvement projects. Most of all he loved being with his family and spending time with his wife and pet Gracie Rose. We thank Don for his service to the Auburn Public Schools.

Gail Holloway, a member of our current School Committee has been a member of the Auburn Public Schools community for over 50 years. Gail began her time in Auburn in September of 1969 as a Grade 6 teacher where she taught social studies, reading, math and science. Over the course of her career, she was assigned to work at Pakachoag School, Julia Bancroft School, Mary D. Stone, Auburn Middle School and right here at the Randall School. She also served as the President of the Teachers Union, she was a team leader and a National Honor Society Advisor. Gail became a member of the APS School Committee on May 21, 2014. During her time on the Committee, Gail has been a champion in support of our students and staff, always putting the needs of our students first. This is the last formal School Committee meeting for Gail and we thank her for the over 50 years of service she has dedicated to the students and staff of the Auburn Public Schools. Nelson Mandela said, "History will judge us by the difference we make in the lives of children." If that is true Gail, and we believe it is, you have made a remarkable difference in the lives of the children of the Auburn Public Schools. Thank you!

Gail was presented with flowers and a gift from the committee.

**Minutes:** 4/5/23

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to accept the minutes from 4/5/23.

Brooke Wrenn made a motion to accept the minutes from 4/5/23. Samantha Raphael seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:**

Ally McGill:

- Seniors wrapping up the school year
- International Club Festival was the Friday before April break
- AP Exams May 1-12
- Prom May 6th at Mechanics Hall
- Rocket of the Week Breakfast Apr 26, 2023
- NHS Field Trip Apr 28, 2023
- May 1st - Decision day for Seniors
- Lots of Senior Events coming up

Ally will attend the University of Florida in the Fall for Health Sciences with a Pre-med track.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

### **Spotlight on Students:**

Dr. Chamberland introduced Auburn High School teacher and JV/Freshman Math Team advisor, Lisa Healey and the following students:

Tucker Benton (Auburn's top scorer)  
Ivy Bowser (Auburn's second place scorer)  
Lena Huynh (Auburn's third place scorer)  
Kayla Alvarez  
Gabi Morris  
Keyshia Thach  
Kaden Wood

The students, along with Mrs. Healey, shared with the committee their experience competing against 7 other schools, Worcester Academy, Tahanto, Quaboag, Nashoba, Bay Path, Claremont, & Millbury. Two of the three meets were hosted at AHS. The AHS JV/Freshman Math Team won first place in their division.

### **Anxious Nation**

Dr. Chamberland provided a brief overview of an upcoming opportunity for families to learn more about the impact of anxiety on children and ways to help children with anxiety. On **April 27th from 6pm-8pm in the Auburn High School Auditorium**, the Auburn Public Schools is offering the community the opportunity to take part in a screening of [\*Anxious Nation: A Feature Documentary Exploring Anxiety, Kids, and Families\*](#). This documentary gives the perspectives of children, parents, and mental health professionals on Anxiety.

Samantha Raphael asked if there would be another opportunity for people to see the documentary if they can not make the 4/27/23 date.

Dr. Chamberland said no, this is a preview and the documentary will be released soon.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

#### **Residency Requirements**

Dr. Chamberland presented for a second reading the School Admission Policy JF. She asked the committee if there were no questions if they would move to a vote. The committee agreed.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to *approve the updates to School Admission Policy JF, as presented by the Superintendent.*

Samantha Raphael made a motion to *approve the updates to School Admission Policy JF, as presented by the Superintendent.* Brooke Wrenn seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

#### **District Safety Team**

Dr. Chamberland: Monthly meetings with the District Safety Team continue this school year. I am thankful to the Auburn Police Department, the Auburn Fire Department, The Auburn Building Inspection Services Department and Joe Fahey, APS Facilities Director for their ongoing support and insight as we continue to do everything we can to keep our students and staff safe. In light of the recent swatting incidents, we reviewed and updated our response, we have met with building principals and secretaries are in the process of being updated.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Auburn High School Program of Studies**

Dr. Chamberland introduced high school principal, Daniel Delongchamp, to present the proposed alterations to the AHS Program of Studies for 2023-2024, and to answer any questions.

Dan Delongchamp provided an overview of the changes being made to Math, ELA, Fine Arts, Wellness, Technology and Social Studies. All changes are documented in the packet.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to *approve the alterations to the AHS Program of Studies for 2023-2024 , as presented by the Principal.*

Samantha Rapahel made a motion to *approve the alterations to the AHS Program of Studies for 2023-2024 , as presented by the Principal*. Meghan McCrillis seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

### **Policy Updates**

Dr. Chamberland presented the following policy updates or a first reading:

#### **Policy AC - Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation -**

First Reading

#### **Policy ADDA - Background Checks** - First Reading

#### **Policy AE - Commitment to Accomplishment** - First Reading

Samantha Raphael pointed out a few typographical errors in the policies that will be amended for the second reading.

### **MassHealth Renewal for Families**

Dr. Chamberland: We have been notified by DESE that all families who are currently MassHealth members, will need to renew their membership within the next year. During the pandemic, subscriptions renewed automatically. That will no longer be the case and it is important for families to know that in order to continue their coverage, they must renew their membership.

### **School Committee Meeting prior to Annual Town Meeting**

Dr. Chamberland: Historically, the School Committee has met prior to Town Meeting at Auburn High School for the purpose of discussing any last minute changes to warrant articles or school budget requests. With the Town meeting taking place next week, I am not sure there is anything to discuss. We can choose to meet briefly or we cannot. I am looking for direction from the committee.

After a brief discussion, and nothing of significance to discuss, it was agreed to not meet on May 2, 2023 prior to the Town meeting.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to not meet prior to the Town Meeting on May 2, 2023.

Samantha Rapahel made a motion to not meet prior to the Town Meeting on May 2, 2023. Brooke Wrenn seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

## **Thankful for Our Team**

Dr. Chamberland: I would just like to take a moment to share some upcoming dates to give some thanks to the many members of the Auburn Public Schools team who help to make our district special. I know the list below does not include everyone, but I want to also thank our Central Office Administrators, Custodians (Custodian's Day - October 2nd), Instructional Support staff (National Teaching Assistant's Day - September 16th), our volunteers and the Auburn community for all of the support they provide to us each day.

- Administrative Assistants' Day - Wednesday, April 26th
- School Nutrition Hero Day - May 5th
- Teacher Appreciation Week - May 8th to 12th
- School Nurses' Day - May 10th
- School Principal's Day - May 1st

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING REPORT:**

Alan Keller was not present, Dr. Chamberland read his report.

On the evening of April 12, Dr. Meghan McCoy offered a virtual presentation to Auburn families on bullying, cyberbullying and conflict. Over 30 people joined the presentation, which was recorded and shared with families. Dr. McCoy defined and highlighted trends of bullying, cyberbullying and conflict, and shared data on the increase in mental health needs, behavioral incidents and the rise in screen time since Covid. From there, Dr. McCoy shifted into what we can do as adults which included:

- Increase face-to-face time and reduce online interactions (screens in and of themselves are not bad; the problem is the activities that screens replace).
- Help our children become resilient—be models at home by showing how we deal with small bits of conflict. Small, manageable conflicts build our students' skills and teach them skills they will need when we are not there for them. Social skills are like muscles, the less we use them, the weaker we become. Similarly, the more we as parents jump in and solve issues, the less our children get this practice.
- Be models of social media.
  - Show our children how to do it right: in moderation, no technology at the dinner table and during family time; phones in a common place at night (never in a bedroom).
  - Teach your child about consent—don't post pictures of them without asking permission, so that they understand this concept as they grow.
  - Discuss "social media distortion" (the phenomenon where everything is wonderful and everyone looks perfect)

- Be aware of your signs of anxiety and depression in your child that include social isolation, lack of interest in areas they typically enjoy, or sadness that persists or worry that cannot be alleviated by logic)
- If you find that your child is being bullied, communicate immediately with the school.

Beginning tomorrow and for the next three weeks, Dr. McCoy will present to students at each of our schools on the concepts of relationships, conflict, bullying and cyberbullying. Her message is designed for each age group, with the goal being to help build our students skills in managing relationships and to identify ways that they can get or offer support in the case of conflict or bullying.

## **BUSINESS/FINANCIAL REPORT:**

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

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a year to date budget report dated April 19, 2023 for review.

### **Budget Transfers**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a listing of Budget Transfers dated April 19, 2023, between the same series for information and between different series for approval.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to *approve the list of Transfers dated April 19, 2023, as presented by the Business Manager.*

Brooke Wrenn made a motion to *approve the list of Transfers dated April 19, 2023, as presented by the Business Manager.* Samantha Raphael seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

## **Executive Session:**

At 6:51pm Jessie Harrington entertained the motion to adjourn into executive session to discuss the bargaining position with non-union personnel that could be compromised if discussed in open session. We will not return to open session.

Gail Holloway made the motion to adjourn into executive session to discuss the bargaining position with non-union personnel that could be compromised if discussed in open session. We will not return to open session. Meghan McCrillis seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned into executive session at 6:51pm.

**Roll Call Vote**  
***Adjournment***

Respectfully submitted,

Mandy Williams

Recording Secretary

**Referenced Documents:**

Meeting Minutes for 4/5/23

Policy JF - School Admissions

AHS Program of Studies Updates

Policy AC - Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation

Policy ADDA - Background Checks

Policy AE - Commitment to Accomplishment

2022-2023 Teaching and Learning Newsletter - April

Year to Date Budget Report Dated 4/19/23

Budget Transfers Dated 4/19/23

**Approved 5-17-23**