



Acton-Boxborough Regional
School Committee Meeting
and Workshop

October 22, 2015

7:00 p.m.

at the R.J. Grey Junior High Library

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) WORKSHOP MEETING

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

October 22, 2015
7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order** (7:00)
2. **Chairman's Introduction**
3. **Statement of Warrant and Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. Minutes of Meeting on 10/1/15 and 10/15/15
4. **Public Participation**
5. **Legislative Subcommittee – Paul Murphy**
 - 5.1.1. Final Letter from ABRSC re Standardized Testing
6. **Acton Three Board Meeting on 10/27/15 – Kristina Rychlik**
 - 6.1. Agenda
7. **Acton Special Town Meeting re Citizens' Petition (11/10/15) – Kristina Rychlik (oral)**
8. **MASC District Governance Program – Workshop #2 Framing the Work – Kristina Rychlik, Dorothy Presser**
 - 8.1. ABRSC 2015 - 2016 Operating Protocols
 - 8.2. ABRSD Mission, Values and Long Range Strategic Plan:
<http://www.abschools.org/district/mission-and-values>
 - 8.3. Superintendent's FY16 Goals
9. **Adjourn** (9:00)

NEXT MEETINGS:

Oct 27	Three Board Meeting	7:00 p.m. in Acton Town Hall Room 204
Nov 5	ABRSC Meeting	7:00 p.m. in Jr High Library
Nov 10 (& 12 if needed)	Acton Special Town Meeting	7:00 p.m. in the ABRHS Auditorium
Nov 19	ABRSC Meeting	7:00 p.m. in Jr High Library

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
DRAFT Minutes

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

October 15, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Amy Krishnamurthy, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Maria Neyland, Deanne O’Sullivan, Kristina Rychlik
Members Absent: Mary Brolin, Michael Coppolino
Others: Bonnie Bisbicos, Deborah Bookis, Glenn Brand, Clare Jeannotte, Beth Petr, ABRHS Student Representatives

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairwoman Kristina Rychlik.
2. **Chairman’s Introduction**
Dr. Brand welcomed the ABRHS School Committee Representatives: Leanne Quinn, Hannah Forgo, Vennela Pandaraboyina and Arnav Mehra. Three of the students are seniors and one is a freshman.
3. **Statement of Warrant and Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. Minutes of the meeting on 10/1/15 will be done at the next meeting.
 - 3.2. Warrant # 16-008 dated 10/8/15 in the amount of \$2,362,824.62 and warrant #16-008PR dated 10/15/15 in the amount of \$507,416.65 were signed by the Committee.
4. **Public Participation** - none
5. **Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpEd PAC) Presentation**
Special Education Parent Advisory Council Cochairs Amanda Bailey and Bill Guthlein presented on the group’s 2015-2016 goals and preliminary report findings. Goals include: APPLE Plan follow up, Broaden Diversity and Expand Outreach, Update Resources on PAC Site, Update Special Education Parent Handbook, and Publish their 2015 Parent/Guardian Survey Report, Population Trends Update, and MCAS Analysis. Other Priorities for 2015-2016 include: Explore new practice of teachers signing off on IEPs/504s within five days of receiving a signed plan, Meeting special educators and specialists system-wide to forge relationships, Continuing to emphasize inclusion and seamless partnership between regular and special education staff, and Lobbying for special education training for all staff and administrators.

Amanda explained that they are trying to reach out in many ways because only one group of families comes to meetings. Some families do not even know that the Sped PAC exists, so they are trying to publicize in many different ways to reach as many groups as possible. Paul Murphy stated that the definition of “low income” being redefined concerns him. Marilyn Bisbicos explained that the state is trying to align itself with the federal criteria and that has changed a few things. Kristina Rychlik said that the Committee will have to figure this out during budget season in particular.

Amanda and Bill were thanked for all of their hard work and especially for the reports.
6. **MASC District Governance Program Update – Kristina Rychlik**
 - 6.1. ABRSC 2015 - 2016 Operating Protocols
 - 6.2. ABRSD Mission, Values and Long Range Strategic Plan:
<http://www.abschools.org/district/mission-and-values>

6.3. Superintendent's FY16 Goals

Kristina stated that the Committee's homework for next week is to consider the District goals and tie them back to the Long Range Strategic Plan. Dorothy Presser will be facilitating the workshop again.

7. **Budget Update** – *Clare Jeannotte*

7.1. FY15 End of Year Update

Clare Jeannotte stated that the General Fund closed the year \$666.9K favorable to the budget with \$23K being revenues and the balance being expense favorability. Favorability in the health insurance line was confirmed in April which was very helpful, but a one time event. Another one time favorable item was a refund from the CASE Collaborative. We are limited by the State to 5% for reserves. Certification will not be done until January or February. The fund balance that the District is starting to work with is \$1,955,000 at this time but DOR (Department of Revenue) may change that slightly.

The annual audit is substantially complete and Clare is waiting for the final financial statements. The Auditor will then report to the School Committee.

In response to a question about 9C cuts, Clare stated that it is the governor's purview to cut the budget during the year if he feels it is necessary. As a result, this is highly unpredictable. Clare emphasized the importance of the pressure put on politicians and MARS on this topic this past year and stressed that it made a difference for the regional districts like AB. Kristina thanked Clare for her very thorough report.

8. **Recommendation to Authorize ABRSD Treasurer to Borrow – VOTE** – *Clare Jeannotte*

This same vote was done a year ago at Tess Summer's suggestion and could be valuable to vote every year, just in case it is needed.

Paul Murphy moved, Maria Neyland seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: To authorize the Treasurer to borrow in anticipation of revenue for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015, in accordance with the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 16(d), and to renew any note or notes with the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 16 (d).

9. **FY18 School Vacation Discussion – Next Steps** – *Kristina Rychlik*

Kristina stated that this discussion will not impact next year's calendar. Based on the last School Committee meeting discussion of alternatives to our current one week off in February and one week off in April, there were three options: begin researching what other communities are doing and present that at a community forum, work on a state initiative, or decide not to proceed with changes. Kristina asked for volunteers for the options.

It was the sense of the Committee to proceed with Option 1. Brigid Bieber pointed out that the state does not dictate the vacation schedule, although it does dictate the number of days required (180). It was suggested that the Committee start by reaching out to the teachers and staff for their input educationally.

The Committee agreed to start with Option 1. Kathleen Neville and Maya Minkin volunteered to lead this effort and keep the School Committee posted.

10. **Subcommittee Reports**

10.1. Budget – *Kristina Rychlik (10/14/15)*

Maria Neyland agreed to chair the budget subcommittee. Next meeting is Oct 28.

10.2. Outreach – *Kathleen Neville (10/14/15)*

Kathleen and Kristina met with Amy Bisiewicz yesterday and are working on the School Committee section of the website. People can now sign up to receive the School Committee meeting agendas via Constant Contact when they are posted on Friday nights.

10.3. Regionalization Financial Oversight Committee (10/6/15)

Kristina read comments from Mary Brolin in her absence.

10.4. Demographic Study Update – *Kristina Rychlik*

On Oct 5, Mary Brolin, Mike Coppolino, Glenn Brand and Andrew Shen met to discuss next steps. Advice was to keep the focus very narrow to be most beneficial. What do we want to know? This one should focus on policy and practice, more than values. Next step is to meet with the Boston College staff.

10.5. Legislative – Paul Murphy

10.5.1. Draft Letter from ABRSC re: Standardized Testing

Paul Murphy and Kathleen Neville have not met since the last meeting. School Committee members agreed to sign the draft letter found in the packet regarding PARCC testing. This will be sent to the Mass Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

11. School Committee Member Reports - oral reports

11.1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Kristina Rychlik, Paul Murphy*

11.2. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) – *Maria Neyland*

11.3. Health Insurance Trust (HIT) – *Mary Brolin*

11.4. Acton Finance Committee – *Kristina Rychlik, Deanne O'Sullivan*

11.5. Acton Board of Selectmen – *Mike Coppolino, Paul Murphy*

11.6. Boxborough Finance Committee – *Mary Brolin*

11.7. Boxborough Board of Selectmen – *Maria Neyland, Brigid Bieber*

11.8. Minuteman Tech Update – *Diane Baum*

11.9. PTO/PTSO/PTF Co-Chairs – *Deanne O'Sullivan*

12. Acton Special Town Meeting re Citizens' Petition (11/10/15) – *Kristina Rychlik*

Kristina reviewed her memo of suggestions/corrections regarding the timing of the Committee making a statement about this issue.

Brigid Bieber expressed confusion because as a regional school district, Acton Town Meeting does not dictate what the ABRSC does. She said it is hard to know how this would apply, beyond it being a non binding resolution for Acton citizens. She does not feel like the School Committee should get into the factual accuracy of the petition on Town Meeting floor.

Maria Neyland attended the Acton Fincom meeting with Kristina last night to hear the petitioners. The School Committee has been clear over the past couple of years about how they feel about PARCC testing, etc. She stated that there is a lot of time and energy being put into this petition and it should be directed to the state and federal level because it cannot be changed at the local level. She proposed a short statement from the Committee at the Town Meeting. Paul Murphy stated that he cannot support the petition with the language it currently has in it.

Kristina read a statement from Mary Brolin urging that a sense of the Committee be stated. The petitioners also use "standardized testing" when they probably mean "high stakes testing", one of several inaccuracies in the document. Kristina is concerned about the approach that is being taken with this issue, especially given that the School Committee has publicly agreed with a portion of this position for a number of years. Amy Krishnamurthy stated that she is uncomfortable with this petition going before the public because there are mistakes and it is not a clear statement that the Committee can make. Steve Noone spoke from the audience and said that the Acton FinCom will not vote a

position until the 3 Board meeting. Kristina suggested that the School Committee may continue this discussion (about the Petition) at the workshop meeting next Thursday night.

Corrine Hogseth, one of the petitioners, spoke regarding the privacy issue emphasizing that this testing will collect a large amount of information about our children that should not be held by the state. Regarding the expense of technology in the classroom, she feels there is too much of it in our classrooms and it takes away from instruction.

Kristina will draft a recommendation memo for the Acton Board of Selectmen and Fincom, and if questions exist after that is distributed, the School Committee can decide how they want to answer them.

13. **FY16 No School/Delayed Opening/Emergency Release Procedures – Glenn Brand**

This information will be sent out to families and staff and posted on the website.

14. **Superintendent's Report – Glenn Brand**

14.1. School Capital and Space Planning Subcommittee Update

In the recent ABConnector newsletter, Dr. Brand asked for volunteers for this subcommittee and expects them to meet in early December. Interested volunteers should contact him.

14.2. Superintendent's Safety Task Force

This group met a little over a week ago. It is comprised of staff and police officers from Acton and Boxborough. Three primary areas of focus include: revisiting recommendations made by the last Committee, reviewing preparations/procedures for readiness, and reviewing the different lockdown procedures currently in place. The work of this committee will be brought to the community when appropriate for parent/guardian input.

14.3. Superintendent's Wellness Committee

This group will meet on October 20th.

15. **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

Dr. Brand highlighted the following:

15.1. School Council Orientation Meeting slides, 10/5/15

15.2. Family Learning Series: *PreK – 2 Early Literacy Learning*, Matt Glover, Oct 29 at 7:00 p.m. in the R.J. Grey Jr High Auditorium – a great new initiative.

15.3. Youth Risk Behavior Survey Presentation, Wednesday, Oct 21 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: ABRHS Room 115N

Results of 2014 Survey & Discussion of upcoming Spring 2016 Survey

The AB Connector newsletter was distributed via Constant Contact last Friday. Sign up on the website to receive issues directly via email, or see issue posted on www.ab.mec.edu.

Dr. Brand acknowledged the recent passing of former Building and School Committee member and active community volunteer, Michael Scanlon. He will be missed.

The ABRSC was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

October 1, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Michael Coppolino, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Maria Neyland, Kristina Rychlik
Members Absent: Amy Krishnamurthy, Deanne O'Sullivan
Others: Marie Altieri, Bonnie Bisbicos, Glenn Brand, Clare Jeannotte, Beth Petr

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Kristina Rychlik, Chairwoman.
2. **Chairman's Introduction** –
3. **Statement of Warrant and Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. Minutes of the meeting on 9/17/15 were approved as written. Maria Neyland abstained.
 - 3.2. Warrant #16-007 dated 9/24/15 in the amount of \$3,490,738.70 and #16-007PR dated 10/1/15 in the amount of \$453,666.28 were signed by the Committee.

4. **Public Participation** - none

5. **Comparable Communities Update** – *Marie Altieri*

- 5.1. Presentation Slides

- 5.2. List of Communities

Marie Altieri presented Peter Ashton's report because he was unavailable. This work was started in 2004 and formalized in 2008. As of 10/1/14, we now have 17 towns on the list for comparisons based on a number of criteria as measured along several different dimensions: Size/demographics, Financial, Ability to pay, and Location.

Mike Coppolino thanked Peter for continuing his work on this task. When looking at the financial columns, he questioned how much of a match the comparison towns are, particularly considering a balance of ability to pay, in addition to the other categories, although he has not examined the report thoroughly yet. The towns that were added seem to be on the higher income bracket. Marie pointed out that bond rating was a consideration. Paul Murphy noted that inherent in this analysis is an equal weighting to each category. He questioned if there should be some sort of prioritization.

It was the sense of the Committee that members were very comfortable with this analysis. When asked how to decide which comparison list to use, now that we have two, Marie stated that it depends what information is needed. At ALG, the Acton Finance Committee was comfortable with the new list. Brigid Bieber noted that it is important to be consistent with how we look at this type of information. Marie confirmed that the Acton-Boxborough region was used for comparing, not just the town of Acton.

6. **MASC District Governance Program Update** – *Kristina Rychlik*

- 6.1. ABRSC 2015 - 2016 Operating Protocols

Kristina Rychlik reported that the final protocols are in the packet and the next Workshop is scheduled for October 22 with Dorothy Presser.

7. **Budget Update**

7.1. FY17 Budget Process

7.1.1. Budget Timeline

7.1.2. Budget Guidelines

Dr. Brand described the process for determining the FY17 Budget and spoke about the proposed guidelines. Mary Brolink stated that the guidelines are excellent, but it will still be a challenge to make the decisions. The Committee did not feel the need to vote on this document.

8. **Subcommittee Reports**

8.1. Policy – Maria said the subcommittee has met twice to discuss how to move forward. Next meeting is 10/14/15.

8.2. Budget – Kristina Rychlik reported on the first meeting.

8.2.1. Financial Reporting per the Regional Agreement (Section 11 & App A Section e)

Mary Brolin reported that the memo in the packet has been sent to both Towns' Boards of Selectmen and Finance Committees. Clare Jeannotte wants to use the October 1 numbers for the report because it is most transparent and consistent, but it means the report will not be provided by October 1st as specified in the Regional Agreement. Brigid pointed out that this was included in the Agreement because the Blanchard School numbers were so different from the Acton elementary schools'. Using the different methodology will probably make the numbers look much different. Mary Brolin agreed.

The Boards all want to share these numbers with both communities, but the timing is important. Mary stated that they are hoping to have good numbers for this requirement by January.

Clare Jeannotte stated that January should be achievable except in terms of procedure. The District will file an end of year report by October 31. The audit for these reports is often not scheduled until February or March and it depends when the DESE issues the guidelines. Clare said that this will all be based on the assumption codes that DESE requires districts to use.

8.3. Legislative – *Paul Murphy*

8.3.1. Update on meeting with Rep. Jennifer Benson on 9/11/15

8.4. Regionalization Financial Oversight Committee to meet Tues 10/6/15 at 7:00 p.m in Superintendent's Conference room

9. **School Capital and Space Planning Committee (new) – Glenn Brand**

Dr. Brand reported on the interest he found for this new committee, particularly with the Existing Conditions Phase 1 Report coming out in January, followed by the second phase. He would like two members of the School Committee to be on this committee and welcomed feedback. Kristina asked anyone who would like to serve on this committee to let her know. Dr. Brand will launch this committee in December or January because it will be tied to the conclusion of the Existing Conditions Study Report. He will ask for volunteers in his first newsletter of the year that will go out soon. Kristina is interested in serving but not if another Acton School Committee member would like to. She suggested asking for people with related professional experience. Maria asked for a broad group of members, including non-school parents to serve.

10. **School Committee Member Reports**

10.1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Kristina Rychlik*

10.1.1. Meeting on 9/24/15

Kristina reported that the spreadsheet is being simplified. She talked about the Three Board Meeting on Oct 27 and noted that a complaint was received from a Boxborough citizen asking if the Boxborough Boards were invited and if not, why. As discussed at the August meeting, the

School Committee offered to do a similar meeting with the Boxborough Boards. Mary Brolin will send the Boxborough Boards the timeline and guidelines and she will ask if they would like a presentation, or have the Committee come to one of their meetings.

10.2. Health Insurance Trust (HIT)– *Mary Brolin*

Mary reported that at the meeting on 9/25/15, they discussed that there is a small loss for the year, but there is a concern that it is a small multi-year loss. There is however, a significant fund balance that will cover it. The FY15 draft audit is expected in mid-November. The trust will have to deal with the Cadillac tax that is part of the affordable Care Act now. We have one plan that is in this category for retirees who live out of state.

10.3. Acton Finance Committee – *Kristina Rychlik*,

Clare Jeannotte will present at the 11/5/15 School Committee meeting, followed by the first Acton Finance committee meeting after that.

10.4. Acton Board of Selectmen – *Paul Murphy*

A large number of people attended for the Senior Center discussion.

10.5. Boxborough Finance Committee- *Mary Brolin*

Mary and liaison Amy Burke have talked to ensure that a good communication plan is in place.

10.6. Minuteman Tech Update – *Diane Baum*

10.6.1. Building Committee Informational Meetings: Sept 28 at 7p.m. & Oct 2 at 8 a.m.

10.6.2. Five Year Projected Revenue Plan and Assessments

Mike Coppolino and Brigid Bieber attended the earlier Building Project Update meeting. Brigid shared 3 handouts from the meeting. Another meeting is being planned. Minuteman Tech will lose their State Building Assistance (SBA) funding in June if they don't have enough support by then. All documents are posted on the Minuteman Tech website. Mike reported that there was a diversity of opinion. He wanted to know what the alternatives were. He said the message given to the Building Committee and Minuteman School Committee was to consider other options like selling some of their land. They have also made some programming changes and realignments. Diane Baum will attend the next meeting.

11. **Standardized Testing Statement from the Administration** – *Glenn Brand*

Dr. Brand stated that the purpose of this statement is to clearly communicate directly to our constituent groups, the Administration's position on and use of standardized testing. Because ABRSD is not a PARCC district, Dr. Brand and the Administration do not feel qualified to speak for or against PARCC at this time.

Paul thanked Dr. Brand for this statement, given the PARCC vote to be taken in November. He asked if the School Committee wanted to create their own statement about this. Members shared their frustration about the topic and agreed they wanted to send a statement. Mary Brolin emphasized that the process is flawed so it is inappropriate for the state to vote due to the lack of public data. Kristina suggested that Paul could watch the previous meetings and put the comments together with the Administrators' statement. She found the document in the packet to be excellent and could be included. Paul agreed to draft a letter for discussion at the October 15 School Committee meeting.

Mike Coppolino asked about the last paragraph on the last page about Student Growth Percentile (SGP). Marie Altieri explained how this could affect a teacher. He feels the paragraph is too strong and appears to be throwing out SGP completely. After his years of teaching, he feels consistently high SGP often means something good is happening and low means something could be better.

Kristina and Maya Minkin commented. A point was made that regarding SGP, it is important to find a place to be comfortable with this item because it does come up every year.

Bill Guthlein spoke on behalf of the SpedPAC, emphasizing that their group has always focused on how to raise the achievement level of special education students, and to them, this means higher SGPs. He disagrees with the Administration's statement because it says that MCAS or PARCC scores will not be used to measure success, and he feels it is important to include if we are trying to raise student output. He does feel that standard testing should not stand equal with all other measures.

Kristina noted that this is the Administration's document. It is up to them if they want to change it. Dr. Brand will share the Committee's comments with Deborah Bookis and rest of the team. It was suggested that the authors of the document be identified in it.

12. Superintendent's Report – Glenn Brand

12.1. FY17 School Calendar Preliminary Discussion

Dr. Brand asked the Committee for their thoughts about voting a 2 year school calendar. Each year the Committee would still be approving a calendar but it is 2 years out (after the first year, when they would approve two years in a row). He agreed that this may not be feasible this year. He also asked for input on how to handle the religious holidays.

Maya Minkin stated that the memo is what she understood the Committee agreed to. She feels there is merit to doing a 2 year calendar. She also wants to rethink the April and February vacations. She said that many parents (and some McT staff) would like the vacations changed so they could avoid traveling during the usual busy vacation weeks. The vacation question has come up in past School Committee meetings and the discussion has been postponed due to timing. Kathleen Neville agreed. She also wants to discuss religious holidays again because it was before full regionalization that the Committee voted.

Kristina Rychlik thinks theoretically that a 2 year calendar sounds good, but there are so many constraints and complications that she feels it is a contractual issue that is not realistic to decide now. She is happy to table the religious holiday discussion for next year.

Maria Neyland agreed with Maya regarding vacations because kids are getting out of school so late in June. She would like to talk about vacations for next year. She always wants to talk about religious holidays because our demographic continues to change, and she has been consistent every year advocating for not cancelling school on Good Friday, Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur

Mike Coppolino wants to ask parents and staff for their opinion. This may not be the time to do a 2 year calendar. He agrees with Maya regarding the vacations.

Marie Altieri stated that there is a lot of language in the teachers' contract that School Committee must be aware of. She said a side letter could be used if necessary regarding a 2 year calendar.

Brigid Bieber agreed with Maya about vacations, suggesting that the District could try a couple of long weekends and a March week off, to avoid the travel crowds. She stated that regarding the religious holidays question, the District's school calendar is not structured appropriately given our community now, but surveying makes the community angry. She would like to survey the community every 5 years or so, not every 2 years.

Kristina asked given there is interest in revisiting the vacation schedule, would it be for next year's calendar. The Committee agreed it would be to start in FY18 given the significance of this kind of change. It would affect so many families with sports, exchange programs, etc. Mike agreed with Brigid that people don't want to be surveyed too often. Kristina and Dr. Brand will discuss this and decide how to proceed.

12.2. EDCO Update

12.2.1. September Update

12.2.2. Request for Proposals re Study of Increasing CASE/EDCO/LABB Partnership

Dr. Brand discussed the memo about the three collaboratives exploring working more closely together with perhaps eventually consolidating. He will keep the Committee updated.

13. **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

13.1. Thank you to Northern Bank and Trust Company, 414 Mass Ave in Acton (Branch Manager, Nancy Dinkel) for collecting donations of school supplies for our students

13.2. Annual Friends of Lower Fields (FOLF) Meeting (9/21) Update

13.3. Influenza Vaccine Clinics at Blanchard (10/1/) and ABRHS (10/6,10/7, 10/8)

13.4. *"Thinking Through, In and About Mathematics in 2015"*, 10/6/15 at 7:00 p.m. in the RJGJHS Auditorium, ABRSD Family Learning Series – Dr. Brand thanked Deborah Bookis and her staff for a wonderful program.

13.5. Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results Presentation, Oct 21 at 7:00 p.m. Location: TBD – Bonnie Bisbicos urged the public to attend this panel presentation. The next survey will be done in March 2016.

Dr. Brand reported on the light pole that fell on Leary Field last month. JD Head had an engineering firm do an inspection and overall things are in good shape. Four poles, not on Leary Field, do need to be replaced. A report will come out soon.

The ABRSC adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

NEXT MEETINGS:

Oct 15	ABRSC Meeting	7:00 p.m. in Jr High Library
Oct 22	ABRSC Governance Workshop	7:00 p.m. in Jr High Library
Oct 27	Three Board Meeting	7:00 p.m. in Acton Town Hall Room 204



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

October 22, 2015

Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Attn: Mr. Paul Sagan, Chair

Dear Mr. Sagan:

While the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee believes in standardized assessments as but one indicator of learning and a useful tool that informs instruction, we urge the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to vote against state-wide implementation of the assessment tool developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

After attending public forums (including the hearings sponsored by DESE), reading available literature, and conferring with curriculum experts to better understand the assessment tool developed by PARCC, we have observed the following:

- In 2010, the state claimed it would agree to adopt the PARCC assessments “provided they are at least as comprehensive and rigorous as our current assessment system (MCAS)”¹. Sadly, no criteria or analysis demonstrating that the PARCC assessments have lived up to the conditions of that agreement has been made public.
- In 2013, the State (or DESE) has asserted that “all indications to date [are] that PARCC will provide a better assessment system than MCAS”², yet no data or evidence to support that claim was ever made public. Nor were any of the “indications” enumerated. Given the statement quoted above, it appears that PARCC improved relative to MCAS, yet no descriptions of how these improvements were achieved were ever made public. Blog posts published in the literature handed out at the public hearing in Lynn on June

¹ Memorandum of Agreement signed by Governor Patrick, Secretary Reville, and Commissioner Chester

² DESE MASS Drive-in Conference, October 2013 slide 12

Our Mission is to prepare all students to attain their full potential as life-long learners, critical thinkers, and productive citizens of our diverse community and global society.

22, 2015 asserted the superiority of PARCC³, but provided no analytical evidence to support the claims.

- The alternative option of changing MCAS to be fully aligned with the MA 2010 standards was never publicly debated, nor was any explanation given as to why the state did not investigate that option.
- In 2013, the state decided to field test the PARCC tool without substantive public input regarding the parameters by which the comparison to MCAS would be made, its effect on School and District Accountability Ratings, or its impact on the Educator Evaluation Process.
- Since the field test was implemented, the state has not made public any of the data collected. The state recently voted to approve a “cut-off” for PARCC achievement, yet no data or analysis supporting that threshold was ever made public.
- We have yet to see any third party analysis of the test’s validity or appropriateness for the grade levels completed.

As such, we feel that the process by which the assessment tool developed by PARCC lacks the requisite public participation that would earn credibility in the public eye. We urge the BESE to vote against state-wide implementation of the PARCC assessment tool.

Sincerely,

Members of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee:

Diane Baum

Brigid Bieber

Mary Brolin

Michael Coppolino

Amy Krishnamurthy

Maya Minkin

Paul Murphy

Kathleen Neville

Maria Neyland

Deanne O’Sullivan

Kristina Rychlik (Chairwoman)

³ “A Walk in the PARCC Part 2: ELA” published by Match Education

“THREE BOARD” MEETING

of the

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
ACTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
ACTON FINANCE COMMITTEE

Acton Town Hall
Room 204

October 27, 2015
7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order** (7:00)
2. **Welcome/Introduction** – *Kristina Rychlik*
 - 2.1. Planning for the FY17 Budget Process
 - 2.2. Goal Sharing
 - 2.3. Critical Budget Issues
3. **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Presentation/questions** – *Kristina Rychlik (7:15)*
4. **Acton Board of Selectmen Presentation/questions** – *Katie Green (7:45)*
5. **Dessert Break** (8:15)
6. **Acton Finance Committee Presentation/questions** – *Mike Majors (8:30)*
7. **Wrap Up**
8. **Adjourn** (9:00)



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

16 Charter Road

Acton, MA 01720

978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

8.1

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Operating Protocols

voted 9/17/15

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee recognizes the importance of our work to our students, families, staff and the communities of Acton and Boxborough. We strive to advocate for the Acton-Boxborough Public Schools and the support of public education, and view our roles as ambassadors of the District. Thus, we have formally established the following operating protocols to follow in our dealings with the Superintendent, Staff/Administration, and the general public.

The School Committee has established policies in the areas of School Committee Powers and Duties (BBA), School Committee-Superintendent Relationship (BDD), School Committee-Staff Communications (BHC), School Committee Member Ethics (BCA) and School Committee Member Authority (BBAA)¹. These outline the expected and appropriate roles of the School Committee and highlight duties, responsibilities and, importantly, the limits of those responsibilities in carrying out our work. All members shall be familiar with these policies and follow them while encouraging their fellow members to do the same.

The School Committee has high expectations for behavior at its meetings, in order to conduct our business in a professional, respectful, thoughtful and efficient manner.

We believe that School Committee members should be empowered to freely express their opinions, concerns and ideas in a climate of trust and mutual respect. While we don't expect to always agree, we do expect that we should always acknowledge the value of each individual member's contributions and work to disagree without being disagreeable. Effective yet efficient debate by members will help us to use our meeting time wisely.

¹ The letters in parentheses reference school committee policies available online at <http://www.abschools.org/school-committee/policies> .

Our Mission is to prepare all students to attain their full potential as life-long learners, critical thinkers, and productive citizens of our diverse community and global society.

We agree that individual School Committee members have no independent authority, only the committee as a whole has authority. When representing the Committee at meetings of other boards or groups, individual members must speak as individuals except when reporting a decision of the majority of the Committee.

The School Committee welcomes respectful, thoughtful input from the public in shaping Committee decisions; however, while our meetings are open to the public; they are not public meetings. Public participation is subject to Chapter 30A section 20g of the Massachusetts General Law and our School Committee Policy BEDH. We expect the public to follow our policy on public participation and allow the Chair the authority to enforce this policy.

Matters of concern by parents and guardians should be addressed by following the Parent Communication Map available at abschools.org. Town or community concerns that are within our purview will be addressed when appropriate and necessary, but not prematurely.

We strive to make our meetings as efficient as possible (beginning no earlier than 7:00 p.m. and ending no later than 10:00 p.m.) in order to be sensitive to the time commitments of staff, committee members and the public. This may entail:

- Adding meetings in order to address topics requiring lengthy discussion;
- Limiting the number of agenda items at a particular meeting;
- Delaying discussion on certain issues;
- Discouraging the use of the addendum to our meeting packets for more than short, routine matters or minor updates.

We aim to avoid surprises at our meetings and will work to maintain focus on our goals and priorities. Questions and concerns should be communicated as early as possible before a meeting. Except in emergency situations, the School Committee will refrain from addressing issues that have not been previously brought to the attention of the Chair and/or Superintendent.

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Long Range Strategic Plan 2011-2016
Adopted December 1, 2011
Updated Spring 2014

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

See: <http://www.abschools.org/district/mission-and-values>

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE GOALS
2015-16 SCHOOL YEAR
Dr. GLENN A. BRAND**

GOAL STATEMENT	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE
<p><u>Professional Practice Goal#1:</u></p> <p><i>MASS/DESE New Superintendent Induction Program (NSIP) - during the 2015-16 school year I will participate in year two of the three year NSIP program.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Attend all content days over the course of the school year and complete all assignments. ii. Complete as many 'coaching' days/sessions as possible with Dr. Kingston. iii. Apply and institute as many tools and strategies to my work here in the ABRSD. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><u>Professional Practice Goal#2:</u></p> <p><i>Meeting Management & Productivity – during the course of the upcoming school year I will work towards improving my direct efforts in maximizing productivity of leadership team meetings through focusing on meeting planning, execution and follow-up strategies.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Explore various management and leadership readings to learn about strategies associated with highly effective meeting management. ii. Introduce and explore the use of various strategies within meetings. iii. Create an online portal that allows for the collection of relevant meeting agendas, minutes and action plans. iv. Gather feedback at both the midway and end of the year to help inform the overall degree of success. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><u>Student Learning Goal:</u></p> <p><i>Student Support Services –in conjunction with the Interim Director of Pupil Services, Director of Special Education & Director of Curriculum & Assessment I will coordinate a review of our district's student support service practices across each of our schools related to the services students PreK-12 receive in both our regular and special educational settings. Using the framework of the Massachusetts Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) this review will more closely examine</i></p>	<p>Develop an ad hoc committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop a methodology for assessing the current supports and interventions in the district in our schools. ii. Study and review the current state of curriculum accommodation planning and identify recommendations for improvements. iii. Gather and examine current data with our TATs including a focus on their strengths, weaknesses and overall satisfaction. iv. Develop an effective way in which to understand the 	<p>Committee Formed By October 1</p> <p>Review Completed By January 30</p> <p>Report and recommendations completed by end of March</p>

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<p>the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current approaches taken to the modification of the curriculum within the regular education setting including a focus on the use of the district and school curriculum accommodation plan (s); • A review of the strengths, weaknesses and overall satisfaction with our teacher-assistance teams (TATs); • The district's current capacity for supporting inclusionary practices of students with specialized needs within the regular educational setting. 	<p>state of inclusionary practices throughout the district and what is needed in order to further support the inclusion of students with specialized needs in the regular educational setting.</p>	
<p><u>District Improvement Goal #1</u></p> <p><i>District Strategic Plan - by the end of the current school year I will oversee the development of a new strategic plan for the district that clearly sets out our priorities for the next three years.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with the District Leadership Team (DLT) on identifying emergent priorities from the Superintendent's Entry Plan Report. Develop a plan to engage first the faculty and staff and then the broader community in the vetting process of identifying priorities. Hold a variety of community forums that allow for input into the priorities and emerging strategic objectives. Construct the district's new strategic plan that includes expectations around district & school alignment, strategic initiatives and forms of measurement and evaluation. 	<p>Priorities Established with Leadership Team By End of October</p> <p>Faculty/Staff Engagement November</p> <p>Community Forums November/December</p> <p>Strategic Plan Completed By May 1</p>
<p><u>District Improvement Goal #2</u></p> <p><i>Focus on Future School Needs – Establish a transparent process that helps identify and creates a</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Form an inter-town and school district committee that will become the Future School Needs Committee. Arrange for a number of presentations from the 	<p>Call for Volunteers Late September & committee formed by first of October</p>

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<p>broader understanding of the short and long-term capital and building-related needs both within the district and at the municipal/town level.</p>	<p>firm completing the district's Existing Conditions Study at both School Committee and other community-based meetings.</p> <p>iii. Establish a specific section on the district's website that provides for the collection of information related to this area.</p>	<p>Presentations throughout the late fall and winter</p> <p>Final report presented in January with community forums thereafter</p>
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