



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-316-3000

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

School Committee Minutes 11/17/2011

Approved by School Committee January 26, 2012

Arlington School Committee
Thursday, November 17, 2011
6:30 p.m.
Arlington High School
School Committee Room – Sixth Floor
869 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476

Present: Ms. Cindy Starks, Chair, Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe, Vice Chair, Mr. Judson Pierce, Secretary, Mr. Jeff Thielman, Mr. Joseph Curro, Jr., Ms. Leba Heigham, and Mr. William Hayner.

Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Dr. Wallis Raemer, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Robert Spiegel, Human Resource Officer, Ms. Linda Hanson, AEA Representative and Ms. Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant

Absent: Ms. Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Special Education Director, and AAA Representative and Student Representative

Mr. Spiegel exited the meeting at 6:43 p.m. and returned at 6:44 p.m.

Mr. Curro exited the meeting at 7:34 p.m. and returned at 7:36 p.m.

Mr. Thielman arrived at 7:40 p.m.

Ms. Heigham exited the meeting at 7:37 p.m. and returned at 7:41 p.m.

Ms. Hanson exited the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

Ms. Starks opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Public Participation

Trish Orlovsky provided comments from SEPAC and informed the committee members that SEPAC has not seen or discussed the job description being proposed tonight by Dr. Bodie of the Special Education Director. Ms. Orlovsky stated that SEPAC has concerns of the proposal and suggested additional responsibilities and duties of the director.

Youth Risk Survey Results

Ms. Cindy Bouvier, Director of Health, Wellness and Guidance and Ms. Colleen Leger, Arlington Health and Youth Coalition, reported on the 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey for students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 for the Arlington Public Schools. Over 981 students responded to the survey, and questions focused on student safety, violence related behaviors, suicide, tobacco use, alcohol use, illegal drug use, HIV/AIDS education, sexual behavior for students in grade 7 and 8, dietary behaviors, self-image and stress, and physical activity.

The committee members said they appreciated the work involved in preparing the survey and the presentation tonight, as well as the work that goes into after the surveys are completed in preparing parent forums and professional development for the Arlington School parents and staff. Ms. Bouvier and Ms. Léger informed the committee on how well the Parent Forums are attended.

MCAS Data and Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) Report

Dr. Raemer reported on the District grade level performance, the cohort performance, high needs student results, and growth data. The overview of the 2011 MCAS shows Arlington is a high achieving district with moderate to very high student growth. The majority of district grade level scores are up in the top 20% in the state and students score above the state average on all measures of achievement.

The Math highlights show Brackett ranked top 5 % in Grade 4, Stratton ranked top 5% in Grade 5, a notable gain in Advanced and Proficient scores in Grade 10, and 72% Advanced in Grade 10. The ELA highlights show Stratton ranked 11th in the state in Grade 3, Dallin ranked 5th in the state in Grade 5, Brackett ranked 14th in the state in Grade 5, Ottoson Middle School ranked 17th in the state in Grade 7, notable gains in Grades 5, 7 and 10 and over the past five years students scoring Advanced has grown. The Science highlights show Brackett ranked 6th in the state in Grade 5, Bishop ranked 12th in the state for Grade 5, Dallin top 5% in state in Grade 5,

Hardy top 45 in state Grade 5, Pierce top 7% in state Grade 5, Stratton top 9% in state Grade 5, the Ottoson Middle School top 7% in state in Grade 8 and Grade 10 shows improvement in Advanced and Proficient and Advanced. The High Needs Students, which students on Individual Education Plans (IEP), and/or identified as Limited English Proficiency, (LEP) or FLEP, and/or eligible for free/reduced lunch shows the overall achievement gap persists but narrows for these students over the years.

Dr. Raemer reported on the Adequate Yearly Progress of the school districts and NCLB law requires that all schools measure the progress of all students in the Aggregate as well as in Subgroups: special education, Limited English Proficiency, and race/ethnicity.

A Majority of our schools meet AYP and/or are “On Target” for improvement for the year. The schools that made AYP in ELA and Math are Arlington High School, Brackett, Hardy and Thompson Elementary Schools, the schools that made significant improvement and change from 2010 exceeding target in ELA and /or Math are Arlington High School-ELA, Ottoson Middle School – ELA- Special Education, Dallin – ELA, Hardy- ELA –Math, and Thompson – ELA- Math. The Improvement status for AYP in the district - Improvement Year 1 ELA-subgroups, Ottoson Middle, ELA Improvement Year 2 – subgroup (Low Income), Math Restructuring Year 2 – Subgroups and Thompson, ELA Improvement Year 2 – subgroups. Dr. Raemer pointed out the steps being taken to increase achievement and growth in Math, ELA, and Science for all students’ success.

Update on Home Schooled Children

Dr. Raemer provided the Home-Schooling Report for the School Committee for 2011/2012 School Years. The data showed 42 families participate with a total of 72 students, 32 Elementary, 20 Middle School and 20 High School. Dr. Bodie and Dr. Raemer are looking into the Department of Education’s decision to allow Home Schooled Children to participate in MCAS which would allow them to possible receive a high school diploma.

Superintendent’s Proposal to School Committee

Dr. Bodie presented her proposed Director of Special Education & Support Services job description to the School Committee tonight and informed the committee that it had been updated since they last received it in the packets. The committee members also received previous Director of Special Education job descriptions and the Special Educational Organization Chart.

Approval of Job Descriptions

Mr. Thielman moved to approve the Director of Special Education & Support Services Job Description drafted by Dr. Bodie, Superintendent, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Dr. Allison-Ampe commented on where Dr. Bodie updated the job description which was the 2nd to last bullet on page 2 to include cooperate with all parent and other community groups, and work closely with the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC), which includes regular meetings and communication with SEPAC. Maintain good communication with special education parents/guardians.

Mr. Hayner moved to amend the motion to amend the job description for the Director of Special Education & Support Services:

“Add under Qualifications:

- **Demonstrate skills and decision-making informed by systematic data gathering and analysis to inform district programs and services.**
- **Direct experience in developing and delivering model programs incorporating best practices for students with disabilities, and utilizing appropriate tools for monitoring progress and increasing performance on district and state assessments and other measures as appropriate for the program.**

Add under ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Expand in-district extracurricular activities and inclusive supports for students with disabilities**
- **Administer professional development programs for disability awareness and best practices for specific disability groups**
- **Improve communication about special education initiatives, changes, or proposals to parents and community**
- **Expand website to provide more information and transparency about the special education department, procedures and practices, and special education resources and programs in the district.**

PAGE 2 add

- **Cooperate with all parent and other community groups, and work closely with the Special Needs Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC), which includes regular meetings with SEPAC for the purpose of: (add the following)**

"Advising the district on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities" and enabling SEPAC "to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school district's special education programs." Seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted: 2-5, Mr. Hayner and Mr. Curro voting Yes

Ms. Heigham, Mr. Thielman and Dr. Allison-Ampe said they would not support the motion to change the job description but thought this would be a great interview question for the Special Education candidate.

After the committee members continued to discuss adding additional bullets around certifications/ financial expertise and experience in budgeting, Mr. Curro moved to terminate the debate, and vote the main motion.

The main motion

Voted: 6-1, Mr. Hayner voting No.

Structure for Leadership of Special Education

Dr. Bodie said many current Directors of Special Education are hired with Waivers or have had to have several searches to find the best person. Dr. Bodie suggested advertising the position in December and to have staff, administrators and parents start reviewing applications in January. Dr. Bodie will bring the Director of Special Education Salary forward to the School Committee members to inform them of the salary range she has chosen.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bodie said the Redistricting Committee met Tuesday, November 15, 2011 and started the process of drafting a Redistricting map and will have it completed by June 2012. Dr. Bodie will have it posted to the website as soon as possible. Mr. Spiegel said he had attended the Transportation Advisory Committee meeting and said the discussion was about the Stratton School safety with the AM/PM bus drop off and pick up. The TAC recommendation was to hire a Traffic Supervisor to the post for the safety of the students. Dr. Bodie said it could possibly be billed back to the Thompson School Project line item for relocation expenses.

After the committee agreed with the recommendation they decided no motion was needed from the committee but appreciate being informed.

Dr. Bodie said the Thompson School bricks are available at certain times of the day for the Arlington Community members, and will be posted to the website when available. Today's Students Tomorrows Teachers will be meeting on Monday, November 21, 2011 from 5 to 6 in the High School Media Center.

Subcommittee & Liaison Reports

- Policies & Procedures
 - Second Reading: JLCF Head Injuries and Concussions

Mr. Pierce moved to approve the Second Reading and adopt the Policy JLCF- Head Injuries and Concussions, seconded by Mr. Thielman.

Voted: 7-0

- Budget - Kirsi Alison-Ampe- None
- Community Relations - Leba Heigham-None
- DA/CIA - Jeff Thielman- None
- Thompson Building Committee - Jeff Thielman-None
- Document Requests

Ms. Starks said she reviewed the Superintendent Evaluation process and said all documents are public documents and are part of the minutes.

Mr. Hayner will wait to received clarification from Mr. Spiegel if ACMI could provide a video link of the entire Evaluation of the Superintendent during the November 10, 2011 School Committee meeting before bringing the motion forward for a vote.

Ms. Starks moved to remove Kirsi Allison-Ampe from the AEA & AAA negotiating team and replacing her with Cindy Starks, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 7-0

Dr. Allison-Ampe said this was due to also being the Chair of the Budget Subcommittee meeting and would be willing to sit in on some of Negotiating meetings.

Consent Agenda

All items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence:

Mr. Hayner moved the Approval of School Committee Minutes: October 27, 2011, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted: 7-0

Mr. Curro moved the 10 0'clock rule to 10:10, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 7-0

Secretary's Report

Mr. Pierce provided the Secretary's Report 11/17/11 (correspondence from 11/11/11-11/17/11)
Email forward from Ms. Fitzgerald with information from EDCO concerning the relationship between Class Sizes and SPED Referrals
Email from Ms. Fitzgerald with Special Education Director Comparative Salary
Email from Ms. Fitzgerald with Sped Director Old Job Descriptions and Structure of Leadership doc
Email forward from Ms. Fitzgerald regarding head injury guidelines.

Email forward from Ms. Fitzgerald regarding Concussion Policy Deadline.

Email from Ms. Fitzgerald regarding 10/27/11 minutes.

Email from Mr. Spiegel regarding Traffic Supervisors.

Email from Fran Reidy of the Selectman's Office regarding notice and invitation to Budget & Revenue Task Force Meeting, 11/21/11 at 6pm.

Email from Karen Fitzgerald with School Committee Posting and Agenda 11 17 2011

Email forward from Dr. Bodie regarding PRESS RELEASE: Massachusetts to Build on Successful Turnaround Strategies Email from Anna Watson regarding Day of Dialogue Letter.

Executive Session

Mr. Curro moved to enter into Executive Session at 10:10 to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with union and/or nonunion personnel or contract negotiations with union and/or nonunion in which if held in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect. To conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, in which if held in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect, Collective bargaining may also be conducted, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 7-0

Adjourn

Mr. Curro moved to exit out of Executive Session and to adjourn at 10:14 p.m. seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Roll Call: unanimous

Respectfully Submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee/jp