



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## Minutes 02/28/2006

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2006**  
**7:30 P.M.**

**Present:** Jeff Thielman, Chair  
Sue Sheffler, Vice Chair  
Suzanne Owayda, Secretary  
Sean Garballey

Susan Lovelace  
Paul Schlichtman  
Martin Thrope

Superintendent: Nate Levenson  
Asst. Supt.: Kevin Hutchinson  
Sp. Ed. Director: Barbara Cataldo  
Student Rep.: EJ Harris

Call to Order: 7:30 pm.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Sharon Grossman and Nora Mann addressed the committee relative to the increased need for school based resources(that have been eroded due to budget cuts) i.e. psychologists, guidance counselors and mental health personnel to support and to help meet the needs of students and staff.

Judi Paradis represented the coalition of the Human Rights Commission, Vision 20/20 Diversity Task Force, MLK Committee, African-American Committee, Robbins Library Children's Staff and SPOT, and presented for the Committee's consideration the following resolution:

### **Resolution on Diversity in Arlington Public Schools**

In order for all our students to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Arlington Public Schools must be committed to providing a successful attitude, which includes valuing and treating with respect and acceptance all members of its community. Consequently, we would like to see our School Committee adopt the following:

- Our faculty should reflect the demographics of our school. To this end, we would like to see a significant increase in the number of teachers and administrators of diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds. In order to attract and retain these teachers, we believe the following must be in place:
  - Professional development that addresses cultural sensitivity and outreach to diverse staff as well as to students and their families
  - Incorporation of a multicultural approach into all classes at all times, rather than developing a separate curriculum to address diversity issues
  - Mentoring and coaching programs that provide significant support for new teachers to assist them in fitting in to our schools and succeeding
  - Programs in place for students and teachers to address issues of acceptance for all members of our school community that teach that bullying, racist language, etc. will not be tolerated and correlate with clear and obvious guidelines for handling specific incidents

### **STUDENT TRAVEL SAFETY TASK FORCE REPORT**

Sue Sheffler and Police Chief Fred Ryan, co chairs of the task force along with members Ed Starr, Chair of the Traffic Advisory Committee, Scott Smith also a TAC member and Teresa DeBenedictis of DPW presented a report of the findings of the Student Travel Safety Task Force.

Ms. Sheffler reported that at the December 13<sup>th</sup> school committee meeting it was voted that a Student Travel Safety Group be established to review how students currently travel to school and to develop a coordinated and monitored plan that allows safe passage for schoolchildren, regardless of weather or traffic conditions, to their schools.

Ms. Sheffler reviewed the draft summary of the Safe Student Travel Task Force (attached) and reported that the task force conducted six major meetings; the goal was to ensure student safety, identify and help maximize use of scarce resources, and to develop a sustainable methodology. Fred Ryan stated that the traffic supervisors do an outstanding job and continue to do so. He noted that posts have been placed historically rather than based on need and must be reviewed year to year to reevaluate deployments. Teresa DeBenedictis pointed out that this presents an opportunity for departments to modify operations and to coordinate between various divisions for the removal of snow and other DPW issues.

Scott Smith explained that the first goal to establish criteria for evaluating the need for an adult traffic supervisor at a particular location and to rank each location and then reviewed the Traffic Supervisor Deployment study.(attached)

There was discussion of the possibility of shortening the length of time in the afternoon shift for the traffic supervisors since there is a short burst of activity in the afternoon and students clear up quickly. Ms. Owayda questioned if there had been any thought for education for the public and parents on safety issues. Ms. Lovelace suggested that specific recommendations should be provided to parents at the beginning of the school year outlining the walking routes to school.

On a motion by Ms. Sheffler seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was

“ Voted that the Superintendent is instructed to build the FY '07 budget based on data presented in the February 28, 2006 Safe Student Travel Task Force report. The budget line item for traffic supervisors in particular developed by the Superintendent shall ensure student safety. The School Committee shall review the Superintendent's implementation of this directive on March 28, 2006 when it reviews and approves the final budget sent to Town Meeting. Unanimous vote

On a motion by Ms. Sheffler seconded by Ms Owayda with an amendment by Mr. Thrope it was

“ Voted that the School Committee approves the prioritization methodology outlined in the Safe Student Travel Task Force report. The task force is instructed to apply this methodology to current data and to rank and order current and proposed traffic supervisor positions and to provide the results to Superintendent no later than March 9<sup>th</sup> with a final report to be presented to the school committee by the April 11<sup>th</sup> school committee meeting. The Superintendent is directed to take this data into account when building the budget, which will be presented to the public and the School Committee, at a hearing on March 14<sup>th</sup>. The School Committee shall review the Superintendent's implementation of this directive on March 28, 2006 when it reviews and approves the final budget sent to Town Meeting. Unanimous vote

#### **THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Supt. Levenson reported on the meetings and outcomes of meeting with the Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee and highlighted what will be different this year.

“ A serious commitment from the top

“ The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent will participate in minority job fairs, as will some principals and department heads. This includes the AARC fair on 3/25.

“ There will be significant outreach; we will contact historically black colleges seeking candidates. The initial contact will be by phone, with follow-ups by email and electronic job postings.

“ Hiring will begin in March which will open a larger pool of candidates.

“ After a minority candidate is interviewed the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent will review the feedback from the interview committee and document this.

“ The Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent will participate in any hiring decision that includes a minority candidate

On a motion by Mr. Thrope and seconded it was

Voted that the School Committee supports the plan and approach for minority recruiting and hiring as presented by Superintendent Levenson. Unanimous vote.

#### **GOAL REVIEW – SUPT. MERIT ADJUSTMENT**

“ Review & vote on progress of Goal 4, Measure 1: Produce list of core offerings and time commitments.

“ Review& vote on progress of Goal 4, Measure 2, Produce a list of all non-core offerings, related cost, and time impact on core curriculum.

Supt. Levenson presented the document on core and non-core data. The Superintendent explained that this is background data that is currently taking place in the district; there are no value judgments or recommendations at this point. Mr. Levenson did state that after the completion of goal four that the data will be very important by allowing the district to compare current efforts to the recommendations gathered in the research.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was

Voted to award Superintendent Levenson four points on Goal 4, measure 1, Produce a list of core offering and time commitments in a completed reasonable professional manner. Unanimous vote

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by ms. Lovelace it was

Voted to award Superintendent Levenson four points on Goal 4 measure 2, Produce a list of all non-core offerings, related cost, and time impact on core curriculum in a completed, reasonable and professional manner. Unanimous vote

Mr. Thrope stated that he would like to see what and how courses are defined as “core data” and non-core data”. Mr. Schlichtman would to see the total number of minutes students in grades 9-12 spend in core subjects.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**AHS 2006-2007 calendar.** AHS principal Charlie Skidmore addressed the Committee relative to the change on graduation 2007 from Sunday to Saturday. Mr. Skidmore cited the three main reasons:

- Efficient running of the schools-Approximately 10-12 teachers are needed to chaperone the all night Last Blast which

results in those teachers requesting that Monday off from school; Mr. Skidmore is not comfortable having that many teachers missing school.

- o Many students have obligations the next day, work, study groups etc.
- o There has been little resistance from parents.

Mr. Thrope stated that as noted at the previous school committee meeting that he has a problem with a Saturday graduation.

**Hardy School Principal Search** – Supt. Levenson reported that eight to ten people will be interviewed and that school committee member Paul Schlichtman agreed to represent the school committee in the interview process.

.. On a motion by Ms. Sheffler seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was

Voted to appoint Paul Schlichtman as the school committee representative on the Hardy School principal search.

**Early releases for the 2006-2007 school year** – Supt. Levenson stated that it would like to incorporate up to five early release days in the 06-07 school calendar, the days would be used for district wide professional development allowing staff from multiple schools to meet. Coverage will be provided for students in after school programs.

The Committee was in agreement with the request and recommended that the release days happen early in the school year to maximize the benefit of the professional development and that a report be given on the content of those days.

#### **Thompson and Stratton**

We will be looking at capital funding for improvements at Stratton and Thompson Schools since rebuild is not likely to happen in near future.

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

- .. Approval of warrant # 06111 in the amount of \$661,797.88
- .. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of amendments to BDFA-E-1 (Updating timeline and process for preparation of school improvement plans)
- .. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of amendments to BDFA-E-2 (Updating timeline and process for submission and approval of school improvement plans)
- .. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of amendments to BDFA-E-3 (Updating timeline and process of District-wide goal setting per the new Superintendent's contract)
- .. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of amendment to JIB (adding agenda item at School Committee meetings to permit input from Student Advisory Committee)
- .. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of amendment to JIC (adding cross reference)
- .. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of amendment to JK (adding cross reference)
- .. 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of amendment to JICC/EEAEC (add "expectation of appropriate behavior")
- .. 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of amendment to JJ (correction of spelling error)

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Owayda it was

Voted to approve the Consent agenda as presented.

#### **COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT**

.. Proposal Motion to establish Stadium Dedication Committee

Ms. Lovelace presented the proposal to the committee for their consideration.

In accordance with the vote taken at our 7/18/05 meeting, "Naming the stadium be postponed until such time as the project is completed, and all cost overruns are resolved, at such time, the SC will embark on a public process that engages full participation by all the community interested in the naming of the stadium."

The Stadium Dedication Selection Committee shall consist of a maximum of 14 members. The School Committee shall seek to include representatives of the following groups on the committee:

- Representative(s) from the town sport user groups
- Current AHS student athlete representative(s)
- AHS parent representative(s)
- AHS coach(es)
- AHS alum(s)
- A representative from the Arlington Public Memorials Committee (specifically to provide guidance the "three levels of memorializing")

One member of the School Committee shall serve on the Stadium Dedication Committee and shall keep the full School Committee informed of the group's progress.

The School Committee shall advertise and receive applications for the Stadium Dedication Committee. The School Committee shall name the members of the Committee. Each School Committee member may select up to two members of the committee.

The member who shall be the School Committee's representative to the Stadium Dedication Committee shall select only one member of the committee.

The Dedication Selection Committee shall develop and inform the Arlington community of the procedure and deadline for submitting field name suggestions. The committee shall seek input from those in town who use and have used the football field.

The Committee shall select its own chair and recording secretary, minutes must be taken for each meeting, and each meeting must be posted with the Town Clerk's office.

Upon receipt of all suggestions, the Committee shall conduct a public hearing to solicit further input from the public. The hearing will offer those who submitted suggestions an opportunity to provide a rationale for their request and to respond to questions. A notice of the hearing (including date, time, location and agenda) must be posted with the office of the Town Clerk and submitted to the Arlington Advocate.

Mr. Thrope suggested that one possible outcome would be to keep the status of Peirce Field with no naming of the stadium.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Mr., Thrope it was Voted to receive the report (with no action to be taken at this time) on the proposal to establish a Stadium Dedication Committee. Unanimous vote.

#### **CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

Ms. Owayda reported that the next meeting would be scheduled after the budget hearing.

#### **POLICIES & PROCEDURES REPORT**

Mr. Thrope presented the following policies for a first reading:

- .. 1<sup>st</sup> reading of policy CBI (align supt. evaluation & goal setting with contract)
- .. 1<sup>st</sup> reading of policy JLCA (language change)
- .. 1<sup>st</sup> reading of policy JRD (bullet last paragraph)
- .. 1<sup>st</sup> reading of policy KDB (added language and cross reference)

Mr. Thrope pointed out that the subcommittee is working on sections L and M and upon completion they will have cycled through the entire policy manual in two years.

#### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Ms. Owayda reviewed correspondence:

- .. The AHS yearbook is requesting the sc to place an ad in the yearbook as in years past. Suzanne will facilitate the effort.
- .. The AHS Gilbert and Sullivan club performance will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> in April. Opportunities to place an ad in the program is also available.
- .. Newsletter from elementary ACE.
- .. Ottoson select chorus, under direction of Cheryl Cristo, has been selected to make a presentation before at the statewide National Educators Music Association on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- .. The AEEF Brainbee is scheduled for Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm at the Town Hall.
- .. 23<sup>rd</sup> SADD assembly has held at chapter at high school today.
- .. AHS Ponders report.~

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Policy BDAA – Election of School Committee Officers

Mr. Thielman informed members that according to policy BDAA the office of chair and vice chair will go to the senior member who has not held the office and that members must declare interest approximately one month prior to the annual election by informing the Chair or the Administrative Secretary.

Mr. Thrope requested that the proposed resolution on Diversity in Arlington Public Schools be placed on the next agenda.

Mr. Schlichtman presented the Petition by Representative Eldridge of Acton to on Minimum Aid. Mr. Schlichtman noted that the Acton School Committee, the Acton-Boxborough School Committee and 25 other school committees have taken votes to support the Minimum Funding Proposal and urged that the Arlington School Committee also support the legislation. .

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Mr. Thrope it was Voted that the Arlington School Committee support the Chapter 70 Minimum Funding Proposal submitted by Rep. Eldridge of Acton.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Sheffler it was Voted to enter executive session for the purpose of negotiations with no further business to be conducted upon return to open session except to adjourn. Roll Call: Unanimous  
**Executive session 10:25 – 10:50.**

On a motion by Ms Owayda seconded by Ms. Sheffler it was Voted to adjourn @ 10:50 pm. Unanimous vote.

**Submitted by**

**Karen Tassone**  
**Committee Secretary**