



Acton-Boxborough Regional
School Committee Meeting

February 15, 2018

7:00 p.m. Open Business Meeting
7:05 p.m. FY18 ABRSD Budget Hearing
7:30 p.m. (approx.) Return to Open Meeting

at the R.J. Grey Junior High Library

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

February 15, 2018
7:00 p.m. Open Meeting
7:05 p.m. Annual Budget Hearing
7:30 p.m. (approx.) Open Business Meeting

AGENDA

1. **ABRSC Call to Order** – *Amy Krishnamurthy (7:00)*
2. **Chairman’s Introduction**
 - 2.1. Annual Spring Town Elections
 - Acton Election is March 26
 - Boxborough deadline to submit papers is April 3 for Election on May 22
3. **FY19 BUDGET HEARING Call to Order** – *(7:05) (see separate agenda)*
4. **Adjourn FY18 Budget Hearing and return to ABRSC OPEN BUSINESS MEETING**
5. **Public Participation**
6. **ABRSD FY19 Budget** – *(addendum)*
 - 6.1. **Recommendation to Approve the FY19 ABRSD Budget and Assessments** – **VOTE** – *Bill McAlduff*
7. **Superintendent Search Update** – *Diane Baum*
 - 7.1. Announcement of Finalists *(brought to meeting)*
 - 7.1.1. Recommendation to Accept the Finalists proposed by the Search Screening Committee - **VOTE**
 - 7.2. Draft Next Steps for Discussion
8. **Statement of Warrant & Approval of Minutes**
 - 8.1. Meeting Minutes of 1/27/18 and 2/1/18
9. **Adjourn**

NEXT MEETINGS:

- March 1 – ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library
- March 15 – ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library
- Acton Town Meeting begins on Monday, April 2
- Boxborough Town Meeting begins on Monday, May 14

Posted 2/9/18 at 12:15 p.m.

At ABRSD, our mission is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.
WELLNESS - EQUITY - ENGAGEMENT



BOXBOROUGH TOWN CLERK

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ELECTION CALENDAR 2018

Special Town Meeting: Monday, February 26

Annual Town Meeting: Monday, May 14

Annual Town Election: Tuesday, May 22

State Primary: TBD

State Election: Tuesday, November 6

February 6: Last day to register to vote for Special Town Meeting on February 26. The Town Clerk's office will be open from 9:00am-8:00pm on that day.

February 26: Special Town Meeting begins at 7:00pm at the Blanchard Memorial School gym.

April 3: Last day to file nomination papers with the Board of Registers/Town Clerk in order to be on the ballot for the May 22 Town Election. Papers are due in the Town Clerk's office by 5:00pm. A minimum of 25 signatures is required.

April 24: Last day to register to vote for Annual Town Meeting and the Town Election. The Town Clerk's office will be open from 9:00am-8:00pm on that day.

Monday, May 14: Annual Town Meeting begins at 7:00pm at the Blanchard Memorial School gym.

Tuesday, May 22: Annual Town Election. Polls open at Boxborough Town Hall from 7:00am – 8:00pm.

TBD: Last day to register for State Primary. The Town Clerk's office will be open from 9:00am-8:00pm on that day.

TBD: State Primary. Polls open at Boxborough Town Hall from 7:00am – 8:00pm.

October 17: Last day to register for State Election on November 6. The Town Clerk's office will be open from 9:00am-8:00pm on that day.

October 22-November 2: Early Voting Period for November 6 state election.

November 6: State Election. Polls open at Boxborough Town Hall from 7:00am – 8:00pm.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
FY19 OPEN BUDGET HEARING

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

February 15, 2018
7:00 p.m. Open Meeting
7:05 p.m. FY19 Budget Hearing
Followed by Open Business Meeting (approximately 7:30 p.m.)

AGENDA (See Separately Posted Material)

1. Call to Order (7:05)

*Please see material posted for 1/27/18 and 2/1/18 School Committee meetings at
<http://www.abschools.org/school-committee/meetings-agendas-packets-and-minutes>*

2. Chairmen's Introduction

3. ABRSC FY19 Budget Presentation-- Bill McAlduff and Dave Verdolino

1. FY19 Final Budget Presentation (*brought to meeting*)
2. ABRSD Budget Summary and Line Item Detail
 - i. Budget Character Code - Summary and Detail
 - ii. Budget by Admin Responsibility – Summary and Detail
3. Recommended Assessments and Table 6

4. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) Update

1. ALG Spreadsheet

5. Acton Finance Committee Update (*oral*)

6. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) Update (*oral*)

7. Boxborough Finance Committee Update (*oral*)

8. Public Participation

9. Budget Hearing is Adjourned

ABRSC Regular Business Meeting Begins

(see separate agenda)

Note: A VOTE to revise the proposed FY19 Budget and Assessments, will be done in the open meeting following the Hearing.

Posted 2/8/18 at 4:50 p.m.

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

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

February 1, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Eileen Zhang
Members Absent: Maya Minkin, Deanne O'Sullivan
Others: Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Dawn Bentley, Bill McAlduff, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chairperson Amy Krishnamurthy.
2. **Chairman's Introduction – Amy Krishnamurthy**
 - 2.1. Annual Spring Town Elections
 - Acton last day to obtain nomination papers - February 2
 - Acton last day to file nomination papers with signatures – February 6
 - Acton 2018 Town Election Calendar
 - Boxborough last day to file nomination papers – April 3
 - Boxborough 2018 Town Election Calendar
 - Katie Neville announced that she will be moving out of the district and regretfully submitted a resignation letter effective May 22, 2018.
3. **Public Participation - none**
4. **2nd Quarter FY18 Financial Report through Dec 31, 2017 – Dave Verdolino**

Revenue projections are unchanged from the Q1 report. The projected estimated budget surplus of \$491,400 does not reflect the \$710,000 appropriation from E&D for the building feasibility study. In response to a question, Bill McAlduff explained that the Building Committee will approve expenses as they come up, not the School Committee. Also as the District submits bills, they will be charged against the MSBA's share of the costs, and would be paid by MSBA. The District does not actually receive reimbursement from MSBA.
5. **FY19 ABRSD Superintendent Preliminary Budget Update – Bill McAlduff**
 - 5.1. Superintendent's Memo
 - 5.2. ALG & BLF Update
 - 5.2.1. ALG Meeting on 2/1/18 and Minutes of 1/11/18

Marie Altieri reviewed the ALG spreadsheet and documents from the meeting that morning. ALG will meet again on February 8th. Brigid Bieber reported from the BLF that their budget process has just starting. They have a Special Town Meeting on February 28. Brigid offered to the BOS and Fincom that a School Committee member could present to them if they would like.
 - 5.3. Questions, comments and input

Bill McAlduff stated that changes to the budget will be folded into the proposal that is used for the Budget Hearing on February 15 based on tonight's discussion. This includes the line that contains the new superintendent's salary which will be moved from \$195,000 to \$215,000 based on some of these savings, per the question at Budget Saturday.

Dawn Bentley discussed the proposed new Junior High program. Establishing this program will allow 3-5 students who may have had to go out of district to stay in. Keeping students in district is a key priority. She and her colleagues are working with the 3-2-1 foundation, a non-profit that helps include students with substantial disabilities within a district. They have been very helpful in assisting Dawn and her staff to think through the new program. Dawn described the placement process for students and what a difficult and lengthy process it can be.

Dennis Bruce referred to staffing slide #77 from Budget Saturday that showed the proposed addition of 9.4 FTE resulting in the net adjustment of 4.4 FTE. Dawn stated that to add the proposed program, a few part-time assistants and one full time teacher would be added so the number would go to 10.4 FTE. The line item detail will be updated for the Budget Hearing, including the head count slide. It will be emphasized that the added staff would cost less than the tuitions that would have to be paid if these students have to go out of the district.

Committee members commented on the benefit that Boxborough taxpayers received this year from a decrease in assessment, understanding the shift was due to Schedule A of the Regional Agreement. The importance of "remembering that we are all in this together" was stressed. In a few years, Boxborough's assessment will be going up. Members must do the best they can to advocate for the school district budget. John Petersen spoke from the audience stating that the largest percentage increase is Acton's at 4.25%. This will limit the ability to draw on higher services.

Amy Krishnamurthy emphasized that the proposed budget allows for single tier busing, changes the start times at the Junior High and High School and OPEB continues to be funded. It also provides a million dollars in capital projects. Considering all that it includes, the assessment is reasonable in her opinion. Mary Brolin noted that the budget is only up 3.3%, and Acton's assessment is up more because they took their share of savings early and now it is Boxborough's turn.

5.4. FY19 Budget Hearing on 2/15/18 at 7:05 p.m. in the Jr High Library, followed by ABRSC meeting

6. School Building Committee Update – Mary Brolin

6.1. Study Enrollment Certification, submitted 1/23/18

Marie Altieri reviewed the Enrollment Certification stating that it landed exactly where the District hoped it would. She and Bill were impressed with how the MSBA worked to understand our district and the way it operates. Amy thanked Marie for her tremendous effort to get to this point on enrollment.

6.2. Feasibility Study Budget – Exhibit A

Bill McAlduff explained how this budget was put together. He asked that the Committee vote to authorize him to sign the Feasibility Study on behalf of the district so it can be sent to MSBA for the meeting on February 14. The Legal Certification also needs to be submitted to MSBA to show who can sign off on all of the documents. After reviewing the Regional Agreement and other district documents, Bill found no language authorizing the Superintendent to sign. Absent that documentation, MSBA asked that School Committee vote to authorize an individual to sign the agreement.

Paul Murphy moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: that the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee authorize the Interim Superintendent of Schools to sign, on behalf of the District, the Feasibility Study Agreement as provided by the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

MSBA will work with the Building Committee to create a Project Scope where this authorization will be needed again. It was noted that the person should be identified by title, not by name.

7. Merriam School Principal Update – Marie Altieri

7.1. Finalist Announcement

Twenty four applications were reviewed and following preliminary interviews, Dr. Christine Price, Ms. Juliana Schneider and Dr. Stefanie Reinhorn were chosen as finalists. They will visit the district next week and meet with staff and the Superintendent. Community meetings are next Thursday, February 8th in the Merriam library. All are welcome. Bill McAlduff hopes to appoint the new principal by February vacation.

8. Subcommittee Reports

8.1. Policy

8.1.1. NEW: Section 504, File: IHBA – First Read – Dawn Bentley

Dawn reviewed the proposed new policy again. (It was initially presented on 1/11/18. It was asked that FAPE be spelled out in the documents. Comments should be sent to Dawn.

9. School Committee Member Reports - none

10. Superintendent Search Update – Diane Baum

10.1. Candidate Profile

10.2. Information on our site: <http://www.abschools.org/home/superintendent-search>

Diane Baum reported that 25 applications were received and reviewed. NESDEC has scheduled the preliminary interviews. The search committee expects to choose 3-5 finalists on February 12th and announce them at the School Committee meeting on February 15th. Next steps will also be reviewed.

Diane asked the Committee for input regarding site visits and finalist interviews. Other communities are on similar search schedules. The search subcommittee will bring recommendations to the February 15th Committee meeting.

It was agreed that once the finalists are identified, it will be easier to plan the schedule. Although a month seems like enough time, an additional meeting could be added. Amy and Bill are comfortable having the Budget Hearing first on February 15th, and then devoting the rest of the meeting to this process. One option is to have three different nights of interviews (one per finalist) and a 4th night for deliberation, or everything could be done at once. Dennis Bruce felt that there was a lot of value in having 3 separate candidate visits/nights last time (2014), and then a final Saturday when all 3 finalists did their public interviews. Sally from NESDEC will attend the meeting on the 15th and she will offer advice.

Mary Brolin agreed with Brigid Bieber that the finalists should come on separate days. In the past, the site visits to their own districts were not that helpful because only the best points came out. Paul Murphy agreed that if site visits are done, having the same people do all of the visits is best for consistency, although it is a lot of time.

11. **Consent Agenda**

11.1. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes**

11.1.1. Minutes of 1/22/18

11.2. **Donations to our Schools – Bill McAlduff**

11.2.1. Recommendation to Approve \$11,000 Donation from Acton-Boxborough United Way to the ABR High School to support the Healthy Teen Initiative – **VOTE**

Amy Krishnamurthy read the warrant summary and asked if the Committee wanted to hold anything. They did not.

Brigid Bieber moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: that the Consent Agenda be approved with gratitude for the donation.

12. **FYI**

12.1. DESE Draft History and Social Studies Curriculum Frameworks Revision

12.2. Annual Education Report for the Acton & Boxborough Town Meeting Books

12.3. January 1, 2018 Enrollment Report

12.4. Family Learning Series - FY18 Calendar of Presentations

12.4.1. Attunement & Somatic Regulation: A Body Based Approach Toward Increasing Understanding & Resilience Within Your Child, Heather Finn, LICSW, February 6th at 7:00 p.m. in the R.J. Grey Junior High School

Middlesex Savings Bank was thanked for donating \$50,000 to the Acton Boxborough Student Activities Fund (ABSASF). The Superintendent noted that that gift will come before the School Committee in May when the ABSASF donation is presented for acceptance.

The ABRSC adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: See agenda, List of warrants, MSBA Feasibility Study Agreement and motion language

**Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee (ABRSC)
FY19 Budget Saturday Meeting
DRAFT Minutes**

**Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School**

**Saturday, January 27, 2018
8:30 a.m.**

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Deanne O’Sullivan, Eileen Zhang
Members Absent: none
Others: Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Karen Coll, Bill McAlduff, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino, members of the Towns’ Boards, the public and staff

1. Welcome and Introductions from the Chairperson and Superintendent

The ABRSC was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairperson Amy Krishnamurthy. Members of the Acton and Boxborough Finance Committees, and the Acton Board of Selectmen were introduced.

2. Panel 1: FY19 Budget Overview

- Bill McAlduff, Superintendent, did an introduction and overview.
- Dave Verdolino, Finance Director, reviewed the financials including revenues and expenses.
- Marie Altieri, Deputy Superintendent, presented the staffing, enrollment and elementary class sections reports.

Questions:

Was the vacancy factor overestimated in the past? Marie Altieri responded that the District began using the vacancy factor in FY13 and it took time to find the correct amount. This year is slightly over budget, but is being closely watched.

There seems to be a lack of understanding by some members of the public of how the District got to this critical place with respect to our capital/building problems and the relationship between the projections and actual changes in enrollment. Why was capital investment delayed in the past? Marie Altieri replied that the building expansions of the Parker Damon Building twin school, and the Junior High and High School increased our capacity by almost 1000 students over a 5-10 year period. Three major building projects were done in five years. Teachers and classrooms had to be added which meant much capital was directed to those costs, and not to other projects and needs. There was also a pretty significant downturn in the economy. The district now has an extensive capital plan in place for the future.

Is it a concern that the E&D figures don’t show the \$710,000 to be spent on the feasibility study? Dave Verdolino explained that E&D was getting close to its cap over time, and has continued to grow. If the District can continue to turn back some amount of surplus each year, it will replace the funds spent on the feasibility study. In general, he stated that using E&D for one-time uses is prudent (vs using it to fund operating budget items). Bill McAlduff added that the District will still have a healthy balance in E&D and it is much improved compared to 4-5 years ago. They are comfortable with this recommendation.

Regarding slide 58 - Enrollment Projections – Is the District taking the large projected enrollment into account in the new building plans? Marie Altieri responded that the new building will add capacity

adequately for the next 5-8 years, and in 4-5 years we will hopefully be able to address Conant School and further expansion. Current preliminary plans for a new twin school have it as large as the Administration would like it to be. How will these enrollment projections affect space at the Junior High and High School? Marie stated that there should be space for the additional students for the next 12-13 years. Mary Brolin noted that with 9 school buildings, the District should be on a continuous cycle of capital improvement. Marie added that if enrollment numbers continue to change, we may have to address capacity at the Junior High/High School sooner than expected.

A question was asked about a line item in Special Education contracted services. Dave Verdolino explained that this was partially tuitions and partially administrative supplies that should not be in that category. It represents a shift of costs but not an increase and will be adjusted in the next reiteration.

Regarding OPEB on slide 33, is the District on target to fully fund OPEB by 2033? Dave Verdolino clarified that Middlesex, not OPEB, would be funded. Regarding OPEB, at some point that obligation will be fully funded although Dave described it as a political decision not an actuarial one. The District and the Town of Acton are addressing OPEB funding fairly aggressively relative to other districts, although it will be a fairly long time before funding levels can be reduced. It took 50 years to fully fund pension obligations, OPEB will take a generation.

Why is the money for the feasibility study not shown in the budget? Dave explained that it is not accrued yet. As a matter of accounting, it will be reflected in the 2018 E&D.

What is the impact of enrollment on the assessment for Acton and Boxborough? Referring to slide 49 showing current and projected assessment for the two towns, Dave explained how this information leads to what is found on slide 53. He noted that everything in future years is a projection, and it will take time to see how the numbers turn out.

How will the new Health Savings Account (HSA) rates be 18% lower than HMO rates? Marie Altieri explained that the district will pay \$1500 toward deductible, and this will still result in reduced cost to district. Because this does not start until July 1st, the actual impact is unknown.

Was it a surprise that the Middlesex County Retirement Assessment recommended increase for FY19 was only 8.4% (slide 36)? Dave explained that it was not. Assessments are done for 2 years in a row. It will be reassessed again in 2018 for FY20 and FY21.

How could health insurance rates be held to zero increases for FY18 and FY19? Dave responded that the Health Insurance Trust (HIT) has been accumulating funds for several years and this provides the relief.

Diane Baum appreciated the District's continued work funding OPEB and was pleased to see housing sales on slide 59. She noted that enrollment projections are difficult and critical to the budget and this data point is very helpful to keep the projections on track. Paul Murphy appreciated the descriptions of the capital projects in the binder, because they help to prioritize what is/isn't important. He expects to see more spending on the schools that are not being rebuilt in future years.

Regarding slide 53, how are the Acton and Boxborough assessments calculated? Marie Altieri explained the 3-year rolling average based on where students live that is used. It does not matter if Acton children go to the Blanchard School, or Boxborough students go to Acton elementary schools. Part of the Regional Agreement shifts some of the costs between the two towns during the first five years of full regionalization. It is a complicated process, as outlined in Table 6, and Marie and Dave would be happy to explain in more detail if anyone would like to contact her.

Break

3. Student Services Enrollment and Trends (began at 10:20)

- Dawn Bentley, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

4. Panel 2: Our Current District Priorities

- Deborah Bookis, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
- Dawn Bentley, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
- Pam Smith, Director of Special Education
- Andrew Shen, Principal, R. J. Grey Jr. High
- Damian Sugrue, Principal, Conant School
- MaryAnn Young, English Learning Education Chairperson

Questions:

Regarding professional development, we still are very low in support compared to other districts (17 out of 20) but our innovation is remarkable. Why does it seem like the District is doing more than the numbers reflect? Deborah Bookis replied that it is difficult to compare districts due to the inconsistent way information is reported to DESE. It is not “apples to apples”. Hopefully there will be more accurate comparable information.

Are we trying to catch up with our demographic trends (ELL, economics, etc) or are we being innovative and staying ahead of the curve? Deborah replied that staff are working hard to identify how to shift approaches to build on students’ and teachers’ strengths and identify and remove barriers for students. AB uses a “strength/asset building approach that is innovative. They ask what a child can do, not what they cannot do.

Regarding the number of students we have on 504 Plans, are we a comparative outlier? Dawn Bentley replied that it is unclear because this is a new data field in SIMS reporting so she does not know yet.

Is there a correlation between the number of ELL students and the number of economically disadvantaged? Dawn said that in general, yes, but she will be looking more closely at this. She stated that ELL students are over represented in the special education numbers.

Deborah Bookis was thanked for her dedicated work in support of teachers. Regarding coaching, is their main job to support teaching standards, or is it also to support self-regulated strategies? Deborah said that it is not just about standards, but truly about supporting teachers in multiple ways – academic achievement, behavior, etc, Coaches also have subject matter expertise that is shared with teachers. A member commented that it is valuable to see the changing needs of our student populations. Does the administration also look at short term measurements, shorter than an academic year so there is more immediate feedback? Deborah said yes, the coaching cycle is 16 weeks. Mary Brolin noted that with a 200% increase in high needs students vs only a 100% increase in staffing, these levels of students need to be supported. Do the proposed increases for next year bring the District up to the required hours? Dawn Bentley said that a program review will be done to determine this. Are we looking into curricular ways to address language-based learning disabilities, eg adjusted curriculum to address dyslexia, etc. Pam Smith replied yes, teachers are being trained in ways to better address students with language learning barriers to access the curriculum. They are always looking at how services are being provided. A member agreed with the coaching approach, but expressed concern that more teaching might come from the coach, not teacher. There has to be a balance. Regarding slide 132 what does students’ “prior learning” mean? This refers to students who transfer in and bring very different levels of exposure to particular subjects and practices.

Regarding teaching and learning staff, how do we measure success? Deborah Bookis said that there are several measures. Assessing Math Concepts is one tool to see how students progress. MCAS 6th grade math scores have gotten higher, and can be compared with those same students’ earlier MCAS

scores to see those students' progress. Asking teachers for feedback on how coaches help can show instructional practice success.

What is the dollar impact of students who are economically disadvantaged or English Language Learners? Several administrators commented that it would be difficult to measure the overall impact of these groups of students throughout the system. Many of these students need additional supports but the costs are not broken out in that manner. The state has stopped measuring this number because it is so difficult to identify. Bill McAlduff responded that there is no dollar impact of the 10 students who have come into the system on the WIDA spectrum since the beginning of the year, but it has had an instructional impact on the teachers and other students for example. It is an impact on staff caseloads, and affects the compliance requirement hours. Many high performing districts are seeing increased numbers of ELL students and this requires staffing to meet the mandated requirements. It is a moving target year to year and during the year.

What has driven the number of FTEs for ELE? Is it not directly tied to growth in the number of students? Dawn Bentley commented that the district started behind their needs, and is catching up but arguably is still understaffed in some areas per the DESE recommended hours. There are 200 FELs (Former English Learners) who are also monitored, and the length of monitoring has been increased now from 2 years to 4. When more high needs students are added to a class, it impacts the ability to meet the needs of all of the children and keeps the ELL students in their classes for a longer time as a result. Brigid Bieber noted that regarding our performance measures, AB does very well even if we haven't been spending what we should. Some students with high needs, may not be getting all of their needs met and as a result, they are not doing as well. She asked if other metrics should be used to measure performance success because we may not be including all of our students right now.

A member of the public appreciated that the presentation includes information about the impact to students, but he felt that is often missing from other discussions about new programs and initiatives. He is concerned about equity data. Deborah Bookis explained that the Boston College research project is a great opportunity for AB that came from one of the Family Learning Series speakers. This work will be eventually published and available to everyone.

A High School student asked about the impact of changing the DESE standards, for example, the second year of world history has been meshed with other topics. Deborah Bookis said that sometimes the impact is new content, especially at the elementary level, biggest change is skills, not content that students are asked to learn. They don't want to change too many things too fast because teachers put a lot of effort into developing curricula.

What specific key performance indicators does the panel expect to use to measure success? Dawn Bentley answered that the Strategic Plan includes measures and one key issue is AB's core value of equity. They often ask if practices are aligned with this. The administration is moving away from items like MCAS, and looking at responsive classroom, etc. The speaker suggested that the District could look at things like reducing the average number of years in WIDA from level 1 to level 6, etc, as a way to measure, or students' movement from more restrictive to less restrictive settings.

Eileen Zhang appreciated the changing demographic information about the community and urged strong support of the ELL services and programs. She noted the increasing number of students who want to study in the US, including those from China, and encouraged the Committee and Administration to be prepared for them.

Lunch Break

5. Panel 3: School Operations

- Bill McAlduff, Superintendent
- Dave Verdolino, Finance Director
- JD Head, Director of School Operations

Questions:

JD Head confirmed that the Leary Field light poles were assessed in 2016 and per the recommendations, they are being replaced. The complete system is replaced with steel, not wood.

Bill McAlduff stated that the District needs to agree on a definition of what “capital” means. Because there is not a clear definition, some items on the Capital Spending list appear to be educational needs to some people. Bill said there will be some tweaks to the lists to put them in appropriate line items.

It was suggested that for the request line items, a column (s) be added to show future funding requests that are anticipated for particular requests.

The battery storage area will be in the High School third tier parking lot. JD stated that this would not present any safety issues. This will be a 2 megawatt battery that would cover the District’s peak needs with plenty to spare. More information will be presented to the Committee in February. Some questions were also asked about the solar power arrangement that provides the district with discounted power.

A member asked if this might be a good time to quantify the cost of our elementary school choice program, with single tier busing starting in the fall. This could help make informed decisions in the future.

Better signage for the High School and Junior High School Buildings was requested.

How do the proposed projects relate to Dore & Whittier’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)? Marie Altieri explained that of the \$120 million improvements outlined by D&W, \$40 million of them would be addressed by the new school building and another \$14 million termed “priority” have been addressed or are being addressed in this budget/plan. Bill McAlduff added that once the new building plan’s long term plan is clearly understood, the District will need to review and update the CIP. JD Head emphasized that a number of the items have been or will be addressed more cost effectively than the Plan suggests. There are also many variables as time goes by, so the Plan will always need to be reviewed and updated. While a “scorecard” would be valuable, it could be difficult to do precisely, given the changes that are inevitable.

It was confirmed that asbestos removal at Conant would be in the office only if found beneath the flooring. Bill McAlduff explained that this is a placeholder for work that may be needed. He stressed that it is sealed and safe and abatement would not be needed. Questions were also asked about the High School auditorium ceiling, which JD stated was safe. JD also explained that the funding for the Maintenance Shed was to analyze the site and make a recommendation. He wants to redirect these funds to higher priorities because the shed is a temporary site and JD knows it will be replaced.

6. Superintendent’s Closing Remarks

The Superintendent thanked everyone involved in the development of the proposed FY19 Budget totaling \$88,960,000 representing a 3.3% increase over FY18.

7. School Committee Discussion, Feedback, Preliminary VOTE

Described as a “responsible and responsive” budget, the Committee was impressed with the overall proposal.

Brigid Bieber moved:

That the total appropriation for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District for the fiscal year of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 be set at \$88,960,000, and that member towns be assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Regional Agreement and amendments thereto as follows: Acton \$60,184,325, Boxborough \$11,389,584, with the remainder to be accounted for by the following sources of funds:

**Anticipated Chapter 70 Aid in the amount of \$14,995,436,
Anticipated Charter School Aid in the amount of \$33,282,
Anticipated Regional Bonus Aid in the amount of \$25,000,
Anticipated Federal Medicaid Reimbursement of \$150,000,
Anticipated Chapter 71, Section 16C Transportation Aid of \$1,307,373,
Anticipated Investment Earnings of \$100,000, and
A transfer from E&D Reserves in the amount of \$775,000.**

Paul Murphy seconded the motion.

Given that at the last Committee meeting, members voted to offer up to \$220,000 to the new superintendent, Dennis Bruce asked if the \$195,000 contained in the proposed budget should be increased. Bill McAlduff said that leading up to the Budget Hearing on February 15th, adjustments to the budget would be made as numbers are confirmed and revised, so he was comfortable not changing the salary number at this time for the preliminary budget vote.

The Committee **VOTED** unanimously by the 4 Boxborough members and 6-1 by Acton members to approve the motion.

(IN FAVOR: Bieber, Brolin, McKinley, Neville, Baum, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, Murphy, O’Sullivan, Zhang OPPOSED: Bruce) It was stated that for the preliminary budget vote, a majority of the members from each town must vote in support for approval.

Dennis Bruce explained that he voted against the budget because he felt that with almost a half million dollars less in health insurance expenses, salaries are going up and the increase is a large assessment for Acton taxpayers.

Amy Krishnamurthy thanked everyone for attending the meeting and the ABRSC adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: Agenda, FY19 Budget Binder, Presentation Slides