



Acton-Boxborough Regional
School Committee Meeting

September 6, 2018

7:00 p.m.

at the R.J. Grey Junior High Library

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 6, 2018
7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order (7:00)**
2. **Chairman's Introduction – Diane Baum**
 - 2.1. Welcome!
 - ABRHS representatives to the School Committee: Michael Cheng, Betty Markman, Arnav Mehra
3. **Public Participation**

Per policy BEDH, members of the public may speak for up to 2 minutes on items not included on this agenda. Typically, the Committee/Administration will not respond to comments during public participation.
4. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes – Diane Baum (7:10)**
 - 4.1. Meeting minutes of August 23, 2018 – **VOTE**
 - 4.2. Proposed reconsideration of meeting minutes of July 23, 2018 workshop - **VOTE**
5. **Introductions – Diane Baum (7:15)**
 - Acton's New Town Manager, John Mangiaratti,
 - Boxborough's New Town Administrator, Ryan Ferrara
6. **Superintendent's Report – Peter Light (7:30)**
 - 6.1. Welcome Back to Staff presentation, 8/29/18
 - 6.2. Summer Professional Learning Memo, Deborah Bookis
 - 6.3. Mental Health: District Work
<http://abschoolswellness.weebly.com/mh-district-work.html>
7. **New Superintendent's Induction Program– Peter Light (7:45)**
 - 7.1. Introduction of Dr. Matt King
8. **Transportation Update – Peter Light (7:55)**
9. **Subcommittee Reports – Diane Baum (8:15)**
 - 9.1. Building– *Mary Brolin (oral)*
 - 9.2. Budget – *Amy Krishnamurthy(oral)*
 - 9.3. Policy – *Amy Krishnamurthy(oral)*
 - 9.4. Protocols – *Peter Light*
 - 9.4.1. 2018-2019 ABRSC DRAFT Operating Protocols – *First Read*
10. **School Committee Member Reports – Diane Baum (8:35)**

11. **Recommendation to Accept Gifts to the School District – VOTE – Peter Light (8:40)**

- 11.1. \$5,000 from Lowe's for scholarships to Gates School for a Smart Board

12. **FYI**

- 12.1. FY19 School Schedule – *includes Jr High & High School early dismissal times*
- 12.2. Family Financial Assistance Letter, on the website at
https://www.abschools.org/district/student_services
- 12.3. FY19 ABRSC Committee Assignments, *approved 8/23/18*
- 12.4. Building Resilience: A Parent/Caregiver Series, Rana Chudnofsky, Ed.M.
October 3rd and 10th 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. The Gallery at Villageworks
- 12.5. Meet Acton's New Town Manager, John Mangiaratti, and School
Superintendent, Peter Light, September 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the Acton Town Hall,
sponsored by the League of Women Voters - Acton Area
- 12.6. Meet Boxborough's New Town Administrator, Ryan Ferrara, and School
Superintendent, Peter Light, October 3 at 7:00 p.m. in the Boxborough Library,
sponsored by the League of Women Voters - Acton Area
- 12.7. Suicide Prevention Training, Sept 17, offered by AB Cares, Free and Open to
the Public, see abuw@abuw.org

13. **Adjourn (8:45)**

Next Meetings:

ABRSC, September 20, 7:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library (packet posted Sept 14)

ABRSC, October 4, 7:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library (packet posted Sept 28)

Posted on 8/31/18 at 4:00 p.m.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
Draft Minutes

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

August 23, 2018
7:00 p.m.

9:00 p.m. (approximately) Executive Session

Members Present:	Michael Bo, Mary Brolin, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer, Tessa McKinley, Paul Murphy, Angie Tso, Eileen Zhang
Members Absent:	Diane Baum, Amy Krishnamurthy, Maya Minkin
Others:	Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Dawn Bentley, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Paul Murphy, Vice Chairperson who ran the meeting in the Chairperson’s absence.
2. **Chairman’s Introduction**
3. **Superintendent’s Report**
 Mr. Light introduced his “Superintendent’s Report” as another way to keep the community informed. These will be posted to the Superintendent’s section of the website after each meeting. The start of school information will be emailed out to all families. Ed Tech Director Amy Bisiewicz was thanked for a tremendous job redesigning our school website. School Operations Director JD Head and the Transportation Department were thanked for a “herculean” job of reworking the bus routes for the new start times. The Facilities department as also praised for completing approximately \$1 million of capital improvements over the summer.
 - 3.1. Entry Plan Update
 Mr. Light shared the final version of his Entry Plan. He appreciated the feedback he received on the High School profiles and the request that he review the School Improvement Plans, which he will do.
4. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes**
 Paul Murphy read the warrant numbers of the documents being signed (see list).
 - 4.1. Minutes of July 16, 2018 Workshop Meeting
 Tessa McKinley moved, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously **VOTED**: to approve the minutes of the School Committee workshop on July 16, 2018 as written.
5. **Public Participation - none**
Per policy BEDH, members of the public may speak for up to 2 minutes on items not included on this agenda. Typically, the Committee/Administration will not respond to comments during public participation.
6. **FY19 Staffing Report – New Staff – Marie Altieri**
 Marie Altieri reported that yesterday was New Professional Staff Orientation which is always very exciting. This year has been a big hiring year with 54 newly hired professional staff to date. Marie explained the complicated nature of looking at the number of positions as there are many ins and outs of people who have retired, left or switched jobs within the district. In

addition to professional staff, many support staff have been hired. Marie reported that the new staff fit within the existing FY19 budget. In fact given savings from teacher turnover the vacancy factor may be increased a bit next year.

Members asked if new positions were all approved as part of the FY19 budget process. Marie said that they were. Michael Bo asked for more detail about the salary levels of the staff members who left. At the Chair's suggestion, Michael will email the Superintendent with his specific questions. A question was asked about how the annual budget is created. Marie explained the budget process and that this is when much of this type of detailed discussion takes place for the coming year. Marie will send Angie Tso a link to the Budget Saturday information about new staff. Marie will also speak with Eileen Zhang to answer her questions about the hiring process.

7. **Transportation Update – JD Head**

7.1. Superintendent's Transportation Letter

7.2. Frequently Asked Questions

JD Head updated the Committee on the significant transportation changes resulting from the changes in school start times. He is still looking for more bus drivers and has had some luck using the job site, Indeed.com. Cost is still trending under the \$750,000 budgeted. Routes have been published on the website. There is a strong focus on safety, student management and de-escalation strategies for this year.

Members asked about the very cold weather last winter and how some students waited outside for a long time when the busses didn't come. JD explained that this type of situation will be improved now because the district uses Bright Arrow to send targeted timely email/text/phone messages to different groups of families which will be very helpful. Prior to that, the only option was to call families' phones individually. The revised Transportation website was noted as very helpful. Angie Tso remembered a number of years ago when an absolute temperature was used to determine when elementary students could go out for recess. She asked if this could be done for transportation so parents would know if a bus would be delayed or school cancelled.

Mary Brolin asked if the parents from the two cul de sacs who spoke at a meeting last spring had their stops changed. JD said that the department determined again that they were safe stops so they have not been changed. Mr. Light explained that it was a broader issue than just cul de sacs. The district must ensure that every stop is safe. There had been a change about the cul de sacs, but the focus is safety and evaluating each stop for it. That has been done and this particular stop has been determined to be safe based on our evaluation including working with the local police for their professional opinion.

Mr. Light emphasized that the district works to be transparent about all of the transportation questions. One issue coming up now is the length of some bus rides. He is hearing concerns from some families who have a 45 minute bus ride and he empathizes with them. The Transfinder software is a very valuable tool that provides the shortest route available.

The elementary buses will also have many more children on them than in the past, which will make routes longer. The benefit to this issue is later start times for the Junior High and High School and a single schedule for all of the elementary schools that does not change year to year. This has been a goal for several years and will have a significant positive effect for student learning and wellness. A member agreed but suggested that perhaps the transportation budget could be increased next year to improve the bus rides next year.

8. **Capital Projects Update – JD Head**

JD Head reported that the High School auditorium ceiling has just been replaced which was a large, badly needed project. Well over \$1 million of capital improvements have been completed this summer. Michael Bo asked about the projects that are not 100% done yet (see chart posted in the packet). He asked if going forward, phases of work for some large projects could be considered and included in the plans.

The early dismissal times for the High School and Junior High will be added to the School Schedule flyer as soon as they are confirmed.

9. **ABRSD Budget Update – Dave Verdolino**

9.1. FY18 Financial Status as of June 30, 2018 – Preliminary & Unaudited

Dave Verdolino reported similar overall annual results between FY18 and FY17 due in part to previous Finance Director Clare Jeannotte’s skillful budgeting. Dave suggested that perhaps with this safety net of good financial health, the district may be able to budget somewhat less conservatively in the future. The net surplus for FY18 was \$1,687,854 compared to FY17’s \$1,635,330 . The district could receive an additional \$100,000 - \$150,000 due to the Governor’s supplemental budget for FY18. Dave will keep the Committee posted on this.

Mary Brolin asked about the old transportation account and if some of the E&D funds (slide 5) could be moved to this type of account. Some of that funding could be used for another bus if it was decided that another one is needed next year. This funding might also be used to increase the OPEB contribution. Dave agreed that there are some strategic financial planning opportunities now that we are close to the E&D ceiling. It was clarified that the old transportation account was never actually funded. It was understood that there are some high priced needs in the district that could/should be addressed.

9.2. FY19 Budget Update

9.2.1. FY19 State Budget

Dave reported that all figures are looking positive right now. He projected a \$400,000 favorable variance to budget this year, although there are many variables. In response to a question, it was confirmed that there are two more years until the Lower Fields Agreement would result in more revenue to the district. Questions about the circuit breaker account will be addressed during the budget process that will begin this fall. Referring to the 2% variance from last year that looks similar for this year, Dave explained that historically, coming into regionalization, the district had small reserves and the previous Finance Director saw the need to budget conservatively which helped to build E&D by about \$1 million a year. This has been a trend for 4 straight years now.

9.3. Annual Recommendation to set the imprest balance of the 3 Student Activity checking accounts for FY19 – **VOTE**

Mary Brolin moved, Ginny Kremer seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to set the imprest balance of the Student Activity checking accounts for the 2018-2019 school year consistent with the prior year, as follows:

Senior High School	\$35,000
Junior High School	\$25,000
Blanchard Elementary	\$ 5,000

10. **Subcommittee Reports**

10.1. Recommendation to Approve FY19 Assignments and Subcommittee Members –
VOTE – *Paul Murphy*

Tessa McKinley moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to approve the FY19 Assignments and Subcommittee members as proposed.

10.2. School Committee Operating Protocol Subcommittee Update

Mr. Light reported that members met for the first time on August 13, 2018 with the goal to make the protocols clearer. They met again on August 23rd and will share a draft for a First Read with the School Committee hopefully in September.

11. **School Building Committee Update – *Mary Brolin***

11.1. Designer Selection Update

The Superintendent described the process and announced that Arrowstreet Inc. was selected on August 7, 2018 as the Project Designer. Although all 3 firms were very well qualified, Arrowstreet was the most responsive to questions and had obviously done a lot of research on our culture and values as well as the different cultures of the schools. Feasibility work has now started focusing on the educational plan including visioning discussions, building on what was done before. The community will be involved. The Douglas building will be assessed, as well as Conant and Gates. JD Head brought Eversource representatives to the meeting and they are starting a new initiative, MassSAVES with many possible cost saving items. Eversource is interested in trying this with a school building, and MSBA, Skanska and Arrowstreet are all interested in working on this together. The website will be kept up to date with all pertinent information.

11.2. Building Committee Membership Update

11.2.1. Recommendation to Add Maya Minkin as a New Member - **VOTE**

Ginny Kremer moved, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to appoint Maya Minkin as a new member of the Building Committee. In addition to being a School Committee member, Maya has construction experience.

11.3. Determination by the School Committee of a Building Committee Member's Disclosure of Financial Interest as Required by M.G.L. c. 268A, S.19 – **VOTE** -
Peter Light

The Committee gave serious consideration to Building Committee member, Katie Raymond's submission of a Disclosure by Non-Elected Municipal Employee of Financial Interest and Determination by Appointing Authority Form as required by M.G.L. 268 s.19. Ms. Raymond filed this form because she is employed by Epsilon Associates, a subcontractor that will be performing work under Arrowstreet's contract. Under Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.), this could be considered a conflict. An individual in this situation can either resign from the Committee or submit the disclosure form requesting that the appointing authority (the School Committee) decide if the information disclosed presents a significant conflict of interest that should prevent the individual from staying on a Committee. The Superintendent spoke with the Attorney General's office and the District's legal counsel on this question. Because the role of Epsilon is limited to working on environmental permitting and Ms. Raymond is an employee, not an owner or partner, she has no financial interest in Arrowstreet. Ms. Raymond's supervisor has also agreed to excuse her from any work related to this project. For these reasons the

Superintendent asked the School Committee to determine if a significant conflict exists. Mary Brolin noted that Ms. Raymond has been an extremely strong and valuable member of the Building Committee.

A member asked about the relationship between the Building Committee and the contractors. Mary Brolin replied that the Building Committee approves all payments so Epsilon will submit a bill to Arrowstreet and Arrowstreet will submit the bill to the Building Committee. Skanska oversees all of Arrowstreet's work for the district, beneath them is the architect, Arrowstreet and then under them are the subcontractors, including Epsilon.

Michael Bo felt that because the Building Committee supervises the Project Manager, there is an indirect conflict of interest. Mr. Light said that Ms. Raymond would be abstaining from any discussion or votes on environmental permitting. To get the same knowledge if Ms. Raymond left the Committee, another environmental engineer would have to be found to volunteer for the Building Committee. Michael expressed concern about the influence she still might have. It was pointed out that the Building Committee is a large one with many layers in between Ms. Raymond and her direct influence.

Ginny Kremer stated that the process set forth is very thorough and the district is benefitting from the volunteer services of a community member. Ginny works on issues like this in her profession and doesn't see a problem because Ms. Raymond will not directly benefit from her serving.

Ginny Kremer moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and it was

VOTED: As appointing officials, as required by G.L. chapter 268, section 19, we have reviewed this matter and the financial interest identified by Katie Raymond and determined that the financial interest is not so substantial as to be deemed likely to affect the integrity of the services which the School District may expect from Ms. Raymond as a Building Committee member. As a result, we authorize Paul Murphy, as School Committee Vice-Chairperson, to sign this Disclosure Form as the Appointing Authority.

(YES: Brolin, Klein, Kremer, McKinley, Murphy, Tso NO: Bo ABSTAINED: Zhang)

The motion passed.

Vice-Chairperson Paul Murphy signed as the Appointing Authority in the absence of the Chairperson.

- 11.4. Feasibility Study and Schematic Design Proposal from Arrowstreet, 8/20/18
- 11.5. Building Committee Minutes of Meeting on 7/2/18

12. School Committee Member Reports

- 12.1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Paul Murphy*
 - 12.1.1. DRAFT Minutes of June 28, 2018 (next meeting is September 26th)
Paul Murphy reported that this was an introductory meeting.
- 12.2. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF)
Mary Brolin reported that BLF met last night. A Special Town Meeting will be held on Sept 5 regarding two warrant articles involving marijuana sales.

13. Recommendation to Accept Gifts to the School District – VOTE

- 13.1. \$5,250 from Acton-Boxborough United Way for scholarships to Community Education's Summer Day Program
- 13.2. \$4,000 from Danny's Place Youth Services for Community Education's Leader-in-Training Program

Tessa McKinley moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to accept these gifts with deep gratitude.

14. FYI

- 14.1. Superintendent's Welcome Letter to Families, *August 2018*
- 14.2. FY19 Schools Open, Back to School/Open House Dates, FY19 School Calendar
It was emphasized that the schools all have new start times and bus schedules next month. It is critical that all families review the notices.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – The Superintendent stated there was no need for the executive session as the pending litigation had been resolved.

The ABRSC was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: See agenda, list of warrants

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) WORKSHOP
Reconsideration of Minutes voted 8/23/18

Superintendent's Conference Room #13
ABRSD Administration Building

July 16, 2018
5:00 p.m.

Members Present:	Diane Baum, Michael Bo (5:30 p.m.), Mary Brolin, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer (5:20 p.m., left at 9:15 p.m.), Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Paul Murphy, Angie Tso, Eileen Zhang
Members Absent:	Maya Minkin
Others:	Peter Light, Marie Altieri, Beth Petr, Student Representative Michael Cheng, Amanda Bailey

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Diane Baum, ABRSC Chair.

5.3 ABRSD Strategic Plan Overview – *Marie Altieri*

Marie reviewed the Plan and the 2015-2016 process done by the 45 member District Leadership Team (DLT). The 2011 task force was much more community oriented, compared to the FY16 work which was a more internal/educator driven process. The Equity Audit being done by the MidAtlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC) will provide the District with a vast amount of detailed data points regarding how students are doing by disability, by school, etc. The School Committee will hear more about this after the data equity audit is completed in the next 3-5 months. Marie reviewed the Seeking Educational Equity & Diversity (SEED) Project. The District is training trainers now. More information will be brought to the Committee soon.

Marie reviewed the current Mission, Vision, Values and goals. She reviewed the background and history of the work with Challenge Success from Stanford University. The district has formed a data inquiry team (DIT) which is being supported by the MidAtlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC). The data inquiry team will be reviewing data with a lens towards equity. The School Committee will hear more about this over the next few months. Marie reviewed the Seeking Educational Equity & Diversity (SEED) project (nationalseedproject.org). The district sent five people to train-the-trainer sessions. All of the Principals and Central Office Leaders, as well as 25 Jr. High teachers participated in the training in-house last year. We are scheduling 4 more sessions for educators this year, with a goal of having as many teachers as possible participate over the next 3 years. Marie concluded that the 2018-2019 Strategic Actions are being worked on now and will come to the School Committee in the fall, late October.

The remainder of the minutes would be as approved on 8/23/18.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

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Peter J. Light
Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent's Update September 6, 2018

First Day of School

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our faculty, staff, students and families on a remarkable first three days of school. We kicked off our school year by welcoming faculty and staff back on Wednesday, August 29th for two days of professional learning and meetings to prepare for the new year. This day was my first opportunity to welcome teachers and it was exciting to see and hear the enthusiasm everyone has for welcoming our students back.

On Tuesday we welcomed all of our students in grades K-6 as well as our 7th and 9th graders. The students in 7th and 9th grade had an opportunity to participate in a variety of activities to help them become acclimated to their new school. For elementary students, the day was an opportunity to become situated, meet their teachers and the staff and begin developing relationships that form the foundation of learning for the year. It was particularly exciting to see our Kindergarteners on their first day of school. On Wednesday, we welcomed the rest of our Junior High and High School students back and I had an opportunity to ride a bus, albeit briefly, with some of them as I made the commute down Charter Road for their high school arrival.

I have visited all of our schools and several classrooms over the last few days and was extremely impressed with the warm welcome our students received. One of my favorite memories of the first day was watching a class of students at Merriam design a solar powered hot dog grill. What a great way to start the year!

Our administrators took some pictures at each school over the first few days and I would like to share these with you.

Suicide Postvention and Prevention Information

My letter to the community in the wake of our student death by suicide indicated that I would follow up when the school year began regarding the various strategies we have put into place to support students and faculty as they return to school. In July, we partnered with Riverside Trauma Center to support students, faculty and families immediately following the incident. Additionally, Riverside staff returned to support faculty and staff at the high school, junior high school and Blanchard Memorial School in late August, and were available in the Counseling Center for our high school students on September 5th. Our high school administration and counseling staff have also reached out to students and families who have been greatly impacted and have been meeting with them on an individual basis to offer support and resources.

Developing engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.



On August 30, our high school counseling staff provided professional learning for all of our faculty to remind them about the protocols we use in the event any staff member becomes worried about a student. They also offered to meet individually with teachers to discuss students, and/or to talk about how to introduce sensitive material and how to approach advisory periods on the first days of school.

Our High School Advisory program includes regular meetings between an advisor and a small group of students that has a clear focus and is something in which all students and staff participate. The first advisory at ABRHS on 9/5/2018 entailed a lesson designed to acknowledge Jacob's death by suicide, speak to the wide range of reactions and emotions to news like this, and to check in with students. Students had the opportunity to jot down concerns or questions on index cards and turn them in so that the advisor or counselor could follow up with them. During this advisory, faculty also shared a list of mental health resources with students (which will be sent out daily in Mrs. Trentsch's "Good Morning, AB" message), and reminded them that counselors, social workers, psychologists, and Riverside Trauma Center staff (9/5/18) were available for them in the Counseling Center.

Finally, we have required that all staff complete *Youth Suicide: Awareness and Prevention*, a 40-minute online learning module designed to provide information to help staff reduce the likelihood of student suicide. This course covers common risk factors related to youth suicide, successful strategies for youth suicide prevention, immediate steps a staff member should take if they encounter a student who is threatening suicide, and best practices for postvention. Each building is working to ensure that all staff know the protocol to use when they have concerns about a student.

Some families or community members may wish to access additional information regarding current and past practices around mental health and suicide prevention. I would encourage interested individuals to visit our wellness site at <http://abschoolswellness.weebly.com/mh-district-work.html> for more information. Additionally, families and community members should watch for upcoming [QPR trainings](#), which stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer — the 3 simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. The AB Cares coalition will be offering these trainings throughout the community in the months to come. For information about the first on September 17th, visit [this link](#).

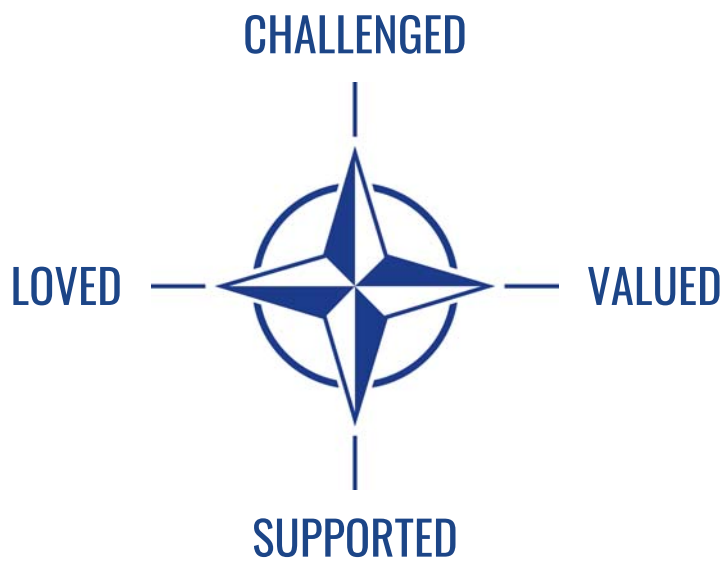
Summer Professional Learning Update

I am excited to have shared with you a memorandum from Deborah Bookis regarding our summer professional learning opportunities that took place across the district. We often think of summer as time off for teachers, but as you can see, many of our educators were busy continuing their own learning and working on district and school sponsored projects that will benefit our students. Some highlights of the summer work included 117 educators participating in twenty-three Research and Development Projects that benefited teaching and learning across grade levels and schools. Additionally, we continued to make progress toward our goals around Equity and Wellness through our educators' work on the Data Inquiry Team, continued Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (S.E.E.D) training, and the Challenge Success Workshop. Thank you to all of our educators who took the time to participate in these various offerings.

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Welcome Back!
All Staff Meeting 2018



LOVED



VALUED

“The Danger of a Single Story”

~ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en#t-1102651



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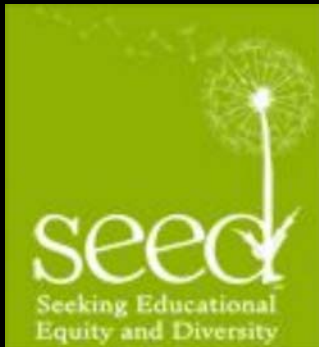
I have always thought that it is impossible to engage properly with a place or a person without engaging with *all* of the stories of that place or that person...

~ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

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The National SEED Project

Creating Conversational Communities That Drive Change

CHALLENGED



SUPPORTED

“How to Prove Others Wrong”

~ Jonathan Mooney

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nmXrSvewRA>



CHALLENGED



SUPPORTED

How might we use strength-based practices to support student learning?

My challenge... How well do you know your students?

In the first weeks of school, and before you start to learn about what your students cannot do or struggle to do, make a list on a note card of the four of five things each child can do both personally and academically. Use this to shape how to talk and work with them around those areas that may appear as weaknesses.

If you did this for every student, could this change the way they learn?

If you work with adults, what are the implications?

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ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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BOXBOROUGH
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THANK YOU!



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6.2

Deborah E. Bookis
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

ph: 978-264-3313
dbookis@abschools.org

TO: Mr. Peter Light, Superintendent

FROM: Deborah Bookis

DATE: August 21, 2018

RE: Summer Professional Learning

This summer our educators logged many hours attending workshops and working collaboratively on Research and Development Projects. Below are some highlights.

Research and Development

Twenty-three Research and Development (R&D) Projects involving one hundred seventeen educators took place this summer. Research and Development Projects are intended to substantively advance current practice. Proposals are written in the spring and thoroughly evaluated by a committee of administrators and educators to make certain they incorporate the following components:

- What problem or need in current practice does this proposal address?
- How will the R&D rectify this problem?
- How does the proposal incorporate new thinking?
- What will be produced/created?
- With whom and how will the product be shared?
- What measures will be used to evaluate the success of the project?

Some highlights from this summer include:

Teaching for Artistic Behavior - Researched and created a plan to implement the Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB) philosophy, which enhances the student's ability to behave in the way real artists approach their practice. The goal is to meld TAB with Studio Habits of Mind in a curriculum that provides more choice in how and what students create to empower them to express their individual ideas and feeling.

Articulating a Vertical Progression of Matter and Energy in Grades 1-2 and 3-5 - Reviewed the vertical alignment and progression of primary and intermediate grade physical science investigations of matter and energy in order to better align with the 2016 MA Science, Technology & Engineering (STE) Framework. Through the development of essential questions and storylines, a clear progression of matter and energy concepts in the elementary grades were articulated.

Expanding the Civics Portion of Seventh-Grade Social Studies - Revised the essential questions and objectives to better meet the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's goals for teaching civics. Lessons were developed as well as a culminating activity in which students will choose an issue that they care about, and using the tools they've learned

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

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT

from successful reform movements, will create a practical strategy for their cause to consider using today as a way to affect change.

Rich Mathematical Tasks - Grade 6 – Developed tasks that help students build an understanding that mathematics is more than just calculation. These tasks allow all students to enter the task, and they build students’ understanding of a big idea. They also allow for formatively assessing students’ understanding of a topic. These tasks have been organized around the big ideas and the Massachusetts Mathematics Content Standards so that teachers using any grade 6 program can incorporate them into their classroom.

HS English Senior Course Development and Redesign - Converted six semester-long 12th grade courses into three year-long, topics-based courses. The new courses preserve the most exciting curricular elements of the well-loved semester classes, while offering more opportunities for students to develop and practice the reading and writing skills they need for college with the same teacher and class community over the course of a full year. The new courses that were finalized are (1) *Blurring Fantasy and Reality: The Study of the World Around us Through Science, Fiction, and Film*, (2) *Chasing the Story: Journalism, Creative Writing, and the Art of the Truth*, and (3) *The Thrill of Victory and the Agony of Defeat: Sports, Life, and the Human Condition*.

Integrating Theatre Sports in Theatrical Curriculum - Incorporated theatresports into the theatrical curriculum through the development of an introductory improv course. The improv curriculum begins by being rooted in the experiential learning of Viola Spolin’s theatre games, then transfers in the improv comedy and theatresports as developed by Keith Johnstone, Paul Sills, and Second City. Developing an improv curriculum created a new entry level course for students curious about theatrical craft while also creating an additional path of coursework for students passionate about honing their theatrical craft.

Data Inquiry Team

The Data Inquiry Team (DIT) continued their work of piloting a new Data Inquiry Tool developed by West Ed during a one day workshop right after school ended. Members of this team then shared the Data Inquiry Cycle process at the Senior Leadership Retreat. The cycle includes predicting what the data will tell us, creating visual representations of the data, making objective observations, inferring, identifying root causes, and generating SMART goals.

Challenge Success Workshop

A small group of educators, school leaders and students attended a one day Challenge Success Seminar to learn about “research-based strategies to improve student health, motivation, and engagement, and network with other leaders from across the nation seeking to achieve a climate of care at their schools.” <http://www.challengesuccess.org/schools/leadership-seminar/>

MA General Hospital (MGH) Institute of Health Professionals: Closing the Literacy Gap in Elementary Education: The Science of Language and Literacy facilitated by Joanna A. Christodoulou, EdD, Assistant Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Director of the Brain, Education, and Mind (BEAM) Team, MGH Institute of Health Professions and Tiffany Hogan, PhD, CCC-SLP, Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Director of the Speech and Language (SAiL) Literacy Lab, MGH Institute of Health Professions.

A group of classroom teachers and reading specialists attended a two day workshop to:

- Understand the role of language processes in word reading and reading comprehension.
- List the multiple pathways underlying reading difficulties.
- Understand the relevance of major findings from cognitive neuroscience research for literacy education.
- Be able to distinguish common educationally relevant neuro- and behavioral-myths and their counter-evidence.
- Practice evidence-based assessments and interventions for reading difficulties based on an individual differences model.
- Understand how brain plasticity is related to reading intervention.

<http://info.mghihp.edu/closingtheliteracygap#overview>

Research for Better Teaching (RBT): Skillful Facilitation facilitated by DeNelle West, RBT Director of Professional Development and a Learning Forward Coach.

A group of specialists and coordinators attended a four-day workshop focused on using research-based adult learning theories and the most effective strategies to deliver high quality professional learning opportunities.

SEED Culturally Responsive Training - New Leaders Week

Four educators/school leaders attended a seven-day workshop that prepared them to lead culturally responsive trainings in our District. During the training, participants “engage in various interactive exercises and conversations to connect their own personal experiences of diversity, oppression, and privilege with an understanding of the systemic nature of privilege and oppression; see how putting people at the center of their own professional development can more effectively nurture the growth and development of young people, community members, and colleagues, and learn how to create and facilitate local SEED seminars that similarly engage their own colleagues and community members, preparing them to create more gender fair, multiculturally equitable, socioeconomically aware, and globally informed schools, communities, and workplaces.” <https://www.nationalseedproject.org/be-a-part/new-leaders-week>

Summer Technology Camp

Using the essential question, *How can we revise our curriculum to be more engaging?* Educators (will) participate in the following workshops taught by their colleagues:

- Organize Your Google Drive
- Virtual Talking Adventures with Vocaroo & QR Codes
- Video-based Formative Assessments with EdPuzzle
- Simple & Engaging Video Creation with Animoto
- Conferencing with Writers on Google Docs
- Interactive Posters with Thinglink

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- Making Learning Visible with PicCollage, Quik, & Social Media
- Let's Kahoot!
- Google Slides & Screencastify
- Digital Storytelling Across the Curriculum with Book Creator
- Google Docs Tips, Tricks, Tools, and Strategies for All Writers
- Video Projects with iMovie
- Google Slides for Interactive Whiteboards
- Meaningful Formative Assessments with ReCap & Plickers
- Google Drawings
- Flip Out Over Google Sheets with Flippity
- Real-world Presentations with Green Screen
- Simple Digital Storytelling & Eportfolios with ChatterPix & SeeSaw
- Research, Note-taking, & Citation with NoodleTools
- Virtual Bulletin Boards with Padlet
- Teach, Survey, Assess, & More with Google Forms
- Make Slides Truly Interactive with Pear Deck for Google Slides
- Introducing the New Google Sites

Early Literacy Workshop

Matt Glover, writing consultant and author of *Projecting Possibilities for Writers: The How, What and Why of Designing Units of Study*, will spend two days in late August working with some of our kindergarten and first grade teachers and our Pk-2 Literacy Curriculum Coordinator, Sharon Ryan. Together they will review and discuss the vertical alignment of the writing curriculum between grades.

Senior Leadership Retreat

A smaller group of district leaders, comprised of Cabinet Members and Building Principals, spent two days this summer. Goals included hearing from our new superintendent, engaging in activities to reconnect and build team camaraderie, learning about and engaging in a data inquiry cycle to examine equity, and defining 2018-19 actionable items related to the Long-Range Strategic Plan and district goals.

Summer Superintendent Leadership Institute

Over fifty district leaders spent a day this summer together reconnecting, hearing from our new Superintendent and beginning the 18 hour SEED Culturally Responsive Training led by Beth Baker, ABRHS Associate Principal and Maureen Lin, RJ Grey Special Educator.

Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) Mentor Workshop

For new mentors, a workshop will be held in late August in anticipation of meeting and working with their protégés. The workshop focused on peer observations, feedback, protocols, classroom management, and district policies and procedures.

Instructional Coaching Retreat

The Assistant Superintendents and the Elementary Curriculum Coordinators met to create parameters and documentation for a formal instructional coaching system to be shared with all elementary staff this fall.

New ABRSD Teacher Orientation Day 1

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All new educators to the ABRSD will spend a day together getting to know one another, hearing from the District Leadership Team, touring the towns of Acton and Boxborough, enjoying lunch sponsored by the ABEA, and working in the afternoon with the Beginning Teachers Support Program Co-Coordinator, Karin Drowne and Maureen Lin, and their individual mentors.

New ABRSD Teacher Orientation Day 2

New ABRSD educators also spend a second orientation day either at their respective school (for JH and HS educators) or together as an elementary cohort. There they will learn specific information about the schools, technology tools, and also have a bit of fun learning together!



Supporting Social Emotional Learning, Mental Health, and Well-Being: An Overview of Some of Our Work

District

- Updated [Long Range Strategic Plan](#) that focuses on wellness, equity and engagement
- Extensive counseling and psychology staff and supports K-12
- Crisis response protocol (Good Grief, Riverside Trauma Center)
- AB Wellness Website: In September, we launched a website with a variety of resources for families, teachers, students, and the greater learning community: <http://abschoolswellness.weebly.com>. Here you will find a variety of pages and resources to support our mission to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships. Highlight mental illness...
- Family Learning Series Parent Learning Offerings (<http://www.abschools.org/families/family-learning>): To date, the district has offered a variety of learning opportunities for families and the community that include:
 - Dr. Kirsty Kerin presented [The Science of Sleep](#)
 - Maria Trozzi, M.Ed. presented *When Adolescents Face Losses... Words, Strategies & Wisdom that Promote Resilience*
 - Janell Burley Hofmann presented [Childhood and Technology](#)
 - Dr. Rob Evans presented [Mental Health: Keeping Our Kids Safe](#)
 - Dr. Denise Pope presented [The Well-Balanced Student](#)
 - Maria Trozzi, M.Ed. presented *5 to Thrive: A Conversation about the Stresses of Parenting Kids Today*
 - Jessica Minahan presented *Reducing Anxiety in Students*
 - Danny's Place Youth Services- "Talk Saves Lives" by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
 - Pamela Katz Ressler [Mindfulness](#) presentation
 - Dr. Josephine Kim presented *Let's Talk! Bridging the Cultural Gap Between You and Your Child*
 - Sarah Ward presented on [Executive Functioning and Resilience](#)
- Community Outreach:
 - Clergy- Superintendent Glenn Brand, Deputy Superintendent Marie Altieri, and Assistant Superintendent Dawn Bentley met with members of the clergy after the high school suicides to share the district's work, as well as to better understand how the faith community could support our students and families.
 - AB Cares Coalition- Assistant Superintendent Dawn Bentley is representing the district on this coalition. Facilitated by Larry Berkowicz of [Riverside Trauma Center](#), it aims to pull a number of agencies from Acton and Boxborough together in order to consider suicide as a lifespan issue across our community and to educate our citizens on mental health and suicide prevention.
 - Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Press Release: We collaborated with Emerson Hospital and the other member districts to ensure that the press release aligned with the responsible reporting guidelines for media



Supporting Social Emotional Learning, Mental Health, and Well-Being: An Overview of Some of Our Work

- Staff Support and Professional Learning:
 - Good Grief training with Maria Trozzi for all staff K-12, refresher at ABRHS, crisis response protocol training for all administrators, two parent presentations- one on coping with loss, one on resilience factors
 - Larry Berkowicz and Clinicians ([Riverside Trauma Center](#)): supports for counseling, psychological, and administrative staff, curriculum development and refinement
 - Judy McKendry (NAMI): Mental Illness in Your Classroom
 - Rob Evans, Ph.D.: grief support for staff, [parent presentation on suicide](#), professional learning for administrators
 - SOS (Signs of Suicide) staff training (2013-2014); repeated during 2016-2017
 - *Suicide Prevention: A Gatekeeper Training for School Personnel* presented to all ABRSD staff in 2017 by [Riverside Trauma Center](#). This is a program that has been approved by the Suicide Prevention Resource Center's Best Practices Registry for Suicide Prevention.

High School

- Guiding Question: How do we support health and well-being within a rich learning environment that provides opportunities for all students to experience success?
- Staff trained on the impact of depression, anxiety, and trauma on learning (2013-2014)
- New staff trained on supports for students who struggle (STAR, SST, etc.) each year
- Advisory Lessons geared toward wellness, mindfulness, community building, and anti-bullying
- Health education related to wellness strategies, healthy relationships
- [SOS Program and Screening](#) - (9th and 12th grade) - screening all students in these identified grades to identify mental health concerns
- Engaged with Deb Garfield and the Eliot Center to provide students with coping groups
- Partnership with Dr. Larry Berkowitz at [Riverside Trauma Center](#) (student presentation on depression, mental health, and suicide prevention)
- Student Support Team (SST) weekly meetings to identify and track at-risk students.
- Building Administrative Team (BAT) weekly meetings to identify and track at-risk students.
- STAR (Supportive Therapeutic Academic Resource) Center, MAP (My Alternative Program), REAL (Relational Emotional Academic Learning), special education learning centers
- Counselors, psychologists, nurses, school social worker available for individual counseling on an as-needed basis.
- Identification of at-risk students transitioning from grade 8-9; meetings with counselors before the start of the school year and within the first few weeks of school



Supporting Social Emotional Learning, Mental Health, and Well-Being: An Overview of Some of Our Work

Junior High School

- MARC pro-social/anti-bullying curriculum throughout the year in both 7th and 8th grade
- Several teachers incorporating mindfulness practices into classroom routine at the start of their classes. Health teacher participated in a mindfulness conference earlier and is exploring ways to incorporate it into the curriculum
- [SOS Program and Screening](#) - (7th grade) - screening all students to identify mental health concerns
- Partnership with Dr. Larry Berkowitz and [Riverside Trauma Center](#)
- After school yoga program available to students
- Life Skills class includes units on emotion management
- Hold all-school assemblies at the start of the year on the importance of sleep and strategies to improve sleep habits (with Dr. Kirsty Kerin)
- Examining homework practices through the lens of student health and wellness
- Counselors, psychologists, nurses, school social worker available for individual counseling on an as-needed basis
- Identification of at-risk students transitioning from sixth grade; meetings with counselors before the start of the school year and within the first few weeks of school

Elementary

- Social emotional learning and supports within each building with programs:
 - Responsive Classroom- a research-based approach to K-8 teaching that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social-emotional learning (SEL) that stresses the belief that a high-quality education for every child is built on the foundation of a safe and joyful learning community
 - Open Circle- an evidence-based social and emotional learning program that proactively develops children's social and emotional skills (i.e. managing emotions, empathy, positive relationships and problem solving), which builds communities where students feel safe, cared for and engaged in learning

**AB
WELLNESS
(/)**

HOME (/) CHALLENGE SUCCESS (/CHALLENGE-SUCCESS.HTML) LEARN (/LEARN.HTML)
DO (/DO.HTML)
EXPANDING OUR SUCCESS NEWSLETTER (/EXPANDING-OUR-SUCCESS-NEWSLETTER.HTML)

MENTAL HEALTH: DISTRICT WORK



*Supporting Social Emotional Learning, Mental Health, and Well-Being:
An Overview of Some of Our Work*

District

- Updated [Long Range Strategic Plan](#) that focuses on wellness, equity and engagement
- Extensive counseling and psychology staff and supports K-12
- Crisis response protocol (Good Grief, Riverside Trauma Center)
- AB Wellness Website: In September, we launched a website with a variety of resources for families, teachers, students, and the greater learning community: <http://abschoolswellness.weebly.com>. Here you will find a variety of pages and resources to support our mission to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships. Highlight mental illness...
- Family Learning Series Parent Learning Offerings (<http://www.abschools.org/families/family-learning>): To date, the district has offered a variety of learning opportunities for families and the community that include:

• Dr. Kirsty Kerin presented *The Science of Sleep*

ABRSD Professional Learning Day

*Mental Health, Wellness, and Learning in the ABRSD:
A PreK to 12 Perspective*
November 3, 2015 7:30 AM - 2:30 PM
Location: Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

The November 3, 2015 Professional Learning Day was devoted to a district-wide focus on Mental Health, Wellness and Learning

Goal

To solidify our district commitment, PK-12, to the social and emotional development of our students and staff, and the promotion of a healthy, balanced life in a district with high expectations and high achievement.

Outcomes

Mental Health – Early Morning Session – State of the District

1. To understand the current mental health challenges of our students & families, PK-12
2. To understand the current efforts, resources, and programs already in place in our schools, PK-12

Wellness – Early Morning Session – Workshops

3. To model/learn wellness strategies for us (and have fun!)

Learning - Afternoon Session - Panel Discussion

4. To understand the impact of mental health challenges and related factors on learning
5. To learn strategies or resources we can take back to our respective schools and our work with students

Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

Beginning in 2013, ABRHS began a 3-year Professional Learning plan centered on Mental Health, Wellness, and Learning.

During the **2013-2014** school year, the high school:

- focused on mental health and wellness by training their staff on the impact of depression, anxiety, and trauma on learning.
- strengthened their Student Support Team (SST) to include a case-study model that increases collaboration among administrators, counselors, psychologists, nurses, and other staff to support students.
- trained staff on Signs of Suicide (SOS) (<http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/sos-signs-suicide>) and partnered with key community organizations to bring the William James College (MSPP) (<http://www.williamjames.edu/>) mental health referral and support services to families in Acton and Boxborough. Each year, new staff members are trained in the above areas to maintain common understandings and build capacity.

During the **2014-2015** school year, the high school:

- examined practices related to homework and workload. They used a year-long, cross-disciplinary model to articulate individual department purposes for homework, piloted 30 minute "in class" homework assignments, reviewed current practices, surveyed students (assessment was most stressful), and read and learned together as a staff.
- piloted a midyear week and gathered feedback from students, families and staff.

During the **2015-2016** school year and **this school year**, the high school:

- Counselors will deliver presentations in **all grade levels** about the signs and symptoms of depression, effective ways of coping with it, what to do if they or someone they know has thoughts of suicide, and how to access appropriate resources.
- looked more closely at assessment practices and the relationship between assessment and instruction
- plan to pilot an assessment calendar
- look more closely at the school day schedule and the impact it has on student learning and overall workload.
- examine Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) (<http://www.casel.org/>) at the secondary level, including models and practices.

Health Curriculum Standards That Support Student Learning of Mental Health Causes, Signs, and Strategies

Grade 6

- Identify the various feelings that most people experience and describe the physical and emotional reactions of the body to intense positive and negative feelings

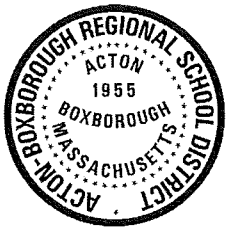
Grades 7 and 8

- Identify and describe the experience of different feelings (such as elation, joy, grief, and rage) and how feelings affect daily functioning.
- Identify the causes and effects of depression and how to seek help.
- Describe the contribution of a personal support system to good mental health.
- Describe those one can trust or turn to for help when needed, such as a support system that can include relatives, friends, neighbors, community organizations, and faith-based groups.

Grade 10 Fitness for Living

Mental Health and Stress including Signs of Suicide (SOS) Prevention Training (<http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/sos-signs-suicide>)

- Explain how personality contributes to health.
- Identify ways to improve self-esteem, and list how self-esteem affects health.
- Recognize emotions and feelings and express them in healthy ways.
- Identify situations that cause stress.
- Explain how the body responds when faced with stress.
- Describe the relationship between personality and stress.
- Develop a plan for managing stress.
- Identify strategies for managing time effectively.
- Explain cause of mental disorders.
- Identify the warning signs of suicide.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720

978-264-4700

www.abschools.org

7.1

Peter J. Light

Superintendent of Schools

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
From: Peter Light
Date: 8/31/2018
RE: New Superintendent Induction Program Presentation

Matt King, Ed.D., will be presenting an overview of the New Superintendent Induction Program (NSIP). The program was developed as a collaborative effort between the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.). The program consists of a combination of "content days" and coaching opportunities that take place during the first three years of the Superintendency. Dr. King has been assigned as my coach through the program. He has previously served as Superintendent of Schools in Lincoln-Sudbury, Concord-Carlisle, and the Wellesley Public Schools.

For more information regarding the program, you may visit the M.A.S.S. website at <https://www.massupt.org/professional-development/annual-programs/new-superintendent-induction-program/>.

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Peter J. Light
Superintendent of Schools

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
From: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools
Date: 9/6/18
RE: Transportation Update

I write this memorandum on the heels of two successful days of implementing the new busing system. I was at the Junior High School on the first day of school and watched 42 buses deliver students for the 7th grade orientation. I then visited the Conant School where approximately 22 buses delivered students on their run between Conant and the Parker Damon Building. To give you a sense of the scope of this operation, between 3,500 and 4,000 students ride our buses each day, we stop at over 1,500 locations, and operate 80 individual bus routes. Designing and implementing a transportation system with this level of complexity is no small feat and again I want to thank J.D. Head and the entire transportation department for their diligent work.

While our first days have been largely successful, there have been several issues that we continue to work to resolve. First, we realize that some families may have interpreted the posted bus times as absolute pick up or drop off times. The posted times are generated by the computer system based on historical data and use an algorithm to determine approximate stop times. There was some frustration among families as buses may arrive a few minutes early and others a few minutes later. We encourage families to arrive at bus stops ten minutes prior to the scheduled pick up times to ensure students are ready when the bus arrives. We also anticipate that bus stop times will normalize and become more predictable after these first two weeks. Additionally, as drivers go through their new routes, we anticipate that some anomalies in the location of bus stops or planned routes have been corrected.

The transportation department continues to work with families around our consolidated bus stops which were developed in order to minimize travel time. The department received 105 email requests for bus stop evaluations between the day we posted bus stops and today. Eliminating duplicate requests, we have received requests to evaluate 87 (under 6%) of the over 1,500 bus stops we have. Specifically, our team received 55 requests prior to the start of school and 32 additional requests since school opened. We have focused efforts on evaluating requests received prior to the start of school and will resume evaluating new requests once routes normalize over the next week.

Each evaluation is completed on a case by case basis and we carefully evaluate the stop for safety based on a variety of factors including the posted speed limit, the presence of adequate sight lines, availability of sidewalks or a suitable walking area, traffic patterns during both morning and afternoon

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commutes, as well as the suitability of a waiting area and the possible presence of any dangerous road conditions. If, in evaluating the safety of a bus stop, our transportation department has any concerns, we seek the opinion of the Acton or Boxborough Police in evaluating the stop independently. Each assessment is unique to the stop and can take between 30 minutes and two hours. Due to our commitment to evaluating each request thoroughly and the amount of time involved in each evaluation, it may take several days to respond to requests.

As of this memorandum, the transportation department has completed 55 bus stop assessments. As a result of these assessments, the department determined to change 35 bus stops and 14 bus stops were left as originally proposed. A small number of additional requests were to ride a bus that did not service the student's school. Finally, we are evaluating a very small number of requests based on specific medical conditions of students.

While the transportation department has shifted a number of stops based on the results of safety assessments, there are other stops that have been determined safe and appropriate and have not been changed. Analysis of these requests reveals two broad patterns that emerge: stops that are regarded as an inconvenience for students and families to travel to and from; and stops where potential inclement weather is regarded as negatively impacting bus stop safety.

While we recognize that every family has unique circumstances that factor into the ease of traveling to and from stops, we are not able to change stops based on convenience of the location. In these cases, it remains the family's responsibility to decide if they should accompany their child to and from the bus stop.

With regard to bus stops where inclement weather may negatively impact the safety of the stop, we want to reassure families that we do not want our students to wait at an unsafe location. The most likely concern is around the impact of large snowfall accumulations at waiting areas, although we recognize there could be other factors as well that could have a negative impact on the safety of a location.

If a bus driver determines that snow or another weather-related factor causes a stop to become unsafe, they are authorized to temporarily change the location of the stop to a nearby, safe alternative and communicate this directly with students and families at the stop. If a family believes a stop to be unsafe because of weather conditions, we encourage families to contact our transportation department if and when the stop becomes unsafe. We will then work to evaluate the stop and if needed, implement a safe, temporary alternative. As a reminder to families, requests for changes should be made to the transportation department and not individual drivers.

Finally, the safety of our students while they ride our buses is always a priority for us. We would like to remind families that we utilize the [Thumbs Up For Safety Protocol](#) to help students be safe during loading and unloading processes. Additionally, as our elementary ridership on each bus is higher than in previous years, our schools are taking additional steps to positively reinforce safety procedures. We have revised our [Student School Bus Behavior Expectations](#) and communicated

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these to families in a variety of ways. We are also having all elementary classroom teachers emphasize bus safety, holding grade level assemblies with school administrators, and having our buses and drivers visit each elementary school so students can further discuss bus safety on an actual bus and practice appropriate procedures.

With regard to driver staffing, districts across the region are experiencing difficulties filling vacant positions. We also had several bus drivers who had accepted our positions withdraw just prior to the start of school. We have been able to operate all routes using our transportation managers and dispatcher to drive on a temporary basis. This has unfortunately caused some delayed communication during pick up and drop off times because we have few staff available to answer telephones. We continue to actively recruit additional drivers and will fill these positions as soon as possible. We ask that families only contact the transportation office during pick up and drop off times in the event of a transportation-related emergency.

One final thank you to J.D. Head and the transportation department, and to all of our building and district administrators who have been instrumental in implementing these changes. Because of these changes we are able to have all elementary schools on the same schedule and our Junior High and High School students begin school at a more healthy, later time, 8:00 and 8:07 a.m. respectively.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
DRAFT Operating Protocols – First Read 9/6/18)

As elected members of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee and ambassadors of the District, we strive to advocate for our schools and the support of public education. We pledge to conduct our business in a professional, respectful, thoughtful and efficient manner, and commit to the following protocols in our dealings with the Superintendent, the Staff/Administration and the general public. We will:

Support the achievement, educational welfare and well being of ALL students
in a positive district climate and culture

- Establish a vision, create policies, develop budgets and assure accountability to sustain continuous improvement in teaching and learning, leaving the implementation strategies and operations to the Superintendent and staff.
- Represent the needs, interests, and achievements of all students in the district and place these above all else in the decisions we make.
- Develop a unified vision which defines success and accountability for the Committee, Superintendent, staff, and students.

Demonstrate professional and collegial relations at all times

- Empower School Committee members to freely express their opinions, concerns and ideas in a climate of trust and mutual respect, even in times of disagreement.
- Base our decisions on available facts, vote our convictions, avoid bias, and uphold and support the decisions of the majority of the Committee once a decision is made. Recognize that authority rests only with majority decisions of the Committee and make no independent commitments or take any independent actions that may compromise the Committee as a whole.
- Debate respectfully, effectively and efficiently so that meeting time is used wisely, being mindful of our large committee.

Dedicate ourselves to establishing and maintaining effective communication

- Channel requests for information, reports, and data through the Superintendent and the Chair rather than directly to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member has equal access to this information in a timely manner and that information will be shared to the extent possible.
- Welcome respectful, thoughtful input from the public in shaping Committee decisions.
- While our meetings are open to the public, and we invite and encourage all citizens to join us, they are not public meetings. Public participation is subject to MA General Law Chapter 30A section 20g and our School Committee policy BEDH.

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- Address questions and concerns in the most efficient manner, by directing parent/guardians to the appropriate person within the district chain of communication via the Parent Communication Map found on abschools.org.
- Communicate questions/concerns as soon as possible, ideally before a meeting.
- Refrain from addressing issues that have not been previously brought to the attention of the Chair and/or Superintendent, except in emergency situations.
- Strive to make our meetings as efficient as possible:
 - Add meetings to address topics requiring lengthy discussion.
 - Recognize that discussion on certain issues may be delayed.
 - Limit the number of agenda items in order to keep meetings to a reasonable time frame.
 - Discourage use of meeting packet addendum items.

All members are familiar with the Committee's Policy Section B: *School Board Governance and Operations* (posted on abschools.org) and agree to follow the policies and encourage fellow members to do the same.

Diane Baum, Chairperson

Michael Bo

Mary Brolin

Adam Klein

Ginny Kremer

Amy Krishnamurthy

Tessa McKinley

Maya Minkin

Paul Murphy

Angie Tso

Eileen Zhang

Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools

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Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

75 Spruce Street • Acton, MA 01720

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To: Acton-Boxborough Superintendent, Peter Light

From: Lynne Newman
Gates School Principal

Date: August 23, 2018

Re: Grant Monies received by the Speech and Language Department

I am pleased to report that our Speech and Language Therapist, Allison Larson, has applied for and received the 2018 Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant in the amount of \$5,000 for the Multi-Media Technology Support for Speech-Language Impaired Students project from Lowe's Charitable and Education Foundation (LCEF). The mission of the LCEF is to improve the communities that Lowe's serve, and they are committed to having a positive impact on the lives of their customers, neighbors and employees.

We greatly appreciate the generosity of Lowes and their commitment to supporting this Grant.

Thank you for requesting a vote of acceptance from the School Committee.



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For Your Information



2018-19 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

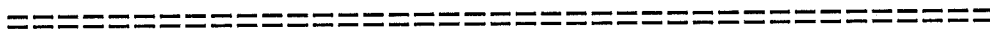
Junior High and High School Schedule

SCHOOLS OPEN: Tuesday, September 4, 2018*

*With the exception of 8th, 10th, 11th, & 12th graders, who start Wednesday September 5, 2018

JUNIOR HIGH: 8:00-2:36 p.m. (11:06 a.m. early dismissal)

HIGH SCHOOL: 8:07-2:47 p.m. (11:18 a.m. early dismissal)



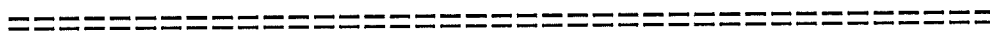
Elementary School Schedule

SCHOOLS OPEN: Tuesday, September 4, 2018

All-Day K and Grades 1-6: 8:50-a.m. – 3:20 p.m.

(Thursdays – 12:50 p.m. dismissal) Half-Day Kindergarten

AM Session: 8:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. (Thursday Schedule 8:50 a.m. – 12:50 p.m.)



Carol Huebner Early Childhood Programs Schedule

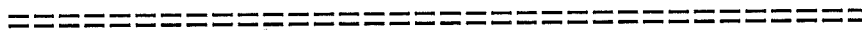
SCHOOLS OPEN: Thursday, September 6, 2018

Monday - Thursday

Morning Session 8:30 - 11:15 AM

Afternoon Session 12:15 - 3:00 PM

All-Day Session 8:30 - 3:00 PM

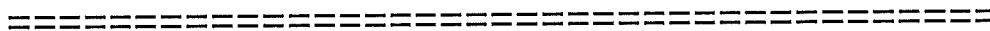


Lunch Prices

\$2.75 (includes fruit, vegetable, milk) Milk only: \$.50

For more information, see the Food Services website at:

<http://www.abschools.org/departments/food-services/lunch-menus>



***** Direct Phone Numbers *****

Blanchard: 978-263-4569

Conant: 978-266-2550

Douglas: 978-266-2560

Gates: 978-266-2570

McCarthy-Towne: 978-264-3377

Merriam: 978-264-3371

All other schools: 978-264-4700



August 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians:

From time to time, families may face financial difficulties, and school related dues and fees can compound family stressors. If your family is experiencing a financial hardship, you or your child can make a request for assistance. Once you contact a member of the school staff, listed below you will be given information and be asked to fill out an "Application for Financial Assistance" form for various types of financial relief.

Category	Area of Need	Types of Assistance:			Forms/ Information available from:
		Reduced	Free	Waived	
Lunch	Lunch	x	x		Principal, Assistant Principal, School Secretary, Counselor, Food Service Director
Tuition	All-Day Kindergarten	x		x	Principal, School Secretary, Counselor
	Carol Huebner Early Childhood Program	x		x	Early Childhood Coordinator, Classroom Teacher
	Community Ed. Extended Day Program	x			Extended Day Director
	Summer school	x		x	Principal, Assistant Principal, Counselor
Fees	Music programs	x		x	Music Director, Principal, Assistant Principal, School Secretary, Counselor
	Interscholastic athletics	x		x	Coach/Athletic Director, Principal, Assistant Principal, School Secretary, Counselor
	Field trips, school-sponsored events, Project Wellness, and Senior Dues	x	x		Principal, Assistant Principal, School Secretary, Counselor
	PSAT, SAT I/II, AP exams, and college applications*	x		x	Counselor, Assistant Principal
Tickets	Special events			x	Principal, Assistant Principal, School Secretary, Counselor
Scholarship	Local needs-based college scholarship awards	Partial Scholarship			Counselor, Assistant Principal

* Note: These supports are offered by the testing companies and by some colleges – not by the public schools.

Both Acton and Boxborough have Community Services Coordinators who can connect you with additional supports:

Acton: Laura Ducharme Phone: 978-929-6651 Email: lducharme@acton-ma.gov
Boxborough: Lauren Abraham Phone: 978-264-1730 Email: lbraham@boxborough-ma.gov

The Acton Food Pantry is also a resource for Acton and Boxborough residents, accessible by calling 978-635-9295. For those looking for affordable housing in Acton, contact the Acton Housing Authority at 978-263-5339. Also, for low-cost high-speed internet options, families can learn more at <https://www.highspeedinternet.com/resources/category/brand-guides/>.

Finally, further information on school or community services or assistance can be just a phone call away by dialing the Student Services Office at 978-264-4700 x3265. All information is kept confidential.

Sincerely,

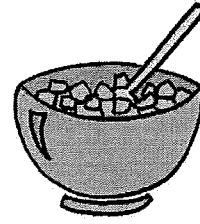
Dawn G. Bentley, Ed.D. - Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

WELLNESS

EQUITY

ENGAGEMENT

Now Serving...Breakfast



BREAKFAST!!!

Breakfast will be available to students 20 minutes before school starts.

Breakfast Menu:

Choice of: blueberry muffin, whole wheat bagel with cream cheese, OR choice of cereal.

Fruit and milk included with breakfast.

\$1.75 for breakfast*

**If you are eligible for free lunch you are also eligible for a free breakfast.*

**If you are eligible for a reduced lunch you are eligible for reduced breakfast at \$.30.*

We have made it easier for families to apply for free or reduced priced meals. Apply online anytime using an Internet-enabled computer. You can complete and submit a secure, confidential application in minutes.

Go to <https://schoolmealapp.com> to apply. If you need help, come to school, and we can assist you!

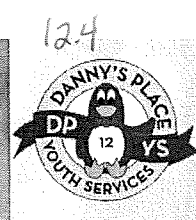
Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee 2018-2019
Subcommittees & Assignments

ASSIGNMENTS:

CASE Board Member	Superintendent Peter Light
EDCO School Committee Leadership Liaison/Round Table	Angie Tso
EDCO Board Member (voting member)	Superintendent Peter Light
EDCO Advisory Member (non-voting member)	Diane Baum
Health Insurance Trust (HIT) Representative	Mary Brolin, Diane Baum (<i>shadow</i>)
PTSO Liaison Coordinator	Diane Baum, Tessa McKinley, Ginny Kremer
Special Education Parent Advisory Comm Liaison	Diane Baum, Paul Murphy, Tessa McKinley
Acton Leadership Group (ALG) Representatives	Diane Baum, Paul Murphy
Acton Board of Selectmen Liaison	Paul Murphy
Acton Finance Committee Liaison	Amy Krishnamurthy
OPEB Trust Fund Board of Advisors	ABRSC Chairperson, Diane Baum
Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) Representatives	All Boxborough Members
Boxborough Board of Selectmen Liaison	Tessa McKinley
Boxborough Finance Committee Liaison	Mary Brolin
Minuteman Tech Liaison/SC Rep to Acton MMT Working Group	Angie Tso
Danny's Place Youth Services Advisory Board	Amy Krishnamurthy
Legislative Liaison	Ginny Kremer

SUBCOMMITTEES:

Budget Subcommittee	Mary Brolin, Amy Krishnamurthy, Diane Baum, Eileen Zhang, Michael Bo, Tessa McKinley
Capital Planning Subcommittee	To be determined
Negotiations Subcommittee	To be determined
Policy Subcommittee	Amy Krishnamurthy (chair), Maya Minkin, Eileen Zhang, Ginny Kremer, Angie Tso, Adam Klein
School Building Committee (subcommittee)	Mary Brolin (chair), Amy Krishnamurthy, Adam Klein, Maya Minkin
Warrant Signature Subcommittee	Paul Murphy, Maya Minkin, Mary Brolin, Tessa McKinley, Eileen Zhang



Building Resilience: A Parent/Caregiver Series

with Rana Chudnofsky, Ed.M

October 3rd & October 10th

6:30pm-8:30pm

The Gallery at Villageworks

525 Mass Ave, Acton, MA

Questions? Contact 978-264-4700 x 3213

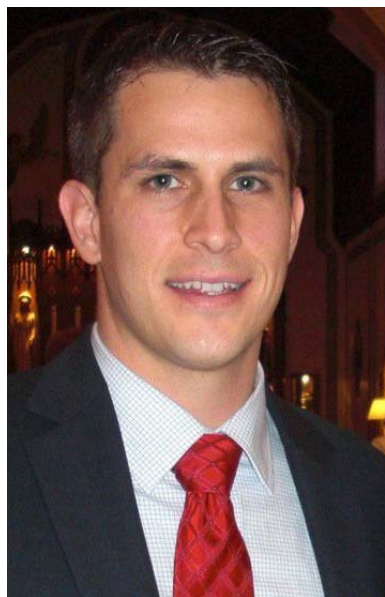
RSVP Here

Learn the essential tools to build resilience, improve health and quality of life, while helping support your children and teens to learn and practice their own resiliency building skills. Learn about the connection between stress and physical or emotional concerns. Practice techniques to elicit the relaxation response to stay cool in stressful situations!



Rana Chudnofsky has served as Director of the Resilient Youth Program at the Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital since 2006. She specializes in teaching relaxation techniques and cognitive strategies at clinical treatment centers, schools and universities. She received her training in Biofeedback from Boston Behavioral Medicine and her EdM from Harvard University in Technology in Education. With a background in Mind Body medicine and technology, Ms. Chudnofsky finds it rewarding to show people how their body's physiology can change with meditation.

MEET ACTON'S NEW TOWN MANAGER AND SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



John Mangiaratti
Acton Town Manager



Peter Light
Superintendent

September 13th

7:00—9:00 pm

Acton Town Hall, Room 204

The public is invited to join the League of Women Voters—Acton Area for an evening of conversation with Acton Town Manager, John Mangiaratti and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Superintendent, Peter Light.



League of Women Voters—Acton Area

P.O. Box 817

Acton, MA 01720

www.lwv-aa.org

Contact: Marilyn Peterson at mpeterson@corneliuspeterson.com

MEET BOXBOROUGH'S NEW TOWN ADMINISTRATOR AND SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



Ryan Ferrara
Boxborough Town Administrator



Peter Light
Superintendent

October 3rd

7:00—9:00 pm

Boxborough Library

The public is invited to join the League of Women Voters—Acton Area for an evening of conversation with Boxborough Town Administrator, Ryan Ferrara, and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Superintendent, Peter Light.



League of Women Voters—Acton Area

P.O. Box 817

Acton, MA 01720

www.lwv-aa.org

Contact: Leslie Hogan at lesliehogan99@gmail.com

SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sponsored by

AB Cares



Question, Persuade, Refer teaches 3 simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2018

6:30 - 8:30 PM

**ACTON HUMAN SERVICES FACILITY
(ACTON SENIOR CENTER)
30 SADBURY ROAD REAR**

Join us in saying YES to saving the life of a friend, colleague, child, sibling, or neighbor

**For information and to sign up
abuw@abuw.org**



**Acton-Boxborough
United Way**