

AMHERST-PELHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 14, 2016

6:00 P.M.

ARHS Library

IN ATTENDANCE

Laura Kent

Trevor Baptiste

Emily Marriott

Phoebe Hazzard

Katherine Appy (left @ 6:55 p.m.)

Sarah Dolven

Vira Douangmany Cage

Stephen Sullivan

Anastasia Ordonez

Maria Geryk, Superintendent

Mike Morris, Assistant Superintendent

Sean Mangano, Finance Director

Lisa Desjarlais, Principal

Faye Brady, Student Services Director

Rachel Bowen, Assistant Human Resources Director

Marisa Mendona, ARMS Principal

Kathryn Mazur, Human Resources Director

Derek Shea, Crocker Farm Principal

Mark Jackson, ARHS Principal

Nick Yaffe, Wildwood Principal

Carol Ross, Media & Climate Communications Specialist

Jean Fay, APEA President

Denise Boyd, ARMS Counselor

Mary O'Brien, ARMS Nurse

Talib Sadiq, ARMS Climate Coordinator

Monica Hall, Director of Equity and Professional Development

David Slovin, SEC Principal

Jo Ann Smith, Student Services Administrator

1. Call to Order and Reorganize

6:05 p.m.

Ms. Geryk called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and asked for nominations for Regional School Committee Chair. Ms. Appy nominated Laura Kent, noting that her experience co-leading SEPAC and collaborating with administration will serve her and the Committee very well. Mr. Baptiste seconded, noting that Ms. Kent has his full support. The nomination was then unanimously approved. Ms. Kent then asked for nominations for Vice-Chair, and Ms. Appy nominated Sarah Dolven. Ms. Marriott seconded and thanked Mr. Baptiste for serving as Chair for two years. Mr. Baptiste said that it was his privilege to serve with such auspicious colleagues. The nomination of Ms. Dolven was unanimously approved. It was then unanimously approved that Debbie Westmoreland will continue to serve as Secretary for the Regional School Committee. Ms. Appy requested a moment of silence for the tragedy in Orlando, which was solemnly observed. Ms. Kent noted that last Friday we celebrated graduation, which is why they all serve on the committee.

Ms. Appy moved to approve the minutes of April 12, May 10 and May 26, 2016 with minor changes to the May 10 and May 26 minutes. Ms. Hazzard seconded and the motion was approved. Ms. Kent reviewed the agenda and asked if any members requested any changes. Mr. Baptiste requested that reorganizing subcommittees be moved up on the agenda rather than being the last item. It was agreed that the item will be moved to before the item Resolution against Lifting the Charter School Cap.

2. Announcements and Public Comments

6:15 p.m.

Ms. Kent opened public comment by reading the School Committee policy regarding public participation in meetings in its entirety. Marylou Conca, Shutesbury resident, asked who the Superintendent is an employee of, noting that the Town Manager has indicated that it is a position that is an employee of the School Committee. Derek Shea, speaking as an Amherst father, spoke about the athletics programs in Amherst and the fantastic job Athletic Director Rich Ferro is doing. He specifically talked about the diversity of the ARMS track and field team led by Coach Russo and the incredible way in which the kids are showing the adults the way forward. Mark Jackson, ARHS Principal, school parent and Amherst resident, spoke on behalf of the full Administrative Team expressing their unqualified support of their superintendent, Maria Geryk, and her leadership. He spoke specifically about the vision that has been established and the work being done to root out bias, noting that it has been operationalized. Nick Yaffe, Wildwood Principal, noted that he cannot stay silent and spoke about Ms. Geryk's leadership and the core qualities of her leadership. He stated that her decisions are based on what is best for children and families first and spoke about Ms. Geryk's work. Mr. Yaffe noted that Ms. Geryk has stepped in at key points in our Districts' history and led with compassion, open heartedness and love. Mr. Baptiste expressed thanks to the leadership, which he stated is well-respected in the community, noting that he can be convinced of Ms. Geryk's perseverance based on their input.

3. Superintendent's Update

6:32 p.m.

DOCUMENT: *Memo from Kathryn Mazur to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee dated June 14, 2016*

Ms. Geryk reported that last night the district celebrated the Retirement and Years-of-Service event for faculty and staff, which was a wonderful event. She noted that the bowls for retirees are made by ARHS students in Ms. Hannah Hartl's class and acknowledged Ms. Westmoreland for her work in planning the event. Ms. Mazur provided a written update about the 7-12 consolidation. There was no verbal report since little has changed since the last report.

5. New and Continuing Business

6:33 p.m.

A. SEPAC Update

DOCUMENT: *Pelham, Amherst, Amherst-Pelham Regional Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) 2015-2016 Update*

Ms. Stewart, SEPAC President, gave a presentation updating the School Committee on the work of SEPAC this year, including workshops offered, community outreach, and the STARS to Special Education event that honors faculty and staff members. Ms. Stewart noted that it has been great having Katherine Appy as the School Committee liaison this year and expressed appreciation for all the help she provided and her attendance at so many SEPAC meetings. She encouraged other School Committee members to attend meetings when possible and to consult Dr. Brady or SEPAC when making policy decisions. Ms. Kent noted that she served on the SEPAC Board with Ms. Stewart for three years, and she is the definition of a parent leader. She stated that Ms. Stewart is a pillar of strength. Ms. Appy noted that she has been so impressed by the way in which Ms. Stewart and Ms. Kent have made SEPAC so open and relevant to parents throughout the district. Ms. Stewart stated that she cannot overemphasize the responsiveness of the administrative team and the importance of that responsiveness. Mr. Sullivan suggested that SEPAC have a general, open meeting at the end of the first semester next year so parents can share how the new schedule is working for them. Mr. Sullivan asked, on behalf of his daughter, if SEPAC reviewed IMP Math with a lens toward students on IEPs. Ms. Stewart noted that she and Ms. Kent met with Mr. Jackson and Jane Mudie, Math Department Chair, at least three times about the program just last year. She noted that she will be happy to speak to him in detail off-line. Mr. Baptiste expressed interest in serving as a SEPAC liaison for Pelham, noting that he needs to see more opportunities of working collaboratively with administration such as Ms. Stewart described. Ms. Hazzard thanked Ms. Stewart for explicitly telling the School Committee how they can support SEPAC and thanked her for the incredible presentation. Mr. Morris and Dr. Brady both acknowledged the work of SEPAC, with Dr. Brady noting that she would not be able to do her work without their work.

B. ARMS Presentation

Ms. Mendonsa read a letter updating the School Committee on work that has been done at ARMS during her two years as principal, focusing particularly on data showing progress toward the goals of the current School Improvement Plan. Her letter concluded by asking the School Committee, as elected officials, to seek to take the negative, often anonymous conversations out of the mainstream work being done in the schools. She noted that our students deserve to have adults who model the expectations and communication we ask from them. Mr. Baptiste stated that Ms. Mendonsa's letter was awe-inspiring and thanked her for her service. He invited her to have a conversation with him so he can have a better understanding of what it was like working in the administrative team. Ms. Geryk noted that Ms. Mendonsa is an inspiring leader and will be missed by the Instructional Leadership Team. She stated that the students have been fortunate to have had her for two years. Ms. Hazzard expressed appreciation for the data and for the personal message about shifting the conversations in the community for the best interest of children.

C. OPEB Funding

Mr. Mangano briefly reviewed the request to designate Medicare Part D funds to the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Fund. Ms. Dolven moved to designate the FY16 Medicare Part D reimbursement (\$82,549) for the purpose of financing the District's OPEB obligation. Ms. Ordonez seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

D. Resolution Against Lifting the Cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools

DOCUMENT: *Resolution Against Lifting the Cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools*

Mr. Baptiste moved to adopt the resolution as presented and Ms. Ordonez seconded. Members spoke to the timeliness of the issue, with Ms. Ordonez asking if there are state-wide groups the committee can sign on with regarding the charter school cap. Ms. Dolven noted that she has served as Leverett's representative to The Collaborative, which is doing work on the issue. Ms. Douangmany Cage noted that the Massachusetts Teachers Association is looking at more than 30 School Committees who have signed on to this resolution. Ms. Fay, APEA President, noted that the MTA website has information about how much funding each school district is losing per year to charter school funding. Ms. Kent invited Ms. Fay to collaborate with the School Committee if she hears of other ways to be involved. The motion was then unanimously approved.

E. Reorganizing Subcommittees

DOCUMENT: Subcommittee Assignments 2016-2017

The committee reorganized the subcommittee membership, as attached. Ms. Kent noted that she wants the subcommittees to be transparent, wants to create a calendar of meetings and wants to work on regular communication with the School Committee.

F. Attorney Selection Process

DOCUMENT: Memo to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Maria Geryk, Superintendent, regarding Retaining Attorney(s), dated June 14, 2016

Mr. Mangano spoke about the benefits of using the RFP process and of having a subcommittee to review the proposals. Mr. Baptiste noted that he agrees with using the RFP process, but it is a School Committee discussion about what the committee wants in the proposals. With regard to the last bullet point in the memo, Ms. Douangmany Cage said it would be beneficial to have different attorneys when there are potential conflicts of interest. Ms. Dolven noted that she agrees, but it may be difficult to find a firm that is willing to serve in the limited capacity of just representing the School Committee. Ms. Ordonez said it would be helpful to have a past RFP for the committee to react to and build on in making the decision. Jo Ann Smith, Student Services Administrator, expressed appreciation to the School Committee for seeking input from the Directors who will be using the legal services. Ms. Kent asked Mr. Mangano to provide the committee with some sample RFPs. She said she is happy to sit with Dr. Brady to talk about the Special Education legal needs. Discussion followed regarding the potential benefits and potential difficulties of having a different attorney for the School Committee and the district administration. The issue will be on the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

G. Policies Approval

DOCUMENTS: JKAA: Physical Restraint and Behavior Support; ECAA: Use of Cameras; Facilities and Bus Video Surveillance Guidelines; GC: SEI Endorsement Requirement

Ms. Hazzard noted that this is the second reading of Policy JKAA: Physical Restraint and Behavior Support, which has been updated by Dr. Brady based on School Committee feedback on the first reading. Mr. Baptiste moved to approve policy JKAA as presented. Ms. Hazzard seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Hazzard then noted that this is the second reading of Policy ECAA: Use of Cameras. Ms. Geryk spoke briefly about the guidelines that are used with implementing this policy. Ms. Ordonez said she is having some issues with this policy because it is unclear to her what level of consent, if any at all, is being asked of parents before any video is released to the police. She noted that there are things within the guidelines that concern her as well, particularly having the sound recorded on buses. Ms. Ordonez noted that she would prefer that there be more conversation around the guidelines to apply more parental consent. Ms. Geryk noted that the practice has been that the film can be used as evidence if a crime has been committed and the district itself is involved in legal actions, but a subpoena would be required before film could be used by any outside party moving toward legal action. Discussion followed regarding potential rewording of the last sentence in paragraph four to address Ms. Ordonez's concerns. Ms. Douangmany Cage stated that cameras do not deter crime, and she does not really trust this particular type of technology in our schools. Mr. Baptiste moved that Policy ECAA be returned to the Policy Subcommittee. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Hazzard reviewed the changes that were made to policy GC: SEI Endorsement Requirement based on the School Committee's first reading. Ms. Geryk recognized Ms. Bowen and Ms. Hall for their work in getting DESE approval for our district to provide SEI training free of charge for staff. Boston is the only other district with such approval. Ms. Ordonez moved to approve the policy as presented. Ms. Douangmany Cage seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

H. Accept Gifts

DOCUMENT: Memo to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Mary Wallace, Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Treasurer, dated June 13, 2016

Ms. Hazzard moved to accept \$300 and \$169.53 from Target Take Charge of Education for the High School Principal's discretion; \$500 from Norman and Eva Brown for the Metzger Brown Holocaust Remembrance Scholarship; \$90.92 and \$100 from Target for the Middle School Principal's discretion; \$500 from an anonymous donor for two Community Building Awards; \$1,356.38 from Stop and Shot for the Middle School Principal's discretion; \$16,848.80 from Stop and Shop for the High School Principal's discretion; and \$500 from Jim Pistrang to fund a 2016 ARMS Ultimate scholarship. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. School Committee Planning

(Discussed @ Various Times during the Meeting)

Sample RFPs for Legal Representation; July 18 with Dorothy Presser to do a School Committee retreat

7. Adjournment

8:40 p.m.

Ms. Kent stated that the committee will enter Executive Session according to MGL Chapter 30A; Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the Chair so declares. The Committee will not return to open session. By unanimous roll call vote, the committee entered Executive Session at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland

**Subcommittee Assignments
2016-2017**

Regional School Committee Assignments

Audit Subcommittee (OPEN MEETING LAW): Katherine Appy, Trevor Baptiste, Laura Kent

Budget Subcommittee (Also serve as OPEB Trustees) (OPEN MEETING LAW): Katherine Appy, Trevor Baptiste, Laura Kent

Clerical Merit Award Committee (Spring—one meeting only): Katherine Appy, Sarah Dolven

Contract Negotiating Team for Four Units: Katherine Appy, Vira Douangmany Cage, Trevor Baptiste, Anastasia Ordonez

Contract Negotiating Team for APAA (assistant principals): Katherine Appy, Vira Douangmany Cage, Trevor Baptiste, Anastasia Ordonez

Data Trends Subcommittee: Emily Marriott, Trevor Baptiste, Anastasia Ordonez

Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) Delegate: Laura Kent

Policy Subcommittee (OPEN MEETING LAW): Stephen Sullivan, Phoebe Hazzard, Katherine Appy, Trevor Baptiste

Professional Leave Request Subcommittee (OPEN MEETING LAW): School Committee Chairs (based on which Districts receive requests)

School Equity Task Force: Vira Douangmany Cage, Anastasia Ordonez

The Collaborative Representative: Cara Castenson (Pelham), Vira Douangmany Cage (Amherst), Sarah Dolven (Region)

Recreation Working Group: Stephen Sullivan

SEPAC: Katherine Appy, Trevor Baptiste

Summer Warrant Signing Subcommittee: Vira Douangmany Cage, Katherine Appy, Laura Kent