

MINUTES

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Location: 5 West Street, School Committee Room

March 27, 2024 6:00 p.m.

In Attendance:

Absent

Zoom

Jessie Harrington

Meghan McCrillis

Samantha Raphael

Brooke Wrenn

Stef Parker

Beth Chamberland, Superintendent

Alan Keller, Assistant Superintendent

Cecelia Wirzbicki, Business Manager

Molly Hilditch, Student Representative

Katie Luby, AEA President

Karen Ballway, AEA Vice President

Karen Ferdella, AHS French Teacher

Daniel Creamer, AHS Spanish Teacher

Maria Berrios, AHS Science Teacher and Science Olympiad Advisor

Mary O'Brien, Student Science Olympiad

Jessica St. Jean, Student Science Olympiad

Gabe Sumner, Science Olympiad

Zach Meola, Student Science Olympiad

Julia Ruco, Student Science Olympiad

Karson Racicot, Student Science Olympiad

CALL TO ORDER:

Jessie Harrington called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

Meghan McCrillis read out loud the Auburn Public School Vision & Commitment.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: None

Jessie Harrington asked if we had any citizens here to comment either in the audience or on Zoom. There were no comments.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS:

Dr. Chamberland recognized the Science Olympiad Team and advisor, Maria Berrios.

On Saturday March 2nd, bright and early, the Science Olympiad team competed in the State Tournament at Wentworth University in Boston. Students have been preparing all year, competed in the UMASS meet, and on Saturday, participated in over 20 events with more than 60 high schools. Some of the events this year were Microbe Mission, Forensics, Disease Detectives, Quiz Bowl, Optics, Chemistry Lab, Forestry, Experimental Design, Wind Power, Mystery Architecture, Tower, Fermi Questions, among others. The Science Olympiad Competition Results were announced and out of 64 participating schools, several of our students finished in the top 25 and 4 students placed in the top 10.

Top 25

- Wren Horne and Brayden Borus placed 25 in Fermi questions
- Bryce and Mary O'Brien placed 25 in Write it Do it
- Gabbe Sumner and Nathan Tran placed 24 in Optics
- Thy Vo and Wren Horne placed 24 in Code Busters
- Mary O'Brien and Brayden Borus placed 23 in Microbe Mission
- Mary O'Brien and Bryce Ataquayfio placed 21 in Wind Power
- Nathan Tran placed 20 in Astronomy

Top 10

- Zach Meola and Wren Horne placed 7 in Geologic Mapping
- Mary O'Brien and Bryce Ataquayfio placed 3 in Mystery Architecture

Please join me in congratulating these scholars and the rest of the team for a job well done.

Maria Berrios, Mary O'Brien, Jessica St. Jean, Zach Meola & Gabe Sumner spoke of their experience in the club and answered questions regarding the competition.

Minutes: 3/13/24

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to accept the minutes from 3/13/24.

Samantha Raphael made a motion to accept the minutes from 3/13/24. Brook Wrenn seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:

Molly Hilditch:

- The Polar Plunge went amazing on Thursday! Pictures posted online at the special Olympics Ma website as well as we were featured on Spectrum News! I participated in the plunge. It was extremely cold but very worth it because the Massachusetts Special Olympics has raised over \$17,000 and counting!
- Disney Junior Breakfast went amazing having 250 people at each session with 500 people showing up! Super fun dancing and face painting + yummy breakfast kids loved it went great
- Sophomores participated in ELA MCAS earlier this week
- Community March Madness Brackets started, so each homeroom participates and so far Mrs. Burokas's homeroom is in first place! With Mr. Young's homeroom at a close second and this event goes on for multiple weeks
- National Honor Society had their March 14 induction for new members it went amazing congratulations to all the inductees we also have a Field Trip coming up April 12th to Kimball Farm with the group
- Spring sports started up and are going well so far, next week many sports like track and tennis will have their very first meets and matches as well as lacrosse and baseball already having some scrimmages played
- The Boys Hockey team was nominated for the Ice Runs Deep Hockey Team of the year!
- Freshman math team had a great ending to their season today ending their season this afternoon after a great year
- Lastly, Junior seminar has started at the school and juniors are meeting with their counselors about the application process

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Student Spotlight: None

Unfinished Business:

Superintendent's Goal/Summative Evaluation Update

Dr. Chamberland: Two weeks ago we had started my evaluation process for the committee. At the last meeting I offered to answer any questions that you may have had. I defer to Chairperson Jessie Harrington for an update as to where that stands.

Jessie Harrington: I just received the last few evaluations this evening. I will look them over, tally the scores and have them ready to present at the next meeting.

New Business:

School Choice Enrollment for 2024-2025

Dr. Chamberland: As you know, the School Committee has supported the continuation of School Choice at Auburn Middle School and Auburn High School. In your packet, you will find enrollment information to be used in determining the number of students we will accept at each grade level based on current and anticipated enrollment. This will give us a total of 85 school choice students next year.

Dr. Chamberland then went over the chart she prepared that is in the packet. She stated that the numbers were determined in collaboration with Mr. Desto and Mr. Delongchamp. These are numbers that are manageable for the buildings considering the potential for registrations throughout the summer, it gives us some flexibility.

Jessie Harrington : I think it is smart keeping the Freshman numbers on the lower side because we do get students back from Baypath.

Cecilia Wirzbicki asked if the acceptance letters from Bay Path had already gone out?

Dr. Chamberland answered yes.

Jessie Harrington: School Choice students have always been a great addition to our school district.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to approve the Superintendent's proposal of accepting 13 school choice students at Auburn Middle School (4-grade 6, 9-grade 7) and 15 school choice students at grade 9.

Meghan McCrillis made a motion to approve the Superintendent's proposal of accepting 13 school choice students at Auburn Middle School (4-grade 6, 9-grade 7) and 15 school choice students at grade 9. Brooke Wrenn seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

Overseas Field Trip Approval

Karyn Ferdella and Dan Creamer from the foreign language department will present information regarding a potential plan for travel to Paris & Madrid April 18-26, 2025 with approximately 20-25 students.

Karen Ferdella & Dan Creamer addressed the committee:

- Ms. Ferdella is in her 23rd year here in the Auburn Public Schools
- Mr. Creamer is in his 25th year here in the Auburn Public Schools
- We have been approved by the committee several times over the years to take students abroad
- Ms. Ferdella has taken 7 groups to France from 2005 -2019 as well as 20 Quebec City Trips
- Mr. Creamer has taken several groups to Spain & Costa Rica
- Combined the trip to France and Spain to give students a diverse experience and to bolster the participation numbers
- The trip cost is higher than it has been in previous years, but the company used, ACIS, has several opportunities for students to obtain scholarships and discounts
- The frameworks for World Language were updated in 2021, part of exploring the language is exploring the culture.

Brooke Wrenn asked if it was open to all who take a language o a certain number of years taking a language?

Karyn Ferella: It is open to all.

Dan Creamer: Usually sophomores and up attend.

Jessie Harrington: I have a question and a concern. Right now France is on a heightened alert due to the terror attack in Russia. What happens a year from now if we are in the same situation, what is the game plan?

Karyn Ferdella: Safety and security of our students is number one priority. We have been overseas several times and we know the company that we work with is very much safety and security driven and have several different checks and plans in place in the event anything should happen if we were in the other country. And if it happens before, our students and families can sign up for several different insurance and protection plans. This could essentially protect their entire cost of their trip. There is also a 24hr emergency hotline as well as security guards walking in the hotel.

Jessie Harrington: The trip is very expensive, do you plan on fundraising?

Karyn Ferdella: Fundraising is tough for a trip like ours only because we are not performative like a music or a band trip, so it feels like we would be crowdfunding for a vacation, it feels a little off. There are opportunities through the company for scholarships. Also, the students are welcome to do their own personal fundraising.

Brook Wrenn: Do you need a certain amount of students to be able to run the trip?

Karyn Ferdella: Yes, typically it is 6 students to 1 chaperone. I have gone with as few as 7 and as many as 25 on my own. Dan Creamer has done the same.

Jessie Harrington: I see the deadline is December 1st of this year, by then would you know if you have enough students?

Karyn Ferdella: Yes, if this trip is approved, we would hold a student meeting followed by a parent meeting to give all the information. The deadlines we were given are mostly for insurance purposes through the company.

Steph Parker: The \$5,204 is the trip and the protection plan is an additional \$300-\$400 .

Karyn Ferdella: Yes.

Brooke Wrenn: I know it is expensive, but it is a 9 day trip, round trip flights and breakfast & dinner.

Cecelia Wirzbicki: All the money is funneled through the company, not the school district, correct?

Karyn Ferella: Correct. The only money we might deal with is securing a bus to transport us to and from the airport.

Megan McCrillis: Any medical needs, what do you usually do for that?

Karyn Ferdella: I've gone through several training sessions with our nurses and I follow the nurse and parents guidelines.

Jessie Harrington: We don't have it on the agenda to vote tonight, but if the committee feels ready, we can vote. My only hang up is it is not an equal opportunity trip. If there is something we can do to help, please let us know.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to approve the Paris & Madrid Trip April 18-26, 2025 .

Brooke Wrenn made a motion to approve the Paris & Madrid Trip April 18-26, 2025. Meghan McCrillis seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

Auburn Booster Club Donation

The Booster Club graciously donated a total of \$5,520.00 to the Varsity Boys & Girls Track & Field teams. This money will be used to purchase gear for the athletes, with any remaining money put towards an award banquet.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to accept with gratitude the donation of \$5,520.00 from the Auburn Booster Club to support new gear for the Varsity Boys & Girls Track & Field teams.

Samantha Rapahel made a motion to accept with gratitude the donation of \$5,520.00 from the Auburn Booster Club to support new gear for the Varsity Boys & Girls Track & Field teams. Brooke Wrenn seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

Food Services Department Update

On March 5th, Mrs. Pulver, our Director of Food Services, organized a food show at Auburn High that included 4 School Food Vendors highlighting 12 food options for students. Based on the surveys from the 72 students and 10 staff AHS will be adding the following to the menu K-12:

- Yaki Soba Noodles in a Chicken/Vegetable lo mein w/ Chicken Egg Roll
- Rippinz Breadsticks with garlic butter
- Breaded Dill Brined Turkey Patty Sandwich
- BBQ Chicken Pizza
- Deeply Rooted Vegetable Crumbles for Tacos and Red Meatless Sauce
- Waffle Flatbreads

The Food Services Department has also started the tower garden seeds for the Middle School and will be purchasing seedlings from local farmers. We are planning to start one at Swanson in April. Over the past few months we have highlighted foods from Pure BS Maple Shack (Auburn, MA), Little Leaf Farms (Devens, MA), Wellspring Harvest (Springfield, MA- Lettuce), Joe Czajkowski Farm (Hadley, MA- carrots, potatoes, butternut squash), Carlson Orchards (Harvard, MA), Smith's Country Cheese (Winchendon, MA) and in May we will be serving beef patties from Whittier Farm (Sutton MA).

In May, students will enjoy an ALL local meal to kick off the summer vibes and have beef patties, cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, onions, french fries and assorted fruits and veggies all from MA.

In the month of February APS Food Services served our highest participation based on average daily attendance 71% lunches and 39.2% breakfast

Lastly, Congressman McGovern's office would like to come and highlight Auburn's School meals program at Auburn Middle School in either April or May. Mrs. Pulver will share more information when she receives a firm date for that event.

Mrs. Pulver has been a great leader and has brought great stability to the department. She is very enthusiastic about her work.

Alan Keller: During our most recent Staff Development Day, Mrs Pulver and Ms. Quirion brought a speaker in for the staff to talk about students with varying needs and communication and the best way to approach them.

TEACHING AND LEARNING REPORT:

Alan Keller: Included in your packet is the proposed Auburn Public School's Student Opportunity Act Plan. A draft of this plan, presented to you in draft form at the March 13, 2024 School Committee meeting, was shared with School Councils as well as in Dr. Chamberland's *Superintendent Update*. The feedback we received was beneficial and, where appropriate, incorporated into the plan.

Each district in the Commonwealth is required to submit their Student Opportunity Act Plan on or before April 1, 2024. Tonight, I seek your approval of the 2024 Auburn Public School's Student Opportunity Act Plan.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to approve the 2024 Auburn Public Schools Student Opportunity Act Plan

Meghan McCrillis made a motion to approve the 2024 Auburn Public Schools Student Opportunity Act Plan. Samantha Raphael seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

BUSINESS/FINANCIAL REPORT:

Year to Date Budget Report

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a year to date budget report dated March 21, 2024 for review.

Budget Transfers

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a listing of Budget Transfers dated March 21, 2024 between the same series and between different series for which she is sought approval.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to approve the *list of Transfers dated March 21, 2024, as presented by the Business Manager*.

Brooke Wrenn made a motion to approve the *list of Transfers dated March 21, 2024, as presented by the Business Manager*, Samantha Raphael seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

Executive Session - No

At 6:52p.m. Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to adjourn for the evening.

Samantha Raphael made a motion to adjourn for the evening. Brooke Wrenn seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

Adjourned at 6:52pm

Roll Call Vote
Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Mandy Williams

Recording Secretary

Referenced Documents:

Meeting Minutes: 3/13/24

Enrollment/24-25 School Choice recommendation

Paris and Madrid Field Trip Request

Booster Club Donation

APS Student Opportunity Act Plan

Year to date budget report dated 3-21-24

Transfers date 3-21-24

APPROVED 4-10-24