



Acton-Boxborough Regional  
School Committee Meeting

February 7, 2019

7:00 p.m. Open Business Meeting  
7:05 p.m. Annual Budget Hearing  
7:20 p.m. (approx.) Return to Open Meeting

at the R.J. Grey Junior High Library  
15 Charter Road, Acton, MA

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING

Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High School

February 7, 2019  
7:00 p.m. Open Meeting  
7:05 p.m. Annual Budget Hearing  
7:20 p.m. (approx.) Open Business Meeting

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**AGENDA**

1. **ABRSC Call to Order – Diane Baum (7:00)**
2. **Chairman’s Introduction**
  - 2.1. Annual Spring Town Elections
    - Acton Election is March 26
    - Boxborough deadline to submit papers is April 2 for Election on May 21
3. **Statement of Warrant & Approval of Minutes**
  - 3.1. Meeting Minutes of 1/10/19 and 1/26/19 (*addendum*)
4. **FY20 BUDGET HEARING Call to Order – (7:05) (see separate agenda)**
5. **Adjourn BUDGET HEARING & Return to ABRSC OPEN BUSINESS MEETING (approx.. 7:20)**
6. **Public Participation (7:20)**
7. **ABRSD FY20 Budget (7:25)**
  - 7.1. Recommendation to Approve the FY20 Final ABRSD Budget and Assessments – **VOTE**
  - 7.2. Recommendation for Appropriation of the ABRSD Capital Improvement Plan and Related Debt - **VOTE**
    - 7.2.1. Recommendation to Bond \$7.5M Debt for the Purpose of Capital Improvements – **VOTE**
  - 7.3. Recommendation to Establish Regional Stabilization Fund – **VOTE**
8. **Presentations: School Improvement Plan Updates (7:30)**
  - 8.1. McCarthy-Towne School – *Principal David Krane*  
[https://mct.abschools.org/the\\_mct\\_school/school\\_improvement\\_plan](https://mct.abschools.org/the_mct_school/school_improvement_plan)
  - 8.2. Blanchard Memorial School – *Principal Dana Labb (addendum)*  
<https://blanchard.abschools.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=229316&pageId=498565>
9. **Superintendent’s Update – Peter Light (8:20)**
  - 9.1. Superintendent’s Report of Entry Findings
10. **School Building Project Update – Mary Brolin (9:00)**
  - 10.1. Recommendation to consolidate the future C.T. Douglas and Paul P. Gates Schools into one school building while maintaining separate educational programs – **VOTE**
  - 10.2. Recommendation to Authorize the Superintendent to Submit to the MSBA the Statement of Interest for the Blanchard Memorial School – **VOTE** (see specific language)
  - 10.3. Minutes of the Building Committee meeting on January 9, 2019

11. **Recommendation to Approve \$2,490 Grant Gift from the Blanchard PTF Organization to the Blanchard School – VOTE – Peter Light (9:10)**

12. **Subcommittee and Member Reports (9:15)**

- 12.1. Policy — *Amy Krishnamurthy*
  - 12.1.1. Staff Recruitment, Selection and Appointment, File: GCE – Second Read - **VOTE**
- 12.2. Capital Improvement - *Adam Klein*
- 12.3. Budget –meeting on Jan 15 and Jan 29 - *Amy Krishnamurthy*
- 12.4. Acton Leadership Group Update (ALG)
  - 12.4.1. Meeting minutes of Jan 17, 2019
- 12.5. Boxborough Leadership Forum Update (BLF)
- 12.6. Others

13. **FYI**

- 13.1. Thank you for gifts to R.J. Grey Junior High School from
  - 13.1.1. Alliance Energy/Exxon Mobil Gas Station for \$500
  - 13.1.2. Applied Materials and a parent for \$300
- 13.2. Acton and Boxborough 2019 Election Calendars
- 13.3. Revised ABRSC FY19 Meeting Schedule
- 13.4. CASE Collaborative Family Community News & Resources Pages, Jan 2019
- 13.5. EDCO Collaborative FY18 Annual Report
- 13.6. This Month in the Division of Open Government, January 2019

14. **Adjourn (9:25)**

**NEXT MEETINGS:**

- Wednesday, Feb 13 – ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library
- March 7 – ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library
- Acton Town Meeting begins on Monday, April 1
- Boxborough Town Meeting begins on Monday, May 13

Posted 2/1/19 at 4:30 p.m.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)  
Draft Minutes

Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High School  
16 Charter Road, Acton, MA

January 10, 2019  
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Baum, Michael Bo, Mary Brolin, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin (7:06 p.m.), Paul Murphy, Angie Tso, Eileen Zhang  
Members Absent: Adam Klein  
Others: Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson Diane Baum.
2. **Chairman's Introduction – Diane Baum**  
The Chairperson asked members whose terms are expiring if they knew their plans for the future. Mary Brolin announced that she will not be running again. Ginny Kremer intends to run again. Eileen Zhang has not decided yet. Diane encouraged new members to consider running. The March 21<sup>st</sup> School Committee meeting will be held in the Administration Building Auditorium. The Committee will decide whether to hold future meetings there.
3. **Public Participation - none**  
*Per policy BEDH, members of the public may speak for up to 2 minutes on items not included on this agenda. Comments regarding items on the agenda should be made during that part of the meeting. Typically, the Committee/Administration will not respond to comments during public participation.*
4. **Student Representatives' Update – Michael Cheng**  
Term 2 ended yesterday. It is a stressful time studying for midyears. Many students are thinking about the schedule changes that the Committee heard about in November. The day will go from 8 periods to 6 with a shortened lunch. An online petition has collected 1000 signatures although there was a lot of confusion. A main area of concern was the shortened lunch period of 44 minutes.
5. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes– Diane Baum**
  - 5.1. Meeting Minutes of Dec 13, 2018  
Diane Baum read the warrants and the Committee signed the documents.  
Paul Murphy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and the minutes of December 13, 2018 were unanimously approved as written.
6. **Superintendent's Update – Peter Light**
  - 6.1. Appointment of Mr. Larry Dorey as ABRHS Principal  
Superintendent Light reviewed the update that he brought to the meeting. Larry Dorey was appointed permanent Principal of ABRHS. At the next meeting, the School Committee will be asked to vote to consolidate the Douglas and Gates buildings, keeping their programs separate. The Superintendent has completed the first phase of his entry process.

7. **FY20 Superintendent's Preliminary Budget – Peter Light**

7.1. Budget Overview including Line Item Detail – *Dave Verdolino*

Superintendent Light introduced the budget and said that the most important part of this presentation will be the input and questions from the Committee. The School Committee priorities need to be reflected in the budget and questions need to be captured so they can be answered at Budget Saturday (1/26/19). Dave Verdolino presented the changes since the Dec 10<sup>th</sup> meeting from the Preliminary Budget to the Recommended Budget.

The Recommended Gross Operating Budget is proposed at \$90,982,111 for a 2.55% increase. Three categories of changes have been made (see slide 3).

Dave discussed what happens to the assessments. These numbers have been shared with both towns and have been well received. This is the last significant year for the cost shift to Boxborough paying more than based on enrollment, as outlined in the Regional Agreement. Slide 6 is the plan for Budget Saturday, although some numbers could change. It was clarified that two additional school buses were being requested. The process of adding a line item to the budget was discussed briefly.

7.2. Transportation Update and Budget – *JD Head, Nicole Rogers - GPI (Greenman-Pedersen Inc)*

Ms. Rogers reviewed the GPI report findings and highlighted the efficiencies we have achieved since changing to our new start times as well as targeted areas where we can make additional improvements. The Committee discussed the bus ridership and ride-time targets and how they relate to costs. Ten additional buses would be needed to get to a 35 minute target time. Currently, most of our routes are getting students to school within 45 minutes. An exception is the Conant-McT-Merriam buses which are often arriving either just as the school day is starting or late. The addition of 2 buses is expected to address this.

Mr. Light reviewed the community concerns around busing from the fall and the various approaches that were taken to address them. Getting students safely to school on time is the priority.

Paul Murphy thanked Nicole Rogers for presenting data, not just anecdotes, emphasizing that it gives an important perspective. The targets of 66% and 88% were decided based on the industry standard capacity utilization of 55 high school students and 65 elementary students per bus. Mary Brolin stated that if the Committee wants to reduce drive time beyond a 45 minute ride, they need to have a serious discussion about School Choice because that is creating some of the long bus rides. Adding two buses is fine for next year, but more discussion is needed after that, in her opinion. Angie Tso asked about how traffic impacts the numbers. Nicole explained that the plans incorporate traffic issues.

The longest ride time is 47 minutes and there are only 2 beyond the 45 by adding two buses. Peter thanked JD and Nicole for their hard work, especially in the beginning of the year because this data shows how efficient our system is.

7.3. Revolving Accounts Updates:

7.3.1. Athletics - *Steve Martin*

Participation numbers are up for the first time since Steve has been here. Automatic waivers are now given to students receiving Free/Reduced Lunch. Steve explained how fees have changed given donated gym space and no set up for girls' gymnastics. He thanked the Committee for providing assistant coaches and is

requesting that they fulfill the last part of that agreement in the FY20 budget. The Committee enjoyed hearing Steve's proposal to add Esports and Fencing as two new High School teams. He noted that Esports is a great way to socialize for some of our kids. Peter thanked Steve for being such a wonderfully creative Athletic Director. No fee increase is being proposed.

#### 7.3.2. Food Services - *Kirsten Nelson*

Kirsten explained the difference between Free and Reduced Lunch and Economically Disadvantaged and how using both has made it easier to identify and provide assistance to children who need it for meals. Her new initiatives include recycling and composting currently at 7 of the 8 schools. Her new Local Sustainable Fish lunch program has been a huge success.

Members expressed appreciation for the vegetarian options in the cafeteria as well as having access to ingredient and nutritional information for students with special dietary needs. A member asked if menu items might be added at Blanchard to include food from a wider variety of cultures. Kirsten is working on adding new items but has several new cafeteria managers this year and is careful about introducing too many changes. Kirsten is working to introduce interactive menus, including ingredient lists.

#### 7.3.3. All Day Kindergarten (ADK) - *Marie Altieri*

Marie reported that the Administration plans to keep the \$4500 fee unchanged for next year and they expect same number of students and sections, although one section will move from Blanchard to Douglas. Over the next 6-9 months, the Administration will study and consider whether to make a recommendation about universal Kindergarten or not. It would be an expensive undertaking to go to full universal Kindergarten with no fee, costing an estimated \$1.2 million. Diane Baum noted that if we had universal ADK, the reimbursement is only \$30/student. Paul Murphy does not want to lose the option of ½ day for those families that want it.

#### 7.4. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) Update – *Paul Murphy*

7.4.1. Materials from meeting on Jan 3, 2019 (next meeting is Jan 17)

7.4.2. Approved minutes of meeting on Dec 13, 2018

7.4.3. BOS/FinCom Budget Saturday Meeting Agenda - Jan 5, 2019

Paul Murphy reported that the \$750,000 deficit on the Acton side has been reduced and the Selectmen are looking for what they can do to close the gap.

#### 7.5. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) Update – *Tessa McKinley, Mary Brolin*

7.5.1. FY20 Operating Budget Review Meeting Agenda - Jan 5, 2019

Peter Light presented the region's budget and it was very well received. Boxborough has two big zoning questions for their upcoming Annual Town Meeting. The Meeting could be 3 or more nights this spring.

#### 7.6. ABRSC FY20 Budget Saturday Meeting Agenda - Jan 26, 2019

The Superintendent hopes to tell a story by using panels arranged by the district goals, hence the agenda's structure. This will make it obvious why requests are important and what they relate to. It was noted that rich discussions happened right after each panel last year, and not so much at the end of the day.

### 7.7. School Committee Budget Feedback and Questions

The language in the Regional Agreement says the budget vote must be taken twice - a preliminary vote and a final vote with deadlines. That is why a preliminary budget vote is done on Budget Saturday and a final vote at, or just after, the Budget Hearing in February.

Michael Bo questioned if 2 or 3 additional buses would achieve improvement of the transportation situation. He suggested more time should be spent analyzing the data to see what is really needed to meet the families' needs. This might end up being a 3 or 5 year plan. The Superintendent explained that the Administration's goal was to implement the School Committee's guidelines of a 45 minute ride time. If the School Committee wants to change those guidelines, he would respond, but Mr. Light would want to know it was the will of the School Committee to do that. Michael stated that without a plan to address the issues, he cannot support the request as proposed.

The Committee discussed the goal of 45 minutes and acceptable error around it, as well as the first steps that could be taken to improve the situation, as proposed. It is currently an efficiently run system. The Superintendent reiterated that the goal is to add 2 buses to have the kids arrive at Conant, McT and Merriam on time for school. A small change to start time might also be warranted.

Diane Baum asked the Committee if they were ok with the current policy of 45 minutes, or if they wanted to discuss it. There was agreement not to change the 45 minutes. A member added that parents should take the bus ride length into consideration when choosing a school if it matters to their family. Michael Bo concluded that if the families who had major concerns and issues this year have had them appropriately addressed, and adding the two buses will help, then he is fine with that decision.

Diane stated that the School Committee's purview is to set priorities and targets and acknowledged the consensus of the committee to keep the 45 minute target and ridership numbers as is, based on the GPI report. Any concerns or questions from individual families in the community regarding busing should be addressed via the Parent Communication Map. Peter summarized that there were 3 issues that had come up in the fall: the duration of the bus rides, the number of students on buses, and safety of some bus stops. The Administration is working with those families whose concerns were brought up more recently this winter.

Angie Tso asked for more information about the technology upgrade at the High School on Budget Saturday as well as about building security. She was also interested in clean water and recycling in our schools.

Mary Brolin concluded that "this is a great budget". Much is being achieved<sup>ed</sup> with an increase of less than 2 1/2 % and it has been well received in both towns.

John Petersen spoke from the audience referring to the Superintendent's comment about the balance point between cost and benefit. In the case of buses, you can predict how/when students will ride the bus. You can either pay for that or not but should base the decision on the data. He encouraged people to ask the hard questions about what is the right value.

8. **ClearGov Data Benchmarking Comparisons Demo – Dave Verdolino**  
[https://www.abschools.org/news/what\\_s\\_new/compare\\_a\\_b\\_r\\_s\\_d\\_to\\_other\\_school\\_districts](https://www.abschools.org/news/what_s_new/compare_a_b_r_s_d_to_other_school_districts)
  
9. **School Building Project Update – Mary Brolin**
  - 9.1. Building Committee meeting on Jan 9 - Site Selection Decision  
*(extensive materials are posted on the Building Committee website at [https://www.abschools.org/district/superintendent\\_s\\_office/school\\_capital\\_space\\_planning](https://www.abschools.org/district/superintendent_s_office/school_capital_space_planning) )*
  - 9.2 Draft Minutes of the Building Committee meeting on Dec 12, 2018
  
10. **FY19 School Committee Meeting Calendar – Diane Baum**
  - 10.1. FY20 Budget Hearing move from Feb 13<sup>th</sup> to Feb 7<sup>th</sup> meeting?  
Diane explained that moving the Budget Hearing to 2/7 would give the School Committee a week to make adjustments if needed after Budget Saturday. There were no objections to this change.
  
  - 10.2. Combine June 6<sup>th</sup> and June 20<sup>th</sup> meetings into one meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>?  
Diane explained that this would avoid meeting close to the last day of school. There were no objections.
  
  - 10.3. FY20 School Committee Workshop Options - Possibly June 26/27, 2019?  
Diane proposed a March workshop to discuss the Superintendent's entry plan findings more in depth. This would be a public meeting. There were no objections.
  

Diane also proposed the idea of having an overnight workshop in June on the SEED program. This is one of our district goals and is a unique opportunity for School Committee members to participate in a District initiative. It is a 15 hour program and would be held at the Wylie Center in Beverly. This would be a commitment to team development to inform future decision making. Members responded that they have heard great things about the training, although it would be hard to commit to a 2-day overnight. A member said that for her, the hardest thing on School Committee is that members feel you have to know everything. She felt that professional development like this adds a lot to the experience of being a Committee member. Diane will move forward with pursuing this and confirming members' availability.

  
  - 10.4. FY20 Summer ABRSC Business Meeting – Thurs, August 22, 2019 at 7 p.m.  
Three Committee members cannot attend on this date so a new one will be found.
  
11. **Recommendation to Approve Donations from the Friends of the Acton Libraries to the ABRSD Libraries – VOTE – Peter Light**  
It was noted that this is a very significant annual donation from the Friends organization. The Committee expressed appreciation for the work done by the volunteers to bring these resources to the students.  
Amy Krishnamurthy moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,  
**VOTED:** to approve the donations from the Friends of the Acton Libraries.
  
12. **Subcommittee and Member Reports**
  - 12.1. Policy -- Amy Krishnamurthy
    - 12.1.1. **Student School Bus Behavior Expectations, File: JICC/EEAEC – Second Read – VOTE**  
Diane Baum sent some comments that were included in the draft.  
Paul Murphy moved, Ginny Kremer seconded and it was unanimously,



**VOTED:** to approve the revised policy as proposed.

- 12.1.2. **Staff Recruitment, Selection and Appointment**, File: GCE – First Read  
Marie explained that the goal was to be clearer, including the title, updated language on qualifications and positions that it applied to. Family members were also defined per the Ethics laws. Feedback may be sent to Amy and Beth prior to the second reading.
- 12.2. Capital Improvement – meeting on Dec 12  
The subcommittee met last night. Peter Light reported that a draft of the Capital Plan was received from SKANSKA and they are reviewing it. JD Head, Dave Verdolino, Marie Altieri and Peter Light will bring the material to Budget Saturday. \$23 million is the total of the work. An SOI could be submitted to the MSBA re the Accelerated Repair Program. This is a strategy to explore. It is anticipated that a Blanchard SOI will come to School Committee at the Feb 7 meeting so they could then go to MSBA. There will be some big decisions about Conant in the future. We will submit an SOI annually for Conant.
- 12.3. Budget –meeting on Jan 3 - *Amy Krishnamurthy (see discussion above)*
- 12.4. SEPAC -*Paul Murphy* reported there has been communication between the SEPAC and the District about hiring.
- 12.5. PTSO Chairs Roundtable - *Tessa McKinley* reported that they had met, but there was no new information.
- 12.6. Acton Board of Selectmen – *Paul Murphy* reported a discussion about how the tax basis is allocated – residential vs commercial and members agreed to stay based on residential. Katie Green and Janet Adachi are not running again.

13. **FYI**

- 13.1. Acton and Boxborough 2019 Election Calendars
- 13.2. 2019-2020 ABRSD School Calendar, voted 12/13/18
- 13.3. Thank you to Lueders Environmental, Inc. for their donation to the ABRSD
- 13.4. This Month in the Division of Open Government

Paul Murphy moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and the ABRSC unanimously adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

**Next Meetings:**

- ABRSC Budget Saturday, January 26, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library (materials posted on Jan 18)
- ABRSC Meeting, February 7, 7:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library (materials posted on Feb 1)

**Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee (ABRSC)  
FY20 Budget Saturday Meeting  
DRAFT MINUTES**

**Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High School  
16 Charter Road, Acton, MA**

**Saturday, January 26, 2019**

**8:30 a.m.**

*Members Present:* Diane Baum, Michael Bo, Mary Brolin, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer (8:35 a.m.), Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Angie Tso (8:35 a.m.), Eileen Zhang

*Members Absent:* none

*Others:* Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino and approximately 30 members of the public including Selectmen and Finance Committee members from both towns

The ABRSC was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by Chairperson Diane Baum.

**1. Welcome and Introductions –**

*Diane Baum, ABRSC Chair; Peter Light, Superintendent*

The Superintendent thanked the School Committee members for volunteering to serve their communities in this important role. Everyone in attendance - Committee members, staff and the public, was invited to introduce themselves.

**2. Budget Overview (Panel 1)**

*Peter Light, Superintendent; Dave Verdolino, Finance Director; Marie Altieri, Deputy Superintendent*

- a. Budgetary Vision and Alignment with District Goals - *Superintendent Peter Light*
- b. Budget Overview and Assessments
- c. Staffing Update

***Discussion Recap:***

Re: revenues, a member conveyed a request from the teacher's union to speak to the School Committee at a future date on the MTA's response to proposed changes in the Foundation Budget.

Marie explained the thinking behind building the budget for salaries and the rationale behind recent adjustments to salary line items such as the vacancy factor and assumptions around use of subs. She noted that \$80,000 for the new capital manager position is included. A member requested that 5-year data be presented in pie-chart form (slides 26-27). A member asked how recent is the information on slide 60 re: SAT data for AB. The data is from 2017, which is the most recent year the DESE has posted.

The Committee discussed implications of continuing to level-fund OPEB vs. doing more. Dave explained that non-certified staff are covered by Middlesex Retirement, as mandated by law. The District pays 50%

of retirement benefits. Those future costs can be determined now so the district is prepared for the future, and if fiscal conditions are favorable we may be able to reduce our OPEB liability more aggressively in the distant future. Few districts have supplementally funded OPEB like we have, so we are in a good position. More analysis is needed to respond appropriately.

A member asked how the changes in our planned use of E&D will affect our assessment in the future (slide 38). Dave responded that future years' assessments have not been examined in regard to possible E&D use. The Committee was reminded that it is always a balance. A Boxborough member expressed support for the proposed amount of E&D use (slide 43) because it helps the Town of Acton get to where they need to be in Fy20 and she appreciates that. Her concern is that significant future increases are being projected in each town and with the Regionalization cost-shift ending, citizens need to be aware of what is coming.

Re: Slide 28, a member noted how the addition of the Health Savings Account (HSA) has provided significant cost savings for the District.

A member noted our high student-teacher ratio as compared to our comparable communities (slide 60) and asked how the district achieves such strong performance results with this ratio. Marie noted how the key to lowering this ratio is to lower class size and how reductions in class size significantly impacts the District's budget. That discussion is the purview of the School Committee. The District has done some of this over time. The coaching model positively impacts student performance. The District's lower certified staffing number is paired with our high number of assistants, and there is discussion around the role of assistants and moving to more certified teachers over time.

### **3. The Students We Serve**

*Marie Altieri, Deputy Superintendent; Dawn Bentley, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services*

- a. Enrollment
- b. Class Size
- c. Demographic Data

#### ***Discussion Recap:***

The Committee discussed the changing demographics of the District and the subsequent increased need for services that this requires. Several members noted the reduction in the number of IEPs and CASE students and concomitant rise in the number of 504s and the number of students needing support at R.J. Grey and want to be sure the district is keeping up with the services that these children need. Dawn explained the difference between the need for specially designed instruction for students with an IEP compared to students who only need accommodations through a 504 plan. Peter noted that with the wider range of learners, the focus is on the special educators working in the general education classrooms and not pulling students out. A member asked to what we attribute the reduction in IEPs and if we are perhaps seeing the positive results of increased supports as a result of the phase-in of three learning centers at each elementary school. She said there is greater awareness about 504 plans now. The Pathways and STEP program additions are an example of how we are moving to keep students in the district. Peter Light noted that Massachusetts is known for being #1 in nation for test results and those types of performance measures, but we are also leading in the equity gap between the highest performing students and the

lowest ones. We have some very wide gaps in equity for our students, and a lot of what is included in the FY20 budget tries to address these issues.

The issue of class size was revisited. A Boxborough member asked if the district was looking at balancing the needs of students vs class size. She believes smaller class sizes can make a difference in meeting students' needs. Marie Altieri explained that there is a lot of research on this and it is not very conclusive until you get to very low class sizes. We are still in the process of merging our two school districts and the current average of 21.9 students/class is a significant improvement. With more classrooms the average class size should continue to improve. The Administration will be talking to the School Committee about class sizes in the future.

Re: enrollment, a member expressed concern regarding the demand for Blanchard kindergarten, particularly given the declining projected enrollment of children living in Boxborough. Care is being taken not to overenroll there given the available space in the building.

Acton Finance Committee member Jason Cole asked about the unpredictability of the Middlesex Retirement numbers for the Town and the schools. Dave Verdolino agreed that this was complicated. OPEB - when it might be fully funded and how much it will take, will be addressed at a future meeting.

A member asked about the high percentage of English Learners (ELs) entering the District (slide 83). Dawn Bentley explained that there is no way to predict what school ELs will attend when they enroll, particularly if they register in the middle of the school year. When additional sections are opened and families register late, there's often not a lot of choice of which school has availability. Slide 73 about elementary class sections will be corrected.

A member asked why CASE transportation is going up 11% while enrollment is dropping. Dawn explained that a district is leaving the CASE collaborative for transportation so that will increase the cost for the remaining districts. Dawn reminded members that the District uses CASE for students who are in specialized programs housed in district as well. Amanda Bailey from the Special Education Parents Advisory Council noted that CASE also covers the Early Childhood Program. Looking at ELs and the Early Childhood Program, it was confirmed that there is a plan to shift some staffing there.

#### **4. Goal 1 - Student Social-Emotional Needs (*Panel 2*)**

*Dawn Bentley, Assistant Superintendent; Keith Campbell, School Resource Officer; Andrew Shen, JH Principal; Lynne Newman, Elementary Principal; Larry Dorey, ABRHS Principal*

- a. Setting the Stage: The Larger Community Context
- b. Staffing Requests
  - c. ABRHS Counseling Support
  - d. Family Support (Wraparound) Services
  - e. School Psychologist\*
  - f. RJGJHS Special Educator- CLASS Program\*
  - g. Board Certified Behavior Specialist (BCBA)\*

h. Elementary Special Education Team Chairperson

*\*Staffing necessary to meet IEP requirements*

***Discussion Recap:***

The Superintendent thanked the panel and everyone in the district who works with our students on these important issues. Although the total needs of our students are not met with this budget, we are trying to address the most pressing needs of this group. The district intends to do more study on our social – emotional work and then develop a comprehensive plan.

School Resource Officer Campbell agreed that more resources and coverage could always be used. Andrew Shen added that this critical work is taking up more and more staff time. The Committee agreed with its importance. A member stated that prevention is key and, “It is the morally and fiscally prudent thing to do.” Increasing awareness of mental health and decreasing the stigma is important. It was asked if the decreasing number of students on IEPs might translate into increased anxiety. Dawn responded that looking at the whole child is essential. Hospitalization of students was discussed. Officer Campbell said that there has been a sharp increase in voluntary hospitalizations and shared that five out of seven days, local police are doing well-being checks at homes. Students in one of our special programs like CLASS must be looked at individually as far as programming due to their broad set of needs. The high school offers a variety of options. Larry Dorey relies heavily on the Jr High staff to help with freshmen placements.

Peter Light emphasized that no student should feel they need an IEP or 504 plan to get help with anxiety. Resources are there in both general education and special education. Superintendent Light recommended “The Myth of Average: Todd Rose at TEDxSonoma County”, a YouTube talk about what it means to be average. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eBmyttcfU4>) He urged everyone to stop thinking about average and how to teach to it, and instead focus on each student and how to reach them.

***LUNCH BREAK***

**5. Goal 2 - Equitable Opportunities to Learn (Panel 3)**

*Dawn Bentley, Assistant Superintendent; Deborah Bookis, Assistant Superintendent; Dana Labb, Elementary Principal; Heather Haines, Mathematics Coordinator*

- a. Setting the Stage: District-wide Data Inquiry Team – *Heather Haines*
- b. Budgetary Requests – *Dana Labb*
  - Clean organized vs cluttered style – what makes you comfortable to use?
  - i. Field-trips and Supplies
  - ii. Anti-Defamation League: A World of Difference Program
- c. Staffing Requests
  - i. Student-Centered Instructional Coaching System
  - ii. Shift to Library/Media Specialists

***Discussion Recap:***

Members discussed how the district defines equity. A member stated that we have too many students for instruction to be too individualized. She added that some don't need academic help, but a lot of kids are very challenged in the classroom. How do we make sure the equity works for them? Dawn Bentley stated that we try to reduce the gaps that currently exist regarding how students are performing. A member added that the coaching model seems excellent but is very time intensive. In response to a member's comment on using coaching as a response to teachers who may need additional support, Dawn stressed that it is not an evaluative process. It is very important to keep it separate from the educator evaluation system to maintain the validity and support. Deb Bookis added that the district has a mentor program for teachers identified as needing more support. Many of our comparable districts have coaches, not assistants. AB is on the late end of getting this activity going.

A member stated that the World of Difference curriculum seems to have been very well received and noted that it also falls under goal 3 – Our students will have safe and effective learning environments.

**6. Goal 3 - Access to Safe and Effective Learning Environments (*Panel 4*)**

*Peter Light, Superintendent; JD Head, Director of School Operations; Dave Verdolino, Finance Director; Marie Altieri, Deputy Superintendent; Amy Bisiewicz, Director of Educational Technology*

- a. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
  - i. Setting the Stage: Capital Planning Overview
  - ii. Funding Plan - Bonding & Stabilization Fund
  - iii. Yearly Projection Detail
  - iv. Project Manager
- b. Facilities and Maintenance- Floating Custodian
- c. School Security
- d. Technology
- e. Transportation
- f. Building Project Update

***Discussion Recap:***

Paul Murphy was on the Capital Subcommittee and supports establishing the stabilization fund, sooner rather than later, because we know there will be some turnbacks that the district can consider making. He asked what the risk is if the projections don't pan out as expected. Dave Verdolino responded that that risk is being mitigated by waiting until May to see where we stand in terms of turnbacks. Calling it "vital", Mary Brolin was "so excited about this Capital Plan finally and with a funding strategy". She thanked the Capital Subcommittee members.

The committee discussed how the CIP projects were selected (slide 173). The starting point was the original list from the Dore & Whittier study. JD Head explained that these were the highest priority projects from the list that have not yet been addressed. Some are safety issues and some asset protection projects. Re slide 196, technology and specifically the age of our wireless controllers was discussed. Amy Bisiewicz said they are around 10-15 years old now and the district cannot upgrade some equipment due to these aged controllers that need to be replaced. Amy tries to go as long as appropriate when requesting new equipment. It depends on the budget and how the tech market evolves. It has been a deliberate

decision to fund this type of technology out of the operating budget, but she has to be sure the funds are set aside for it.

In response to a question, JD Head explained that any playground with equipment is required to have an acceptable fall zone. We use a biodegradable wood chip fiber. The budget does not include funding for large playground equipment, which is why parent groups often fundraise for them. Funding is included for repairing/maintaining the equipment. There are some solar panels on our buildings but there will be many more in the new building.

Angie Tso stated that she is new to the area and the Committee, and has some concerns about the high taxes in Acton and our low per pupil expenditure amount. She emphasized a comment by the Superintendent at the beginning of the morning that your values are shown in your budget. She felt the proposed budget and all of the information and work was great.

Acton Finance Committee member Steve Noone asked if there was anything in the Capital Plan that was not in the Dore & Whittier report. JD replied that 99% of it was in the original Plan. Steve asked Dave Verdolino to send 5 year plan numbers, as best he can, for the Finance Committee's document. Steve concluded that this is his 14<sup>th</sup> ABRSD Budget Saturday and he never thought he would see a 2% increase in the school budget and a comprehensive Capital Plan both in the same year. He was very supportive. Acton Fincom member Jeff Bergart cautioned the Committee to be sure all elements in the Building proposals meet the MSBA requirements to be sure they are reimbursable by the state. Going outside of the guidelines (unless there is real justification for it) would mean a lot more for taxpayers to cover. Marie Altieri acknowledged that the district knows they will go over the 8% for capital site work planning. In addition, if there are 2 offices in building, MSBA might pay for only one, but they are working their way through this analysis in the coming months and the community will be made aware.

## **7. School Committee Discussion and Preliminary FY20 Budget VOTE**

Members' comments included:

- Money is going exactly where it needs to go. The administration has thoughtfully kept students' needs in focus. Seeing the staff all work so well together today shows how collaborative the team is.
- Regarding the Health Insurance Trust, there are healthy funds however it is also because the school and town administrators negotiated with the members. We are doing a lot in areas to be fiscally prudent but also bringing such innovation to the classroom, thinking about all students' success.
- A new member appreciated all of the clear and accessible information. She stressed that it is not enough to be #1 because the repercussions to the students who don't achieve success are so heartbreaking and compelling.
- It was appreciated that the material was so thoughtfully laid out about why the district is doing what they're doing.
- Another new member expressed some frustration about lack of input into the budget process, and the appropriate time to do so. He asked that for the FY21 budget season the school establish a

clear way for School Committee members and the public to provide comments for consideration. Two other members agreed about more community input and engagement in the process.

- The per pupil expenditures could be presented as a pie chart so people can see where their tax dollars go. This would help them to understand the budget better.
- A member wanted to include the funding of playground equipment in the school budget.
- A veteran member was “grateful for a healthy and robust budget”. She knows how hard it is to get everything that should be included. She would like to see more initiatives to address learning but she understands why they are not included at this time.
- A veteran member reminded the Committee that the budget process is a year-long process. Members need to rely on the professional expertise of our administrators and staff to tell them what they need. In her opinion, parents have a lot of voice in the community. At some point, budget needs must be filtered through the professional voice.
- One member commented that the ideal budget reflects a balance between fairness, fiscal concerns and administrative concerns, and this budget does all of that. The Capital Improvement Plan is a “sea change in how we address capital. It is bold and visionary.”

John Petersen spoke from the audience about the difficulties of some long term discussions of resource allocations due to the 3 entities that will always be involved – the Town of Acton, the Town of Boxborough and the Regional School District. He reminded the Committee that the budget motion will be brought to the Town Meetings by the School Committee, but it is the Committee’s responsibility to determine if there are sufficient resources in the two towns to fund the proposed budget and have it be sustainable.

Adam Klein moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,

**VOTED:** That the total appropriation for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District for the fiscal year of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 be set at \$90,982,111, and that member towns be assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Regional Agreement and amendments thereto as follows:

**Acton** \$61,235,254 (consisting of a Capital Assessment of \$2,726,396 and an Operating Assessment of \$58,508,858); and

**Boxborough** \$11,522,285 (consisting of a Capital Assessment of \$384,822 and an Operating Assessment of \$11,137,463);

with the remainder to be accounted for by the following sources of funds:

Anticipated Chapter 70 Aid in the amount of \$15,187,441,  
Anticipated Chapter 71, Section 16C Transportation Aid of \$1,907,131,  
Anticipated Charter School Aid in the amount of \$30,000,  
Anticipated Federal Medicaid Reimbursement of \$200,000,  
Anticipated Investment Earnings of \$200,000,  
Estimated Miscellaneous Revenues of \$10,000, and  
A transfer from E&D Reserves in the amount of \$690,000.



Paul Murphy moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and the ABRSC unanimously adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: agenda, FY20 Budget Binder and Presentation Slides

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING  
**FY20 OPEN BUDGET HEARING**

Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High School

February 7, 2019  
7:00 p.m. Open Meeting  
7:05 p.m. FY20 Budget Hearing  
Followed by Open Business Meeting (approximately 7:20 p.m.)

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**AGENDA (See Separately Posted Material)**

**1. Call to Order (7:05)**

*Please see budget material posted for 1/26/19 School Committee meeting at  
<http://www.abschools.org/school-committee/meetings-agendas-packets-and-minutes>*

**2. Chairmen's Introduction**

**3. ABRSC FY20 Budget Overview– Peter Light**

1. FY20 Final Budget Presentation
2. Recommended Assessments and Table 6

**4. Budget Feedback and Public Participation**

**5. Budget Hearing is Adjourned**

**ABRSC Regular Business Meeting Begins**

*(see separate agenda)*

Note: A VOTE on the proposed FY20 Budget and Assessments, will be done in the open meeting following the Hearing.

Posted 2/1/19 at 2:30 p.m.

*Office of the Superintendent*  
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District  
(978) 264-4700  
<http://www.abschools.org>

2/7/19 Budget Hearing

(VOTE taken during  
Business Meeting)

TO: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee  
FROM: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools  
DATE: February 1, 2019  
RE: Recommendation for FY2020 Acton-Boxborough Regional School  
District Final Budget and Assessment VOTE

---

**1. Recommended MOTION for FY2020 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Final Budget Appropriation and Assessments**

MOTION: That the total appropriation for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District for the fiscal year of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 be set at \$90,982,111, and that member towns be assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Regional Agreement and amendments thereto as follows:

**Acton** \$61,235,254 (consisting of a Capital Assessment of \$2,726,396 and an Operating Assessment of \$58,508,858); and

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Anticipated Federal Medicaid Reimbursement of \$200,000,  
Anticipated Investment Earnings of \$200,000,  
Estimated Miscellaneous Revenues of \$10,000, and  
A transfer from E&D Reserves in the amount of \$690,000.

Note: This motion was unanimously approved by the School Committee as a preliminary budget at their meeting on January 26, 2019.



Our **vision** is to provide high-quality educational opportunities that inspire a community of learners

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Our **mission** is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships

## FY20 Recommended Final Budget and Budget Public Hearing

Peter Light, Superintendent  
February 7, 2019

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## FY20 Budget Development Timeline

December 6, 2018	Presentation #1	<p>Superintendent's Preliminary Budget Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget Guidelines &amp; District Goals</li> <li>• Staffing Requests</li> <li>• Key Strategic Requests</li> <li>• Preliminary Revenues</li> <li>• Cost Saving Strategies</li> <li>• Overall Budgetary Impact &amp; Preliminary Assessments</li> </ul>
December 13, 2018	Presentation #2	<p>Superintendent's Preliminary Budget (Part 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Plan Funding Strategy</li> </ul>
January 10, 2019	Presentation #3	<p>Superintendent's Recommended Budget v. 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Line Item Budget</li> <li>• Capital Project Plan Detail</li> <li>• School Lunch Program; Athletics</li> </ul>
January 26, 2019	Presentation #4	<p>Budget Saturday - Superintendent's Recommended Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary SC Vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 25 Days before final budget deadline</li> <li>○ Vote is majority of members from each town</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
February 7, 2019	Presentation #5	<p>Superintendent's Final Budget Recommendation Public Hearing on Proposed FY20 Budget School Committee Votes FY20 Budget</p>

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# FY20 Budget Development

**A Special Thank You and Recognition....**

19 Meetings in all...

- 8 Budget Subcommittee
- 6 Capital Subcommittee
- 5 Full School Committee

Budget Subcommittee		Capital Subcommittee	
<u>Members:</u>	<u>Meeting Dates:</u>	<u>Members:</u>	<u>Meeting Dates:</u>
Diane Baum	Sept. 17	Diane Baum	Oct. 10
Michael Bo	Oct. 2	Adam Klein	Oct. 24
Amy Krishnamurthy	Oct. 30	Paul Murphy	Nov. 29
Tessa McKinley	Nov. 20		Dec. 12
Eileen Zhang	Dec. 4	Jason Cole	Jan. 9
	Jan. 3	(Acton FinCom.)	Jan. 16
	Jan. 15		
	Jan. 29	Gary Kushner	
		(Boxborough FinCom.)	

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## From Guidelines to Priorities....

### I. Addition of 8.6 FTE personnel in five major areas including:

1. Strategic additions that continue a multi-year plans already in place
2. Additions to support the implementation of the District's proposed Capital Plan
3. Staff necessary to meet the increasing need of students supported through IEPs, specifically in the areas of Social-Emotional Learning
4. Additions to the budget to support staff already in place due to the loss of a nursing grant
5. Staff requests achieved through a reallocation of existing resources

### II. Budgetary Additions to Support District's Work Around Equity

Funds to provide students with equitable opportunities to access programs and curricula

### III. Creating and Implementing a Capital Plan

Capital Improvement Plan - comprehensive plan to complete c. \$21M in needed improvements over 12 years, including implementation of Capital Stabilization Fund

# Capital Strategy



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## Key Funding Details

- Increase *Budgeted* Capital in FY20 (\$1.25M) and FY21 (\$1.5M) is \$2.75M
- Goal = make funding for highest priorities available in first 2+ years of plan
  - Intention to borrow \$7.5M
- Bonded amount balances priority of projects with ability to repay WITHIN operating budget
- Bond + Budget = c. \$10M available for Capital Improvements in FY20-21
- c. \$10M available for Capital in years 3-12 of plan
- Debt repaid through ABRSD Operating Budget - *Not a debt exclusion*
- Will require approval of SC and 2/3 vote at Acton and Boxborough Annual Town Meetings to authorize debt
- Allows us to address identified priority projects in next 2 years
- Maintains capacity within operating budget for newly identified projects

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## Regional Stabilization Fund

Key reasons to authorize a Stabilization Fund:

- DESE Advisory: “should be based on district’s long range capital plan”
- Auditors: “prudent means of capital budgeting and strategically targeting financial reserves in an appropriately transparent manner”
- Potential to augment resources identified in CIP bond funding proposal
- Create a safety net by addressing perceived concerns about minimal available funding in future years of CIP proposal
- Favorably received by Capital Committee & Towns

## FY20 Recommended Budget Summary

### What this FY20 Budget Proposal Accomplishes

- ✓ Maintains existing services
- ✓ Grows programs and services in alignment with stated goals and values
- ✓ Maintains reasonable class sizes in accordance with School Committee policy
- ✓ Strives to deliver the resources necessary to meet the needs of our students, programs and services
- ✓ Preserves and enhances prior commitments to operational areas such as OPEB and Capital Improvements

# FY20 Budget Overview



	FY19	FY20 Prelim. Dec. 6	FY20 Recom. Jan. 10	Final Budget Feb. 7
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$88,721,492	\$91,111,306	\$90,982,111	<b>\$90,982,111</b>
Increase from prior year	2,631,001	\$2,389,814	\$2,260,619	\$2,260,619
<b>Percent Increase from prior year</b>	3.06%	2.69%	2.55%	<b>2.55%</b>
TOTAL Assessments	\$71,333,313	\$73,191,734	\$72,937,539	\$72,757,539
Acton TOTAL	\$59,981,958	\$61,591,055	\$61,387,606	<b>**\$61,235,254</b>
<b>Acton % Change</b>	3.90%	2.68%	2.34%	<b>**2.09%</b>
Boxborough TOTAL	\$11,351,355	\$11,600,679	\$11,549,933	<b>**\$11,522,285</b>
<b>Boxborough % Change</b>	-2.09%	2.20%	1.75%	<b>**1.51%</b>

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## Discussion and Questions

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## 1. Proposed ABRSC FY20 Final Budget VOTE

### *Recommended Motion*

That the total appropriation for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District for the fiscal year of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 be set at **\$90,982,111**, and that member towns be assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and terms of the Regional Agreement and amendments thereto as follows:

**Acton \$61,235,254, Boxborough \$11,522,285**, with the remainder to be accounted for by the following sources of funds:

Anticipated Chapter 70 Aid in the amount of \$15,187,441,

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Anticipated Investment Earnings of \$200,000,

Anticipated Miscellaneous Revenues of \$10,000, and

A transfer from E&D Reserves in the amount of \$690,000.

## 2. Authorization to **Incur Debt** VOTE

### *Recommended Motion*

That the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District hereby appropriates the amount of \$7,500,000 for the purpose of paying construction, installation and all other associated costs of providing the capital improvements identified hereof in the District's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); and to meet this appropriation, the District Treasurer is hereby authorized to borrow up to \$7,500,000 under and pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Chapter 16 (d), the Regional School District Agreement, and/or any other enabling authority; and that, subsequent to an affirmative vote, within seven days thereof, the District, through its Secretary, shall notify the Board of Selectmen of each of the member towns as to the amount and purpose of the debt so authorized.

### **3. Establishment of Stabilization Fund VOTE**

#### *Recommended Motion*

That the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District hereby establishes a regional stabilization fund in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Chapter 16G-1/2, for the purpose of providing funding for its future capital needs in conjunction with the District's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); and, subsequent to an affirmative vote, within seven days thereof, the District, through its Secretary, shall notify the Board of Selectmen of each of the member towns as to the fund so authorized.

*Office of the Superintendent*  
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District  
(978) 264-4700  
<http://www.abschools.org>

TO: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee  
FROM: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools  
DATE: February 7, 2019  
RE: Recommendation for Final Vote on FY2020 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Budget and Assessments, Bonded Debt Authorization and Establishment of Regional Stabilization Fund

---

**1. Recommended MOTION for FY2020 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Budget Appropriation and Assessments**

Note: This motion was unanimously approved by the School Committee as a preliminary budget at their meeting on January 26, 2019.

MOTION: That the total appropriation for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District for the fiscal year of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 be set at \$90,982,111, and that member towns be assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Regional Agreement and amendments thereto as follows:

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Anticipated Investment Earnings of \$200,000,  
Estimated Miscellaneous Revenues of \$10,000, and  
A transfer from E&D Reserves in the amount of \$690,000.

**2. Recommended MOTION for Appropriation of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Capital Improvement Plan and Related Debt**

MOTION: That the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District hereby appropriates the amount of \$7,500,000 for the purpose of paying construction, installation and all other associated costs of providing the capital improvements identified hereof in the District's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); and to meet this appropriation, the District Treasurer is hereby authorized to borrow up to \$7,500,000 under and pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71,

Chapter 16 (d), the Regional School District Agreement, and/or any other enabling authority; and that, subsequent to an affirmative vote, within seven days thereof, the District, through its Secretary, shall notify the Board of Selectmen of each of the member towns as to the amount and purpose of the debt so authorized.

**3. Recommended MOTION for Establishment of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Capital Stabilization Fund**

MOTION: That the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District hereby establishes a regional stabilization fund in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Chapter 16G-1/2, for the purpose of providing funding for its future capital needs in conjunction with the District's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); and, subsequent to an affirmative vote, within seven days thereof, the District, through its Secretary, shall notify the Board of Selectmen of each of the member towns as to the fund so authorized.



# Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road - Acton, MA 01720  
www.abschools.org

7.3

Finance Department  
David A. Verdolino, Director  
(978) 264-4700  
dverdolino@abschools.org

To: Peter Light, Marie Altieri  
From: Dave Verdolino  
Re: Regional Stabilization Fund  
Date: January 18, 2019

Peter & Marie –

As you know, we have been discussing the potential implementation of a regional stabilization fund for capital projects; that issue was brought up, with favorable reaction, at the most recent budget subcommittee meeting.

I am attempting here to summarize the components of this issue, as I believe there is a short timeline to consider options regarding initial funding of this initiative; see below.

## **Legislation and background**

Enabling legislation for regional stabilization funds is found at MGL Chapter 71, Section 16G-1/2, a copy of which is attached here. In addition, I have attached a DESE Advisory on this topic, which forms the basis of the recommended steps outlined in the remainder of this memo. To get further clarification about the memo, I communicated with Christine Lynch of DESE Regional Services.

We had informally discussed this issue earlier in “budget season”, and also in connection with the presentation of our CIP, as a way to provide supplemental funding beyond what is included in the hypothetical plan that I prepared. In further support of this undertaking, our auditors’ most recent management letter (issue date November 19, 2019) includes a recommendation “that the District consider establishing a stabilization fund for capital needs planning consistent with...the law” (i.e., as cited above).

The process, if we decide to undertake it, can be broken down into three steps: establishing, funding and use (spending) of the fund.

## **Establishing the fund**

Per the Advisory, “establishment and use of a stabilization fund should be based on the district’s long range capital plan”. While our CIP is in the formative process, I submit it is appropriate to consider the stabilization fund at the same time as pursuing approval of the CIP. So, as far as intent, I believe the opportunity afforded by this legislation is one we should take advantage of, particularly noting the auditors’ similar recommendation.



# Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

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www.abschools.org

Finance Department  
David A. Verdolino, Director  
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Specifically, establishment of the stabilization fund requires action by BOTH the regional school committee AND member towns, as follows (Advisory citations in quotes):

- Vote of regional school committee (majority)
  - “approval of a majority of the local appropriating authorities of the member(s) ... (who) must take a specific vote to authorize establishment of the fund.”
- I interpret this to mean that the Town Meetings (the appropriating authorities) of both Acton and Boxborough (a majority of two being two) must take votes to approve this action. I copied you both on an email to Mark Hald of Acton to determine whether we are timely to get an article on Acton’s ATM; I will separately communicate with Boxborough, but believe we have more time there.

Once those votes are taken, the stabilization fund is created. Note that this process differs from that used to establish the Transportation Stabilization Fund several years ago, which required no similar actions by Town Meetings.

## Funding

The Advisory provides two means of providing resources to the stabilization fund: (a.) through the annual budget process and (b.) through a budget amendment. Both of these are further explained as follows:

- a. Through the annual budget process, monies can be directed to the stabilization fund via line item appropriation in the district’s budget. Just like other line items, this appropriation to the stabilization fund would not require a separate vote by the members, but would be approved via passage of the budget warrant articles.

The stabilization fund component of the budget appropriation would be apportioned to both towns based on methodology in the regional agreement. And there are limitations on the extent of appropriating to stabilization funds, but those limits appear to be far in excess of what we would be contemplating here.

- b. Once the budget is adopted, the appropriation to the stabilization fund can only be increased via an approved budget amendment. The Advisory cites CMR 41.05(5), a copy of which is included with this memo. In short, budget amendments require:
  - A two-thirds vote by the regional school committee
  - Notice of that vote must be given to the towns within 7 days of the vote
  - Towns have 45 days to take a disapproving vote; otherwise it is adopted



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The practical result of this section is that we may wish to consider EITHER funding method mentioned above, through which the initial stabilization fund appropriation could be included in the FY2020 budget OR amendment to the FY2019 budget. We will need to discuss these options in more detail.

## **Expenditures from the Fund**

Authorization to expend from the stabilization fund differs from that required to establish and appropriate into it. Expenditures are authorized by a vote of the regional school committee (two-thirds supermajority). As long as the funds are to be used for a purpose for which borrowing is permitted (in my view, a “given” of the intent of this undertaking), no further approval is required.

Similar to Capital Projects and revolving funds, the stabilization fund balance carries over to successive fiscal years. Importantly, any unexpended balances from completed projects funded by stabilization fund votes would be closed to the stabilization fund (not to the operating fund or E&D).

## **Other Aspects**

The balance in the stabilization fund are not considered part of the district’s general fund and do not impact the calculation of E&D (unless the balance exceeds the generous limits as referred to above).

The district’s treasurer, as custodian of all district monies, acts as custodian of the stabilization fund and any interest earned remains in the stabilization fund.

There are several technical sections of the Advisory that deal with financial accounting and reporting that I will not go into here; they would be addressed during the process of setting up the fund in our accounting system and in preparation of the end-of-year report to DESE.

I hope this gives a sufficient overview of the issues involved. To me this is a prudent, strategic and very timely use of an opportunity that is presented to regional districts that have the wherewithal to implement it.

**Part I** ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT**Title XII** EDUCATION**Chapter 71** PUBLIC SCHOOLS**Section** STABILIZATION FUND**16G1/2**

*[ First paragraph effective until November 7, 2016. For text effective November 7, 2016, see below.]*

Section 16G1/2. A regional school district may, upon a majority vote of all the members of the regional district school committee and, with the approval of a majority of the local appropriating authorities of the member municipalities, establish a stabilization fund and may, in any year, include in its annual budget for deposit in the stabilization fund an amount not exceeding five per cent of the aggregate amount apportioned to the member municipalities for the preceding fiscal year or such larger amount as may be approved by the director of accounts. The aggregate amount in the fund at any time shall not exceed five per cent of the combined equalized valuations of the member municipalities. Any interest shall be added to and become a part of the fund. The annual report submitted to the member municipalities pursuant to clause (k) of



section sixteen shall include a statement of the balance in the stabilization fund and all additions to and withdrawals from the fund during the period covered by such report.

*[ First paragraph as amended by 2016, 218, Sec. 183 effective November 7, 2016. For text effective until November 7, 2016, see above.]*

A regional school district may, upon a majority vote of all the members of the regional district school committee and, with the approval of a majority of the local appropriating authorities of the member municipalities, establish a stabilization fund and may, in any year, include in its annual budget for deposit in the stabilization fund an amount not exceeding five per cent of the aggregate amount apportioned to the member municipalities for the preceding fiscal year or such larger amount as may be approved by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. The aggregate amount in the fund at any time shall not exceed five per cent of the combined equalized valuations of the member municipalities. Any interest shall be added to and become a part of the fund. The annual report submitted to the member municipalities pursuant to clause (k) of section sixteen shall include a statement of the balance in the stabilization fund and all additions to and withdrawals from the fund during the period covered by such report.

The treasurer of the regional school district shall be the custodian of such fund and may deposit or invest the fund in such deposits or investments as are legal for the deposit or investment of revenue funds of the district or in such securities as are legal for the investment of funds of savings banks under the laws of the commonwealth.

*[ Third paragraph effective until November 7, 2016. For text effective November 7, 2016, see below.]*

The stabilization fund may be appropriated by vote of two-thirds of all of the members of the regional district school committee for any purpose for which regional school districts may borrow money or for such other district purpose as the director of accounts may approve.

*[ Third paragraph as amended by 2016, 218, Sec. 183 effective November 7, 2016. For text effective until November 7, 2016, see above.]*

The stabilization fund may be appropriated by vote of two-thirds of all of the members of the regional district school committee for any purpose for which regional school districts may borrow money or for such other district purpose as the commissioner of elementary and secondary education may approve.

This section shall also apply to any regional school district established under the provisions of a special law.

## **Advisory on Regional School District Stabilization Funds**

G.L. c.71, s.16 G ½ provides for the establishment of stabilization funds by regional school districts. This law was recently amended, by St. 2010, c.188, s.58, to clarify the approvals necessary to make expenditures from these funds.

Establishment and use of a stabilization fund should be based on the district's long range capital plan. A regional school district stabilization fund may be established through a majority vote of the school committee and with the approval of a majority of the local appropriating authorities of the member municipalities. Member municipalities must take a specific vote to authorize establishment of the fund.

Once established, the school committee may include a line item in each year's annual budget to appropriate monies into the stabilization fund. This line item is part of the annual school committee budget and does not require a separate vote by the member municipalities. The amount to be appropriated to the stabilization fund is included in each member municipality's assessment and is apportioned based on the regional agreement methodology for apportioning capital costs. The amount budgeted in any year may not exceed five percent of the aggregate amount assessed to the member municipalities for the preceding fiscal year. A larger amount may be budgeted only if approved by the Director of Accounts in the Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services. At no time, however, may the aggregate fund balance exceed five percent of the combined equalized valuations of the member municipalities. The regional school district treasurer is the custodian of the stabilization fund and any interest earned must be added to and become a part of the fund.

Because appropriations into a stabilization fund are a form of capital budgeting, the regional school committee does not have authority to increase or decrease the amount appropriated for the year once the district budget has been approved. On July 1 (or upon approval of the budget if later), the amount appropriated and shown in the budget is credited to the fund. After the annual budget has been approved, the school committee may increase the amount in the stabilization account through the use of excess and deficiency funds or through an additional assessment to member municipalities only by amending its approved budget. Such an amendment must be approved in accordance with CMR 41.05 (5).

Annual appropriations into a stabilization fund should not be reported as an expenditure on the End of Year Financial Report. The appropriations represent revenue to the district and should be reported on Schedule 2 as a capital assessment to the member districts.

Advisory on Regional School District Stabilization Funds  
Page Two

In any given year, expenditures from the fund may be authorized by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the regional school committee. If the funds are to be used for a purpose for which the district is permitted to borrow, no further approval is required. These purposes are listed in G.L. c.71, s.16(d), and generally encompass what are considered capital costs. If the funds are to be used for any other purpose (for example, to cover unexpected increases in operating costs), then the approval of the Director of Accounts is also required.

Expenditures are made directly from the stabilization fund; a transfer into the general fund is not required. Expenditures should be reported on the End of Year Financial Report as an additional appropriation of the school committee.

Unexpended balances in amounts authorized for expenditures close to the stabilization fund when the project or purpose is completed. The unexpended balance of the fund at the end of a fiscal year carries over to the succeeding fiscal year. Balances in the stabilization fund are not part of the district's general fund and do not impact the district's excess and deficiency calculation. However, if the Director of Accounts determines that an annual appropriation into the stabilization fund, or the aggregate balance of the fund, exceeds the applicable statutory limit, the Director may take appropriate action, including but not limited to closing any amount in excess of that limit to the district's general fund. A report of the fund balance and any withdrawals or additions must be prepared annually and presented to the member municipalities.

Questions about this advisory should be directed to Christine Lynch, director of school governance, at 781-338-6520 or [clynch@doe.mass.edu](mailto:clynch@doe.mass.edu) .

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**MANAGEMENT LETTER**

**JUNE 30, 2018**

**Consider Establishing a Regional School District Stabilization Fund**

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 16G½, as amended in 2010, provides for the establishment of stabilization funds by regional school districts to assist in administration of a district's long range capital needs planning. We believe this to be a prudent means of capital budgeting and strategically targeting financial reserves in an appropriately transparent manner.

We recommend that the District consider establishing a stabilization fund for capital needs planning consistent with the provisions of this section of the law.



- > Laws & Regulations Home
- > State Regulations
- > State Laws
- > Federal Laws
- > Legal Advisories
- > Arbitration Awards
- > Litigation Reports

## Education Laws and Regulations

### 603 CMR 41.00: Regional School Districts

#### Section:

- 41.01: Definitions
  - 41.02: Reorganization Procedures
  - 41.03: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Approval
  - 41.04: Municipal Representatives in Regional School District Collective Bargaining
  - 41.05: Regional School District Budgets
  - 41.06: Excess and Deficiency Funds
  - 41.07: Fiscal Control of Regional School Districts by the Commissioner
- [View All Sections](#)

### 41.05: Regional School District Budgets

#### (1) Initial Adoption by the School Committee

(a) The regional school committee shall propose, by a majority vote, a budget containing all proposed operating expenditures, capital expenditures, and debt service payments to be paid from general revenues of the regional school district. The budget shall be classified into such line items as the regional school committee shall determine, provided that such line items shall be consistent with but need not be to the same level of detail as the chart of accounts required for the end of year reporting of expenditures pursuant to 603 CMR 10.03(3).

(b) The budget shall identify each separate revenue source, and the amount estimated for each revenue source; shall specify whether members' assessments are to be calculated pursuant to the statutory assessment method or the alternative assessment method; and shall specify the total amounts to be assessed to the members for the support of the budget.

(c) The regional school committee may include a line item in the budget for a reserve for extraordinary and unanticipated expenditures.

(d) The regional school committee may include a line item in the budget for transfers into a stabilization fund established pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, § 16G½. Proposed expenditures from this stabilization fund shall not be included in the budget, but shall be governed by the requirements of M.G.L. c.71, § 16G½.

(e) Expenditures from grant funds, revolving funds, trust funds, and other funds that by law may be expended by the regional school committee without further appropriation, shall not be included in the budget. A summary of projected receipts and expenditures in such funds shall be provided to the members for informational purposes only along with the budget.

(g) The regional school committee shall hold a public hearing on the proposed budget and, following such hearing, shall adopt a budget by a two-thirds vote, incorporating such changes from the proposed budget as the regional school committee deems appropriate.

(h) The treasurer of the regional school district shall certify and transmit the budget and the assessments to each member within 30 days after the school committee's adoption of the budget and, in any event, no later than April 30.

#### (2) Initial Action by the Local Appropriating Authorities

(a) The budget as adopted by the regional school committee and the member's assessment as certified by the treasurer of the regional school district, shall be placed before each local appropriating authority for its consideration. Notwithstanding provisions in the regional agreement to the contrary, approval of the budget shall require an affirmative vote of the appropriating authorities of two-thirds of the members. A vote by the local appropriating authority to appropriate the member's assessment shall constitute approval of the regional school district's budget. The use of the alternate assessment method shall require the approval of all of the members; such approval may be given by a separate vote of the appropriating authority, or if a separate vote is not taken, approval of a budget or assessment based on the alternate method shall be deemed approval of the method.

(b) If a local appropriating authority votes to appropriate a lower amount than the assessment as certified by the treasurer of the regional school district, such vote shall not constitute approval of the budget as submitted by the regional school committee. The regional school committee may consider such votes when it reconsiders the budget pursuant to 603 CMR 41.05(3).

(c) Approval of a budget based on the alternative assessment method shall be reported to the commissioner on the district's end of year financial returns.

#### (3) Reconsideration of Rejected Budgets

(a) If the budget is not approved by two-thirds of the members, the regional school committee shall have 30 days from the date of disapproval by more than one-third of the members to reconsider, amend, and adopt a revised budget. With the approval of the Commissioner, this 30-day period may be extended an additional 15 days. Where the local appropriating authority is a town meeting and the annual town meeting is dissolved prior to voting on the budget, the budget shall be deemed disapproved by that member as of the date of such dissolution.

(b) The revised budget adopted by the regional school committee and the assessments corresponding to such budget may be less than, equal to, or greater than the amounts in the previously adopted budget.

(c) Within seven days following the regional school committee's adoption of a revised budget, the treasurer of the regional school district shall calculate and certify the assessment of each member and shall transmit the assessments and a copy of the revised budget to the members. Each member's local appropriating authority shall have 45 days from the date of the regional school committee's vote to meet and consider the revised budget.

(d) The approval of a revised budget shall be as set forth in 603 CMR 41.05(2)(a). If a local appropriating authority does not vote on the revised budget within the 45-day period, that member shall be deemed to have approved the revised budget.

(e) In a regional school district comprised of three or more members, if the revised budget is not approved, the regional school committee shall again reconsider, amend, and adopt a revised budget. The revised budget shall be resubmitted to the members pursuant to the provisions of 603 CMR 41.05(3).

(f) In a regional school district comprised of two members, if the revised budget is not approved by both members, the regional school committee shall again reconsider, amend, and adopt a revised budget and shall convene a district-wide meeting, at which the revised budget shall be placed before all voters eligible to vote at said meeting. If a majority of voters at this district-wide meeting votes to approve the revised budget, such vote shall constitute approval. If a majority of voters at this meeting votes to approve a greater or lesser amount for the budget, such amount shall be placed before the regional school committee for its ratification. If the regional school committee by a two-thirds vote ratifies this amount, it shall constitute approval. If the regional school committee rejects such greater or lesser amount, it shall again reconsider, amend, and adopt a revised budget and shall reconvene a district-wide meeting pursuant to the provisions of 603 CMR 41.05(3)(f).

(g) A district-wide meeting convened in accordance with 603 CMR 41.05(3)(f) shall only consider budgets based on the statutory assessment method.

(h) A regional school committee may reconsider, amend, and adopt a revised budget at any time prior to the approval of a previously adopted budget.

(i) If a local appropriating authority votes to approve an adopted budget subsequent to the required date for such action but prior to the regional school committee's revision of the budget, such vote shall be deemed valid.

(j) Whenever a member's assessment is reduced to a smaller amount than previously appropriated by the local appropriating authority, that appropriation shall automatically be reduced to the lesser amount.

#### (4) Establishment of Budgets by the Commissioner

(a) If the operating budget for a regional school district has not been approved by July 1, the superintendent of schools shall notify the Commissioner, and the Commissioner shall establish an interim monthly budget for the regional school district. The interim monthly budget shall be one-twelfth of the regional school district's budget for the prior fiscal year or such higher amount as the Commissioner may determine. The interim monthly budget shall remain in effect until an operating budget is approved pursuant to 603 CMR 41.05(3) or December 1, whichever comes earlier.

(b) If a regional school district's budget has not been approved by December 1 of the fiscal year, the Commissioner shall assume fiscal control of the regional school district pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, §16B, and 603 CMR 41.07, and shall establish the final budget for the fiscal year.

(c) Whenever the Commissioner establishes an interim or final budget for a regional school district under the provisions of this section, the treasurer of the regional school district shall calculate and certify to the members their respective assessments. Every member shall pay its respective assessment in accordance with the payment schedule in the regional agreement. The appropriation of funds to pay an assessment ordered by the Commissioner under 603 CMR 41.05(4) shall not be deemed approval by the municipality of the district's budget.

#### (5) Amendments to Approved Budgets

(a) A regional school committee may propose, with a two-thirds vote, an amendment to a previously approved budget. If such amendment results in an increase in the total amount of the budget or an increase in assessment for any member, such amendment shall be submitted to the local appropriating authorities for their approval. The treasurer of the regional school district shall submit the proposed amendment to the members within 7 days from the date of the regional school committee vote. The local appropriating authority of every member shall have 45 days from the date of the regional school committee's vote to meet and consider the amendment. The proposed amendment shall be effective if it is approved by two-thirds of the local appropriating authorities and by the local appropriating authority of any member whose assessment is increased.

(b) If a local appropriating authority does not vote on the proposed amendment within the 45-day period and that local appropriating authority has previously appropriated funds for its assessment in an amount greater than or equal to the member's assessment for the amended budget, that member shall be deemed to have approved the amended budget.

(c) If a proposed amendment to a previously approved budget does not increase the total amount of the budget and reduces or leaves unchanged the assessment for every member, the amendment shall not require approval by the local appropriating authorities and shall be effective upon a two-thirds vote of the regional school committee.

(d) If the Commissioner adjusts the required local contribution of any member or members subsequent to the approval of the budget, the regional school committee shall propose an amendment to the budget to reflect such adjustments.

(e) Whenever a member's assessment is reduced to a smaller amount than previously appropriated by the local appropriating authority, the appropriation shall automatically be deemed to be reduced to such lesser amount.

(f) Transfers from one budget line item to another shall require and be effective upon approval of the regional school committee. Such approval shall be by a majority vote of the regional school committee unless otherwise specified in the regional agreement. Authority for such transfers may not be delegated.

#### (6) Changes to Budget upon Admission or Withdrawal of Members

(a) The treasurer of the regional school district shall include prospective members in the calculation of assessments for the fiscal year in which the members will be admitted. If such assessments are based upon enrollment in the prior fiscal year, the treasurer of the regional school district, with the approval of the Commissioner, shall estimate the enrollment to be used for prospective members. The local appropriating authorities of prospective members shall vote on the district budget for the fiscal year in which the members will be admitted and on the same terms and conditions as if they were a member.

(b) The treasurer of the regional school district shall exclude withdrawing members from the calculation of assessments for the fiscal year in which such withdrawal will take place. The local appropriating authority of the withdrawing members shall not vote on the district budget for the fiscal year in which they will no longer be a member.

(7) **Department Opinions.** The regional school committee or the mayor or board of selectmen of a member may request that the Commissioner issue an opinion as to whether (a) the assessments of members have been calculated correctly; and (b) whether the budget of the regional school district has been approved in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

(8) **State Review.** The Commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of Revenue, may request any regional school committee to submit its proposed budget for review prior to its adoption by the regional school committee. Upon such request, the regional school committee shall provide the Department within 7 days with a copy of its proposed budget and all other information as requested by the Commissioner. The regional school committee shall not vote on the adoption of the budget, and the treasurer of the regional school district shall not certify assessments to the members unless and until the Commissioner and the Commissioner of Revenue jointly determine that the proposed budget is in balance.

**Regulatory Authority:**  
603 CMR 41.00: M.G.L. c. 69, §1B; c. 71, §14B and §16D; c. 150E, §1.  
Most Recently Amended by the Board of Education: May 19, 2009

Last Updated: June 3, 2009

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**Disclaimer:**  
For an official copy of these regulations, please contact the [State House Bookstore](#), at 617-727-2834.



McCarthy-Towne Elementary  
2018-2019 School Improvement Plan

*“There is nothing permanent, except change.” -Heraclitus*



## District Core Values: Alignment and connections

- Wellness
- Equity
- Engagement



**First Goal:** Continue to develop and support the workshop model in all classrooms.

**Second Goal:** To enhance social vocabulary and interactions for all children by continuing to use Responsive Classroom for the school community and by continuing to implement ideas and methodology from the Social Thinking curriculum.



**Third Goal:** Continue to explore and implement methods of integrating visual art into the curriculum at McCarthy-Towne, deepening curriculum understanding and enhancing the social emotional well being of students.

**Fourth Goal:** To educate and inform the McCarthy-Towne families, as well as all of the recently hired faculty members, of the three cornerstones of classroom activities-Responsive Classroom, Art Integration, and Workshop Model- that support the mission and vision of McT and ABRSD.



## Workshop Model- growth and refinement

Continued use of consultant for professional learning in literacy

Summer Institutes in Reading and Writing, Teachers College

Year-long whole-school Thursday Professional Learning book study on Jo Bohler's *Mathematical Mindsets*

Adjustments to master and classroom level schedules to accommodate academic supports for all learners



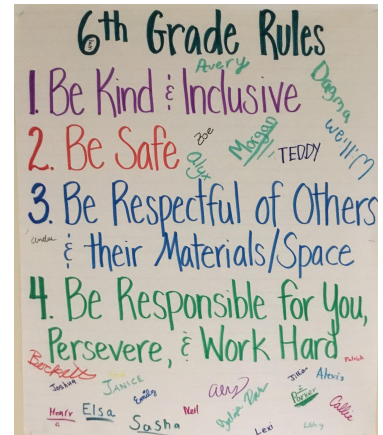
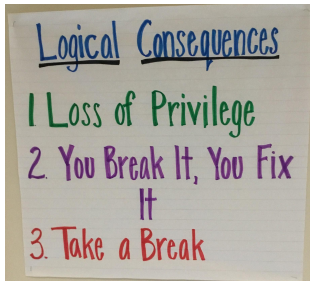
# Responsive Classroom

Week-long training of new staff in RC model

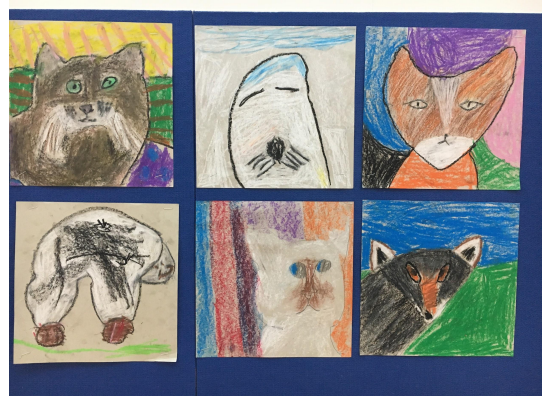
Integration of Social Thinking language

Social-emotional classroom instruction with

School Counselor (ST)



Grade 1: National Symbols



Grade 2 Animals

## Art Integration

Fundamental to the beliefs of McCarthy-Towne is the concept of process. Our commitment to the artistic process encourages independent and self-motivated learning wherein students explore, take risks, discover, honor differences, and develop skills for lifelong learning.



## Parent education forum

Parent forum to present Workshop, Responsive Classroom, and Art Integration practices last evening was well attended and served the purpose of informing parents of the three central components of learning at McCarthy-Towne.



# School Improvement Plan

PROGRESS to DATE



Wellness | Equity | Engagement



## GOALS

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



# STUDENTS

Will develop as inquisitive, flexible, resilient learners through collaborative and caring relationships.



STARR Values



Problem Solving



PBIS



2018-2019 | Progress to Date

# STAFF

Will develop high quality, equitable educational opportunities supported by a healthy community.



Staff-Designed Professional Learning



Outdoor Teaching



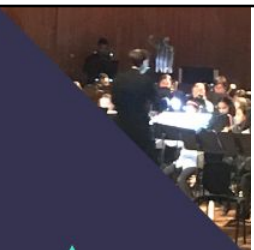
MTSS



2018-2019 | Progress to Date

# FAMILIES

Will develop ongoing partnerships with the Blanchard community that are collaborative and complementary.



Communications



PTF



Special Events



2018-2019 | Progress to Date

# HIGHLIGHTS

#CultivateKids



Outdoor Learning



Culture



Teaching & Learning

2018-2019 | Progress to Date



#CultivateKids



THANK YOU!

Wellness | Equity | Engagement





# Superintendent's Report of Entry Findings

## Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

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### Introduction

I arrived at the Luther Conant Elementary School early on September 4, 2018 in time to meet one of our incoming kindergarten classes as they entered school for the first time; these children will graduate from our schools in June 2031. The next thirteen years for this group of students and their families will pass in the blink of an eye. These thirteen years are also the time we have to provide each of these children, and each of the more than five thousand students who will attend our schools every day, a world-class education that will serve them well for the remainder of their lives.

As a leader new to the district, I engaged in an entry process that was designed to allow me to learn about our schools through the collective lenses of the students, families, faculty, staff and administrators, as well as the individuals and organizations who make up the broader Acton-Boxborough community. This process also helped me to understand the unique strengths and opportunities we have, as well as our challenges, and to give voice to stakeholders in shaping the future of our schools.

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The process outlined in my Entry Plan included meetings with groups of students, families, and faculty at each school as well as opportunities to meet with community leaders in a variety of settings. I also reviewed relevant demographic and performance data and spent many hours visiting classrooms in each of our schools in order to deepen my understanding of the teaching and learning that takes place each day.

This *Report of Entry Findings* is intended to summarize what I have learned about our schools' many strengths, and to highlight the opportunities we have ahead of us. More importantly, the entry process and *Report of Entry Findings* serves to unearth important questions that will lead us to continually improve our schools for the betterment of the students who will spend their thirteen important years with us.

### **Highlights of the Entry Process**

The entry process has been an incredible learning experience for me. In September, when I initially presented my entry plan, I was struck by the passion and support within the community for public education. The entry process reaffirmed and cemented this belief further with each stakeholder meeting I conducted. I was also immediately impressed by the high value that students and families place on their teachers. Participants in the various groups universally indicated how much they knew that teachers cared about the students. Teachers also reported that they felt supported by the district in their work, and this is evident in the longevity of the faculty.

The district has recognized its changing demographics over the last decade and has made a commitment to implementing culturally responsive practices. There has also been significant focus on ensuring equitable opportunities and access for all students.

Students, families, teachers and administrators are passionate about our schools. There is a historical tradition of individualism, autonomy and innovation that has driven the development of the schools and this is evident in the unique culture and traditions of each school. As a newly expanded PreK-12 regional district, important work has taken place over the last several years to appropriately blend the cultures of the Acton and Boxborough elementary schools with each other.

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## **Opportunities for Continuous Improvement**

This following section of the report is organized into key questions which represent the broad themes that I believe will be essential for us to address in the coming years. Rather than make recommendations, I have organized this section into broad questions to provoke additional thought, discussion and eventually action. I have also provided some background information to support my conclusions, and have posed more discrete questions for consideration which support the overarching theme for each section. These observations and questions will form the basis of future work of the leadership team as we refine and further expand the district's long term strategy.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Light,  
Superintendent of Schools

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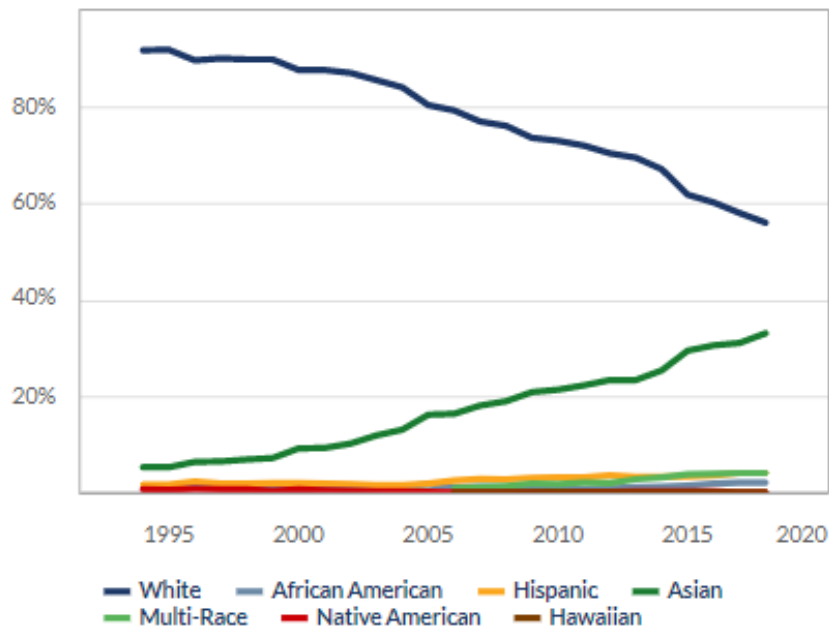
## Overarching Questions and Themes

- I. *How can we manage tension that has arisen from increasingly diverse cultural perspectives about education and the purpose of schools, and leverage this diversity into increased opportunities for students?*
- II. *How can we continue to expand our Strategic Plan in order to increase focus on the teaching and learning process, and more fully articulate our vision for student learning?*
- III. *How can we manage tension between greater district-wide strategic coherence and the rich traditions of individualism and autonomy that have developed in the various schools?*
- IV. *How can we foster an increased culture of inclusivity and best leverage resources in order to support an increasingly diverse student population (with regard to learning profiles, race and socioeconomic status) in a more inclusive environment?*
- V. *How can we be more proactive in meeting the needs of a fast growing population of students with increasingly complex and acute social and emotional needs?*
- VI. *How can our Leadership Teams most effectively employ the characteristics of High-Performing Teams to support the work of the schools and district?*

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***1. How can the district manage tension that has arisen from increasingly diverse cultural perspectives about education and the purpose of schools, and leverage this diversity into increased opportunities for students?***

### STUDENT DIVERSITY OVER TIME



source: <https://www.cleargov.com/massachusetts/school/acton-boxborough/2017/students>

Over the last two decades, our schools have seen a dramatic shift in demographics with respect to the cultures we serve. Throughout the entry process, stakeholder groups identified a growing tension around the appropriate balance between wellness and achievement. Specifically, some families expressed concern that the emphasis on student wellness may detract from the district’s traditions of academic excellence. While the stakeholders who expressed these concerns were not unique to a single race or ethnicity, this concern was raised consistently by members of the community. In particular, many members of the Asian community who participated in stakeholder meetings expressed a concern that the schools would not continue to embrace a focus on academic achievement

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as efforts to promote student wellness are increased. This tension between valuing achievement and balancing both wellness and equity has also manifested itself as district and school initiatives have been implemented, most notably with concerns around the revised homework policy and the high school schedule. In both of these examples, stakeholders expressed concern about how changes to district programs might negatively impact the district's achievement. In some cases, stakeholders worried that the current direction of the district would not maintain its commitment to excellence.

Stakeholder groups that represented staff and administration developed the district's current mission, vision and values in 2016, and have been deeply committed to the work in promoting the three Core Values of Wellness, Equity and Engagement since they were adopted by the school committee. In discussing the development of the current set of values, the administration indicated that the current Core Values were designed to continue the pursuit of excellence, but focused on redefining "excellence" more broadly. This was in reaction to what was perceived as a hyper-focus on standardized test scores as a measure of excellence, as well as the faculty and administration's increasing awareness of rising student levels of stress and anxiety.

While all stakeholders agreed with efforts to reduce stress among students, there were divisions that appeared to be cultural which were expressed during some stakeholder meetings with regard to how the district might best accomplish this goal while preserving its strong academic and extracurricular programs.

- *How can teaching and learning practices as well as our educational programs continue to evolve in ways that recognize and manage tension between the values and priorities of diverse cultures within the community?*
  
- *What strategies might we implement to establish greater connections with students and families that represent all of the various cultures and backgrounds in the community and ensure that these groups' voices feel heard?*

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The Acton elementary schools have long had an "Open Enrollment" policy which allows parents to choose a preferred elementary school for their child to attend. Since full

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regionalization, this practice has continued and parents have this same opportunity, but with a “home town guarantee” that allows their children first priority to attend a school within their town of residence. Over the last several years, there has been an increasing trend toward schools whose racial and ethnic makeup vary significantly from that of the overall district’s racial diversity. This has manifested itself most demonstrably in two schools becoming over-represented by students identified as “White” and two schools over-represented by students identified as “Asian.” There are similar differences among some of the smaller selected demographic populations. However, these two racial groups, because of their relative size and representation among students in the district, are the most notable. During the entry process, stakeholder groups shared support for the open enrollment model, but some stakeholders also expressed concerns about school enrollments that are disproportionate to the demographics of the community. In moving forward, it will be important for the district to more deeply understand patterns of school choice across races in order to ensure that the education programs in each of the elementary schools are responsive to students of all racial identities.

→ *What is driving the discrepancies in open enrollment with respect to race and how can the schools and district effectively respond to this in order to ensure racial equity within the open enrollment program?*

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During the entry process, various groups, including students, articulated that the increasing diversity of the community has led to some increases in what was perceived as bias-based behaviors. For example, some students articulated that they hear jokes about academic or athletic skills of students from different cultures. Additionally, during the entry process, some stakeholders articulated concerns about the growing national, state and local trends toward bias incidents and, in the most serious instances, hate. These groups also indicated that our schools play an important role in educating students against bias. The district has taken numerous steps to reduce bias and respond to incidents including, but not limited to, the development of a middle school social studies curriculum focused on bias, purchasing additional classroom library materials in the elementary schools to support this work, and reviewing the high school English curriculum to expand the representation of various cultures in the literature students read. Additionally, the district has made Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (S.E.E.D.) training a priority for staff. Despite some of

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these efforts, stakeholders continued to be concerned that the schools promote anti-bias education.

- *Do the district's stated Core Values, Vision and Mission fully embrace, reflect and capitalize upon the value of the diversity in the educational community?*
  
- *How can we continue to prioritize anti-bias education for members of our educational community and promote a continued focus on developing respect for human differences as a key outcome for students?*

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Our schools boast one of the most unique demographic profiles of any district in Massachusetts. This demographic profile, which includes the third largest Asian population of students in the state as a percentage of enrollment, and the overall diversity of the community, provide a largely untapped opportunity to position the schools as leaders in developing our students as global citizens. This opportunity for our district to become a leader in global citizenship is growing more important as the world continues to see a shift in traditional political and economic power centers from Western Europe to Asia.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional High School adopted the Seal of Biliteracy to allow students who demonstrate fluency in more than one language to be recognized for this accomplishment. Additionally, there have been numerous trips over the last decade designed to provide students with opportunities to travel abroad, and in the summer of 2018 the Acton Little League hosted a baseball team from China. While there have been these and similar intermittent opportunities to increase students' capacity as global citizens, they have not been coordinated as part of a broader strategic effort to leverage the diversity of the community as a center of global citizenship. There may be opportunities to create global partnerships that provide students with ways to learn from and collaborate with peers across the globe. In addition, faculty and administrators may find opportunities to expand our vision for education and immerse themselves in diverse cultures in order to better understand the students and families we serve.

- *How could the district leverage its diversity as an asset to support the development of international strategic partnerships which increase focus on global citizenship as a student outcome and provide faculty with opportunities to more deeply immerse themselves in and understand cultures that are represented within the A-B community?*



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***II. How can the district continue to expand its Strategic Plan in order to increase its focus on the teaching and learning process and more fully articulate its vision for student success?***

The Long Range Strategic Plan articulates three broad, overarching goals. Two of these are to “*Understand and respond to our students’ social-emotional needs,*” and that “*Our students will have equitable opportunities and access.*” These two goals clearly reflect the values of Wellness and Equity. The third goal of the district for the past three years has been related to much needed capital improvements to its facilities. While there has been significant work in growing educational programs, there are no clear goals in the strategic plan that reflect the community’s value for teaching and learning, the district’s stated Core Value of Engagement, or which drive the continued growth of teaching and learning across all schools and classrooms.

→ *How might the district further expand upon its strategy as articulated in the Long Range Strategic Plan to better reflect the inherent value in the community for teaching and learning?*

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AB has long been recognized as a high performing district, and many members of the community have come to see this as a reflection of the district’s performance on traditional standardized measures such as MCAS, SAT and AP scores. Through work with Challenge Success, there has been a concerted effort to expand the definition of success beyond reliance upon these measures; however, there has been no universally agreed upon vision across all stakeholder groups of what an expanded notion of success should look like for all students. Because there has been no universally adopted vision of a successful graduate, some stakeholders perceived that the district lacked a consistent set of measures by which to measure student learning. Stakeholder groups that ranged from families to school committee members have questioned how the district defines an expanded vision of student success and expressed that this lack of coherence led them to question “if not standardized test scores, then what?”

→ *How can the district work with stakeholders to come to consensus on what an expanded notion of success might look like and how this can be measured over time?*

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As a key part of my entry process I observed classrooms on a monthly basis at each school with building Principals, met with curriculum coordinators and district leaders, and reviewed a variety of data regarding educator observation and evaluation. There was significant evidence that faculty are highly knowledgeable, care deeply about the students they teach, and maintain high expectations for them. There was also evidence that there are some inconsistencies with regard to how teachers implement programs and practices such as balanced literacy, including phonics instruction and readers' and writers' workshops, and Responsive Classroom programs across schools and levels. At the secondary level, some students in focus groups commented on inconsistencies among instructional practices of teachers. These inconsistencies may be partly related to varied professional learning opportunities in which teachers have participated. Additionally, there are opportunities to increase the consistency by which teachers and administrators are supported by the educator evaluation framework.

→ *In moving forward, how can the district leverage professional learning and educator supervision and evaluation in order to increase instructional coherence and outcomes for all students?*

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***III. How can the District manage tension between district-wide strategic coherence and the rich traditions of individualism and autonomy that have developed in the various schools?***

Our schools have leveraged site-based leadership and decision-making as a historical strategy to providing students with a personalized and responsive learning environment. This has resulted in several schools within the district developing specialized foci such as arts integration, looping, project-based learning, exhibitionary learning, and outdoor education. This approach has been enjoyed by many students and families and the opportunity to personalize the school environment has led to the adoption of an “open enrollment” program that allows families in both Acton and Boxborough to select the elementary school that they believe best meets their child’s needs. This has also led to increasingly site-based management over time and schools each adopted separate curricular programs and materials in the areas of literacy, mathematics and social emotional learning. School improvement planning has been focused at the building level through the respective school councils. A review of school improvement plans indicated varying degrees of coherence with district goals and some stakeholders offered feedback which questioned the strategic alignment of school plans with those of the district. During the entry process, many families, faculty, students and administrators expressed tremendous support for the positive impact the culture of individualism and autonomy has had on students. Some stakeholders within each group also questioned how these practices may lead to inequities in students’ outcomes and indicated that they believe the schools to be similar in many ways. Additionally, over the last several years, the district has recognized some of the inequities that arose from this culture and has taken steps to ensure more equitable access to opportunities across the schools. This process has led to natural tension within the district as resources have been reallocated across schools and there has been an increasing focus on ensuring equitable student access to programs. Some stakeholders also expressed concerns about diminishing the culture of individualism and autonomy as there has been increased focus around equity.

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- *What strategies might the district utilize to increase strategic coherence that result in equitable opportunities and access for students while celebrating opportunities for individualism and autonomy at the classroom and school level?*
  
  - *How can we most effectively manage the tension that is arising from an increasing focus on strategic coherence in a long standing culture of individualism and autonomy?*

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Literacy and mathematics curriculum and instruction across the elementary schools is varied and analysis of the MCAS data reveals some inequitable outcomes for some students in these key areas. Additionally, because there are no centralized programs for literacy and mathematics across the elementary schools, there is no centralized benchmark data collection and analysis system in place to ensure equitable outcomes for all students across schools. Based on interviews with stakeholders including teachers, specialists, and administrators, data collection and analysis is done at the classroom and school level, but there are inconsistencies in the processes by which the data is utilized to inform instruction.

- *What strategies might the district utilize to ensure that all students have equitable outcomes in literacy and mathematics instruction?*
  
- *What might the District do to ensure that there are effective data collection and analysis systems in place to support teachers in using assessment data to inform instruction?*

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Many of the classrooms across the district have embraced digital learning strategies that leverage technology to enhance the curriculum and teach these essential digital literacy skills. This is an area of relative strategic coherence across the elementary schools as all students in K-2 have access to iPad carts within classrooms, and all students in grades 3-6 have access to chromebook carts within classrooms. Additionally, the Junior high school has proposed to implement a 1:1 program for its students by re-allocating existing chromebooks within classrooms and purchasing the remaining number of needed chromebooks for the 2019-20 school year. At the high school, some departments have

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purchased chromebook carts for students to access during class, but this has not been universally adopted across departments or all classrooms within departments. As a result, the district lacks a plan to ensure a coherent K-12 plan for technology access and integration for students.

→ *In moving forward, how can the district ensure that there is a coherent plan to integrate technology into instruction vertically across all K-12 classrooms as well as provide students opportunities to learn and practice key 21st century digital skills as they progress through all grades toward graduation?*

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***IV. How can the District foster an increased culture of inclusivity and best leverage its resources in order to support an increasingly diverse student population (with regard to learning profiles, race, and socio-economic status) in a more inclusive environment?***

Over the last decade, we have seen a significant shift in student demographics among selected populations. Some key demographic highlights include:

- A steady decline over the last decade in the percentage of students identified as “white” from 76% (2008) to 56% (2018) with a corresponding increase in students identified as Asian (18.9% to 30.5%) during the same period;
- Increases in the percentages of students identified as African American (1.0% to 1.8%), and Hispanic (2.7% to 3.5%)
- The percentage of students qualifying for Free or Reduced Price Lunch has increased by 400% over last decade from 2.5% (2008) of students to more than 10% (2018).
- The percentage of students identified as English Learners (EL) has increased by almost 500% over the last decade from 1.1% (2008) to 4.8% (2018).
- Since 2013, when the state began reporting an aggregate population of high needs students, the district has seen a steady increase in this student population from 20.2% (2013) to 24.9% (2018)
- Additionally, over the last several years, the district has made a concerted effort to provide special education programming for students with increasingly complex needs in order to allow them to remain in district.

The district has recognized that there are equity gaps among these various selected populations of students. As the student population has shifted, services for students of selected populations (EL, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged) have increased, and as the district has sought to reduce equity gaps, the Student Services Department has played an increasingly important role in its work with families, educators and school-based administrators. Based on analysis of various performance indicators, the impact of programs across the district is inequitable to the selected populations of students. For example, students in these subgroups are disproportionately overrepresented in the

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lowest quartile of students on state testing. While equity is a Core Value of the district, it has been defined as “ensuring access” but not having “equitable outcomes” for students.

→ *Should the district consider expanding its definition of equity from ensuring access and opportunity, to ensuring equitable outcomes for students?*

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The evolving needs of students has also required general education classroom teachers to adopt an increasingly diverse repertoire of skills, and for the district to think about the most appropriate delivery model for the various services students require to achieve equitable outcomes. Stakeholders including families, teachers and administrators all recognized a significant shift in the needs of students, but not all stakeholders were in clear agreement as to the most effective model to support students.

During classroom observations and meetings with various stakeholders, it was noted that there is a significant number of students receiving support services and direct instruction outside of the regular classroom environment. This equates to opportunities lost for these students to receive instruction from the content teacher and to participate in peer groups within the classroom environment. It was unclear from stakeholder feedback if there is a universal shared belief that this pull-out model is the most effective service delivery model for students who require these supports.

→ *How might the district establish and communicate a clear vision and necessary supports for inclusive practice, and ensure that beliefs around inclusive practice permeate both regular and special education settings?*

→ *How might the district evaluate whether the current service delivery model is the most appropriate for providing services and ensuring equitable access to content instruction from highly-qualified, licensed teachers?*

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Various stakeholders including students, families, faculty and administrators identified a belief that there are inconsistencies that exist in grading practices among secondary teachers. There was also feedback from stakeholders, which was confirmed through

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classroom observation, that some of the practices and expectations between and among the various course levels and sections at the high school were inconsistent.

→ *How might the district increase the consistency of grading and assessment practices, particularly at the secondary level, while simultaneously ensuring high expectations in all course levels and sections?*



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***V. How can the District become more proactive in meeting the needs of a fast-growing population of students who have increasingly complex and acute social and emotional needs?***

Over the last five years, district leaders and staff became increasingly concerned with the level of stress among students, and the negative impact this stress had on both their learning and overall quality of life. This led to the launch of Challenge Success as a strategy to focus more deeply on the social and emotional wellbeing of our students. Through the work with Challenge Success, the district implemented several key initiatives to respond to student needs. The most notable efforts in this area included the development of a new homework policy and a move to later start times.

It was also immediately evident upon my entry into the district that a number of student deaths by suicide which occurred over the last two years have taken a tremendous emotional toll on the students, families, faculty, staff and administration of the district. Administrators and counselors report an increasing number of students with acute mental health illness as early as elementary school, and teachers have reported the negative impact that student emotional wellbeing is having on their ability to engage in learning.

The district has implemented a number of screening and intervention programs, provided parent trainings, introduced programs at the secondary level in order to reduce stress, changed start times, revised its homework policy, and developed a variety of community partnerships to support students. Despite these efforts teachers, counselors and administrators report increasing needs with regard to student mental health and a lack of sufficient support to work with students in crisis. Families widely reported ongoing concern for students' mental health.

Elementary schools have increasingly adopted The Responsive Classroom as a process to support student social and emotional learning. Classroom observations and discussions with teachers and administrators indicate that there is an opportunity to increase the consistency with which this program is implemented. Additionally, some classrooms and schools have adopted social and emotional curricula beyond the Responsive Classroom approach, but these vary by school, and in some cases by classroom.

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While many elementary classrooms across the district use some or many Responsive Classroom methods, and there have been various strategies and supports used in the secondary schools, there was no evidence of an agreed upon set of skills that students should develop or strategies to assess how students are making progress toward these skills and systematically support those students who need additional skill development. This lack of consistency may lead to inconsistent development of social and emotional skills among students and, in particular, our most vulnerable students.

Stakeholder meetings with teachers, counselors and administrators all identified that there was insufficient support for students' mental health. However, an initial analysis of staffing levels in this area shows that the schools across the district meet or exceed recommended staffing levels set by the various professional organizations. As staff and school-based administrators see the increasing needs of students, there is a tension with regard to appropriate staffing levels in counselling and psychology and the role these professionals play in supporting students on a daily basis.

Social and emotional skill development has become regarded as critically important to supporting optimal student learning, and businesses are now identifying emotional intelligence as a key skill valued in the workforce. Similarly, research is clear that toxic levels of stress can profoundly impede learning. All stakeholder groups reported a sense of urgency with regard to ensuring students' wellness, and it is important that we take a proactive and cohesive approach to helping students develop these critical social and emotional skills.

- *What are the social and emotional skills that all students should develop and how can these skills be integrated systematically within a developmental framework throughout all grade levels?*
- *How could the district ensure that all students develop necessary social emotional skills and more deeply and proactively understand which students need additional early intervention supports in these areas?*
- *How can the district implement a system of social and emotional supports that provides continuity and coherence for students as they progress through the grades and between schools?*

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→ *What steps might the district take to resolve the tension with regard to staffing and support for social emotional learning?*

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**VI. How can the District's Leadership Teams most effectively employ the characteristics of High-Performing Teams to support the work of the schools and district?**

For the last several years, the leadership team that includes district and school administrators has grappled with issues of wellness, equity among schools, and the tension between strategic coherence and individualism and autonomy of schools. Additionally, the district has had turnover in leadership during this same time period (four Superintendents in six years). During meetings with senior leaders (district leaders and Principals), stakeholders have identified long-standing tension between the roles of school and district administrators and the impact this tension has on the team's work. In order for the district to move the work highlighted in this report forward, successful functioning of the leadership team will be critical.

*→ How can the leadership team continue to develop the characteristics of high performing teams which include developing mutual trust, recognizing trust as both thinking and feeling, and continuing to develop strategies to ensure that meetings and the work of the District focus on having important and impactful conversations that deeply impact student learning?*

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The school committee is a critical leadership team and the relationship between the school committee and Superintendent is important to providing strategic leadership to the schools. The committee is also a leadership team that, due to its nature as an elected body, typically experiences changes in membership each year. Additionally, because of its large size with regard to membership, there are often several new members welcomed onto the committee in any given year.

*→ How can the Superintendent and School Committee continue to develop themselves as an important leadership team within the district, and ensure that:*

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- ◆ *The district's Core Values, Vision and Mission reflect the values of the community and its vision for education;*
  - ◆ *There is a focused strategy in place that reflects the Core Values, Vision and Mission that can withstand changes in leadership;*
  - ◆ *Improvement efforts and initiatives are coherent and relevant to the district strategy, while minimizing threats to this focus;*
  - ◆ *There is a positive and predictable system of accountability for the district and its schools for making progress toward its goals as well as a method to communicate this progress effectively with stakeholders in the community;*
  - ◆ *The various members of the school committee are able to effectively voice individual perspectives in an atmosphere of mutual trust, while simultaneously working from consensus and recognizing the large make-up of the committee?*

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## Next Steps

While AB continues to be recognized as a high performing district at the state and national levels, all stakeholders identified opportunities for improvement. In the coming months, I will work with the leadership team and school committee to delve further into the questions posed in this report. I anticipate that some of the questions posed will lead to an expansion and refinement of the district's long term strategy, while other ideas may be tabled for a period of time, or dismissed upon further investigation. This work will span the spring and summer months and will be reflected in the district's expanded strategy and goals which will be presented to the school committee next fall.





Our **vision** is to provide high-quality educational opportunities that inspire a community of learners

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT

Our **mission** is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships

## Superintendent's Report of Entry Findings

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Peter Light, Superintendent  
February 7, 2019

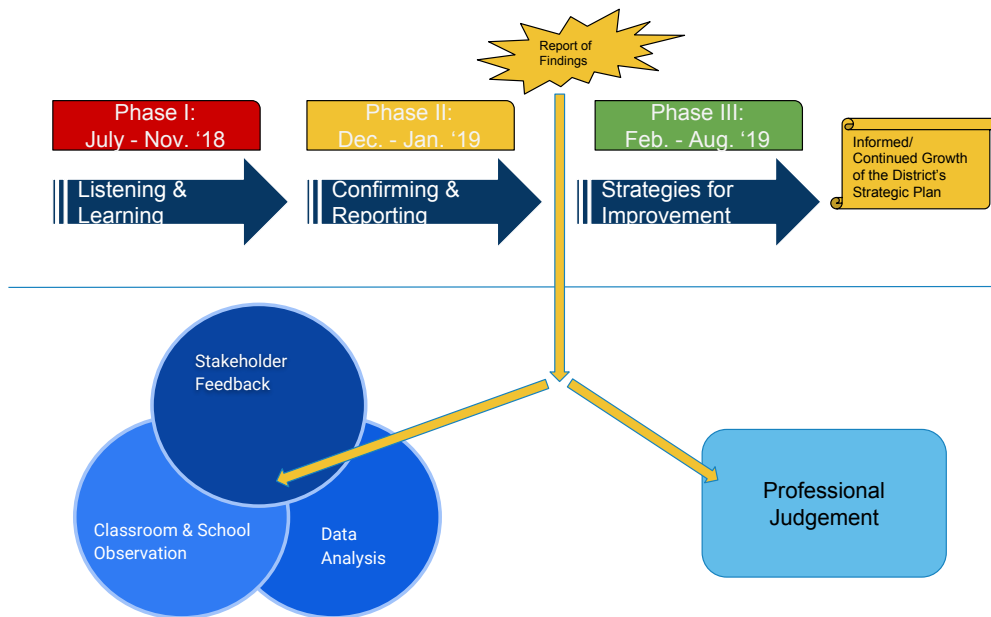
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## Thank You...

- Marie Altieri
- Deb Bookis, Dawn Bentley
- Principals and Central Office Administrators
- Beth Petr, Karen Coll
- School Committee Members
- Participants in the Stakeholder Meetings
  - Students, Teachers and Families

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## Overview of Entry Process



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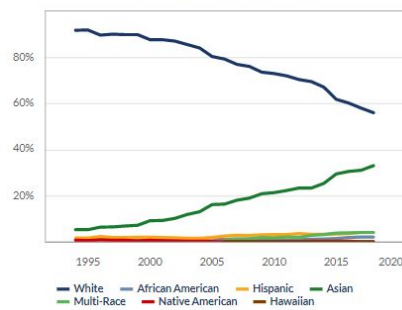
## Organization of the Report

- Six broad themes that emerged
- Framed as questions to promote curiosity and dialog
- More discrete questions within each theme
- Supported by evidence taken from:
  - Stakeholder Meetings
  - School and Classroom Observation
  - Data Analysis
- Conclusions were shared/tested with key stakeholders
- Conclusions are *my professional judgement* based on the evidence gathered





STUDENT DIVERSITY OVER TIME



## Six Broad Themes

- I. *How can we manage tension that has arisen from increasingly diverse cultural perspectives about education and the purpose of schools, and leverage this diversity into increased opportunities for students?*
- II. *How can we continue to expand our Strategic Plan in order to increase focus on the teaching and learning process, and more fully articulate our vision for student learning?*
- III. *How can we manage tension between greater district-wide strategic coherence and the rich traditions of individualism and autonomy that have developed in the various schools?*

## Six Broad Themes

IV. *How can we foster an increased culture of inclusivity and best leverage resources in order to support an increasingly diverse student population (with regard to learning profiles, race and socioeconomic status) in a more inclusive environment?*

V. *How can we be more proactive in meeting the needs of a fast growing population of students with increasingly complex and acute social and emotional needs?*

VI. *How can our Leadership Teams most effectively employ the characteristics of High-Performing Teams to support the work of the schools and district?*

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### ***1. How can we manage tension that has arisen from increasingly diverse cultural perspectives about education and the purpose of schools, and leverage this diversity into increased opportunities for students?***

- *How can teaching and learning practices as well as our educational programs continue to evolve in ways that recognize and manage tension between the values and priorities of diverse cultures within the community?*
- *What strategies might we implement to establish greater connections with students and families that represent all of the various cultures and backgrounds in the community and ensure that these groups' voices feel heard?*
- *What is driving the discrepancies in open enrollment with respect to race and how can the schools and district effectively respond to this in order to ensure racial equity within the open enrollment program?*
- *Do the district's stated Core Values, Vision and Mission fully embrace, reflect and capitalize upon the value of the diversity in the educational community?*
- *How can we continue to prioritize anti-bias education for members of our educational community and promote a continued focus on developing respect for human differences as a key outcome for students?*
- *How could the district leverage its diversity as an asset to support the development of international strategic partnerships which increase focus on global citizenship as a student outcome and provide faculty with opportunities to more deeply immerse themselves in and understand cultures that are represented within the A-B community?*

## **II. How can we continue to expand our Strategic Plan in order to increase focus on the teaching and learning process, and more fully articulate our vision for student learning?**

- *How might the district further expand upon its strategy as articulated in the Long Range Strategic Plan to better reflect the inherent value in the community for teaching and learning?*
- *How can the district work with stakeholders to come to consensus on what an expanded notion of success might look like and how this can be measured over time?*
- *In moving forward, how can the district leverage professional learning and educator supervision and evaluation in order to increase instructional coherence and outcomes for all students?*

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## **III. How can we manage tension between greater district-wide strategic coherence and the rich traditions of individualism and autonomy that have developed in the various schools?**

- *What strategies might the district utilize to increase strategic coherence that result in equitable opportunities and access for students while celebrating opportunities for individualism and autonomy at the classroom and school level?*
- *How can we most effectively manage the tension that is arising from an increasing focus on strategic coherence in a long standing culture of individualism and autonomy?*
- *What strategies might the district utilize to ensure that all students have equitable outcomes in literacy and mathematics instruction?*
- *What might the District do to ensure that there are effective data collection and analysis systems in place to support teachers in using assessment data to inform instruction?*
- *In moving forward, how can the district ensure that there is a coherent plan to integrate technology into instruction vertically across all K-12 classrooms as well as provide students opportunities to learn and practice key 21st century digital skills as they progress through all grades toward graduation?*

**WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT**

**IV. How can we foster an increased culture of inclusivity and best leverage resources in order to support an increasingly diverse student population (with regard to learning profiles, race and socioeconomic status) in a more inclusive environment?**

- *Should the district consider expanding its definition of equity from ensuring access and opportunity, to ensuring equitable outcomes for students?*
- *How might the district establish and communicate a clear vision and necessary supports for inclusive practice, and ensure that beliefs around inclusive practice permeate both regular and special education settings?*
- *How might the district evaluate whether the current service delivery model is the most appropriate for providing services and ensuring equitable access to content instruction from highly-qualified, licensed teachers?*
- *How might the district increase the consistency of grading and assessment practices, particularly at the secondary level, while simultaneously ensuring high expectations in all course levels and sections?*

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**V. How can we be more proactive in meeting the needs of a fast growing population of students with increasingly complex and acute social and emotional needs?**

- *What are the social and emotional skills that all students should develop and how can these skills be integrated systematically within a developmental framework throughout all grade levels?*
- *How could the district ensure that all students develop necessary social emotional skills and more deeply and proactively understand which students need additional early intervention supports in these areas?*
- *How can the district implement a system of social and emotional supports that provides continuity and coherence for students as they progress through the grades and between schools?*
- *What steps might the district take to resolve the tension with regard to staffing and support for social emotional learning?*

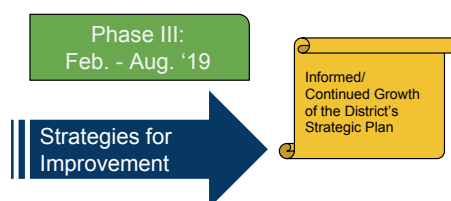
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## VI. How can our Leadership Teams most effectively employ the characteristics of High-Performing Teams to support the work of the schools and district?

- How can the leadership team continue to develop the characteristics of high performing teams which include developing mutual trust, recognizing trust as both thinking and feeling, and continuing to develop strategies to ensure that meetings and the work of the District focus on having important and impactful conversations that deeply impact student learning?
  
- How can the Superintendent and School Committee continue to develop themselves as an important leadership team within the district, and ensure that:
  - ◆ The district's Core Values, Vision and Mission reflect the values of the community and its vision for education;
  - ◆ There is a focused strategy in place that reflects the Core Values, Vision and Mission that can withstand changes in leadership;
  - ◆ Improvement efforts and initiatives are coherent and relevant to the district strategy, while minimizing threats to this focus;
  - ◆ There is a positive and predictable system of accountability for the district and its schools for making progress toward its goals as well as a method to communicate this progress effectively with stakeholders in the community;
  - ◆ The various members of the school committee are able to effectively voice individual perspectives in an atmosphere of mutual trust, while simultaneously working from consensus and recognizing the large make-up of the committee?

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## Next Steps



- Follow-up Workshop for School Committee - opportunity to dive deeper
- Ongoing work with Leadership Team
- Expanded district strategy (Long Range Strategic Plan)

## Massachusetts School Building Authority

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### Next Steps to Finalize Submission of your FY 2019 Statement of Interest

Thank you for submitting your FY 2019 Statement of Interest (SOI) to the MSBA electronically. **Please note, the District's submission is not yet complete.** The District is required to mail all required supporting documentation, which is described below.

**VOTES: Each SOI must be submitted with the proper vote documentation.** This means that (1) the required governing bodies have voted to submit each SOI, (2) the specific vote language required by the MSBA has been used, and (3) the District has submitted a record of the vote in the format required by the MSBA.

- i **School Committee Vote:** Submittal of all SOIs must be approved by a vote of the School Committee.
  - i For documentation of the vote of the School Committee, Minutes of the School Committee meeting at which the vote was taken must be submitted with the original signature of the Committee Chairperson. The Minutes must contain the actual text of the vote taken which should be substantially the same as the MSBA's SOI vote language.
- i **Municipal Body Vote:** SOIs that are submitted by cities and towns must be approved by a vote of the appropriate municipal body (e.g., City Council/ Aldermen/Board of Selectmen) in addition to a vote of the School Committee.
  - i Regional School Districts do not need to submit a vote of the municipal body.
  - i For the vote of the municipal governing body, a copy of the text of the vote, which shall be substantially the same as the MSBA's SOI vote language, must be submitted with a certification of the City/Town Clerk that the vote was taken and duly recorded, and the date of the vote must be provided.

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION FOR SOI PRIORITIES #1 AND #3:** If a District selects Priority #1 and/or Priority #3, the District is required to submit additional documentation with its SOI.

- i If a District selects Priority #1, Replacement or renovation of a building which is structurally unsound or otherwise in a condition seriously jeopardizing the health and safety of the school children, where no alternative exists, the MSBA requires a hard copy of the engineering or other report detailing the nature and severity of the problem and a written professional opinion of how imminent the system failure is likely to manifest itself. The District also must submit photographs of the problematic building area or system to the MSBA.
- i If a District selects Priority #3, Prevention of a loss of accreditation, the SOI will not be considered complete unless and until a summary of the accreditation report focused on the deficiency as stated in this SOI is provided.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** In addition to the information required above, the District may also provide any reports, pictures, or other information they feel will give the MSBA a better understanding of the issues identified at a facility.

If you have any questions about the SOI process please contact the MSBA at 617-720-4466 or [SOI@massschoolbuildings.org](mailto:SOI@massschoolbuildings.org).

## Massachusetts School Building Authority

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School District Acton-Boxborough

District Contact John David Head TEL: (978) 264-4700

Name of School Blanchard Memorial

Submission Date 2/7/2019

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### SOI CERTIFICATION

To be eligible to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI), a district must certify the following:

- The district hereby acknowledges and agrees that this SOI is NOT an application for funding and that submission of this SOI in no way commits the MSBA to accept an application, approve an application, provide a grant or any other type of funding, or places any other obligation on the MSBA.
- The district hereby acknowledges that no district shall have any entitlement to funds from the MSBA, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B or the provisions of 963 CMR 2.00.
- The district hereby acknowledges that the provisions of 963 CMR 2.00 shall apply to the district and all projects for which the district is seeking and/or receiving funds for any portion of a municipally-owned or regionally-owned school facility from the MSBA pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B.
- The district hereby acknowledges that this SOI is for one existing municipally-owned or regionally-owned public school facility in the district that is currently used or will be used to educate public PreK-12 students and that the facility for which the SOI is being submitted does not serve a solely early childhood or Pre-K student population.
- After the district completes and submits this SOI electronically, the district must mail hard copies of the required documentation described under the "Vote" tab, on or before the deadline.
- The district will schedule and hold a meeting at which the School Committee will vote, using the specific language contained in the "Vote" tab, to authorize the submission of this SOI. This is required for cities, towns, and regional school districts.
- Prior to the submission of the SOI, the district will schedule and hold a meeting at which the City Council/Board of Aldermen or Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body will vote, using the specific language contained in the "Vote" tab, to authorize the submission of this SOI. This is not required for regional school districts.
- On or before the SOI deadline, the district will submit the minutes of the meeting at which the School Committee votes to authorize the Superintendent to submit this SOI. The District will use the MSBA's vote template and the vote will specifically reference the school and the priorities for which the SOI is being submitted. The minutes will be signed by the School Committee Chair. This is required for cities, towns, and regional school districts.
- The district has arranged with the City/Town Clerk to certify the vote of the City Council/Board of Aldermen or Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body to authorize the Superintendent to submit this SOI. The district will use the MSBA's vote template and submit the full text of this vote, which will specifically reference the school and the priorities for which the SOI is being submitted, to the MSBA on or before the SOI deadline. This is not required for regional school districts.
- The district hereby acknowledges that this SOI submission will not be complete until the MSBA has received all of the required vote documentation in a format acceptable to the MSBA. If Priority 1 is selected, your SOI will not be considered complete unless and until you provide the required engineering (or other) report, a professional opinion regarding the problem, and photographs of the problematic area or system. If Priority 3 is selected, your SOI will not be considered complete unless and until you provide a summary of the accreditation report focused on the deficiency as stated in this SOI.

**LOCAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT/SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR  
(E.g., Mayor, Town Manager, Board of Selectmen)**

**Chief Executive Officer \*      School Committee Chair      Superintendent of Schools**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)                      (signature)                      (signature)

Date                              Date                              Date

\* Local chief executive officer: In a city or town with a manager form of government, the manager of the municipality; in other cities, the mayor; and in other towns, the board of selectmen unless, in a city or town, some other municipal office is designated to the chief executive office under the provisions of a local charter. Please note, in districts where the Superintendent is also the Local Chief Executive Officer, it is required for the same person to sign the Statement of Interest Certifications twice.



# Massachusetts School Building Authority

School District Acton-Boxborough

District Contact John David Head TEL: (978) 264-4700

Name of School Blanchard Memorial

Submission Date 2/7/2019

## Note

### The following Priorities have been included in the Statement of Interest:

1. <sup>e</sup> Replacement or renovation of a building which is structurally unsound or otherwise in a condition seriously jeopardizing the health and safety of school children, where no alternative exists.
2. <sup>e</sup> Elimination of existing severe overcrowding.
3. <sup>e</sup> Prevention of the loss of accreditation.
4. <sup>e</sup> Prevention of severe overcrowding expected to result from increased enrollments.
5. <sup>b</sup> Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility.
6. <sup>e</sup> Short term enrollment growth.
7. <sup>e</sup> Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements.
8. <sup>e</sup> Transition from court-ordered and approved racial balance school districts to walk-to, so-called, or other school districts.

## SOI Vote Requirement

<sup>b</sup> I acknowledge that I have reviewed the MSBA's vote requirements for submitting an SOI which are set forth in the Vote Tab of this SOI. I understand that the MSBA requires votes from specific parties/governing bodies, in a specific format using the language provided by the MSBA. Further, I understand that the MSBA requires certified and signed vote documentation to be submitted with the SOI. I acknowledge that my SOI will not be considered complete and, therefore, will not be reviewed by the MSBA unless the required accompanying vote documentation is submitted to the satisfaction of the MSBA.

**Potential Project Scope:** Accelerated Repair  
Roof  
Windows/ Doors

**Is this SOI the District Priority SOI?** NO

**School name of the District Priority SOI:** Douglas

**Is this part of a larger facilities plan?** YES

**If "YES", please provide the following:**

**Facilities Plan Date:** 9/15/2016

**Planning Firm:** Dore and Whittier

**Please provide a brief summary of the plan including its goals and how the school facility that is the subject of this SOI fits into that plan:**

The Blanchard Memorial School was one of 9 facilities evaluated by Dore and Whittier as part of a two-phase District Master plan. Phase one was a full scale existing conditions facilities assessment of all of our District facilities and physical assets and the final phase was a forward looking Master Plan with the goal of addressing our educational program needs within our facilities. This effort has led to the CT Douglas Elementary School being accepted in the MSBA core construction program, currently in the feasibility phase, as well as the adoption of a multi-year capital improvement plan that will see the District complete over \$20,000,000 in capital projects through fiscal year 2032. The funding strategy for the plan involves short term borrowing, the creation and funding of a capital stabilization fund, and increased funding in the area of capital improvements in the District Facilities operating budget. The five overarching goals which guided the development of this proposed Capital Plan include:

- \* Utilize the Dore & Whittier report to identify the appropriate projects for inclusion in the district's mid-range capital plan
- \* Develop a phasing process that will allow the district to execute the projects identified for completion efficiently and in a fiscally responsible manner
- \* Develop a funding strategy that will enable the district to complete projects identified in the plan
- \* Develop a long-term budget strategy that will allow the district to have access to sufficient funds to execute the plan and fund any unanticipated capital needs in the foreseeable future
- \* Ensure that the district allocates an appropriate level of funding each year for capital projects

As part of this comprehensive capital plan evolving from the Dore and Whittier District Master Plan the Blanchard Memorial school received a comprehensive heating system upgrade with new boilers, circulation pumps, and domestic hot water upgrades. Additionally the District has replaced the Administration Wing HVAC rooftop unit, interior bathroom upgrades have been completed, and additional parking added to the facility. Moving forward the District has identified an additional \$3,000,000 in capital projects at this facility, including the replacement of the roofing system and some windows which is the subject of this accelerated repair statement of interest document.

**Please provide the current student to teacher ratios at the school facility that is the subject of this SOI: 11 students per teacher**

**Please provide the originally planned student to teacher ratios at the school facility that is the subject of this SOI: 11 students per teacher**

**Does the District have a Master Educational Plan that includes facility goals for this building and all school buildings in District? YES**

**If "YES", please provide the author and date of the District's Master Educational Plan.**

The author of the plan is Dore and Whittier Architects. The District partnered with Dore and Whittier to complete a comprehensive two phase District Master Plan and Feasibility Study. Phase I, Existing Conditions and Capital Planning Study was completed and delivered January 2016. The District then moved directly into Phase II, Master Planning and Educational Feasibility, and this final phase was completed and delivered September 15, 2016.

**Is there overcrowding at the school facility? NO**

**If "YES", please describe in detail, including specific examples of the overcrowding.**

**Has the district had any recent teacher layoffs or reductions? NO**

**If "YES", how many teaching positions were affected? 0**

**At which schools in the district?**

**Please describe the types of teacher positions that were eliminated (e.g., art, math, science, physical education, etc.).**

**Has the district had any recent staff layoffs or reductions? NO**

**If "YES", how many staff positions were affected? 0**

**At which schools in the district?**

**Please describe the types of staff positions that were eliminated (e.g., guidance, administrative, maintenance, etc.).**

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**Please provide a description of the program modifications as a consequence of these teacher and/or staff reductions, including the impact on district class sizes and curriculum.**

Does not apply

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**Please provide a description of the local budget approval process for a potential capital project with the MSBA. Include schedule information (i.e. Town Meeting dates, city council/town council meetings dates, regional school committee meeting dates). Provide, if applicable, the District's most recent budget approval process that resulted in a budget reduction and the impact of the reduction to the school district (staff reductions, discontinued programs, consolidation of facilities).**

The FY'20 budget presented to the School Committee on 1/26/2019 totals \$90,982,111, an increase of 2.55% from FY19. This represents an increase of approximately 0.3% in Capital Expenditures and 2.25% in General Operating Expenses. However, with the additional use of E&D, the overall increase in assessments to the communities from FY19 is now 2.00%, which represents an increase of 2.09% to Acton and 1.51% to Boxborough. To date the budget process and specifically the capital improvement plan has been met with overwhelming support from the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee as well as the respective Financial Committees in both Acton and Boxborough. The School Committee voted unanimously to initially approve the proposed FY'20 budget 1/26/2019, a final budget vote from the school committee will occur 2/7/2019. Following that the member communities will have an opportunity to vote the budget at their respective Town Meetings. In Acton this will occur April 1, 2019 and in Boxborough May 13, 2019. The District will bring this ARP SOI to a vote at the regional school committee meeting scheduled for February 7, 2019. Once voted the Regional School District will be authorized, with funding in the proposed appropriated budget, to move forward and partner with the MSBA on this very important accelerated repair capital project.

## General Description

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**BRIEF BUILDING HISTORY: Please provide a detailed description of when the original building was built, and the date(s) and project scopes(s) of any additions and renovations (maximum of 5000 characters).**

Blanchard Memorial School is located on an approximately 8.37 acre plot at 493 Massachusetts Avenue in Boxborough, Massachusetts. The school site is bounded to the east, north and west by a wooded area serving as a buffer to wetlands and Guggins Brook and a pond. Also on-site to the north are a baseball field and playground area. The parking lot, with approximately 100 parking spaces, is accessed from Massachusetts Avenue (Route 111) and runs along the southern perimeter of the site. The site is located across the street from the Boxborough Police Station and Fire Station buildings, and adjacent to the Sargent Memorial Library.

The school was originally built in 1949 with additions in 1959, 1967, 1973, and 1995. The cafeteria with classrooms above wing was part of the original 1949 school building. In 1959, a classroom addition was constructed southwest of the original building. In 1967 a two-story classroom addition was constructed east of the original building. The Gymnasium was built in 1973. The school underwent a maintenance project in various locations in 1988. The school doubled in size with the 1995 two-story classroom addition, gymnasium addition, cafeteria addition and library additions.

The 1967 addition drawings were prepared by Perley F. Gilbert Associates in Lowell, MA in 1965. Strekalovsky & Hoit Inc. prepared drawings in 1998. The 1995 addition and renovation project was designed by Boston, MA architect Earl R. Flansburgh & Associates.

Current enrollment, based on October 2018 report, is approximately 464 students in grades K-6. The school also offers a PK program serving approximately 21 students. The gross floor area is 71,395 +/-SF. Peak staff during the day numbers approximately 110 people.

**TOTAL BUILDING SQUARE FOOTAGE: Please provide the original building square footage PLUS the square footage of any additions.**

71395

**SITE DESCRIPTION: Please provide a detailed description of the current site and any known existing conditions that would impact a potential project at the site. Please note whether there are any other buildings, public or private, that share this current site with the school facility. What is the use(s) of this building(s)? (maximum of 5000 characters).**

To reiterate from the building history section, the site is a 8.37 acre plot at 493 Massachusetts Avenue in Boxborough, Massachusetts. The school site is bounded to the east, north and west by a wooded area serving as a buffer to wetlands and Guggins Brook and a pond. Also on-site to the north are a baseball field and playground area. The parking lot, with approximately 100 parking spaces, is accessed from Massachusetts Avenue (Route 111) and runs along the southern perimeter of the site. The site is located across the street from the Boxborough Police Station and Fire Station buildings, and adjacent to the Sargent Memorial Library.

The parking lot at the southwest portion of the ranges from approximate El. 246 at the high point within the drop off loop adjacent to the main building entrance, to approximate El. 240 at the eastern driveway entrance along Massachusetts Avenue. The western driveway entrance along Massachusetts Avenue is at approximate El. 246. There is a three to five foot tall retaining wall located just southwest of the main building entrance between the back of sidewalk and the building face. The paved play area to the north of the building is at approximate El. 246. There is an approximate four to five foot tall cut slope to the east of the paved play area along the central portion of the building. This slope is met by a one to five foot tall retaining wall just south of the northernmost building face. The northernmost building face is at approximate El.

242. The northeastern and southeastern faces of the building are at approximate El. 242 as well. Based on the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Middlesex County Soil Survey, issued February 2010, the site classified as Soil Group A.

**ADDRESS OF FACILITY: Please type address, including number, street name and city/town, if available, or describe the location of the site. (Maximum of 300 characters)**

Blanchard Memorial School  
493 Massachusetts Ave  
Boxborough, MA 01719

**BUILDING ENVELOPE: Please provide a detailed description of the building envelope, types of construction materials used, and any known problems or existing conditions (maximum of 5000 characters).**

Building foundations are primarily constructed of 8"-12" thick poured in place concrete with steel reinforcing at the original building and additions. The foundation walls are generally in good condition. The exterior walls are mostly comprised of a red brick veneer with concrete masonry unit (CMU) back-up and typically 3" of insulation minimum at newer walls. In general, the brick is in good condition. The gym consists of split ribbed CMU in good condition. The 1995 addition includes brick veneer with ground faced block in various locations. Fiber-reinforced panels (FRP) are located at upper section of the Gym walls. Windows are aluminum framed with insulated glass, many were replaced during the 1988 and 1995 building projects. However, thermal issues exists in many areas, in some locations the original aluminum window frames were left but thermally insulated glass was replaced. The exterior doors are aluminum at most entries with a few hollow metal doors with hollow metal frames. Most doors are in satisfactory condition as they were replace or installed in 1995. The adhered membrane roofing systems found at the school varies in age and condition. An EPDM roof was installed over the majority of the roof in 1997 with a 20 year warranty. Per the drawings, it has 3" rigid insulation on metal decking. This portion is in poor condition. In 2009, the area over the 1959 building was replaced with PVC membrane and has a 15 year warranty. In 2010, the roof over the cafeteria addition was replaced with PVC membrane with a 20 year warranty. In 2013 the gymnasium and music room sloped roofs were replaced with PVC membrane with a 10 year warranty. The fascia system seems to be in satisfactory condition. Roof drains are present and in good condition. The roof hatches were in good working order and provide easy access to the roof. Lightning protection was installed extensively along the roof perimeter and at roof mounted equipment to decrease the risk for fire in the event of a lightning strike.

**Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the EXTERIOR WALLS? YES**

**Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 1995**

**Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:**

In 1995 the building went through a major renovation addition project.

**Roof Section A**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section? YES**

**Area of Section (square feet) 33500**

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe)**

Rubber Adhered EPDM

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced) 25**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

Nothing other than general preventative maintenance and leak repair / patching.

**Roof Section B**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section? NO**

**Area of Section (square feet) 11000**

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe)**

PVC

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced) 6**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

N/A

**Roof Section C**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section?** NO

**Area of Section (square feet)** 1800

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))**  
PVC

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced)** 9

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

N/A

**Roof Section D**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section?** NO

**Area of Section (square feet)** 4000

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))**  
PVC

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced)** 10

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

N/A

**Roof Section E**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section?**

**Area of Section (square feet)**

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Roof Section F**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section?**

**Area of Section (square feet)**

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Roof Section G**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section?**

**Area of Section (square feet)**

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Roof Section H**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section?**

**Area of Section (square feet)**

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Roof Section I**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section?**

**Area of Section (square feet)**

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced)**  
**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Roof Section J**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section?**

**Area of Section (square feet)**

**Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Window Section A**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section? YES**

**Windows in Section (count) 75**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

Aluminum Frame Insulated Glass

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced) 24**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

Preventative Mtn and general repairs

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**Window Section B**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section? YES**

**Windows in Section (count) 25**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

Aluminum frame insulated glass

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced) 31**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

Preventative maintenance and general repairs

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**Window Section C**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?**

**Windows in Section (count)**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Window Section D**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?**

**Windows in Section (count)**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Window Section E**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?**

**Windows in Section (count)**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Window Section F**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?**

**Windows in Section (count)**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**  
**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced)**  
**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Window Section G**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?**

**Windows in Section (count)**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Window Section H**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?**

**Windows in Section (count)**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Window Section I**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?**

**Windows in Section (count)**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Window Section J**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?**

**Windows in Section (count)**

**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

**Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**MECHANICAL and ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS: Please provide a detailed description of the current mechanical and electrical systems and any known problems or existing conditions (maximum of 5000 characters).**

In general, the buildings electrical systems are in satisfactory condition. The facilities electrical services are provided by Littleton Electric Light Department and are secondary metered. Other incoming utilities include: cable TV, fiber, and fire alarm. The power distribution is in good condition and adequately sized. The emergency power system is in excellent condition as it was recently upgraded. Most of the lighting is in need of an efficiency retrofit to LED lamps and ballasts. The fire alarm system is obsolete and non-compliant and is scheduled for replacement. The primary three phase service runs overhead on utility company poles, then underground to a 300 kVA, 277/480V pad mounted transformer. The overhead primary cables continue to another pole which contains a pole mounted transformer that serves the facilities fire pump ancillary loads which is located below grade in a vault. The fire pump is fed from the 300 kVA pad mounted transformer. The meter is mounted exterior on the pad mounted transformer, meter #04583143. Secondary service between the pad mount and the switchboard consists of 1,000 Amp, 277/480V, three phase, four wire feeder via a 1,000 Amp automatic transfer switch with a service entrance rated 1,000 Amp main breaker with GFI protection. The main switchboard is manufactured by Westinghouse. It contains a Westinghouse IQ Data Plus II display meter. The fire pump secondary service consists of a 225 Amp, three phase, four wire service fed via a 225 Amp main breaker located within an exterior Nema 3R enclosure. The fire pump is connected to the emergency generator. An automatic transfer switch is also located within the exterior Nema 3R enclosure. Most electrical panels are located within dedicated electrical rooms and are of circuit breaker type. In general, panel boards are manufactured by Westinghouse. The panel boards are in fair to good condition.



The mechanical equipment is original to the 1995 expansion. The school mostly consists of unit ventilators for all the Classroom spaces and Cafeteria, an indoor air handling unit for the Gym, a roof mounted make-up air handler for the Kitchen, and a brand new rooftop unit for the Administration area. Only the Administration rooftop unit has air conditioning. The rooftop units and indoor air handling units are associated with duct distribution systems for the supply and return air. Exhaust air is provided throughout the building through the use of roof mounted exhaust fans. The building's overall temperature control system is handled with standalone pneumatic controls, however a DDC controls upgrade is currently in progress. Overall the current equipment is functional.

There are two newly installed Viessmann Vitotronic 100, GC1 condensing boilers. Boiler project also included two newly installed Grundfos Hydro MPC fully integrated system pumps, motor and variable frequency drive. The system is controlled by a CU 352 MPC controller, and features high efficiency CR pump range with MLE permanent magnet (ECM) integrated VFD/motor.

The Administration area is air conditioned and ventilated via Carrier 50TCD12A 10 ton cooling only rooftop unit that was installed in August 2015. This unit consists of a supply fan, power exhaust fan, filter section, and direct expansion coil. The rooftop unit has no heat so supply air is heated via a duct mounted hot water coil. Zoning and individual temperature control is provided by a Carrier VVT bypass VAV system. The duct serving each room contains a damper that varies the supply of air to satisfy the room thermostat, providing individual temperature control to each space.

**Boiler Section 1**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?** NO

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?** NO

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?** 100

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

Natural Gas

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)** 1

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

N/A

**Boiler Section 2**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Boiler Section 3**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

**Boiler Section 4**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Boiler Section 5**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Boiler Section 6**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Boiler Section 7**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Boiler Section 8**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Boiler Section 9**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Boiler Section 10**

**Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler?**

**Is there more than one boiler room in the School?**

**What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler?**

**Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)**

**Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced)**

**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

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**Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the HVAC SYSTEM? YES**

**Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 2018**

**Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:**

Boilers / Domestic Hot Water / Circulation Pumps

**Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the ELECTRICAL SERVICES AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM? YES****Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 1995****Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:**

Prior major renovation addition.

**BUILDING INTERIOR: Please provide a detailed description of the current building interior including a description of the flooring systems, finishes, ceilings, lighting, etc. (maximum of 5000 characters).**

There are multiple types of flooring used throughout the school. These consist of the following:

- Corridors, main vestibules, and lobby areas are primarily vinyl composition tile (VCT) (Image 29), with recessed and/or walk-off mats incorporated into the vestibules.
- Stairs, ramps and secondary vestibules: Raised rubber tile flooring.
- Administration, Library: Carpet
- Classrooms: Typically has mix of VCT and carpet. Some are fully carpeted.
- Gym: Rubberized athletic flooring (RAF).
- Stage: Wood.
- Cafeteria: Vinyl Composite Tile
- Kitchen: Textured Epoxy flooring
- Toilet rooms: Ceramic Mosaic Tile, Textured Epoxy flooring
- Custodial closets, custodial rooms, electrical closets, and storage rooms are a combination of VCT/VAT and /or concrete sealed concrete.
- Vinyl Base typically found throughout the building except at walls that have glazed block.

The majority of interior walls of the building are gypsum wall board (GWB), plaster and/or painted concrete masonry units (CMU). Some spaces have varying materials including glazed concrete masonry units (CMU) in toilet rooms, mosaic wall tall at water fountain alcoves, painted concrete masonry units (CMU) in 1975 wing and stairwells, and brick masonry. GWB corridor walls typically have a 4" wood chair rail molding. For the most part these are all in relatively good condition considering their age. A moveable partition wall exists in the 1967 addition resource room. Ceilings types consist of primarily suspended acoustical panels (ACP). Metal lath and plaster (at mechanical room), suspended Tectum panels (IT room), and exposed metal deck (gymnasium, receiving) were also found in the building.

Interior doors in 1995 portion are hollow metal doors and frames. Wood doors and frames remain in older sections of the buildings. Door panel types vary; some are solid, others have 1/4" tempered glazing vision panels or side lites. Newer door hardware appear to be accessible and code compliant. Interior borrowed lights have hollow metal frames and clear vision glazing.

Other general interior notes include:

- Classroom built-in furniture varies from space to space. Built-in wood casework with laminate counter tops in newer sections of the building, where as older sections of the building typically have original wood casework, some with stainless steel countertops. Although the stainless steel countertops have fared better than the newer laminate ones, the cabinets are outdated and do not provide sufficient storage. In many rooms, supplies are stored above the cabinets, in loose furniture/bookshelves/file cabinets and on top of unit ventilators.
- Classrooms are equipped with chalkboards (in older sections of the building), marker boards, tack boards, smartboards, projection screens and projectors.
- The facility has a fully functioning commercial kitchen.
- Toilet partitions in student gang toilet rooms are solid plastic in newer sections and enameled steel in older sections. Newer toilet partitions are in good condition. Older toilet partitions are in process of being replaced.
- Lab casework in the Science Room and stations in the Computer Lab are from the 1997 renovation

and in good condition. Science tables have chemical resistant tops in good condition.

- There are numerous other areas of built-in wood millwork and casework at kitchenettes and storage rooms that vary in condition.
- The Gymnasium does not have fixed seating within the space. A fabric court dividing partition. There are fixed and retractable basketball goals. The stage addition was constructed during the 1995 project and there are curtains, lighting and projection screening. The gym functions as the Auditorium and hosts the Boxborough Annual Town Meeting.

**PROGRAMS and OPERATIONS: Please provide a detailed description of the current grade structure and programs offered and indicate whether there are program components that cannot be offered due to facility constraints, operational constraints, etc. (maximum of 5000 characters).**

The Blanchard Memorial School serves 464 students in grades K-6 and 108 staff members which equals 90 Full Time Equivalent employees (FTE). The elementary curriculum includes Educational Technology, English Language Arts, Health, Mathematics, Performing Arts, Physical Education, Science, Engineering & Technology, Social Studies, and Visual Arts. There is also a portion of the ABRSD Carol Heubner Early Childhood program PK program in the space servicing 21 students and a Concord Area Special Education (CASE) collaborative program serving several students from the collaborative. Blanchard offers full special education programming through two learning centers, two substantially separate classrooms for children on IEPs with significant disabilities from across the district. OT and PT services and speech and language services are provided. Regular education services via a Reading specialist, Math assistant and Writing assistant are also offered.

**EDUCATIONAL SPACES: Please provide a detailed description of the Educational Spaces within the facility, a description of the number and sizes (in square feet) of classrooms, a description of science rooms/labs including ages and most recent updates, a description of the cafeteria, gym and/or auditorium and a description of the media center/library (maximum of 5000 characters).**

There are 4 kindergarten classrooms averaging approximately 1,000 SF. There are 19 general classrooms for grades 1-6. Sizes range between 852 SF and 1,058 SF. There are approximately 17-18 kindergarten students per class, and between 21-25 students per class in Grades 1-6. There are two Preschool classrooms averaging approximately 1,000 sq ft., and one CASE collaborative classroom (1,000 sq. ft.). There is one technology lab classroom (1,000 sq. ft.). The district-wide elementary substantially separate special education program is located at the Blanchard school, and occupies two classrooms (1,000 sq. ft. each). There are two learning centers (500 sq. ft. each). The library and associated spaces total 3,000 SF and are located centrally but internally. Cafeteria and associated storage totals 4,000 SF. Gymnasium is 6,000 SF and is the all school assembly space.

**CAPACITY and UTILIZATION: Please provide the original design capacity and a detailed description of the current capacity and utilization of the school facility. If the school is overcrowded, please describe steps taken by the administration to address capacity issues. Please also describe in detail any spaces that have been converted from their intended use to be used as classroom space (maximum of 5000 characters).**

Every classroom in the Blanchard school is being used as classrooms. District-wide elementary capacity issues has caused the District to convert some Blanchard space into additional Pre-K, Special Education, and General Classroom Space. The primary example here is the conversion of a science lab into a general education classroom. The CASE collaborative program has been reduced from two classrooms plus a breakout space to a single classroom, and they may have to move out completely to accommodate students enrolling at Blanchard.

**MAINTENANCE and CAPITAL REPAIR: Please provide a detailed description of the district's current maintenance practices, its capital repair program, and the maintenance program in place at the facility that is the subject of this SOI. Please include specific examples of capital repair projects undertaken in the past, including any override or debt exclusion votes that were necessary (maximum of 5000 characters).**

The Operations Department has a proposed FY '20 total budget footprint of \$9,652,836. This footprint is comprised of \$4,861,567 in personnel expenses and \$4,791,269 in operation expenses. The Department has \$472,000 budgeted in

FY 20 for preventative maintenance and \$1,250,000 budgeted for capital projects within the operating budget. The District comprehensive capital plan includes approximately \$3,000,000 ear marked for projects at Blanchard Memorial.

Capital planning and program implementation is a priority. Long term, short term, and medium term capital has been outlined with anticipated funding sources in the FY' 20 budget. The district is proposing an increase in the annual budget for capital in order to accelerate projects identified as high priority. Bonding and other options will be considered for medium term capital needs. To support this initiative the District is proposing adding a Capital Project Manager in the FY' 20 budget. The multi-year capital improvement plan will see the District complete over \$20,000,000 in capital projects through fiscal year 2032. The funding strategy for the plan involves short term borrowing, the creation and funding of a capital stabilization fund, and increased funding in the area of capital improvements in the District Facilities operating budget. The five overarching goals which guided the development of this proposed Capital Plan include:

- Utilize the Dore & Whittier report to identify the appropriate projects for inclusion in the district's mid-range capital plan
- Develop a phasing process that will allow the district to execute the projects identified for completion efficiently and in a fiscally responsible manner
- Develop a funding strategy that will enable the district to complete projects identified in the plan
- Develop a long-term budget strategy that will allow the district to have access to sufficient funds to execute the plan and fund any unanticipated capital needs in the foreseeable future
- Ensure that the district allocates an appropriate level of funding each year for capital projects

As part of this comprehensive capital plan evolving from the Dore and Whittier District Master Plan the Blanchard Memorial school received a comprehensive heating system upgrade with new boilers, circulation pumps, and domestic hot water upgrades. Additionally the District has replaced the Administration Wing HVAC rooftop unit, interior bathroom upgrades have been completed, and additional parking added to the facility. Moving forward the District has identified an additional \$3,000,000 in capital projects at this facility, including the replacement of the roofing system and some windows which is the subject of this accelerated repair statement of interest document.

The Department employees licensed trades professionals to complement the custodial staff and maintenance foreman, including a plumber, electrician, HVAC mechanic, diesel mechanic, and 3 grounds personnel.

**Priority 5**

***Question 1: Please provide a detailed description of the issues surrounding the school facility systems (e.g., roof, windows, boilers, HVAC system, and/or electrical service and distribution system) that you are indicating require repair or replacement. Please describe all deficiencies to all systems in sufficient detail to explain the problem.***

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The rubberized adhered EPDM roofing system is in need of replacement. The District is outside the warranty period and the asset as a whole has outlived its useful life. There are several patches failing, ponding is starting in some areas, and the adherence seems to be failing as the system is starting to ripple.

The window systems lack the desired thermal qualities necessary to get the building to perform to our District sustainability standards. We have had some water leaks around frames and the systems are outdated in general and in need of replacement.

**Priority 5**

***Question 2: Please describe the measures the district has already taken to mitigate the problem/issues described in Question 1 above.***

---

The District has a robust preventative maintenance program that fixes leaks and other issues as they arise. At this point these systems have outperformed their useful lives and it is time for full replacement.

**Priority 5**

***Question 3: Please provide a detailed explanation of the impact of the problem/issues described in Question 1 above on your district's educational program. Please include specific examples of how the problem prevents the district from delivering the educational program it is required to deliver and how students and/or teachers are directly affected by the problem identified.***

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The primary impact on the educational program related to these systems revolves around thermal comfort. The window and roof systems contribute to the poor thermal performance in the building at times creating comfort issues and high heating bills. Additionally, on low temp degree days with severe wind chill we have experienced situations where the outside air penetrating the window system has contributed freezing heads and pipes associated with fire suppression system. We have had multiple occurrences where the program was impacted due to delays caused by water damages resulting from burst pipes.



**Priority 5**

***Question 4: Please describe how addressing the school facility systems you identified in Question 1 above will extend the useful life of the facility that is the subject of this SOI and how it will improve your district's educational program.***

Replacing these systems will result in reduced spending in heating the facility which will allow to District the opportunity to invest those funds elsewhere to support the educational program. These systems replacement projects also will protect against future water damage and will lend to improved thermal properties inside the building for the staff and students associated with the program.

**Please also provide the following:**

**Have the systems identified above been examined by an engineer or other trained building professional?:**

YES

**If "YES", please provide the name of the individual and his/her professional affiliation (maximum of 250 characters):**

Lee Dore, Architect, Dore and Whittier Architects

**The date of the inspection:** 8/19/2015

**A summary of the findings (maximum of 5000 characters):**

The adhered membrane roofing systems found at the school are in varied condition. An EPDM roof was installed over the majority of the roof in 1997 with a 20 year warranty. Per the drawings, it has 3" rigid insulation on metal decking. In 2009, the area over the 1959 building was replaced with PVC membrane and has a 15 year warranty. In 2010, the roof over the cafeteria addition was replaced with PVC membrane with a 20 year warranty. In 2013 the gymnasium and music room sloped roofs were replaced with PVC membrane with a 10 year warranty. Several EPDM patches over the 1995 classroom addition were opening up / lifting / damaged. Ripples were noted at the membrane at an area on the southern half of the 1995 classroom addition. Indicates the adhered material is seperating from the deck. Boot at an exhaust pipe has sunken into the opening and can lead to issues. A tree in the courtyard is starting to extend over the roof. Moss growth was noted near the lighting protection. Base of one rod of the lightning protection system has detached from the membrane. Ponding water was observed near a downspout at the cafeteria addition roof.



**CERTIFICATIONS**

The undersigned hereby certifies that, to the best of his/her knowledge, information and belief, the statements and information contained in this statement of Interest and attached hereto are true and accurate and that this Statement of Interest has been prepared under the direction of the district school committee and the undersigned is duly authorized to submit this Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The undersigned also hereby acknowledges and agrees to provide the Massachusetts School Building Authority, upon request by the Authority, any additional information relating to this Statement of Interest that may be required by the Authority.

**Chief Executive Officer \***

**School Committee Chair**

**Superintendent of Schools**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

Date

Date

Date

\* Local Chief Executive Officer: In a city or town with a manager form of government, the manager of the municipality; in other cities, the mayor; and in other towns, the board of selectmen unless, in a city or town, some other municipal office is designated to the chief executive office under the provisions of a local charter. Please note, in districts where the Superintendent is also the Local Chief Executive Officer, it is required for the same person to sign the Statement of Interest Certifications twice.

## REQUIRED FORM OF VOTE TO SUBMIT A STATEMENT OF INTEREST

### REQUIRED VOTES

If the SOI is being submitted by a City or Town, a vote in the following form is required from both the City Council/Board of Aldermen **OR** the Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body **AND** the School Committee.

If the SOI is being submitted by a regional school district, a vote in the following form is required from the Regional School Committee only.

*\*Current votes for each SOI submission are required.*

### FORM OF VOTE

Please use the text below to prepare your City's, Town's or District's required vote(s).

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on February 7, 2019, prior to the SOI submission closing date, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee of Acton and Boxborough, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated February 7, 2019 for the Blanchard Memorial School located at 493 Massachusetts Ave, Boxborough, MA which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future for priority 5 which identifies the majority of the roofing system and window systems in need of replacement; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

### DOCUMENTATION OF VOTE

Documentation of each vote must be submitted **in hard copy** to the MSBA as follows:

- 1) For the vote of the City Council/Board of Aldermen or Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body, a copy of the text of the vote must be submitted **with a certification** of the City/Town Clerk that the vote was duly recorded and the date of the vote must be provided.
- 2) For the vote of the School Committee, Minutes of the School Committee meeting at which the vote was taken must be submitted **with the original signature** of the Committee Chairperson.

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
School Building Committee (SBC) Approved Minutes**

R. J. Grey Library  
16 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720

January 9, 2019  
7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Mary Brolin; Adam Klein; Amy Krishnamurthy; Maya Minkin; Peter Light; Marie Altieri; Peter Berry; Jason Cole; Dennis Bruce; Becca Edson; Bob Evans (*arr 7:30pm*); Bill Hart; JD Head; Gary Kushner; Lynne Newman; Maria Neyland; Katie Raymond; Mac Reid; Chris Whitbeck (*arr 7:15pm*).

**Members Absent:** None.

**Other:** Karen Coll; Representatives from Skanska: Dale Caldwell, Victoria Clifford, Sovathya Sar; Representative from Arrowstreet: Emily Grandstaff-Rice, Larry Spang; Damian Sugure, Principal, Conant School; Dave Verdolino, Director of Finance; Kate Crosby, ABRSD Energy Manager; members of the public.

1. Mary Brolin called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.
2. PDP MSBA Comments Review and Status

Victoria Clifford reviewed the revised schedule agreed to at the last Building Committee meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup>, which postponed our Preliminary Schematic Report (PSR) submission until February 20<sup>th</sup> while keeping to the rest of our initial milestone schedule. Emily Grandstaff-Rice said that, based on the later submission date, the MSBA agreed to delay our submission of Preliminary Design Program (PDP) revisions until January 11<sup>th</sup>. Some of the requested PDP revisions will also be elements of the PSR, such as an analysis of all of the potential configuration options, even those that have been ruled out as unfeasible.

3. Initial Traffic Impact Assessment

All materials have been posted on the website. Emily noted that we would need additional data on the traffic impact of consolidating schools, including any impact on school choice. JD Head said that GPI, the firm that did the traffic analysis, has been working in Acton on other projects for many years, as well as conducting the recent school district bus analysis, and has a good understanding of the towns and the issues. GPI was asked to use data they already had to develop a traffic impact assessment for the Gates and Conant sites.

For a Douglas/Gates school, the analysis assumed all traffic coming in and out of the Gates side and none on the Douglas side, although some parking may actually be on the Douglas side. Emily said that the GPI report showed a relatively small impact on traffic in that scenario. If the Conant site is used, traffic at Douglas/Gates would decrease but there would be a significant increase around the Conant site. Emily said that further analysis will be done, including traffic counts at specific locations and an analysis of intersections to identify potential problems and ways to mitigate them.

4. Geotechnical Information

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**WELLNESS - EQUITY - ENGAGEMENT**

A high water table has been found in some areas on the Gates site, as well as silt on both sites. The silt will have to be removed, either by removing the existing soil and replacing it or by using the existing soil and adding improvements to it. Either site would require soil mitigation, about 5-6 feet on the Gates site and slightly less at Conant. Perc tests will also provide information about the areas planned for septic systems. Mitigation would only be required for soil under the building, not necessarily in other areas. There is also a ledge at Conant. More targeted borings will be drilled as the exact location of the building is finalized. There are also unknown issues that will need to be identified and resolved. Some of the information will come later, as we narrow our focus and make various decisions along the way.

## 5. Discussion with Acton Natural Resources Director, Tom Tidman & Conservation

Emily summarized the discussion from a December 14<sup>th</sup> meeting about the two potential building sites with Acton Natural Resources Director Tom Tidman and Town Manager John Mangiaratti. While Director Tidman does not speak for the Acton Conservation Commission, he could offer advice. He voiced concerns about using and replicating elsewhere some of the isolated border wetlands near the Conant basketball courts; as a result, new designs have been drawn to avoid those wetlands.

Mary Brolin said that, if a potential building site is currently in noncompliance with wetlands restrictions, it is limited to replacing the uses that are already in those areas; for example, a playground currently located in a protected area can only be replaced by another playground, not a building, and the replacement is limited to the amount of area currently used. Emily noted that part of the current Gates building is in a protected area.

On the Gates site, the consultants have been very aware of floodplain areas and all designs have respected these areas. Emily added that, while designers definitely want to avoid all 100-year floodplain areas, there is a question about whether we need to avoid 500-year floodplains. Katie Raymond raised a question about the location of a river on the Gates site, which will need to be clarified. Tom Tidman said that the Conservation Commission won't weigh in on these issues until a formal request is made. Going forward, we will need a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) certification from FEMA.

An element of the strong preference for the Gates site is concern about the wetlands on the Conant site. Marie Altieri said that the amount of water found on the Conant site presented significant space limitations and permitting hurdles, which sounded increasingly insurmountable. We will need proper soil management on either site. Best management practices for storm water drainage are not restricted by wetlands, although a storage unit can't be built there.

## 6. Design Options

Emily reviewed the matrix of potential building options; she will add one that has been eliminated but needs to be reviewed to meet MSBA requirements, the option of a newly constructed Douglas school on the Conant site separate from the Conant school. Emily reminded the committee of the space constraints on both the Conant and Douglas sites. Larry Spang said the MSBA was worried about objections being raised if we didn't examine all options, and we are doing due diligence to back up the decisions not to pursue some options.

a. Gates-Douglas Options Update (Site, Program, Phasing/Schedule)

Emily reviewed drawings of the Gates site and potential buildings using a single phase or 2-phase construction process. If necessary, the land could be built up higher on both the Douglas and the Gates sides. A regulation-sized softball field could be included. Peter Berry noted that the town will also expect any Nature Playspaces to be replaced. Parking will probably be increased to 240 spaces to accommodate staff, the preschool and family parking, possibly incorporating a separate small lot for the preschool.

Gary Kushner asked whether one of the building schemes had an advantage with respect to sustainability. Emily said that it was a mixed issue; the 2-phase design maximizes the solar contribution but its larger outer façade is less energy efficient. Amy Krishnamurthy said that the longer time frame of a 2-phase pushes back the timing of addressing Conant. The cost differential between single- and 2-phase construction would be approximately \$3.7MM.

Either construction process would probably require the removal of 3-4 classrooms from the current Gates building while keeping the school operating. This might require the use of modular units or another option, which would not be reimbursable. Single-phase construction is less expensive than a 2-phase process. In a single-phase scheme, the media center will be at the front of the building, near the entrance. In a 2-phase process, the Pre-K would be separated from the rest of the school, with the media center on the second floor. The building could have multiple entrances. The designers are beginning to think through how to structure the spaces to support the school uses and Pre-K. Emily said that it would be possible to make the building seem less linear than these initial drawings.

Chris Whitbeck found the 2-phase design more institutional on the first level; people entering the building might not see learning spaces on that level. Adam Klein added that the administrative offices would be isolated from where the classrooms are and suggested that some offices might be dispersed into educational areas. Marie Altieri noted that there are numerous demands for space on the first floor of a multiple school. Adam liked the height step-backs but was concerned that they were on the play area side but not on the bus lane side, and that the building would look very imposing. It might be possible to have step-backs on the driving side as well.

b. Conant-Douglas Options Update (Site, Program, Phasing/Schedule)

Emily showed drawings of these schemes, which had been revised to incorporate the discovery of wetlands. We know there is some ledge on the site. The new configurations would require increased dependence on access from Minot Avenue rather than Taylor Road because there wouldn't be room for parking on the Taylor Road side given the new requirements for placement of the building. Becca Edson noted that building an access road to Minot Avenue would be a significant project because it has to cross Mary's Brook; it would require a bridge in place of the current pedestrian footpath.

Committee members found the single-phase construction design institutional-looking. The constraints of working around the existing building and significant wetlands resulted in a long L-shape. The 2-phase design looks very different, with a central core and two wings. The traffic pattern is better than the single phase and we might be able to divert some traffic out to Taylor Road. This site is very challenging for a large twin school; it would be more feasible to build a smaller single school.

Emily reviewed the cost estimates. Skanska based these estimates on the costs of recently-built schools with an increase for inflation, and also had to factor in the costs associated with meeting MSBA standards. New construction will cost approximately \$550/square foot. Even code upgrades would be about \$377/square foot. These are still high-level numbers, which will be refined into final numbers in the next phase of planning. There are additional costs included for furniture and other expenses. Skanska will look for opportunities to keep costs down.

The estimates are for total construction costs and do not take into account the MSBA reimbursement factor. Some of the costs will be ineligible for reimbursement. Next steps will include a breakdown of all those factors. Factoring in reimbursement too early can create surprises later. The estimates include removal and replacement of soil, which would be more expensive than improvement and reuse. The costs for the Conant site do not include demolishing the Douglas building, which would not be reimbursable. Peter Light asked whether they could provide a ballpark estimate of the cost to demolish Douglas if we went with Conant option since it is unclear at this point whether we will do that or renovate the structure.

The estimates are much higher than the committee expected, and higher than the Dore & Whittier estimates. Marie said that there are still decisions to make that could impact costs, such as shared spaces or whether Pre-K gets its own OT/PT spaces. We will also try to make the case to the MSBA that septic and/or geothermal systems are reimbursable as part of building's plumbing system.

Mary Brolin said that we want a solid building that works for us but we don't need a Cadillac model. Mac Reid noted that some things that could be done in later years as upgrades rather than being done now. Emily said that the MSBA will ask to us design plans that could be expanded in the future so we don't come back to them later with a request for a bigger building.

## 7. Options Pro/Con

Committee members listed a number of reasons that Gates was a preferable site:

- Community support for keeping Douglas in West Acton;
- The change in traffic conditions would be minimal for Gates but significant for Conant;
- The difficulty of trying to fit an appropriate twin school building on the Conant site. The two buildable sections on the Gates/Douglas site are 6.3 acres and 2.86 acres, while the largest buildable section at Conant is 5.79 acres with two smaller areas of 1.3 acres and 1.77 acres.

Potential advantages to the Conant site included:

- From a transportation standpoint, Conant is closer to North Acton, although it would still involve fairly long bus rides from that part of town. Schools paired on the same buses tend to be located close together, so Douglas students might be bused further. Busing and school choice could change over time as students graduate and new ones enter;
- The river on the Gates site could pose a constraint. If necessary, we would have to reshape the building. Katie Raymond said that we need a clear ruling about exactly where we could build;



- Peter Berry noted that the Acton Arboretum is near Conant and is a great natural resource for students.

Concerns about both sites included:

- Disruption to the neighbors. Peter Light said that the OPM will work with neighbors to discuss and mitigate any concerns;
- There are unknowns about water on both sites. Emily said that we have information now and will continue to dig further;
- There are more unknown issues at Gates; at Conant, the unknowns are fewer but we know that the situation will be quite difficult. Emily clarified that, if we select a preferred option for the PSR and later discover something that makes that site more difficult than we expected, we would not be locked into it by the MSBA;
- We need to clarify what is considered already-used area, such as playgrounds, that fall under town 'grandfathering' protections.

Any new findings will be shared with the public.

Emily said that square footage estimates are based MSBA guidelines with an effort to meet specific district requirements and requests, such as separate gyms and cafeterias. The MSBA pushed back on some things, such as two separate stages, extra table storage space, and agreed to one full size gym and a smaller one but not two full gyms. There are also some redundant non-educational spaces, such as two administrative areas. The Parker Damon Building has separate administrative areas; Arrowstreet could take a look at these. Katie Raymond suggested revisiting the inclusion of a Pre-K, given the space constraints.

#### 8. Preferred Site – Vote

Bob Evans made a motion to select the Gates site as the preferred site for the twin school building project. Jason Cole seconded. A member of the public asked whether the boardwalk between the Gates and Douglas sides was included in the cost estimates; this is considered a limited project and has been included in the costs. In response to a question from the public about the carbon footprint of the materials to be used in construction, Emily said that they have not done a carbon footprint analysis at this point. Mary Brolin said that, even without a new building, all three schools would require extensive renovations and repairs, which would create externalities; she added that building a twin school would significantly reduce the time frame to address the needs of all three schools.

Committee members voted and the motion was unanimously approved.

Katie Raymond asked whether we would also need to decide on a single-phase versus 2-phase construction process before submitting the PSR. Emily said it was not a requirement, but that it would be helpful.

#### 9. Estimate/Budget Review and Invoice Approval

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**WELLNESS - EQUITY - ENGAGEMENT**

Victoria Clifford reviewed the budget and invoice package. We have reached the point where we can start requesting reimbursement from the MSBA ProPay system. JD Head moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded, Jason Cole abstained, and the invoices were unanimously approved for payment.

10. Mary reviewed the meeting schedule for the remainder of the year, and reminded members to let Karen Coll know if they are unable to attend any meetings. Adam Klein moved, Maria Neyland seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:18pm.

Documents Used:

MSBA PDP Review Comments  
Geotechnical Information  
Initial Traffic Assessment  
Wetlands Constraints Analysis  
Flood Maps – Gates Site 1978-2014  
MSBA Options Matrix  
Design Options  
Design Options with Pricing  
Douglas/Gates Site Survey  
Douglas/Gates Buildable Area  
Conant Site Survey  
Conant Buildable Area

Next Building Committee Meetings (all in RJ Grey Library unless otherwise noted):

Jan 30 (Jan 23 conflicts with MLK Community Service Awards Night)  
Feb 12 (Note - this is a Tuesday; Feb 13 conflicts with SC meeting)  
Feb 27  
March 13  
March 27  
Apr 10  
Apr 24 (meeting in Admin Building, Room 13)  
May 8  
May 29 (avoids consecutive SBC/SC meetings)  
June 12  
June 26 (after the last day of school)



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District  
Blanchard Memorial School  
493 Massachusetts Avenue  
Boxborough, MA 01719  
978-263-4569 <http://blanchard.abschools.org>

11.

Mr. Dana Labb  
Principal

TO: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools  
FROM: Dana Labb, Principal  
DATE: January 4, 2019  
RE: Donation from Blanchard's Parent, Teacher, Friends (PTF) Organization

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The Blanchard Memorial School has been notified that our recent grant request to Blanchard's PTF Organization has been approved in the amount of \$2,490.00.

We ask that you and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee please approve this generous grant which will be used to purchase one set of Spheros (Robots) Bolt Power Pack. This technology will greatly enhance learning for our students.

We are extremely grateful to the PTF for their continued support of our school.

Thank you,

Dana Labb, Principal

**PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT**

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee seeks to hire and retain the most qualified ~~persons~~ candidates for all positions in the school district.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for ensuring that every effort is made to attract the most qualified candidates. Efforts will be made to balance and maintain experience levels ~~in consideration of~~ when considering applications for vacant positions. The Principal and/or the Superintendent shall have the final decision in hiring of all staff.

Criteria for employment include:

- Appropriate education and certification/eligibility for certification waiver
- Previous positive experience in a relevant role
- High level of academic achievement which demonstrates strengths in the area for which the candidate is being considered
- Ability or potential to meet the performance standards of the school district
- Personal characteristics, such as
  - ~~Sensitivity to the needs of children~~ Student-centered
  - ~~Concern for others~~ Empathy and compassion
  - Collaboration
  - Organizational skills
  - Initiative
  - Creativity
  - Integrity
  - Flexibility

Applications of all candidates shall be given equal consideration without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, active military/veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin~~race, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or handicapping conditions.~~ ~~Administrative action~~ The Hiring process shall be ~~taken~~ designed to encourage the application of qualified ~~minority~~ candidates of color for all vacancies.

School Committee members may not hold a paid position in the school district. Applications for positions in the school district shall not be considered from members of the immediate family of School Committee Members, Central Office, administrators Superintendent or Assistant Superintendents, -or or Principals. For purposes of this policy, "immediate family" is defined as spouses, siblings, children, parents or in-laws as outlined in the MA General Laws Conflict of Interest Law, Chapter 268A. The only exception to this will be part-time positions within Community Education.

CROSS REF.:            ADDA, C.O.R.I. Requirements

## STAFF RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee seeks to hire and retain the most qualified candidates for all positions in the school district.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for ensuring that every effort is made to attract the most qualified candidates. Efforts will be made to balance and maintain experience levels when considering applications for vacant positions. The Principal and/or the Superintendent shall have the final decision in hiring of all staff.

Criteria for employment include:

- Appropriate education and certification/eligibility for certification waiver
- Previous positive experience in a relevant role
- High level of academic achievement which demonstrates strengths in the area for which the candidate is being considered
- Ability or potential to meet the performance standards of the school district
- Personal characteristics, such as
  - Student-centered
  - Empathy and compassion
  - Collaboration
  - Organizational skills
  - Initiative
  - Creativity
  - Integrity
  - Flexibility

Applications of all candidates shall be given equal consideration without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, active military/veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin. The hiring process shall be designed to encourage the application of qualified candidates of color for all vacancies.

School Committee members may not hold a paid position in the school district. Applications for positions in the school district shall not be considered from members of the immediate family of School Committee Members, Superintendent or Assistant Superintendents, or Principals. For purposes of this policy, "immediate family" is defined as spouses, siblings, children, parents or in-laws as outlined in the MA General Laws Conflict of Interest Law, Chapter 268A. The only exception to this will be part-time positions within Community Education.

CROSS REF.:            ADDA, C.O.R.I. Requirements

# TOWN OF ACTON

Acton Leadership Group

February 7, 2019

7:30 AM

Francis Faulkner Room

Room 204

Acton Town Hall

## Agenda Topics

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Approval of Meeting Minutes          | All                             |
| 2. FY19 Updates                         | John Mangiaratti<br>Peter Light |
| 3. Review of Multi-Year Financial Model | Marie Altieri<br>Steve Barrett  |
| 4. School Building update               | Peter Light<br>Marie Altieri    |
| 5. Public Comment                       |                                 |
| 6. Adjourn                              |                                 |

Next Meeting February 28, 2019 at 7:30 AM

# own of Acton Multi-Year Financial Model

Prepared by the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and Finance Committee

7-Feb-19

WORKING DOCUMENT NOT FINAL

<u>Summary</u>	<u>Tax Recap FY19</u>	<u>Projection FY20</u>	<u>Projection FY21</u>	<u>Projection FY22</u>
<b>Municipal Funding Sources:</b>				
Tax Levy (excluding debt exclusion)	83,232,563	86,495,027	89,376,953	92,328,877
State Aid	1,345,108	1,358,559	1,358,559	1,385,866
Local Receipts	5,510,104	5,562,104	5,616,555	5,671,551
Debt Exclusion	2,538,007	2,512,627	2,500,163	2,444,653
NAFS Debt	-	-	550,000	550,000
ABRSD Twin School Debt	-	-	266,000	797,000
Minuteman Building Project Debt	-	-	296,296	296,296
SBAB Reimbursement	923,000	923,000	923,000	923,000
Add: Town Reserves	<u>2,382,722</u>	<u>1,703,510</u>	<u>1,300,000</u>	<u>1,300,000</u>
<b>Acton Total Funding Sources</b>	<b>95,931,504</b>	<b>98,554,827</b>	<b>102,187,526</b>	<b>105,697,242</b>
<u>Allocation to Budgets</u>				
Municipal Spending	\$ 34,565,022	\$ 35,861,539	\$ 37,206,347	\$ 38,601,585
NAFS Debt	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 550,000	\$ 550,000
<b>Total Municipal Spending</b>	<b>\$ 34,565,022</b>	<b>\$ 35,861,539</b>	<b>\$ 37,756,347</b>	<b>\$ 39,151,585</b>
Percent change year-to-year	2.54%	3.75%	5.28%	3.70%
<b>ABRSD Assessment</b>	\$ 59,981,959	\$ 61,237,606	\$ 63,822,900	\$ 65,910,600
ABRSD Twin School Debt	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 266,000	\$ 797,000
<b>Total ABRSD Spending</b>	<b>\$ 59,981,959</b>	<b>\$ 61,237,606</b>	<b>\$ 64,088,900</b>	<b>\$ 66,707,600</b>
Percent change year-to-year	3.90%	2.09%	4.66%	4.09%
Minuteman Operating Budget	\$ 1,114,235	\$ 1,163,947	\$ 1,263,947	\$ 1,363,947
Minuteman Building Project Debt	\$ 189,579	\$ 291,735	\$ 296,296	\$ 296,296
<b>Total Minuteman Assessment</b>	<b>\$ 1,303,814</b>	<b>\$ 1,455,682</b>	<b>\$ 1,560,243</b>	<b>\$ 1,660,243</b>
Percent change year-to-year	21.52%	11.65%	7.18%	6.41%
<b>Total Acton Spending</b>	<b>\$ 95,850,795</b>	<b>\$ 98,554,827</b>	<b>\$ 103,405,490</b>	<b>\$ 107,519,428</b>
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>\$ 80,709</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ (1,217,963)</b>	<b>\$ (1,822,186)</b>

<u>Table 6 Data</u>	<u>FY19 ABRSD Revenues</u>	<u>FY20 ABRSD Revenues</u>	<u>FY21 ABRSD Revenues</u>	<u>FY22 ABRSD Revenues</u>
<u>ABRSD Funding Sources:</u>				
State Aid Ch.70	14,968,061	15,140,000	15,280,000	15,280,000
Transportation	1,337,757	1,700,000	1,762,900	1,762,900
Regional Bonus Aid & Misc Revenue	275,000	275,000	275,000	275,000
Charter School Aid	32,361	35,000	35,000	35,000
Excess & Deficiency	775,000	432,480	432,480	432,480
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 17,388,179</b>	<b>\$ 17,582,480</b>	<b>\$ 17,785,380</b>	<b>\$ 17,785,380</b>

<b>Additional OPEB Contribution</b>	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000
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<u>Town of Acton - Tax Impact</u>	<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>
Total Valuation ('000s)	\$ 4,437,432	\$ 4,570,555	\$ 4,707,672	\$ 4,848,902
Tax Rate	\$ 19.37	\$ 19.52	\$ 19.84	\$ 19.97
SF Value	\$ 584,315	\$ 601,844	\$ 619,900	\$ 638,497
% Change in SF Value	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
SF Tax Bill	\$ 11,318	\$ 11,745	\$ 12,298	\$ 12,752
% Change in SF Tax Bill	3.12%	3.78%	4.70%	3.69%
\$ Change in SF Tax Bill	\$ 342	\$ 427	\$ 552	\$ 454

# TOWN OF ACTON

Acton Leadership Group

January 17, 2019

7:30 AM

Francis Faulkner Room

Room 204

Acton Town Hall

## Agenda Topics

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Approval of Meeting Minutes          | All                             |
| 2. FY19 Updates                         | John Mangiaratti<br>Peter Light |
| 3. Review of Multi-Year Financial Model | Marie Altieri<br>Steve Barrett  |
| 4. School Building update               | Peter Light<br>Marie Altieri    |
| 5. Public Comment                       |                                 |
| 6. Adjourn                              |                                 |

Next Meeting February 7, 2019 at 7:30 AM



Present: Bart Wendell, facilitator; Joan Gardner & Katie Green, BoS: Jason Cole & Roland Bourdon, FC; Diane Baum & Paul Murphy (arrived late) SC; John Mangiaratti, Peter Light & Marie Altieri, Staff. Absent: Steve Barrett, staff.

Audience: Mark Hald, Asst. Town manager; Dave Verdolino, Region's finance director & Charlie Kadlec.

Additional documents: Town of Acton Multi-year financial model (spreadsheet); ABRSD FY2020 recommended budget

1. Minutes were accepted with corrections [change date from October to November; change of amount for Per Pupil Cost to \$30-\$50; changes in Jason's statements]
2. **FY19 updates** **Peter Light & John Mangiaratti**

John: Revenues are where we expected; we have an unanticipated expense due to the repair of a dam along Fort Pond Brook on River Street. Well be looking into grants to pay the costs.

Peter: No major surprises. There is no update; as we end the second half of the quarter, the revenues remain positive.

Roland: Are there expenses for salting, sanding and plowing?

John: We get the major storms in February and March and there is nothing so far.

### 3. **Review of Spreadsheet** **Marie**

Marie: the change sheet shows the actual numbers. What we need to discuss is the \$761K deficit. .

John: we note that the deficit in accounting: we are using the excess levy capacity plus \$1.3m in reserves

Bart: Questions?

Katie: Is there a small increase in state aid?

John: it's minor in FY 19 and we don't have the new numbers yet

Roland asked about turn-backs: the town was \$350-400K while the schools was \$1.7

Bart asked if there was to be a conversation on the \$761K

Marie distributed ABRSD FY2020 recommended budget with a summary of the changes. This will be presented at the Jan 10 SC meeting.

Marie noted that the Dec 15 deadline for teachers to say if they were going to retire resulted in a \$70K savings; another \$60K savings comes from dropping one bus and half of the first year costs ( for the remaining two extra busses) will be reimbursed; there is an increase to \$30/pupil for Ch.70. The recommended budget assessment is \$72,937,539. That is a 2.55% increase with the Acton increase **2.34%**. Reducing the budget assessment saves \$254K of which \$203 is for Acton. That makes the \$761K just over \$500K. The current ALG plan is \$1.3m in revenue use which is a step down.

Roland: you are using all the excess capacity in one year.

Katie: we can increase the use of reserves and decrease the use of overlay keeping the unused levy. We have the Minuteman debt to cover....

There was a general discussion as to which route would be best. Mr. Kadlec, having the spreadsheet from last meeting, was able to add that the unused levy total was \$606K.

Bart: shall we discuss: use of full tax levy; increase use of town reserves; school's reduction as shown; reducing the use of overlay?

John: we have the option to discuss Municipal Modernization Act; potentially set aside less **overlay** but still be conservative; can use previous year's allotments; \$700K overlay.

There was more discussion about possible options.

Jason: We do not have the approval to use all the tax levy. I need to take back to the FC: \$400K in reserves/all tax levy or \$700K reserves with ½ of tax levy.

We are very happy with the school numbers.

John: We are being asked to cover the Minuteman (MM) costs in our operating budget and getting \$1.7m in reserves makes it difficult; \$2m would be **even harder**. We could do a debt exclusion for MM.

Jason: I think we should wait **on debt exclusion**. It's more palatable to go for one big bond covering schools fire---doing an operational override is more political.

Marie: **Is there an option of taking MM out of the stabilization fund?** It would take a 2/3 vote.

Katie: It makes more sense to take MM from unused levy.

Jason: It's better to use unused levy rather than debt exclusion

Kate: We have to take these proposals back to our boards.

Marie: There is logic in Katie's idea of **using the tax levy in lieu of debt exclusion, why do you want it under tax levy if you are willing to consider debt exclusion?**

Jason: To keep the tax bill down. We will soon have a huge number for the town to swallow.

Bart: Question is: do we use reserves or tax levy? Anything else?

It was agreed that these questions needed to go back to the individual boards and would be discussed at the next ALG meeting.

There was the hope that an agreement could be reached at the next meeting.

#### 4. Public comment

Charlie: there is a risk of losing a debt override---it's 11 months out and we still do not have any hard numbers to look at.

Jason: the FC is now seeing an only a 6-digit deficit, which is better.

Marie: the SC has to vote on their budget on Feb.13.

Adjourned at 7:55AM

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS: Town of Acton Multi-year Financial Model (Spread sheet) & ABRSD Recommended FY2020 budget**

Next meeting is Jan 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM (Bart will not be able to attend)

Ann Chang

## **ALG Minutes, November 19, 2018**

Meeting was held at 7:30 AM in Room 204, Acton Town Hall, AKA Francis Faulkner room

Present: Bart Wendell, facilitator; Katie Green & Joan Gardner, BoS; Paul Murphy & Diane Baum, SC; John Mangiaratti, Peter Light & Marie Altieri, staff. Absent: Roland Bourdon, FC. Audience: Mark Hald, Asst. Town Manager.

This is a special meeting of the ALG; Agenda Topic

1. Discussion of response to OML complaints All members participating

Included in the information was a description of the OML complaint

John: the town has received multiple OML complaints and it's required that these complaints be addressed in a public session. The responses are due tomorrow.

John read out the allegations for OML 8 & 9 [the BoS has numbered the allegations from the same individual and 1-7 deal solely with allegations against the selectmen while 8 & 9 deal with allegations against the ALG] Members answered and discussed the allegations with an eye to putting them into the letter of response.

Allegations include: the inability of the complainant to discover the June 28th minutes prior to the September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting and that they were only discovered indirectly through the school committee packet; the minutes did not identify the place or time of the meeting; the minutes did not adequately list the extra information, some of which were not in the school committee packet and are not discoverable on the town(ALG) website; the minutes did not record any votes.

The complainant wants to have the ALG disbanded claiming that it is a super committee that works outside the OML and other municipal governance and usurps municipal authorities.

Jason: the posting does need to identify the meeting place but he was not sure of the 30-day posting.

Bart asked if the 30-day posting was correct.

Katie volunteered to look into this aspect.

Members noted that the ALG process is not one of voting but of consensus and continual iteration.

Marie noted that the ALG did not make the final decisions but those were made by the boards: selectmen, school committee and finance committee. Members took the ALG discussion back to their various boards and they were the ones who did the voting or if there was not agreement, the ALG went over the issue again until all could reach consensus.

Jason thought that the only vote taken was at the March meeting for the spreadsheets that were put into the warrant for the town meeting.

Paul said [the letter] should say that the ALG sessions were an information transfer and that there was no authority to vote and the voting took place on the boards.

John asked how to answer the complaint of being a super committee and to disband.

Marie said that its clear there is intensive feedback between the boards and the ALG.

Peter noted that there may be agreement among the boards but he could not speak for the finance committee—that each board had its voice in the ALG process.

There was the question of having each board compose a response. Katie noted that the time was short counsel need the letter and suggested that once all the points were covered, drafts would be sent to each committee for perusal .

John said that he thought the reply needed to be done through the administration.

The substance of the letter will address the allegations: request for timely minutes; that the ALG does not take votes---which is not a violation of the OML; the identification if documents and their availability (perhaps being listed on an ALG website—or having a better site for ALG on the town website); the availability of the spreadsheet; reply to June minutes; March ALG plan and the draft minutes in the various board packets.

[Jason and Paul attended an OML meeting in Harvard where it was suggested that all the extra info documents be listed at the end of the minutes for ease of discovery]

Marie said she would help with the letter's composition in any way needed. She also suggested that the school's attorney know of these complaints. She also said that the minutes were taken by an "outside party" not connected to any of the boards and the LWV has provided volunteers for many years.

Members wanted to know what happened next.

Katie said that the response is to the Attorney General, where a finding will be made. The complainant has a 60-90 day appeal period.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 AM

The next meeting is scheduled for November 29<sup>th</sup>; 7:30 AM in room 204, Acton Town Hall

Ann Chang

Extra information documents: OML complaint form with description of alleged violations

# Town of Acton Multi-Year Financial Model

Prepared by the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and Finance Committee

17-Jan-19

WORKING DOCUMENT NOT FINAL

<u>Summary</u>	<u>Tax Recap FY19</u>	<u>Projection FY20</u>	<u>Projection FY21</u>	<u>Projection FY22</u>
<b>Municipal Funding Sources:</b>				
Tax Levy (excluding debt exclusion)	83,232,563	86,647,027	89,376,953	92,328,877
State Aid	1,345,108	1,358,559	1,358,559	1,385,866
Local Receipts	5,510,104	5,562,104	5,616,555	5,671,551
Debt Exclusion	2,538,007	2,512,627	2,500,163	2,444,653
SBAB Reimbursement	923,000	923,000	923,000	923,000
Add: Town Reserves	<b>2,382,722</b>	<b>1,404,672</b>	<b>1,300,000</b>	<b>1,300,000</b>
<b>Acton Total Funding Sources</b>	<b>95,931,504</b>	<b>98,407,989</b>	<b>101,075,230</b>	<b>104,053,946</b>
<u>Allocation to Budgets</u>				
<b>Municipal Spending</b>	\$ <b>34,565,022</b>	\$ <b>35,861,539</b>	\$ <b>37,206,347</b>	\$ <b>38,601,585</b>
Percent change year-to-year	2.54%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%
<b>ABRSD Assessment</b>	\$ <b>59,981,959</b>	\$ <b>61,387,606</b>	\$ <b>63,998,000</b>	\$ <b>66,141,000</b>
Percent change year-to-year	3.90%	2.34%	4.25%	3.35%
Minuteman Operating Budget	\$ <b>1,114,235</b>	\$ <b>1,177,430</b>	\$ <b>1,277,430</b>	\$ <b>1,377,430</b>
Minuteman Building Project Debt	\$ <b>189,579</b>	\$ <b>284,414</b>	\$ <b>296,296</b>	\$ <b>296,296</b>
<b>Total Minuteman Assessment</b>	\$ <b>1,303,814</b>	\$ <b>1,461,844</b>	\$ <b>1,573,726</b>	\$ <b>1,673,726</b>
Percent change year-to-year	21.52%	12.12%	7.65%	6.35%
<b>Total Acton Spending</b>	\$ <b>95,850,795</b>	\$ <b>98,710,989</b>	\$ <b>102,778,073</b>	\$ <b>106,416,311</b>
<b>Net Position</b>	\$ <b>80,709</b>	\$ <b>(303,000)</b>	\$ <b>(1,702,843)</b>	\$ <b>(2,362,365)</b>

<u>Table 6 Data</u>	<u>FY19 ABRSD Revenues</u>	<u>FY20 ABRSD Revenues</u>	<u>FY21 ABRSD Revenues</u>	<u>FY22 ABRSD Revenues</u>
<u>ABRSD Funding Sources:</u>				
State AID Ch.70	14,968,061	15,140,000	15,280,000	15,280,000
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Regional Bonus Aid & Misc Revenue	275,000	275,000	275,000	275,000
Charter School Aid	32,361	35,000	35,000	35,000
Excess & Deficiency	775,000	432,480	432,480	432,480
<b>Total</b>	\$ <b>17,388,179</b>	\$ <b>17,582,480</b>	\$ <b>17,785,380</b>	\$ <b>17,785,380</b>

<b>Additional OPEB Contribution</b>	\$ <b>1,500,000</b>	\$ <b>1,500,000</b>	\$ <b>1,500,000</b>	\$ <b>1,500,000</b>
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<u>Town of Acton - Tax Impact</u>	<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>
Total Valuation ('000s)	\$ 4,437,432	\$ 4,570,555	\$ 4,707,672	\$ 4,848,902
Tax Rate	\$ 19.37	\$ 19.55	\$ 19.60	\$ 19.64
SF Value	\$ 584,315	\$ 601,844	\$ 619,900	\$ 638,497
% Change in SF Value	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
SF Tax Bill	\$ 11,318	\$ 11,765	\$ 12,150	\$ 12,537
% Change in SF Tax Bill	3.12%	3.95%	3.27%	3.19%
\$ Change in SF Tax Bill	\$ 342	\$ 447	\$ 385	\$ 387

**Town of Acton, MA  
ALG Actions  
FY20**

**Changes**

<u>Location of Change (Sheet)</u>	<u>Subject Title</u>	<u>FY20 Amount</u>
	DEFICIT - 2/28/18	0
	ALG June 28, 2018	
	Formula correction - Total Acton Spending (Minuteman Debt)	-296,296
	DEFICIT - 6/28/18	-296,296
	<u>February 28 2018 Changes to reverse</u>	
	Debt Exclusion - Minuteman	-296,296
	Debt Exclusion - FY19 Bonding - EST	-400,000
	Reserve Balancing reversed	-743,661
	DEFICIT - 9/27/18	-1,736,253
	DEFICIT - 10/25/18	-1,736,253
	<u>November 29, 2018 Changes</u>	
	<u>Adjust Minuteman to Preliminary Assessment</u>	
	Lower Operating Assessment	36,805
	Lower New Building project debt	11,882
	DEFICIT - 11/29/18	-1,687,566
	New Growth from 800K to 655k	-151,727
	Overlay from \$900k to \$700K	200,000
	ABRSD Budget preliminary FY20 Assessment	938,947
	DEFICIT - 12/13/18	-700,346
	Municipal FY20 Town Manager budget	-86,741
	Revised "State Aid"	25,966
	DEFICIT - 1/3/19	-761,121
	ABRSD assessment change, 1/10/19	203,449
	Reduce Overlay \$150K	150,000
	Increase reserve use	104,672
	DEFICIT - 1/17/19	-303,000

Acton Leadership Group  
Review of ALG plan metrics  
17-Jan-19

<u>Metric</u>	<u>3-Jan-19</u>	<u>17-Jan-19</u>
Deficit	\$ (761,000)	\$ (303,000)
Reserves used	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 1,405,000
Untaxed Levy capacity	0	0
Changes in avg. SF tax bill	3.95%	3.95%

FYI items are posted separately  
after the packet materials