

I. **CALL OF MEETING  
TO ORDER AND  
FLAG SALUTE**

A regular meeting of the School Committee was held in the Auditorium at the Middle/High School.

Present: Mr. Chris Coyle, Chair; Ms. Danielle Grafton, Vice-Chair; Ms. Heidi Hernandez, Secretary; Ms. Julie Groom, and Ms. Wendy Happel, Members. Also in attendance were Mr. Peter Schafer, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Felicia Moschella, Assistant Superintendent; Elizabeth Lindo, Student Representative; and Ms. Theresa Minnehan, Administrative Assistant.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Mr. Coyle stated that due to the size of the crowd this evening, the meeting was moved from the library to the auditorium. He stated that there is nothing on this evening's agenda to remove a school group or club. He also asked that people be respectful to others when speaking under the Hearing of Visitors section. The agenda item related to a possible vote to remove a book at a future meeting is driven by MA General law, Chapter 71, Section 50. He stated that he received a request from a member of the School Committee who would like an agenda item to vote on the removal of the book, *This Book is Gay*, and he continued that any member has as much right as the Chair to have the topic discussed, the only way to vote is to give notice this evening that a vote could take place at any future meeting. He stated that no vote would be taken this evening on the removal of the book, *This Book is Gay*. He would prefer for the removal of any instructional materials to go through the steps outlined in our policy, KEC, Challenged Educational Materials, opposed to using state law. However, there have been no formal complaints made to the Superintendent regarding any materials. He also asked that when speaking to give your name and address. The policy allows three minutes to speak and he will ask to end or cut it short if going on too long. He also asked for proper conduct this evening and that there be no personal complaints against any individual. He may have to end Hearing of Visitors before all get a chance to speak, but encouraged community members to email any member of the Abington School Committee or Mr. Schafer, Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Schafer gave an update on information and the status of where we are; he was asked to remove the book; *This Book is Gay* from the high school library shared area. He removed it after reviewing portions of the book. After reading the entire book he decided to put the book back on the high school side of the library. He stated that the book cautions students about safe sex, and online behavior and other cautionary messages to students. He tried to put a review committee together but there isn't an actual challenge of the book so the policy doesn't fit.

II. **HEARING OF VISITORS**

Mr. Shannon, President of the Abington Education Association, and teacher in the Abington Public Schools, asked to speak to the Abington School to request a swift, fair and equitable settlement to the Association's collective bargaining agreements.

The following residents asked to be heard regarding the book, *This Book is Gay*.

- Alex Hagerty, 515 Summer Street, not speaking on behalf of the Board of Selectmen but rather on behalf of himself
- Sue McHugh, 30 Elm Street
- Kristine Simmons, 36 Thaxter Avenue
- Beth McDonnell, 45 Spruce Street
- Susan Wakelin, 47 Buckboard Lane
- Steven Driscoll, Quincy, was not given an opportunity to speak due to being from out of town.
- Rachel Abell, 571 Randolph Street

Danielle Grafton requested that the School Committee take a brief recess.

VOTED: on motion of Danielle Grafton (Chris Coyle) the members of the School Committee voted to take a recess. Ms. Happel opposed to a recess.

Upon return Mr. Coyle continued the Hearing of Visitors' section, but stated that it would end at 8:10 p.m.

- Thomas Burke, 254 Presidential Drive
- Patricia Baldner, 76 East Street
- Galen Cunniff, 369 High Street

Public comment ended at 8:10 p.m. and Mr. Coyle reviewed the process that if you want to challenge a book our policy is online.

### III. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 28, 2022.

VOTED: on motion of Chris Coyle (Heidi Hernandez) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes of September 28, 2022, as presented.

IV. **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT**

A. Art Department Update. (M. Poirier)

This presentation was tabled for a future meeting.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Notice of the Consideration of a Change of School Books at the November School Committee Meeting for *This Book is Gay* (J. Dawson)

Mr. Coyle stated that this section should be considered notice of the consideration of a change of school books at the November or any future meeting of the book, *This Book is Gay*. It could happen at the next meeting or a meeting thereafter. Ms. Happel asked how we figure out what meeting this would take place and Mr. Coyle stated that he would decide when developing future agendas. Ms. Happel stated that the people chosen to be on the original review committee were biased. Mr. Schafer stated that the policy outlines who participates and given that we are a small district he looks for people from neither side to review the book. Mr. Schafer stated that he follows policy as outlined and chose parents from the school council who were democratically chosen. Mr. Coyle stated that his preference would be to go through Abington School Committee policy rather than state law and he stated that the notice has been given and he will not put this on the agenda if it is going through our policy. Mr. Coyle stated that he will review with Attorney Joseph Emerson whether the change must go through a School Committee vote.

VI. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. MASC/MASS Annual Joint Conference (November 2-5, 2022) at Resort and Conference Center at Hyannis, Hyannis, MA

1. Appointment of a Voting Delegate.

VOTED: on motion of Chris Coyle (Danielle Grafton the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to Appoint Heidi Hernandez as the voting delegate on the 2022 MASC Resolutions as informed by the Abington School Committee.

2. Review of 2022 Resolutions.

*#1 Regarding Sanctuary Laws for Transgender Students.*

VOTED: on motion of Chris Coyle (Julie Groom) the members of the School Committee voted to support resolution #1.  
Yes: Chris Coyle  
Julie Groom  
Danielle Grafton  
Heidi Hernandez  
No: Wendy Happel

*#2 To Increase the Maximum Balance Allowed by the Special Education Reserve Fund.*

VOTED: on motion of Julie Groom (Danielle Grafton) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to support resolution #2.

*#3 Membership of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.*

VOTED: on motion of Chris Coyle (Heidi Hernandez) the members of the School Committee voted to support resolution #3.  
Yes: Chris Coyle  
Julie Groom  
Danielle Grafton  
Heidi Hernandez  
No: Wendy Happel

*#4 Preserving Local Governance of Massachusetts Schools*

VOTED: on motion of Danielle Grafton (Julie Groom) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to support resolution #4.

*#5 Personal Finance Literacy*

VOTED: on motion of Danielle Grafton (Julie Groom) the members of the School

Committee unanimously voted to support resolution #5.

*#6 Establishment of a Regional School Assessment Reserve Fund*

VOTED: on motion of Danielle Grafton (Heidi Hernandez) the members of the School Committee voted to support resolution #6.

Yes: Chris Coyle  
Julie Groom  
Danielle Grafton  
Heidi Hernandez

Abstain: Wendy Happel

**VII. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES**

A. Additional Home School Requests for the 2022-2023 School Year.

Dr. Robbins requested the approval of two additional families to home educate their school-aged children. These requests came in after our August meeting. These families are in compliance with the procedures set forth by Massachusetts State Law, Chapter 71, Section 1, 2, and 3, Chapter 76, Section 1, and the Abington Public Schools. He recommended this evening that the School Committee approve their request to home educate their child(ren).

VOTED: on motion of Heidi Hernandez (Chris Coyle) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the additional Home Education Programs for the 2022-2023 school year as recommended by Dr. Robbins.

**VIII. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

A. Abington Public Schools' Targeted District Review Report (April 2022).

Mr. Schafer stated that at the end of the last school year, DESE provided an audit of the District. This is done periodically, and we have just received our report back and it is overall a positive report. There are some areas to reflect on as we improve the District and he wanted to make all aware that the report is back, and he would like to review some positive areas and as well as the recommendations for improvement. This is not a review of the MCAS reports that department heads

give annually. However, MCAS results are cited as a District in this report. He reviewed in the executive summary teachers express a desire for more structured time to analyze and respond to student-level data as well as have access to a data dashboard to ensure that important data are readily available. The District understands that data usage is an area of need and is working toward meeting the identified need. Mr. Schafer stated that this is in the works, and we have the ability to provide this for staff. Table summaries were given in the Report for strengths and areas for growth and Mr. Schafer reviewed those indicators and their strengths and areas for growth. He then referred the Committee to the Assessment section on page 15 and stated that our strength is that we use a variety of assessments to measure and monitor student performance and that we communicate with families using a variety of methods such as standards-based report cards, grade promotion letters, and universal screener data. He stated that an area for growth is to adopt a formal structure data dive processes. Mr. Schafer stated that the document is online and we will digest this Report and be reflective about the Report and what needs to be worked on. Ms. Hernandez was impressed with the student engagement at the high school level and believes it is a testament to our teachers.

**IX. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

**A. School Safety and Update on November 8<sup>th</sup> Professional Development ALICE Training.**

Dr. Moschella gave an update on what will take place on the staff half day of professional development on November 8<sup>th</sup> and she reiterated that there is no school for students on this day. She stated that staff will be refreshed on the ALICE safety program and (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate) and to make decisions based on the information received during an incident. This training does not start or end on November 8<sup>th</sup>. All staff have gone through training and/or watched an ALICE video. On November 8<sup>th</sup> there will be an e-learning component and presentations provided by the Abington Police Department and Abington Public School staff. She thanked the police department for their partnership in school safety in general. Students and staff participate in ongoing ALICE drills in each building which varies based on age level throughout the school year.

**X. ESTABLISHMENT OF NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DATE**

*Tuesday, November 29, 2022 @ 7 p.m.*

**XI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

1. Tues., November 8 – No School for Students- Half Day of Professional Development for Staff.
2. Wed., November 9 – Abington Education Foundation (AEF) Board Meeting @ Abington Town Hall @ 7 p.m.
3. Thurs., November 10 – National Honor Society Induction @ AHS Auditorium @ 6:30 p.m.

4. Fri., November 11 – Veterans’ Day – All School Offices and Buildings Closed
5. Wed., November 23 – Half Day (Thanksgiving Break) Thurs., November 24 and Fri., November 25 – All School Offices and Buildings Closed
6. Tues., November 29 – Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting @ 7 p.m.

- **Personnel Administration - Informational**

1. The Superintendent has accepted the resignation of Aanton Lynch, Jr., as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on October 7, 2022.
2. The Superintendent has accepted the resignation of Saysha Martin as a lunch/recess paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on October 21, 2022.
3. The Superintendent has accepted the resignation of Katie McPhee as a lunch/recess paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on October 5, 2022.
4. On the recommendation of Jennifer Barresi, Principal of the Woodsdale Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Stacie Chase as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on September 22, 2022
5. On the recommendation of Matthew MacCurtain, Principal of Abington Middle School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Charles Elledge as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on October 17, 2022.
6. On the recommendation of Matthew MacCurtain, Principal of Abington Middle School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of David Lyons as a long-term substitute wellness teacher within the Abington Public Schools effective on October 6, 2022, and continuing to on or about January 3, 2023.
7. On the recommendation of Matthew MacCurtain, Principal of Abington Middle School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Deidre McCarthy as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on October 31, 2022.
8. On the recommendation of Jennifer Barresi, Principal of the Woodsdale Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Katie O’Neill as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on September 22, 2022.
9. On the recommendation of Jennifer Barresi, Principal of the Woodsdale Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the reassignment of Tammy Reid as a paraprofessional to a tutor within the Abington Public Schools effective on September 26, 2022.
10. On the recommendation of Julie Thompson, Principal of the Beaver Brook Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Jennifer Whitman as a long-term substitute

paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on October 24, 2022, continuing to on or about January 15, 2023.

11. On the recommendation of Jennifer Barresi, Principal of the Woodsdale Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of the following lunch/recess paraprofessionals:
  - Judith Durant
  - Jillian Gonzalez
  - Myra Gretskey
  - Janet Parsons
  
12. On the recommendation of Melanie Savicke, Assistant Principal of the Beaver Brook Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of the following lunch/recess paraprofessionals:
  - Theresa Corbett
  - Jillian Gonzalez
  - Adriana Rampino
  
13. On the recommendation of Jonathan Bourn, Principal of Abington High School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of the following advisors for the 2022-2023 school year:
  - Meg Doherty            Math Team
  - Presley Mahanna      Freshman Class
  
14. On the recommendation of Matthew MacCurtain, Principal of the Abington Middle School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of the following enrichment club advisors for the 2022-2023 school year:
  - Vicki Graham            Minecraft
  - Timothy Leonelli       Instrumental Music & Drama
  - Melissa Manley         Alliance
  - Angela Nguyen         Running
  - Samuel Perkins         Chess
  - Lauren Peruzzi         Running
  
15. The Superintendent has granted Ms. Cassandra Edouard, a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools, a parental leave of absence in accordance with Option A as stipulated in Article VI of the ESP Agreement. This leave of absence will be for the 2022-2023 school year.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION  
@ 8:39 p.m.

VOTED:            by roll call vote in accordance with MA G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) for the purpose of updating the Committee on negotiations with AEA Units A and B

since, as declared by the Chair, to hold this discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee; and not to return to regular session

Yes:

Mr. Coyle  
Ms. Grafton  
Ms. Groom  
Ms. Happel  
Ms. Hernandez

---

Heidi Hernandez, Secretary