

Dear Visitors:

Welcome to an open meeting of the Abington School Committee. This is the agenda that will be discussed this evening. Please note that Hearing of Visitors is included; and if you have a statement or question, please be kind enough to wait to be recognized by the Chair and give your name and address.

Chris Coyle, Chair

***This meeting may be digitally recorded***

ABINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ABINGTON, MA 02351

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ABINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, February 27, 2024

**ABINGTON MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL – LIBRARY**

**7:00 P.M.**

I. CALLING OF MEETING TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

II. HEARING OF VISITORS

III. READING AND APPROVAL OF RECORDS

January 30, 2024

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

A. English Language Arts (Dr. Elizabeth Gonsalves, Department Head, English Language Arts)

B. Update on Chet Millett and, the Deirdre Volunteer Service Awards (Dr. Christopher Basta, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment)

V. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology Services Update (Rich Bykowski, Director of Technology Services)

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Request to Adjust the Previously Approved 2024-25 Abington High School Student International Travel Dates

VII. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

- A. FY25 Budget Update
- B. Extension of Contract with First Student
- C. Long Term Facilities Update

VIII. NEW BUSINESS AND ESTABLISHING OF NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

*March 26, 2024 @ 7 p.m.*

IX. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) 2023 Special Education Determination under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities ACT (IDEA – Meets Requirements (MR))
- Communication from Athletic Director Peter Serino regarding Memorial Field Improvement efforts
- Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Draft
- North River Collaborative Quarterly Report
- **Personnel Administration - Informational**
  1. On the recommendations of Jennifer Barresi, Principal of Woodsdale Elementary School, and Julie Thompson, Principal of Beaver Brook Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Catherine Laprade as an art teacher, effective February 12, 2024.
  2. On the recommendation of Jason Linn, Director of Maintenance, the Superintendent has approved the reassignment of Barry Sullivan to day custodian at 201 Gliniewicz Way, effective February 12, 2024.

3. On the recommendation of Jason Linn, Director of Maintenance, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Mary Wojciechowski as a full-time night custodian at 201 Gliniewicz Way, effective February 12, 2024.
4. On the recommendations of Matthew MacCurtain, Principal of Abington Middle School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Hannah Stebbins as a wellness teacher effective February 26, 2024
5. On the recommendations of Matthew MacCurtain, Principal of Abington Middle School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Lynne Hinkle as a paraprofessional effective February 26, 2024.
6. On the recommendations of Jennifer Barresi, Principal of Woodsdale Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Cynthia Porter as a long-term substitute Math Tutor, effective January 26, 2024.
7. On the recommendations of Matthew MacCurtain, Principal of Abington Middle School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of John Sal Clifford as a long-term substitute science teacher effective on or around February 14, 2024.
8. On the recommendations of Matthew MacCurtain, Principal of Abington Middle School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Rachel Collins as a long-term substitute science teacher effective on or around February 15, 2024.
9. On the recommendations of Jonathan Bourn, Principal of Abington High School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Fraser Toomey as a long-term substitute ELE teacher effective on or around February 12, 2024.
10. On the recommendation of Jean Connon, Director of Food Services, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Sarah Joyce as a Site Supervisor at Woodsdale Elementary School effective on February 5, 2024.
11. The Superintendent has accepted the resignation of Charlie Blanchette for purposes of retirement effective at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

Action Agenda  
February 27, 2024  
Page 4.

- Dates to Remember

1. AHS Presents Beauty and the Beast the Musical March 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm and March 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm
2. Tues., March 19 – Inservice / Early Release for Students
3. Tues., March 26-School Committee Meeting @ Middle/High School Library

X. ADJOURNMENT

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

A regular meeting of the School Committee was held in the library at 201 Gliniewicz Way.

Present: Mr. Chris Coyle, Chair; Ms. Heidi Hernandez, Secretary, Julie Groom, Member and Melanie Whitney, Member. Also in attendance were Mr. Peter Schafer, Superintendent of Schools, Felicia Moschella Assistant Superintendent, and Ms. Danielle Gaylor, Executive Secretary

**II. HEARING OF VISITORS**

Mike McDonald, 3 Pine Crest Road asked the School Committee to reconsider voting to change the FY24 School Calendar, making Good Friday, March 29, 2024, a non-school day.

**III. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**VOTED:** on motion of Melanie Whitney (Julie Groom) the members of the School Committee voted to approve the minutes of January 9, 2024, as presented.

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

Tim Leonelli provided an update on the Music Department. He talked about how the Department is undergoing a “Self-Evaluation” to determine, by the end of the year, what the department is doing well, and what can be targeted for improvement. The Department’s objective is to promote student recruiting and retention. He shared enrollment numbers for all grades. He looked back on past areas of growth and noted that the addition of a dedicated elementary music teacher has been valuable. He said that music teachers are teaching in their primary fields which helps provide more authentic and robust instruction. He reported that the Abington Music parents funded the Color Guard Coach position and it has been wonderful to have the color guard back. Tim shared the Department’s Vision of the Graduate and provided statistics on how music students can stand out as Higher Ed. continues to drop SAT requirements. Lastly, Mr. Leonelli shared his ideas on how he would like the department to grow which included adding different performing and non – performing classes.

Nicole Corbett, Department Head of the Science Engineering, & Technology Department provided curriculum updates and discussed the Department’s areas of growth that included the ease of material access and the enhancement of Middle-High School transition. She explained that the Department used PD time to look at assessments by grade and set expectations for lab assessments and report writing for grades 7-12. She shared the Department’s strengths which includes an enthusiastic, experienced, and interactive team of teachers. Some areas of growth include refining the Biology Boot Camp and building student scientific literacy. She spoke about how the Department is working towards the Vision of the Graduate in creating socially competent contributors and self-aware individuals, by, for example assigning in-depth lab assignments where students will conduct research, design, and experiment, and create formal lab reports. Ms. Corbett reviewed AP testing data, and the areas of improvement as it pertains to the overall scores. She also touched on AP class recruiting i.e. teacher recommendations.

**V. PRINCIPALS REPORT**

Karin Daisy presented the itinerary and other information on the two FY25 school trips for consideration and approval of the School Committee. Costa Rica in February of 2025 and Italy in April of 2025.

**VOTED:** on the motion of Heidi Hernandez (Chris Coyle) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the Abington High School Trip to Costa Rica during the 2025 February break as amended.

**VOTED:** on the motion of Melanie Whitney (Heidi Hernandez) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the Abington High School Trip to Italy during the 2025 April break as presented.

Before beginning his presentation on the Program of Studies, Jonathan Bourn, Principal of Abington High School, thanked Karin Daisy for her hard work, he also thanked Nancy McDonough the founder of Have a Sammy Kind of Day for her charitable donations to AHS students in need. Mr. Bourn presented the recommended revisions to the 2024-2025 Program of Studies that were submitted by the Department Heads/Directors and approved by Student Council to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

**VOTED:** on the motion of Chris Coyle (Heidi Hernandez) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the 2024-25 Abington High School Program of Studies as presented.

Matt MacCurtain, Principal of Abington Middle School, presented the new report cards that will replace the current grade 5-6 and 7-8 report cards to be rolled out in the Fall of 2024. He explained the open process that helped to create the new report cards as well as the implementation timeline. Training for teachers will begin this spring and Parent Information Sessions will be held in the Fall of 2024 during Open House.

**VI. REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES**

James Robbins asked the School Committee to consider and approve Abington Public School's membership into the South Shore Educational Collaborative.

**VOTED:** on the motion of Julie Groom (Melanie Whitney) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve membership of the Abington Public Schools into South Shore Educational Collaborative.

**VII. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Moschella presented the FY25 Capital Plan.

**VOTED:** on the motion of Melanie Whitney (Chris Coyle) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve FY25 Capital Plan as presented or amended to submit to Town Hall.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS AND ESTABLISHING OF NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DATES**

*February 27, 2024 @ 7 p.m.*

**IX. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

**Personnel Administration - Informational**

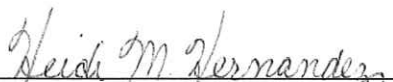
1. The Superintendent has accepted the resignation of Craig O' Connor as a custodian within the Abington Public Schools effective on January 12, 2023.
2. The Superintendent has accepted the resignation of Katherine Hughes as a Wellness teacher within the Abington Public Schools effective on January 5, 2024.
3. The Superintendent has accepted the resignation of Allison Brown as an Art teacher within the Abington Public Schools effective on January 31, 2024.
4. On the recommendation of Jennifer Barresi, Principal of the Woodsdale Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Zoe Balewicz as a long-term substitute within Abington Public Schools effective 12.1.23.
5. On the recommendation of Jean Connon, Director of Food Services, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Jenna Kelly and Alma Frederick as a cafeteria worker within Abington Public Schools.

**Dates to Remember**

1. Tues., Feb 13- SEPAC Meeting @ 6:30pm - AMS/AHS Library
2. Tues., Feb. 13- Boosters Meeting @ 6pm -AMS/AHS Cafeteria
3. Fri., Feb. 16 – Inservice/Early Release Day for Students
4. Mon., February 19 – Presidents' Day – All School Offices and Buildings Closed
5. Mon., February 19 – Fri., February 23 – Winter Vacation Break

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**VOTED:** on the motion of Heidi Hernandez (Julie Groom) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the January 30, 2024, School Committee meeting at 9:15pm.

  
Heidi Hernandez, Secretary

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADES 7-12

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

BY DR. LIZ GONSALVES

FEBRUARY 28, 2024



# THE LITERATE PERSON OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

**Students who meet the standards readily undertake the close, attentive reading** that is at the heart of understanding and enjoying complex works of literature.

**They habitually perform the critical reading** necessary to navigate the staggering amount of information available today both in print and digitally.

**They actively seek the wide, deep, and thoughtful engagement** with high-quality literary and informational texts that builds knowledge, enlarges experience, and broadens worldviews.

**They reflexively demonstrate the cogent reasoning** and use of evidence that is essential to both private deliberation and responsible citizenship in a democratic republic.

**Students who meet the standards** develop the skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundation for any creative and purposeful expression in language.

*( MA Frameworks, ELA & Literacy, 2017)*



# STRENGTHS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, 7-12

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- **Experienced, skilled teachers**
- **Authentic text set curriculum, written by teachers**
- **Teaching for mastery**
- **Vertical planning**
- **Consistent pedagogy**
  - Common essential questions & assignments at grade level
  - Student voice & choice in demonstration of knowledge & skills
  - Focus on writing as a process & practice

# EXPOSITORY WRITING ACROSS THE GRADES

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- Text Dependent Writing
- Literary Analysis Essays
- Timed Writing
- Persuasive Essays/Speeches
- Research Paper/ Author Study
- Reflections after Reading, Viewing, and Writing
- Growth Update Letters

Teach your students real-world writing purposes, add a teacher who models his or her struggles with the writing process, throw in lots of real-world mentor texts for students to emulate, and give our kids the time necessary to enable them to stretch as writers.

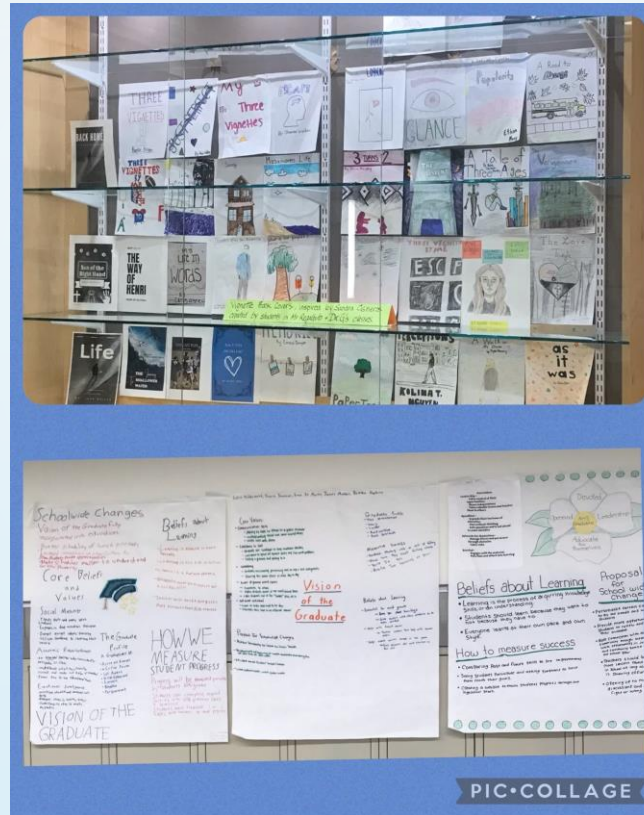
Kelly Gallagher

[www.idlehearts.com](http://www.idlehearts.com)



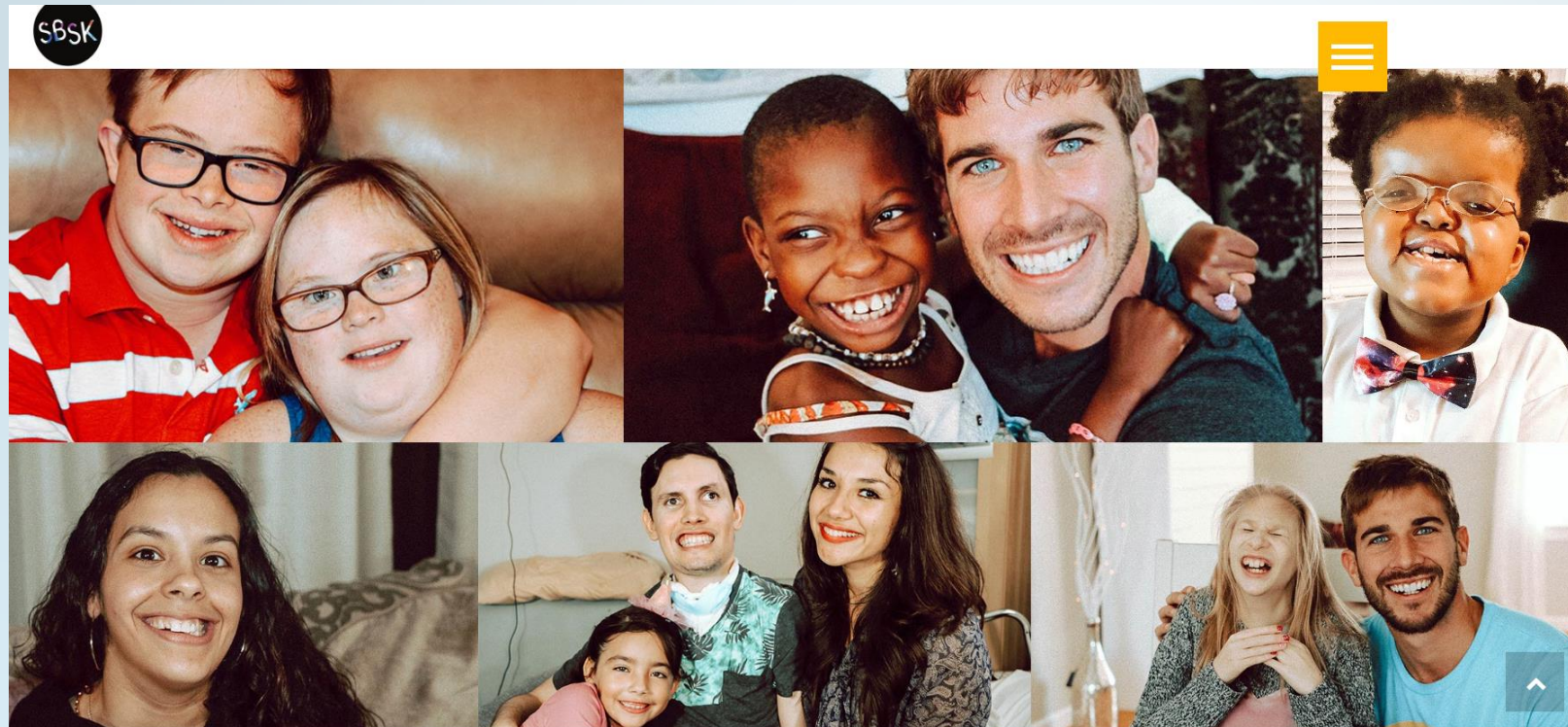
# INNOVATIVE INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT FOR AUTHENTIC AUDIENCES

- Scaffolded, graded discussions
- Philosophical Friday Discussions
- Writing Vignette Books
- College Essays as Art & Ads
- Storyboarding to show comprehension
- Drawing & explaining symbols
- Movie Reviews



- Vision Boards and Artist Statements
- Using a critical disability lens to read *Of Mice and Men*
- One Pager notes on documentaries
- Film pitches for updated Shakespeare
- Writing/filming scripts *Twilight Zone*
- Illustrated Vocabulary & Poems
- Re-envisioning the Graduate

# EKPHRASTIC POETRY @ GRADE 9



Watch 3 videos—or more.  
Write about one person.

Choose a point of view to  
welcome this person.

Who do you meet?  
What do you see?  
What do you hear?  
How do you feel?  
What will you ask?  
Pick a poetic form.

# STUDENT GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

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Heterogenous grouping  
& differentiated  
instruction at 7/8

HS Levels 1 & 2:  
common content  
& assessments

Effective collaboration  
with student support  
team

Fluid movement  
between levels,  
elimination of level 3

Closing of MCAS score  
gaps, especially high  
needs students

AP: Open enrollment,  
26-27% of each class  
(on average over 5 yrs.)  
in 2 course loop

# CHALLENGES & AREAS FOR STUDENT GROWTH

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INVITING STUDENTS  
BEYOND MINIMAL  
COMPLIANCE



ENGAGING PASSIVE  
STUDENTS



EVOKING  
INFERENTIAL  
READING  
COMPREHENSION  
SKILLS



GENERATING AMPLE  
SUPPORTING  
EVIDENCE



ELICITING  
ATTENTION TO  
CRAFT AND STYLE AS  
WELL AS CONTENT



SUPPORTING  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
LEARNERS



EXPLORING WAYS  
TO EXPANDING  
ELECTIVE OFFERINGS

# GROWING READERS AND WRITERS IN CHALLENGING TIMES

- ✓ Engaging students through goal setting & feedback
- ✓ Selecting Mirrors & Windows\*
- ✓ Supporting multi-lingual students
- ✓ Fostering connections: self/texts/world
- ✓ Building reading identity: SSR/FVR
- ✓ Introducing audio books, graphic novels, manga & ebooks as real reading
- ✓ Featuring film, documentaries & multi-media as texts

\* Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop, (1990)





# ELECTIVES SURVEY: HORROR IN LITERATURE & FILM

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Horror in Literature & Film → 30%

Yearbook → 24%

Philosophy 101 → 21%

Creative Writing → 19%

Journalism/Media Production → 15%

Public Speaking → 8%

The macabre and terrifying has haunted the collective human consciousness for millennia. Starting with gothic literature in the early 1600s, horror has changed and evolved. From Edgar Allan Poe to Shirley Jackson, to Stephen King; there have been many writers that accurately capture our anxieties about the known and unknown. Their counterparts in film include the likes of John Carpenter, Jordan Peele, Jennifer Kent, and Wes Craven. By turning these anxieties into art, many authors and filmmakers have shown us ways to heal and cope with some of the darkest parts of the human condition.

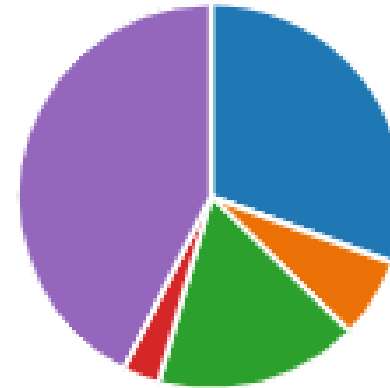
In this course, students will study both horror literature and film through a critical lens. Through the study of these works, students will pinpoint exactly why and how these films and stories comment on both society and our own inner turmoil. By the end of the course, students will write or record their own piece of horror fiction that reflects an issue they see in themselves, or in society, and demonstrate the importance of confronting these issues.

# LEVEL OF ELECTIVE

9. Some people consider the level of an elective before deciding to add it to your schedule. How important is the level of an elective to you? Please read all selections before choosing your answer.

[More Details](#)

- I would only take a level 1 electi... 59
- I would only take a level 2 electi... 13
- I would only take a leveled elect... 33
- I would only take an unlevelled e... 6
- I don't care about the level of a... 82



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 2023-24

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## Professional Learning Communities [PLCs]

- ✓ Expectations for Student Behavior
- ✓ Bridge Block Data
- ✓ Grades and Grade Reporting
- ✓ High Quality Performance Assessments
- ✓ Multilingual Learners



# WAYS STUDENTS ARE RECRUITED TO AP ENGLISH COURSES

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Teachers at AMS recommend students for Level I English in grade 9.



Teachers in grades 10 and 11, both levels, present the AP option to students.



Teachers who plan to teach AP offer an information session during Bridge Block.



Teachers confer with students who express interest, especially aspirational candidates.



Teachers speak to students who demonstrate reading, writing and/or speaking skill about AP options if students do not express an interest.

# AP Language 2019-2023

	Total Students	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5	Mean AHS	Mean MA	Mean Global
2019 30%	38 100%	11% (4)	63% (24)	16% (6)	8% (3)	3% (1)	2.29	3.11	2.78
2020 22%	29/34 85%	7% (2)	28% (8)	34% (10)	17% (5)	14% (4)	3.03	3.24	2.96
2021 25%	39/40 98%	18%(7)	23% (9)	38% (15)	21% (8)	0% (0)	2.62	3.09	2.86
2022 26%	38/40 95%	11%(4)	26% (10)	50% (19)	11% (4)	3% (1)	2.68	3.04	2.83
2023 29%	40/42 95%	15% (6)	35% (14)	40% (16)	10% (4)	0% (0)	2.45	2.98	2.82

YEAR	Total	1	2	3	4	5	AHS	+/-	
2023	15,094	12%	26%	26%	22%	13%	2.98	2.45	- .53
2023	566,148	14%	29%	26%	20%	10%	2.82	2.45	- .37

# AP Literature 2019-2023

	Total Students	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5	Mean AHS	Mean MA	Mean Global
2019 39%	41/4 95%	12% (5)	37% (15)	34% (14)	15% (6)	2% (1)	2.59	2.95	2.62
2020 32%	21/37 54%	5% (1)	52% (11)	33% (7)	10% (2)	0% (0)	2.48	3.19	2.84
2021 14%	21/45 47%	0% (0)	52% (11)	43% (9)	5% (1)	0% (0)	2.52	2.68	2.47
2022 19%	30/45 66%	3% (1)	27% (8)	33% (10)	13% (4)	23% (7)	3.27	3.52	3.31
2023 31%	26/41 70%	4% (1)	15% (4)	46% (12)	31% (8)	4% (1)	3.15	3.51	3.26
	Total	1	2	3	4	5		AHS	+/-
2023	10,199	6%	15%	32%	31%	21%	3.51	3.15	-.36
2023	358,463	9%	14%	34%	28%	15%	3.26	3.15	-.11

# THANK YOU!

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# Abington Public Schools Technology Department

Rich Bykowski – Director

Oliver Crichlow – Systems Support Engineer

Rhys Papineau – Computer and Network Technician

Vicki Graham – Technology Integration Specialist



# What we do in the Technology Department

- **Manage, monitor and maintain:**
  - ~2200 laptops, desktops, etc.
  - ~130 projectors, touchscreen displays
  - ~100 printers, copiers
  - District network including ~250 network switches, wireless access points, etc.
- **Support and train staff on use of all district software including Canvas, Aspen and all educational subscriptions**
- **Work with various district departments to improve processes, discover new products and implement new workflows to help optimize workflows, for example, online submission of the Basic Student Information Sheet.**

# Support ticket statistics

The technology department uses a ticketing system called IncidentIQ to track help requests, resolve issues and alert our “customers” when their issues have been resolved. Staff, students and families (through our website/online form) can enter tickets to be addressed by technology staff.

Year over year stats:

- August 15, 2021 – June 30, 2022: Tickets closed = 4157
- August 15, 2022 – June 30, 2023: Tickets closed = 3753
- August 15, 2023 – February 20, 2024: Tickets closed = 2557 (estimate 3500 total at year end)

Reasons for the decrease:

- Support from the staff in the library media center
- Alerting families to student laptop damage
- Larger percentage of newer laptops in the hands of students

# Technology Projects

- Through funding provided by Town Meeting, the school district can provide each 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grader with a new laptop, bag for the device and earbuds with microphone to be used through their time at AMS or AHS.
- With ECF Federal funds and school budget monies, we are working to replace staff laptops, many of which were purchased as part of the building project.
- Rolled out SMS text functionality through our SchoolMessenger emergency calling system. \*More on this later
- Moved nearly all district hosted software systems to the cloud, improving accessibility for these systems and decreasing IT overhead.

# Cybersecurity

- Technology continues to monitor district systems to ensure they are patched and there are no vulnerabilities to be exploited on district systems.
- Implemented Multifactor Authentication for staff in the district.
- Completed DMARC email authentication, a protocol used to ensure emails sent from our organization are not fraudulent.

# Physical Security

- With funding secured from the State “Safer Schools” grant, added 15 cameras and an additional electronic locking door across Woodsdale and Beaver Brook.
- Continue to review options with maintenance and district leadership to further improve security across all district buildings.

# Change to APS Website and District to Home Communication

- As previously noted, we rolled out SMS text functionality as an addition to our emergency calling system earlier this school year. Since then, the company we were working with was purchased by a larger company and our experience with the new company has been severely degraded.
- To ensure the best possible communication with our community, we have been vetting replacement options for our website and emergency calling systems as well as looking to implement a mobile app and a district wide option for two-way communications directly between staff and our families.



# ABINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*"The mission of the Abington Public Schools is to provide all students with relevant, challenging educational experiences to prepare them to be engaged, responsible citizens and members of the global community."*

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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To: Peter Schafer, Superintendent of Schools  
From: Felicia Moschella, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent of Schools  
Date: February 12, 2024  
RE: First Student Bus Contract

As part of our contract with our regular education transportation contract, First Student, we have the opportunity to exercise two additional "Optional Years," FY25 and FY26.

At this time, I recommend the School Committee extend the contract with First Student for FY25 and FY26 at a 3% increase each year.

Thank you

**DATE:** November 29, 2023

**TO:** Jason Linn, Maintenance Director

**FROM:** Ken Beck

**SUBJECT:** HVAC System Evaluation  
Beaver Brook Elementary School  
Abington, MA

**COPIES TO:** File

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### General

Beaver Brook Elementary School is located at 1 Ralph Hamlin Lane and was constructed in 1951, new addition added in 1955, renovated in 1985 and further limited renovations converting shop spaces to offices, classrooms, etc. The building is 67,000 SF of occupied space. The building currently has steam heat and unit ventilators.

### Existing Equipment

The following is a list of the existing heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems within the Beaver Brook Elementary School:

- 1) Heating System: Steam heat from (x2) natural gas/fuel oil fired steam boilers.
  - a) Steam Boiler: (x2) Smith model 35500A-S-10; 3,057 MBH input
    - i) Boiler room renovated in 1980.
    - ii) Triplex boiler feed unit
    - iii) Steam to hot water converter and base mounted circulating pumps for floor radiant heating.
    - iv) Fuel oil pump set
    - v) Underground storage tank has been removed.
- 2) Gym: (2) steam Heating and Ventilating Units; exhaust at stage on wall.
- 3) Former Locker Rooms: Converted to classroom space.
- 4) Cafeteria: Unit ventilators
- 5) Former Shop Areas: Gas furnace split system for new offices, etc.
- 6) Typical Classroom:
  - a) Steam heat Unit Ventilator per classroom w/ thru wall outdoor air intakes.
  - b) Hot water floor radiant heating (abandoned in place).
  - c) Standard efficiency filters
  - d) Exhaust from openings at floor level to horizontal ductwork in attic space; exhaust fans in attic to cupola or roof exhaust fans over wings.
- 7) Administration, Misc. Spaces Corridors:
  - a) Heat only with steam cabinet unit heaters and/or radiation.





- b) Hot water floor radiant heating (abandoned in place)..
- c) Miscellaneous split systems, window units for air conditioning
- 8) Bathrooms:
  - a) Steam Cabinet Unit Heaters or radiators
  - b) Roof mounted exhaust fan ducted down to janitor's closet and bathroom.
- 9) Automatic Temperature Controls
  - a) Pneumatic controls that appear to be original to the building and in various states of disrepair.
- 10) Electrical: 120/208/1ph/600amps

Note: Asbestos containing materials (ACM) was noted throughout building.

### **HVAC System Options**

The existing steam system has far exceeded its anticipated life expectancy and is in serious disrepair. Direct replacement of the systems is not an option since much of the steam/hot water piping is deteriorated and not reusable in a renovation. Since the piping needs to be replaced, it is recommended the system be replaced with a refrigerant based or water based heating and cooling system.

#### **Option 1 – Variable Refrigerant Flow Unit Ventilators**

##### Central Plant

Remove existing steam/hot water heating system in its entirety.

##### Occupied Building

This option includes removing the existing unit ventilator and providing a new unit ventilator with a VRF coil and MERV13 filters. The VRF coil would be interconnected by insulated refrigerant piping to a roof or grade mounted or VRF heat pump to provide air conditioning. A new condensate drain system would be required for all new cooling coils. Since humidity control has been a continual issue at the school, he unit ventilators could be provided with an electric heating coil to provide classroom dehumidification.

Gym air handling units shall be replaced with similarly sized air handlers with a VRF refrigerant coils and MERV13 filters. The VRF coil would be interconnected by insulated refrigerant piping to a roof or grade mounted or VRF heat pump to provide air conditioning. A new condensate drain system would be required for all new cooling coils.

Areas with existing split system air conditioning systems (Main Office, Computer Room, Library, etc.) and other areas that may want be air conditioned (Guidance, Speech, Testing, etc.) shall be provided with a Variable Refrigerant Volume (VRF) system.

The Variable Refrigerant Flow system (180 tons) would include heat recovery type heat pumps on the roof or grade that have the capability of simultaneous heating/cooling for connected fan coil units and insulated refrigerant to branch selector boxes and then to equipment.

New rooftop/attic exhaust fans with VFD control for classroom exhaust air systems; and gymnasium for demand control ventilation and economizer sequence of controls.



All steam/hot water heating systems will be removed. Areas requiring supplemental heat where a VRF fan coil would not be appropriate will be provided with electric heat.

All new heating, ventilating and air conditioning equipment will be controlled by a new Direct Digital Control (DDC) Building Management System (BMS).

## **PLUMBING**

### Central Plant

The existing gas fired water heater has exceeded their anticipated life expectancy and will be replaced with a new heat pump domestic hot water heater system. The recirculation hot pump shall be replaced and a new mixing valve will be added to the system so that the domestic hot water can be stored at 140F (adjustable) and distributed to the building at 120F (adjustable).

## **ELECTRICAL**

### Central Plant

The existing electrical service will need to be replaced with a new 3000amp/208v/120v/3phase electrical service to the support the additional electrical load to add air conditioning to the areas indicated.

### Occupied Building

New duct smoke detectors, where required, will be wired back to building fire alarm control panel.

New VRF system shall require a new power distribution through the building to the new mechanical equipment.

No major structural improvements beyond should be required depending on placement of units. Normal equipment supports, curbing, integration into roofing system and roof penetrations (piping/power) will be required. All roofing work will be required to be performed in accordance with roofing system manufacturer's instructions so as not to void any warranties and to provide a weathertight installation.

### MASS Save Rebates

The estimated rebate is \$3,500.00 per ton or approximately \$ 700,000.00 (200 tons).

### Estimated Construction Cost

The estimated construction cost to fully renovate the building under this option is \$ 5,360,000.00.

## **ANALYSIS**

*Advantages:* Energy Efficient air conditioning, Energy Efficient heating, eliminates use of fossil fuels, minimal noise transmission to the spaces; Construction Costs.

*Disadvantages:* Dependent on existing equipment if project is phased; disruption to the school.



## **Option 2 – New Air Source Heat Pump/Unit Ventilators**

### HEATING, VENTILATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

#### Central Plant

Remove existing steam/hot water systems in their entirety.

Provide 300 tons of air source heat pump to with glycol solution to a plate fame heat exchanger to provide heating and cooling to the building. Provide heat pump circulating pumps, water specialties for the air-cooled heat pump loop.

A new two pipe dual water piping system will be provided throughout the entire school to provide heating or cooling to terminal equipment.

Provide building circulating pumps, two base mounted, with new base mounted circulating pumps with equivalent capacities. Provide expansion tanks and diaphragm type expansion tanks, new air separator and water specialties for in new dual water supply piping.

#### Occupied Building

Existing heating only unit ventilators and air handling equipment shall be removed and replaced a new similarly sized unit ventilators or air handlers with a dual water coil and MERV13 filters. The Gym air handling units shall be replaced with similarly sized air handlers with a dual water coil and MERV13 filters. Dual water coils shall be interconnected to the new dual water distribution piping system.

New rooftop exhaust fans with VFD control for classroom exhaust air systems; and gymnasium for demand control ventilation and economizer sequence of controls.

Replace terminal heating equipment with new equipment sized for 130F entering water temperature.

Areas with existing split system air conditioning systems (Main Office, Computer Room, Library, etc.) and other areas that may want be air conditioned (Guidance, Speech, Testing, etc.) shall be provided with a Variable Refrigerant Volume (VRF) system. The Variable Refrigerant Flow system would include heat recovery type heat pumps on the roof or at grade that have the capability of simultaneous heating/cooling for connected units, insulated refrigerant to branch selector boxes and then to fan coil units and insulated condensate drain piping to the outdoors.

All new heating, ventilating and air conditioning equipment will be controlled by a new Direct Digital Control (DDC) Building Management System (BMS).

## **PLUMBING**

#### Central Plant

The existing gas fired water heater have exceeded their anticipated life expectancy and will be replaced with a new heat pump domestic hot water heater system. The recirculation hot pump shall be replaced and a new mixing valve will be added to the system so that the domestic hot water can be stored at 140F (adjustable) and distributed to the building at 120F (adjustable).

The existing ¾" reduced pressure backflow preventer shall be replaced and protected water makeup



piping shall be extended to the new heating hot water system for makeup water.

## ELECTRICAL

### Central Plant

The existing electrical service will need to be replaced with a new 3000amp/208v/120v/3phase electrical service to the support the additional electrical load to add air conditioning to the areas indicated.

### Occupied Building

Replacement unit ventilators and air handling equipment mostly will be able to be disconnected/reconnected to existing power sources. New duct smoke detectors, where required, will be wired back to building fire alarm control panel.

New VRF system shall require a new power distribution to individual components.

No major structural improvements beyond should be required depending on placement of units. Normal equipment supports, curbing, integration into roofing system and roof penetrations (piping/power) will be required. All roofing work will be required to be performed in accordance with roofing system manufacturer's instructions so as not to void any warranties and to provide a weathertight installation.

### MASS Save Rebates

The estimated rebates are approximately \$ 505,600.00.

ASHP (300 tons):	\$2,500.00 per ton
Variable Speed Drives (4):	\$1,400.00 per drive

### Estimated Construction Cost

The estimated construction cost to fully renovate the building under this option is \$ 8,040,000.00.

## ANALYSIS

*Advantages:* Energy Efficient air conditioning, Energy efficient heating, elimination of fossil fuels.

*Disadvantages:* High construction costs; disruption to the school, medium level sound transmission.

## **Option 3 – Geothermal Source Heat Pump/Unit Ventilators**

### **HEATING, VENTILATING AND AIR CONDITIONING**

#### Central Plant

Remove existing steam/hot water systems in their entirety.

A geothermal closed loop well field and piping system with a 35% propylene glycol solution for 200 tons of geothermal heating and cooling to the building will be required. Provide geothermal side circulating pumps, water specialties for air cooled heat pump loop.

Provide a new two pipe dual water distribution piping system to provide either heating or cooling to new terminal equipment throughout the building.



Provide 200 tons of geothermal water to water heat pumps to provide heating and cooling to the building. Provide new building side base mounted circulating pumps. Provide new diaphragm type expansion tanks, new air separator and water specialties in new dual water supply piping.

#### Occupied Building

Existing heating only unit ventilators and air handling equipment shall be removed and replaced a new similarly sized unit ventilator or air handlers with a dual water coil and MERV13 filters. Gym air handling units shall be replaced with similarly sized air handlers with a dual water coil and MERV13 filters. Dual water coils shall be interconnected to the new dual water distribution piping system.

New rooftop exhaust fans with VFD control for classroom exhaust air systems; and gymnasium for demand control ventilation and economizer sequence of controls.

Replace terminal heating equipment throughout the building with new equipment sized for 130F supply water temperature.

Areas with existing split system air conditioning systems (Main Office, Computer Room, Library, etc.) and other areas that may want be air conditioned (Guidance, Speech, Testing, etc.) shall be provided with a Variable Refrigerant Volume (VRF) system. The Variable Refrigerant Flow system would include heat recovery type heat pumps on the roof that have the capability of simultaneous heating/cooling for connected units, insulated refrigerant to branch selector boxes and then to fan coil units and insulated condensate drain piping to the outdoors.

All new heating, ventilating and air conditioning equipment will be controlled by a new Direct Digital Control (DDC) Building Management System (BMS).

### **PLUMBING**

#### Central Plant

The existing gas fired water heater has exceeded their anticipated life expectancy and will be replaced with a new heat pump domestic hot water heater system. The recirculation hot pump shall be replaced and a new mixing valve will be added to the system so that the domestic hot water can be stored at 140F (adjustable) and distributed to the building at 120F (adjustable).

The existing ¾" reduced pressure backflow preventer shall be replaced and protected water makeup piping shall be extended to the new heating hot water system for makeup water.

### **ELECTRICAL**

#### Central Plant

The existing electrical service will need to be replaced with a new 3000amp/208v/120v/3phase electrical service to the support the additional electrical load to add air conditioning to the areas indicated.

#### Occupied Building

Replacement unit ventilators and air handling equipment mostly will be able to be disconnected/reconnected to existing power sources. New duct smoke detectors, where required, will be wired back to building fire alarm control panel.



New VRF system shall require a new power distribution to individual components.

No major structural improvements beyond should be required depending on placement of units. Normal equipment supports, curbing, integration into roofing system and roof penetrations (piping/power) will be required. All roofing work will be required to be performed in accordance with roofing system manufacturer's instructions so as not to void any warranties and to provide a weathertight installation.

#### **MASS Save Rebates**

The estimated rebates are approximately \$ 905,600.00.

WSHP (300 tons):	\$4,500.00 per ton
Variable Speed Drives (4):	\$1,400.00 per drive

#### **Estimated Construction Cost**

The estimated construction cost to fully renovate the building under this option is \$ 9,540,000.00.

#### **ANALYSIS**

*Advantages:* Energy Efficient air conditioning, Energy efficient heating, elimination of fossil fuels.

*Disadvantages:* High construction costs; disruption to the school, medium level sound

#### **Option 4 – Hybrid Gas High Efficiency Boilers/Air Source Heat Pump**

##### **Central Plant**

Remove existing steam/hot water systems in their entirety.

##### *Hybrid High Efficiency Gas Boilers*

Replace the existing steam/hot water system with three (3) new condensing type boilers, Lochinvar FBN1701 or Approval Equal rated for 1,750 MBH gas input and 1,464 MBH (96.4% efficient) net output hot water heating capacity at condensing water temperatures.

Provide the new boilers with a primary-secondary piping system. In addition, the boilers will be provided with combustion air and venting in with the manufacturer's listed installation instructions.

The boilers will be designed to operate on a hot water reset schedule (180F water temperature when the outdoor air temperature is 10F or below, 140 F water temperature when the outdoor air temperature is 40F or above and to vary linearly between 180F and 140 F entering water temperature when the outdoor air temperature is between 10F and 40F) to maximize boiler operating efficiency.

Provide new emergency boiler shutoff switches for each boiler and domestic hot water boiler at the boiler room entry. While carbon monoxide detection is not required by applicable codes, it is recommended that this detection be provided as part of this renovation.

##### *Hybrid Air Source Heat Pump*

Provide 300 tons of air source heat pump new piping system with 35% glycol solution to a plate fame heat exchanger to provide heating and cooling to the building. Provide heat pump circulating pumps, water specialties for the air-cooled heat pump loop.



### *Hybrid Boiler Room*

Provide a new two pipe dual water distribution piping system to provide heating or cooling to new terminal equipment throughout the building.

Provide new primary circulating pumps, two base mounted, with new base mounted circulating pumps with equivalent capacities. Remove existing expansion tanks and replace with new diaphragm type expansion tanks. Provide a new air separator in heating hot water supply piping.

The hybrid boiler room will use the air source heat pump for primary heating and air conditioning water distribution to the building; the high efficiency gas boilers will be used for low outdoor air temperature, system redundancy and emergency heating of the building.

Provide all new direct digital controls for new heating/cooling plant.

### Occupied Building

Existing heating only unit ventilators and air handling equipment shall be removed and replaced a new similarly sized unit ventilator or air handlers with a hot water coil and MERV13 filters.

Existing heating only unit ventilators and air handling equipment shall be removed and replaced a new similarly sized unit ventilator or air handlers with a dual water coil and MERV13 filters.

New rooftop exhaust fans with VFD control for classroom exhaust air systems and gymnasium for demand control ventilation and economizer sequence of controls.

Terminal heating equipment sized for 180F entering water temperature will be evaluated for reuse; since the equipment will lose approximately half of its heating capacity, most of the equipment will need to be replaced to provide adequate heating capacity at 130F entering water temperature.

Gym air handling units shall be replaced with similarly sized air handlers with a hot water coil and MERV13 filters.

New rooftop exhaust fans with VFD control for classroom exhaust air systems and gymnasium for demand control ventilation and economizer sequence of controls.

Areas with existing split system air conditioning systems (Main Office, Computer Room, Library, etc.) and other areas that may want be air conditioned (Guidance, Speech, Testing, etc.) shall be provided with a Variable Refrigerant Volume (VRF) system. The Variable Refrigerant Flow system would include heat recovery type heat pumps on the roof or at grade that have the capability of simultaneous heating/cooling for connected units, insulated refrigerant to branch selector boxes and then to fan coil units, insulated condensate drain piping to the outdoors and new automatic temperature controls integrated into the upgraded building management system.

All new heating, ventilating and air conditioning equipment will be controlled by a new Direct Digital Control (DDC) Building Management System (BMS).

## **PLUMBING**

### Central Plant

The existing gas fired water heater has exceeded their anticipated life expectancy and will be replaced

**BLW ENGINEERS, INC.**  
**311 GREAT ROAD, LITTLETON, MA 01460**  
**P.O. BOX 1551 LITTLETON, MA 01460**  
**P. 978.486.4301 F.978.428.0067**



with a new heat pump domestic hot water heater system. The recirculation hot pump shall be replaced and a new mixing valve will be added to the system so that the domestic hot water can be stored at 140F (adjustable) and distributed to the building at 120F (adjustable).

Modify the existing gas piping systems to accommodate the new condensing boilers.

The existing ¾" reduced pressure backflow preventer shall be replaced and protected water makeup piping shall be extended to the new heating hot water system for makeup water.

The boilers will be individually vented (CPVC vent piping) up through the existing chimney terminating through a new stainless steel chimney cap in accordance with manufacturer's applicable written instructions; each new boiler and the domestic hot water heater shall be provided combustion air from individual combustion air PVC pipes up through the roof to a new intake vent on the roof.

## **ELECTRICAL**

### Central Plant

The existing electrical service will need to be replaced with a new 3000amp/208v/120v/3phase electrical service to the support the additional electrical load to add air conditioning to the areas indicated.

### MASS Save Rebates

The estimated rebates are approximately \$ 529,600.00.

ASHP (200 tons):	\$2,500.00 per ton
Boiler (3):	\$8,000.00 per boiler
Variable Speed Drives (4):	\$1,400.00 per drive

Reference Appendix E – Rebate Information for rebate form.

### Estimated Construction Cost

The estimated construction cost to fully renovate the building under this option is \$ 8,840,000.00.

### Analysis

*Advantages:* Energy Efficient heating, Energy Efficient cooling, minimal disruption to the school.

*Disadvantages:* Construction costs; use of fossil fuels; medium level sound transmission.

## **Option 5 – New Variable Refrigerant Flow Ductless Units/Energy Recovery Ventilation**

HEATING, VENTILATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

### Central Plant

Remove existing steam/hot water heating system in its entirety.

### Occupied Building

Existing heating only unit ventilators shall be removed, outdoor air louvers removed and wall openings patched. Unit ventilators will be replaced with individual classroom mounted ductless fan coil units with MERV13 filters.





Air handling equipment shall be removed and replaced a new similarly sized air handlers with a VRF coil and MERV13 filters. Gym air handling units shall be replaced with similarly sized air handlers with VRF coils and MERV13 filters.

Areas with existing split system air conditioning systems (Main Office, Computer Room, Library, etc.) and other areas that may want be air conditioned (Guidance, Speech, Testing, etc.) shall be provided with a Variable Refrigerant Volume (VRF) system.

The Variable Refrigerant Flow system would include heat recovery type heat pumps on the roof or at grade that have the capability of simultaneous heating/cooling for connected units, insulated refrigerant to branch selector boxes and then to fan coil units, insulated refrigerant piping systems and insulated condensate drain piping to the outdoors.

Ventilation and exhaust for the building will be provided by energy recovery units with VRF coils to condition ventilation air. New insulated supply air and exhaust air duct distribution systems will provide outdoor air for ventilation and exhaust air from each space in accordance with applicable codes. Ducts that serve only two floors will require fire dampers at the floor level and ducts that serve more than two floors will require two-hour fire rated shafts and fire/smoke dampers at each shaft wall penetration. Each occupied space will be provided with a motorized damper to control ventilation and exhaust air for demand control ventilation.

All steam/hot water heating systems will be removed. Areas requiring supplemental heat where a VRF fan coil would not be appropriate will be provided with electric heat.

## PLUMBING

### Central Plant

The existing gas fired water heater and indirect tank have exceeded their anticipated life expectancy and will be replaced with a new heat pump domestic hot water heater system. The recirculation hot pump shall be replaced and a new mixing valve will be added to the system so that the domestic hot water can be stored at 140F (adjustable) and distributed to the building at 120F (adjustable).

## ELECTRICAL

### Central Plant

The existing electrical service will need to be replaced with a new 3000amp/208v/120v/3phase electrical service to the support the additional electrical load to add air conditioning to the areas indicated.

### Occupied Building

Replacement unit ventilators and air handling equipment mostly will be able to be disconnected/reconnected to existing power sources. New duct smoke detectors, where required, will be wired back to building fire alarm control panel.

New VRF system and ductless wall mounted units shall require a new power distribution through the building to new mechanical equipment.



### **MASS Save Rebates**

The estimated rebates is \$3,500.00 per ton (200 tons) or approximately \$ 700,000.00.

### **Estimated Construction Cost**

The estimated construction cost to fully renovate the building under this option is \$ 6,700,000.00.

### **ANALYSIS**

Advantages: Energy Efficient air conditioning, Energy efficient heating, System Redundancy, median sound transmission.

Disadvantages: Higher construction costs; disruption to school.

### **Recommendation**

**Option 1 – Variable Refrigerant Flow Unit Ventilators**

**Peter Schafer**

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**From:** Tobey, Gregory (DESE) <Gregory.Tobey@mass.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 25, 2024 3:34 PM  
**To:** Peter Schafer  
**Subject:** 2023 Special Education Determination under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – Meets Requirements (MR)

**Categories:** Blue Category

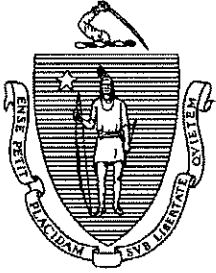
[EXTERNAL SENDER]

**Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary and Secondary Education**

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135 Santilli Highway, Everett, MA 02149

Telephone: (781) 338-3000  
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370



January 25, 2024

James Robbins  
Director of Special Education  
Abington Public Schools  
1071 Washington St.  
Abington, MA 02351

**RE: 2023 Special Education Determination under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – Meets Requirements (MR)**

Dear James Robbins:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (the Department) local special education determination under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Abington Public Schools

Annually, the Department is required to identify each local educational agency's (LEA's) specific needs for technical assistance or intervention in the area of special education.<sup>1</sup> The Department is required to assign each LEA to one of four categories: Meets Requirements (MR), Needs Assistance (NA), Needs Intervention (NI), and Needs Substantial Intervention (NSI). In prior years, the LEA determinations were aligned with LEA accountability levels unless additional performance and compliance measures, specific to special education, warranted a change in the LEA determination. The LEA determination process was revised in 2021 to focus on data that most impacts outcomes for students with disabilities.

The Department developed the LEA determinations Rubric to calculate each LEA’s determination level. In continuing to improve the identification process, the rubric has been adjusted for 2023. The rubric has been separated into Performance Criteria and Compliance Criteria to best reflect our State’s General Supervision Process. The performance section of the rubric specifically considers the following:

- Annual Dropout rate for students with disabilities (2022);
- 5-Year Cohort Graduation rates for students with disabilities (2021);
- Performance on Special Education State Performance Annual Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicator 3 (2023); and
- Performance on Special Education State Performance Annual Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicators 5 & 6 (SY 2022-2023).

The compliance section of the rubric specifically considers the following:

- Special Education State Performance Annual Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicators 4B, 9, & 10 (SY 2021-2022);
- Special Education State Performance Annual Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicators 11, 12, & 13 (SY 2022-2023);
- Identification of Non-Compliance # of Findings (Public School Monitoring (PSM)/Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) (SY 2022-2023); and
- Timely Submission/Verified Correction of Non-Compliance (SY 2022-2023).

For the full LEA Determinations Rubric, see the Special Education Policy Memo SY2022-2023 — 3: 2022-2023 Determinations of Need for Special Education Technical Assistance or Intervention. Consistent with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services [Memo 23-01](#), the Department may also consider other available data about the LEA’s compliance with IDEA in making determinations.

Each LEA is evaluated using the rubric and other available data, as the Department deems appropriate, and then placed into one of the LEA determination categories. As described in the determination rubric, final LEA determinations reflect both performance and compliance in special education. This year, the 5-Year Cohort Graduation rate and Least Restrictive Environment (Indicators 5 and 6) continue to be prioritized by the Department and are weighted x1.5 and x2.0, respectively. Additionally, points for Problem Resolution System Findings were combined with Public School Monitoring Findings into two categories: Identification of Non-Compliance and Timely Submission/Verified Correction of Non-Compliance, and are calculated per 1000 students with disabilities.

Data for Abington Public Schools:

		Performance			Compliance			
Annual Dropout Rate (2022)	5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (2021) <i>Points x1.5</i>	Special Education State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicator 3 (2023)	Special Education State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicators 5 & 6	Special Education State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicators 4B, 9, & 10	Special Education State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicators 11, 12, & 13	Identification of Noncompliance # of Findings (PSM/PRS) (SY2022-2023)	Timely Submission/ Verified Correction of Noncompliance (SY2022-2023)	

				(SY2022-2023) Points x2	(SY2021-2022)	(SY2022-2023)		
LEA Data	2.9%	86.4%	37	71.1%	No Status	Ind 11: --% Ind 12: --% Ind 13: --%	0	0
Rubric Points	3	4.5	2	6	4	--	4	4

Abington Public Schools earned 27.5 out of 34 possible points on the rubric, or 81%.

As a result of this determination, the Department is not requiring the LEA to engage in specific targeted and technical assistance activities. For additional information about the data, including access to the LEA's source data, go to *Frequently Asked Questions about LEA Determinations of Need for Special Education Technical Assistance or Intervention* which can be found on our MA Local Education Agencies' (LEA) Special Education Determinations website.

If you have any questions about the LEA's special education determination, please feel free to contact the Office of Special Education Planning and Policy, at [specialeducation@doe.mass.edu](mailto:specialeducation@doe.mass.edu).

Sincerely,

Jamie Camacho  
 Director, Special Education Planning and Policy

C: Peter G Schafer

To: Superintendent Peter Schafer  
From: Peter Serino, Athletic Director Abington Public Schools  
Subject: Proposed Field and Lighting Renovation at Memorial Field  
Date: February 8, 2024

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Over the last several years we have worked to identify areas of improvement at Memorial Field, an appropriate phasing of these improvements and avenues of funding. Throughout this process we worked with an outside consult that provided their vision of a master plan for the space, and potential phasing. Recently the Community Preservation Act Committee accepted our proposed project of the initial phase of Memorial Field improvements and advanced it to the town meeting. This phase of the improvements includes replacement of the Memorial Field lighting and renovation of the northeast corner to increase safety and usability of the space.

The replacement of the 34-year-old field lights at the Memorial Field playing field and the accompanying renovation of the available field space along the eastern half of the Memorial Field complex will increase the "usability" of Memorial Field for all the school and community groups in our town. The field renovation work will expand the amount of safe and usable field space, making more areas of Memorial Field available for team practices, scrimmages, and games, while also enlarging areas for community events, such as those sponsored by the Abington Celebrates committee. Under existing conditions, the entire northeastern quarter of this complex (the "Dust Bowl" area) is essentially unusable; this proposed Memorial Field renovation project will add almost 3 more acres of safe, irrigated grass field space for our community to enjoy. Additionally, we have included the installation of sod for this space in the projected cost which will allow the field space to become usable almost immediately after the completion of the work.

If we fail to replace the field lighting system, we fear that we will soon lose the ability to host night games or events of any type at Memorial Field, including losing the ability to schedule future fireworks shows. It is becoming more difficult each year to find and purchase replacement light fixtures for the existing system. The installation of the new LED light fixtures will enhance not only the usability of the main playing field, but it will also include some additional site lighting for the areas being renovated on the eastern half of Memorial Field. This additional lighting will allow greater flexibility for coaches and parents involved with our youth and high school sports teams to safely extend practices into the early evening hours during the fall, when the sun sets much earlier in the day -- and the use of new LED lights will also lower the electricity costs to our town. Additionally, the new technology severely limits the light pollution that occurs with the current lights.

This investment into the lighting system and the expanded and renovated field areas will bring more users and events to Memorial Field, which has served our town for over 75 years as the focal point of our community's recreational and civic events. Given the recent investments in the new scoreboard, the renovated baseball diamond, the new Beaver Brook playground, and the expanded parking area, the investment in our field lighting system and the expansion of the field areas should attract more and varied users to this complex and will restore the luster to this iconic landmark in the Town of Abington. As the stewards of this space, the Abington DPW and School Department will continue to guarantee equal access to interested community groups and implement procedures that help protect the investment to ensure it is long lasting.



# ABINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*"The mission of the Abington Public Schools is to provide all students with relevant, challenging educational experiences to prepare them to be engaged, responsible citizens and members of the global community."*

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES  
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DATE: February 14, 2024  
TO: Peter Schafer - *Superintendent*  
FROM: Christopher Basta, EdD - *Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment*  
SUBJECT: Student Opportunity Act 3-Year Plan

A new three-year Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan is due to DESE from districts that receive SOA funds by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Additionally, DESE is establishing a three-year improvement target for each district to include in their SOA plans that focuses on rapidly improving the performance of the "Lowest Performing Students" group. This group, by definition, includes the students who currently have the lowest academic performance, and therefore need the most significant levels of support to reduce the disparities between their performance and that of their peers (the purpose of SOA funding).

I have drafted an SOA plan based on an internal analysis of our student achievement and attendance data. Once DESE releases 3-year improvement targets they will be included in our plan. Below are excerpts from the draft SOA plan for your review and I will provide you with a final version to be approved by the School Committee before submission.

### ***Analysis of District Data:***

*Based on the review of Abington Public Schools data, our Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English Learners (EL) are not demonstrating the same level of achievement as their peers, as measured by the MCAS test. Additionally, these sub-groups are disproportionately affected by chronic absenteeism.*

*During the past five years, the district has experienced a significant increase in the number of students in the subgroups SWS and EL. Over the past five years, our SWD population has increased by 22% and the English Learner student population increased by 101%. In each of the identified sub-groups, students across all grade levels are scoring well below the district average in ELA, Math, and Science.*

*The Abington Public School System is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, homelessness, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender identity or sexual orientation. The contents of all publications are available upon request in languages other than English.*

*In addition, chronic absenteeism for our EL student population is above the district average. Our graduation rate for EL students is below the overall district rate. The graduation rate for SWD is below the overall district rate.*

*Therefore, this SOA plan will focus on supporting Abington's "Lowest Performing Students" – specifically Students with Disabilities and English Learners.*

***Outline of SOA Plan:***

*An analysis of triangulated district data indicates our approach as a district to reduce the gaps in achievement and attendance in our identified sub-groups needs to be multifaceted. We need to provide staff with professional development and support aimed at meeting the needs of and engaging all students. Our students, families, and community within these sub-groups need to feel connected to our schools and understand the implications of chronic absenteeism. As a district, we need to focus more of our work with vulnerable populations by using formative assessment data to inform instruction and intervention. Our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process needs to be updated and aligned to meet the needs of today's student population. Our curriculum and instruction need to be relevant and responsive to our students culturally and linguistically.*

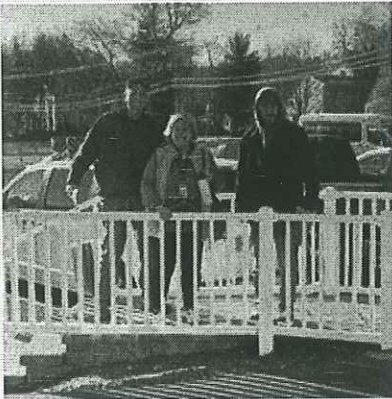
*The Abington Public School System is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, homelessness, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender identity or sexual orientation. The contents of all publications are available upon request in languages other than English.*





## North River Collaborative Quarterly Report

SY 2023-2024 –Quarter Two



North River Collaborative (NRC) is a multi-purpose, educational organization formed in 1976 to serve as an extension of school districts. The member districts of Abington, Avon, Bridgewater-Raynham, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Holbrook, Rockland, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, and Whitman-Hanson work together to provide high-quality, cost-effective educational programs and services predominantly to students with disabilities from our member districts and many other surrounding communities.

### **Mission Statement**

North River Collaborative cooperatively develops and delivers quality and cost-effective programs and services for students, school districts, partner organizations, and communities.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

The North River Collaborative does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, limited English speaking ability, genetic information, ancestry, age, disability, homelessness, military status, marital status, or any other protected class under the law in admission to, treatment in or employment in its programs or activities.



The North River School basketball team.

## Notes from the Executive Director

Our Learning Center staff and students at Sauchuk Farm in Plympton.



### Learning Center Programs

Our Learning Center classrooms had a very enriching fall and early winter with many great themes and activities woven into their instruction! All Learning Center Classrooms took an annual field trip to Sauchuk Farm in Plympton on October 20<sup>th</sup>. Many families attended too and enjoyed hayrides, pumpkin patches, a corn maze, and other games. The thematic unit for October was “Fast and Slow-Objects Go” and students explored mathematical and real-life learning scenarios. The Unique Learning System themes for November were “People Long Ago” and “Moving and Exploring.” These themes prompted such interdisciplinary activities as shopping and preparing a fall harvest feast, conducting a survey, and exploring new places map exploration. The theme for December was “The Gift of Giving.” There were many reading activities and activities related to showing kindness and support. Some students even helped at a food pantry. On December 19<sup>th</sup> our Learning Center classrooms participated in a community wide activity of decorating gingerbread cookies. Our Easton classrooms even showcased their talents at a presentation of Camp Rock that was written, directed, produced, and starred one of our very talented students from that program location! It was a great show that some of our staff were lucky enough to get to participate in as well. We'll see what this talented young lady and her classmates have in store for us all this spring!

**Staff Additions:** Staffing has remained consistent.

**Enrollment Snapshot:** Multiple Disabilities Program, 23 students and ASD/Developmental Program, 15 students

I am excited to share an update of the happenings at North River Collaborative for our second quarter in school year 2023-2024! We have all settled into our school year routines and set our sights on continuing to move our students and Collaborative forward.

In that spirit, this quarter has been focused upon the gathering of staff member, student, parent/guardian, and school district stakeholder feedback that will be thoroughly reviewed and utilized to craft our North River Collaborative Student Success Plan. This plan will utilize the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Planning for Success Model to create a strategic plan that will guide our Collaborative through the next three-to-five-year period. Thank you so much to everyone who has submitted both areas of commendation and feedback on areas of potential improvement for our organization.

As always, it has been great to continue to be out in our program classrooms as much as possible to stay connected with our wonderful staff and students across the Collaborative. We are also working as an administrative team to plan for the winter season.

-Paul Tzovolos

## North River School

The North River School has had a busy second quarter with the nature of the program finding students enrolling and unenrolling on a consistent basis throughout the year. Some students come to North River School as their full educational placement and some visit for a short-term evaluation. The North River School was excited to host its first Open House for parents/guardians on November 7, 2023, which was very well attended. This gave families an opportunity to come into the school on a less formal basis and be able to engage with staff about their students' successes. Some of the students even attended with their families as well.

The staff and administrators at North River School have also been busy with their own professional development. Our lead teacher is continuing her pursuit of Wilson Reading Certification, which is a structured phonemic-based method of reading instruction that will enrich the academic offerings at our school. The entire team at North River School has also completed CPR certification and continue to engage in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training as well. CPI training focuses on the de-escalation of crisis situations and the care, welfare, safety, and security of our school settings and students.

From a facilities perspective, the building continues to be maintained and any concerns are addressed. This quarter we quickly responded to a leak in a student bathroom that caused damage to one of the walls. The conference center is also regularly kept in great condition to support upcoming staff meetings and professional development opportunities.

There have been many student activities that we would like to highlight over the course of the quarter. The North River School student basketball team has participated in two games against READS Collaborative, coming away with one tie and one loss so far this year. This basketball team is incentive-based and offers a great opportunity for connections in the community. The staff at North River School also coordinated the sharing of Thanksgiving dinner meals for many students to take home to their families. On a more somber note, the students and staff held a memorial consisting of a moment of silence and flowers to dedicate an outdoor basketball court to a fellow student who passed away one year prior.

Staff Additions: None currently, search for clinical and support staff is ongoing.

Enrollment Snapshot: 36 students currently with new arrivals from Abington, Canton, Holbrook, Brockton, Stoughton, and Hanover.



## Independence Academy

The students and staff at Independence Academy were off and running during the second quarter of the school year! The high point was the school-wide Thanksgiving feast with all staff and students prior to leaving for the long weekend. We are very thankful for this wonderful school community and all of the great experiences that staff help our students to engage in and learn from. Here are some other community engagement events that students and staff at Independence Academy took part in this quarter:

- \*November 3rd-Trip to Ward's Berry Farm in Sharon
- \*November 16th- Soup and sandwich luncheon provided by students for their school community. The students were the "guest chefs" and prepared lunch for their classmates.

\*November 17th-Students went to the Animal Rescue League of Boston in Dedham to volunteer to clean up the grounds and care for animals.

\*December 7th-Students received a visit from a local boxing gym where a group called Sober Warriors is in place to help teens struggling with substance use. Four of our students have signed up since the visit!

\*December 8th-Students and staff went to Level99 in Natick for a team-building field trip. The opportunity provided students with challenges they had to figure out as a team.

\*December 14th-Another community luncheon with guest chefs making grilled cheese.

The team at Independence Academy also gave back by continuing to partner with Volunteer Ventures in Lexington to build wheelchair accessible picnic tables for individuals with disabilities. The crew is also running a fundraiser in partnership with Father Bill's & Mainspring in Brockton to help purchase food for displaced and needy families in the Brockton area. Help donate at [Donateabag.org/products/independenceacademy02301](https://donateabag.org/products/independenceacademy02301). The students are also very excited for their upcoming Winter Semi-Formal event at Camp Kiwanee in Hanson on January 25th!

We continue to **advocate for and improve our districts** to support transportation to and from Independence Academy for our students as cost and consistency are major factors for our students to fully access and engage in the program. This need is especially prevalent on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Staff Additions: None currently.

Enrollment Snapshot: 24 students total with 12 in the full Independence Academy Program, 8 students in the 45-day Intervention Program, and 2 students in the ten-day Upper Course Program.

## Professional Development

The professional development schedule continued to be robust and supportive of the needs of our school district partners for the second quarter of the year! Our first round of Understanding the New IEP Tool kicked off in November 2023 with a follow up to be scheduled in the spring to help districts to adapt to the new IEP format for the 24-25 school year. We were very excited to hold an in-person job alike for staff in the region who work in Alternative School settings. This event was housed and led by our own Independence Academy team members. We have also continued our focus on professional development geared toward supporting English Language Learners. Our PD team had great success with training provided by Kelly Mertens focused on paraprofessionals specifically, which was a clear area of need expressed by our special education directors this fall. We are looking forward to another quarter of enriching offerings including an in-person event centered around incorporating music therapy practices into instruction for teachers and related service providers.

## District Services

Our District Services Team has been busy supporting students both within our programs and in our member districts through our consultation, evaluation, and direct services. Our school psychologists have completed 59 evaluations so far this school year. Our BCBA has completed Safety Care Training with all our Learning Center Program Staff in addition to providing services to our Learning Center and North River School Students. Our speech and language pathologist team has completed several assistive technology and augmentative and alternative communication evaluations in school districts in the region in addition to their direct-service caseloads within our programs.

Staff Additions: None currently.

Enrollment Snapshot: Ongoing psychological, vision, orientation/mobility, assistive technology, and behavioral assessments and services are being well-accessed by our districts.

## Transportation

Our transportation staff engaged in a training focused on disability awareness and intervention strategies on November 28<sup>th</sup>. This supplements their CPR and First Aid training to ensure our drivers and monitors have the skills they need to transport some of our most needy students in the region. The office team is also continuing to become proficient with the new Transfinder software, which will greatly improve some of our internal efficiency. We were also excited to receive two new wheelchair vans and one new eight passenger van, which is a great accomplishment in the current market. We are also continuing to make strides in hiring new drivers and monitors and hope to continue this trend! We continue to operate out of our Almshouse, North River School, and Beaver Brook Elementary locations with a count of 383 students, 66 drivers, and 24 monitors currently.

## Behavioral Health Initiative and Social Work Intern Programs

We currently have six social work interns that work within both the East Bridgewater and West Bridgewater Public Schools. They receive coaching through our team members here at North River Collaborative as they serve day to day at their assigned school building. The social work interns also engage in group discussions and coaching focusing on a range of topics including learning contracts, scheduling, trauma support, and restorative justice. The NRC team also meets with university liaisons and completes evaluations of the interns each semester. This is a very rewarding program, and we look forward to continuing to support this great resource to our interns and our districts in the future. Our BHI social workers have also been busy creating their SMART goals and engaging in reflective discussions that help to support the work that they do as full-time clinicians in our member district schools.



### Contact Information

Thank you for reading our Quarterly Report! We are happy to answer any questions or provide additional information. Please reach out to Paul Tzovolos, Executive Director, at [ptzovolos@nrcollab.org](mailto:ptzovolos@nrcollab.org) or 781-878-6056 x 100.