



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting

January 21, 2021

7:00 p.m. Open Meeting
9:00 p.m. Executive Session

Via zoom webinar:

<https://abschools.zoom.us/j/99162690993>

NEW! Please note:

Public comment to be read at the meeting should be emailed to:

abrsc_public_comment@abschools.org

(Emails must be received by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting)

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
MEETING AGENDA - REVISION #2

Virtual Public Zoom Webinar Meeting

January 21, 2021

To attend webinar: <https://abschools.zoom.us/j/99162690993>

7:00 p.m.

To call in: 301 715 8592

9:00 p.m. Executive Session

Live streaming: <https://www.youtube.com/actontv1>

To submit public comment to be read at meeting: abrsc_public_comment@abschools.org
(public comment to be read at meeting must be submitted by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting)

1. **Call to Order (7:00)**
 - a. **Chairperson's Welcome - Tessa McKinley**
 - i. ****Recommendation to Temporarily Suspend Public Participation Policy BEDH - VOTE - Tessa McKinley**
 - b. **Public Comment - Please see note in the heading above**
 - c. **Superintendent's Update – Peter Light**
2. **PRESENTATIONS (7:20)**
 - a. **World Language Single Entry Level - Sinikka Savukoski**
 - b. **Superintendent's Preliminary FY22 Budget - Peter Light, Dave Verdolino**
 - i. Budget Subcommittee Update - Adam Klein (oral)
 - ii. Acton Leadership Group Update -J. Petersen/A. Krishnamurthy
 - iii. Boxborough Leadership Forum Update - Tessa McKinley
3. **ONGOING BUSINESS (8:25)**
 - a. **Consent Agenda - VOTE - Tessa McKinley**
 - i. Approval of Meeting Minutes of 1/7/21 – **VOTE**
 - ii. Approval of Anonymous Donation of \$627 to the Student Assistance - Homeless and Food Assistance Fund - **VOTE**
 - iii. Approval of Donation of 3,000 No Place for Hate face masks for students and staff from the AB United Way - **VOTE**
 - b. ***Structured Learning Time Update - Peter Light (addendum)**
 - c. ***Recommendation to Approve Nonresident Tuition Rate for the RJGJHS STEP Program - VOTE - Peter Light (per policy JFABA)**
 - d. **FY22 School Calendar - Second Read - VOTE - Marie Altieri**
 - e. **Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan - Second Read - VOTE - Peter Light (addendum)**
 - f. **ABRSC FY21 Operating Protocols - Third Read - VOTE - Tessa McKinley**
 - g. **Subcommittee and Member Reports**
 - i. **Policy - Diane Baum (oral - meeting on 1/15/21)**
 - ii. **Statement of Warrants & Recommendation to Approve – VOTE**
 - h. **FYI**
4. **EXECUTIVE SESSION (9:00)**

to be convened under MGL Ch 30A, sec. 21(a) purpose (3): to discuss strategy with respect to litigation because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Committee. This is in regard to the financial position of the Educational Collaborative (EDCO) and possible future litigation. The Committee will not return to open session.

Posted on 1/15/2021 at 4:30 p.m.

Reposted on 1/19/21 at 5:00 p.m. to:

- Move Structured Learning Time Update to Ongoing Business section
- Add an update from the Boxborough Leadership Forum under 2.b. FY22 Budget
- Add 3.c. Recommendation to Approve Nonresident Tuition Rate for the RJGJHS STEP Program - VOTE
- Add detail to the reason for entering Executive Session
- Add Monthly Student Enrollment and EDCO FY20 Reports to the “For Your Information”

**Reposted on 1/20/21 at 9:50 a.m. to add Vote to Temporarily Suspend Policy BEDH

NEXT MEETINGS (via zoom):

ABRSC: February 4 and February 11 at 7:00 p.m.

Next Community Coffee with the Superintendent & ABRSC Chair: February 3rd 7-8 p.m.

Note: “Budget Saturday” previously scheduled for Jan 23 is cancelled.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION (FYI)

- Thank You to Anonymous Donor for \$250 for the Student Assistance Fund**
- FY22 Budget Schedule, voted 11/19/20**
- Acton 2021 Annual Election Calendar**
- Boxborough 2021 Annual Election Calendar & Candidate’s Checklist**
- QPR Training:** Learn the 3 simple steps to save a life from suicide. People trained as QPR Gatekeepers learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. Gatekeepers can be anyone, but include parents, friends, neighbors, and many others who can recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide. Sign up for one of the free (virtual) QPR trainings AB Cares is offering. Click on this [QPR Training Flyer](#) for details and to sign up online. Next one: Feb 24 at 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
- Monthly Student Enrollment, 1/14/21**
- EDCO Collaborative FY20 Annual Report and Audit Report**



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	1.a
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AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Chairperson's Welcome
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PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley
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SUMMARY OF TOPIC	<p>The Chair welcomes members and the public to the meeting. If it is a remote zoom meeting, that is stated and the remote participation policy BEDJA is mentioned. Voting at remote meetings must be done by roll call. The Chair is also required to state if the meeting is being taped. Acton TV tapes and broadcasts most School Committee meetings.</p> <p>See Public Comment page for explanation of vote to be taken.</p>
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WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?

	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	"Move to temporarily suspend Public Participation at School Committee Meetings policy BEDH" 2 /3 vote required
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FOLLOW-UP	
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APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min.
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ATTACHMENTS	Public Participation policy BEDH & Suspension of Policies policy BGF
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File: BEDH - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public, except for "Executive Sessions" which will be held as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee welcomes citizens of the District to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the public's input.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have the opportunity to speak and to ensure the ability of the Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures have been adopted by the Committee:

1. At each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the Committee. The Chairperson shall determine the length of the public participation segment.
2. Each speaker will be allowed three (3) minutes to present a statement. The presiding Chairperson may permit extension of this time limit at their discretion.
3. Topics for discussion are not limited to those items listed on the School Committee meeting agenda for that evening. However, items not on the agenda must be brought up during public participation portion of the meeting. Due to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, the School Committee may not be able to respond to items brought up during public participation.
4. All remarks shall be addressed through the Chairperson of the meeting.
5. Topics raised during the Public Comment period shall be limited to items that are within the School Committee's authority. Areas that are within the School Committee's authority are: District educational goals; policies; budget of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District; and the performance of the Superintendent.
6. Written comments may be presented to the Committee before or after the meeting for the Committee members' review and consideration at an appropriate time. Letters or emails addressed to the School Committee will be shared with the Committee members and will be responded to by either the Committee Chair, Vice Chair or appropriate administrator. Emails to the Committee are public records as defined by Mass General Law.

Public Participation is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between or among citizens and the School Committee. Rather it is intended to offer citizens an opportunity to express their opinion on issues regarding School Committee business. While the Committee and /or administrators will not typically respond to citizen comments or questions posed during Public Participation, the Chair, as presiding officer of the meeting, may answer or request an answer to a question if he/she deems it readily available.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A, Section 20 (f)

Approved 11/20/14, 01/09/2020

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

File: BGF - SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of the School Committee's policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for that meeting.

CROSS REF.: BG, School Committee Policy Development

CH, Policy Implementation

Approved on: 12/12/13

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	1.b
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Public Comment		
PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	<p>For this meeting, public comment to be read at the meeting will be emailed to: abrsc_public_comment@abschools.org. Emails must be received by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.</p> <p>In the past, policy BEDH,permitted members of the public to speak for up to 3 minutes on items not included on the agenda. Comments regarding items on the agenda would be made during that part of the meeting. The Committee/Administration would not respond to comments during public participation. For this meeting, the Committee voted to suspend the Public Participation policy BEDH, per the Suspension of Policies policy BGF, and instead will read public comments submitted through the link on the meeting agenda.</p>		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
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	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME	5 min.
ATTACHMENTS	none

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	1.c
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Superintendent's Update		
PRESENTER(S)	Peter Light		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Bi-weekly Superintendent's Update. This is brought to the meeting.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
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	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
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If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	10 min.
ATTACHMENTS	Brought to meeting



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	2.a
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Presentation: World Language Single Entry Level		
PRESENTER(S)	Sinikka Savukoski, Department Leader - World Languages ABRHS		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Due to the impact of the pandemic on students' world languages during the current year and in an effort to provide more equitable access to students during their freshman year, the world language department will be implementing a single entry level for freshman beginning fall 2021. This provides for alignment across all languages offered and does not impact available choices for students in grades 10-12. There is no action requested of the committee, but we are providing this update due to the significance of the change.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
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X	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
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	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	20 min.
ATTACHMENTS	Memo and slides

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
36 Charter Road, Acton, Massachusetts 01720

Together we promote respect for self, others, and learning.

To: Peter Light, Superintendent
From: Sinikka Savukoski, Department Leader World Languages 9-12
Date: January 8, 2021
Re: Single Entry Language Courses for 2021-2022

Proposal: 1 level of Spanish and French 2 (Intermediate Spanish 2, Intermediate French 2)

Reasoning:

- 1) Due to the pandemic, students are not engaging with the same amount of material and skill work as before as a result of the interruption in learning in the spring and our current pandemic schedule. As a department we have observed that students in French 2 and Spanish 2 are showing similar strengths and areas of growth in skill areas regardless of the level in which they were placed. Considering this, we feel it would be most advantageous to allow students more time to grow and more accurately demonstrate their skills before being placed into a leveled course.
- 2) The ABRHS World Languages Department has updated its curriculum over the last 7 years from a grammar based to a proficiency based model that focuses on skill development and makes differentiation easier. The department has developed thematic based units guided by Can Do Statements and authentic resources. The department utilizes a common skills based rubric for grading. Students set goals throughout the year utilizing the skills appropriate for the students' developmental level and teachers provide individualized feedback based on these goals. Students also spend time reflecting throughout the year on their progress towards reaching these goals and celebrating what they can do with the language.
- 3) Data collected from our Senior Survey shows that leveling causes students stress, contributes to a negative self-image, and less interaction among peers of different levels. This change would contribute to less competition, a stronger community, and better student wellness. A few points from our 2019 senior survey summary include:

-Students continue to be concerned about the culture of competition at A-B, the divide between the levels of courses, and student focus on grades over learning. (senior survey)

-Frequent comments spoke to the belief that the level of academic pressure and competition at ABRHS adds to high levels of student stress and creates a "toxic" learning environment. Forty-four students out of the 140 respondents shared this feeling directly in their response. (senior survey)

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-Other students felt that the requirements for the various academic course levels were too rigid and that the perceived inability to change “tracks” or access higher level courses adds to the stress level and feelings of inadequacy within ABRHS. (senior survey)

- 4) Our 2016 Challenge Success survey data shows that “on average, 9th and 10th graders report more academic worry than 12th graders”. Less overall movement of classes (no need to change levels) in the first year would result in more consistency for Freshmen in their first year and an easier transition to high school.

- 5) As the district engages in DEI work, it is clear that leveling plays a role in limiting academic opportunities for students of color. Research shows that:

- “African American, Latino and low-income children of all ethnicities are overrepresented in low tracks and vocational programs. Tracking can be seen as a vital part of how schools reproduce inequality, a structural arrangement through which individuals come to accept their own socioeconomic positions as inevitable and natural.” (Rubin 5)

- “In tracked schools, African American and Latino students are less likely to be placed in high-track classes than are their white or Asian counterparts with the same achievement test scores, and they are overrepresented in low-track classes, further reinforcing false stereotypes. Even in districts that pride themselves on equitable and forward thinking policies, stratification often exists.” (Burris and Garrity 56)

Unleveling this first year helps to level the playing field.

- 6) Currently, the World Language Department offers 4 languages: Spanish, French, Latin and Chinese. Latin and Chinese both begin with a single entry unlevelled high school course. In a year where language will become a graduation requirement, this change would bring consistency to the department overall and encourage students to choose their language based on interest and not leveling offered.

- 7) 100% of the World Languages Department and building leadership at the Junior High and High School support this change for the upcoming school year.

Impact:

-The goal of the World Languages Department is to provide more equitable opportunities for students, easier mobility among current levels, more access to AP courses in the future and more opportunities for students to become more proficient.

-This adjustment would allow students to interact with a more diverse group of peers resulting in a stronger sense of community.

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36 Charter Road, Acton, Massachusetts 01720

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- The Freshmen transition to high school would be easier.
- This would result in consistency of courses within the department and students being offered the opportunity to choose courses based on interest rather than level offered. The consolidation of first year courses would enhance teacher collaboration with more teachers teaching this entry course.

Next Steps:

-The World Languages department will utilize time in the spring and summer to engage in the important work needed in order to adjust our current curriculum to meet the needs of a single heterogeneous group of learners. Rather than looking at curriculum in terms of Honors/AE/CP level activities we would move to looking at tasks that are appropriate for the Intermediate level of language learning and how to address the needs of a range of learners within this developmental level.

-We will continue to survey students and teachers to gather feedback regarding these changes. The World Languages Department would like to continue to engage in professional development to look at this area to best meet our students' needs.

Rubin, Beth C. "Tracking and Detracking: Debates, Evidence, and Best Practices for a Heterogeneous World" p 4-14, published online, August 16, 2010

Burris, Carol Corbett. and Garrity Delia T. "Detracking for Excellence and Equity", 56, ASCD, August 15, 2008

Single Entry Language Course

-Intermediate Spanish 2
-Intermediate French 2
21/22



What we currently have:

- Leveled Spanish 2 and French 2 courses (Cp1/CP/AE/H)
- Recommendations are made in 8th grade for these courses

Proposal for next year:

- Single entry Intermediate Spanish 2 and French 2
- Placements for future leveled courses to be made at the end of Intermediate Spanish 2/French 2

Why a single entry course:

- Interruption in learning (20-21 effect on 7th and 8th grade progress)
- High School curriculum changes
- Survey Data: Senior Survey & Challenge Success
- Commitment to District DEI work
- Consistency within the WL department
- 100% support by WL department members and building Junior High and High School leadership

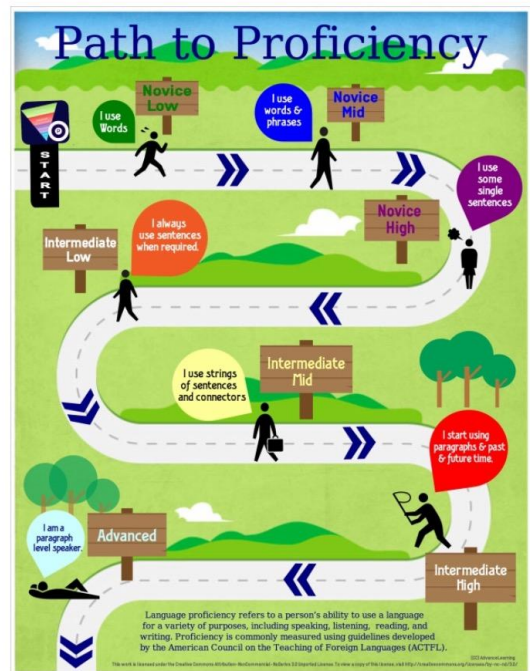
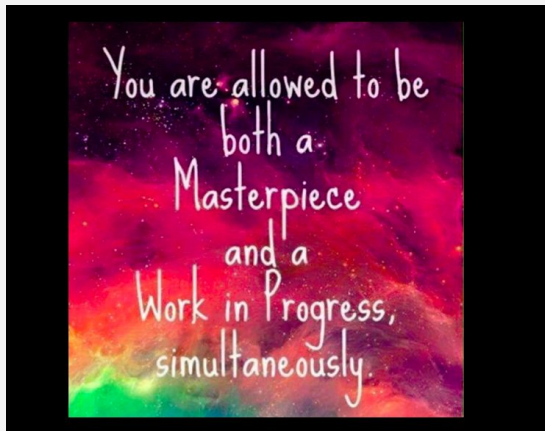
Intended Impact:

- More equitable opportunities for students
- Easier mobility among levels
- More access to AP courses
- A stronger sense of community and easier Freshmen transition
- More consistency within the department and enhanced teacher collaboration

Next Steps:

- Spring and summer curriculum work to prepare the fall courses
- Gather and analyze feedback from students/staff 21/22

You **"CAN DO"** it.





Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	2.b
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Superintendent's Preliminary FY22 Budget		
PRESENTER(S)	Peter Light, Dave Verdolino		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	This is the first FY22 Budget Presentation and will be followed by presentations on February 11th (Superintendent Recommended Budget), March 4 (Preliminary VOTE), March 18 (Open Budget Hearing) and a final VOTE prior to the Town Meetings on March 25.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
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	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
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APPROX. TIME ON AGENDA	min.
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ATTACHMENTS	Presentation slides, ALG spreadsheet and approved minutes
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Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700
www.abschools.org

To: Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee
From: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools
David Verdolino, Director of Finance
Date: January 21, 2021
RE: FY22 Superintendent's Preliminary Budget Overview

As an accompaniment to the slide presentation planned for the January 21st meeting, we have prepared this memo to provide you with high level information about the FY22 budget including timelines, key milestones, broad overviews of projected revenues and level service expenses, information regarding potential use of district reserves, and the overall impact of the Preliminary Budget on member assessments.

As you are aware from previous years, the budget will evolve over multiple iterations in the coming months. This Preliminary Budget is based upon approved budget guidelines, and discussions with school committee, administration and staff which began - due to Covid - later in the school year than has been customary. This presentation makes use of the best available information to date regarding projected FY22 revenues and student enrollment, and includes analyses of certain historical budget trends and patterns for context,

Note that an overarching assumption on which this Preliminary Budget is based is the resumption of classroom-based learning, and does not extend the Remote Learning Program beyond this school year. We are a long way from knowing whether that assumption is unduly optimistic, but it underlies this entire presentation. In addition, much of the narrative here is grounded in what had been presented in this space last year; we are looking to FY22 as a year in which "getting back to normal" will start by picking up where we left off, budget-wise, a year ago, assessing needs and unforeseen circumstances as they arise, utilizing federal relief funds to maximize value educationally and financially, and adjusting accordingly. Much of what FY22 ultimately has in store may be impossible for us to predict this far in advance.

The Superintendent's Preliminary Budget for FY22 is \$100,525,643 and represents an increase of 3.73% from the FY21 appropriation of \$96,912,701. Based on that amount, and using the three-year historical enrollment averages as per the Regional Agreement, the Preliminary Budget assessments to each community would be:

Acton:	\$68,460,013 (4.39% increase)
Boxborough:	\$12,846,416 (5.97% increase)

The budget will continue to evolve over the next two months based on multiple sources of feedback and additional information that is made available to us by the state and at the local level. This process will be highlighted by a comprehensive budget and program presentation on Thursday, March 4, 2021 (in lieu of the traditional Budget Saturday), and culminate on March 11, 2021 (or March 18, 2021 if needed) when the School Committee votes to adopt its final budget that will be presented at the Annual Town Meetings.

This memorandum is designed to provide background information supporting our presentation to you on January 21st. Remember that this memo, and the accompanying presentation, are intended to be preliminary in nature and to solicit feedback for further budget development. More detailed information and analysis will follow with subsequent iterations throughout the budget process.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration, comments and questions regarding these materials.

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FY22 Budget Presentation Timeline

January 21, 2021	Presentation #1	Superintendent's Preliminary Budget Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Guidelines & District Goals • Preliminary Revenues & Budget Drivers • Aspects of Level Services Budget • Overall Budgetary Impact & Preliminary Assessments
February 4, 2021	Presentation #2	Superintendent's Recommended Budget v. 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line Item Budget Details • All Day Kindergarten (SC to vote FY22 Tuition Rate) • CIP Project and Funding Update
February 11, 2021	Presentation #3	Superintendent's Recommended Budget v. 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Presentation • School Committee Preliminary Budget Vote • (at least 20 days before expected final budget vote)
March 4, 2021 (Thursday)	Presentation #4	Comprehensive Budget and Program Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (in lieu of traditional Budget Saturday Presentation)
March (11 or 18), 2021	Presentation #5	Superintendent's Final Budget Recommended Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Presentation • Public Hearing on Proposed FY22 Budget • School Committee Votes FY22 Budget
Begins May 10, 2021	BOXBOROUGH TOWN MEETING	
Begins June 21, 2021	ACTON TOWN MEETING	

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FY22 Budget Guidelines

The following budget guidelines and starting assumptions were developed by the Budget Subcommittee in consultation with the administration and adopted by the school committee at a previous meeting:

FY22 Budget Guidelines Administrative Suggestions/ Recommendations

- Develop a flexible budget that is responsive to uncertainty caused by the pandemic and allows for a variety of educational models for FY22.
- Assume uncertainty with regard to state and federal funding for schools.
- Adequately fund education programs designed to expedite recovery from the pandemic, and ensure effective services and supports are in place for all students' social-emotional and academic needs.
- Evaluate opportunities to use existing resources to align services and supports across the district in a fiscally sustainable manner that balances student needs with the economic interests of the communities.
- Consider funding directly allocated to programs that support students with IEPs, English Learners, students whose families may be income insecure, students of color, or other groups who may have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and school closures.
- Prioritize anti-bias, anti-racist strategic initiatives.
- Evaluate Kindergarten Enrollment Projections carefully in light of fluctuations in K enrollment due to the Pandemic.
- Evaluate All Day Kindergarten tuition in light of assumed resumption of All Day Kindergarten during FY22.
- Maximize opportunities to leverage alternative revenue sources, including, but not limited to state and federal grants.
- Monitor strategic use of reserves in light of economic uncertainty.
- Evaluate strategies to replenish revolving accounts that have been negatively impacted by pandemic-related costs and reduced revenues.
- Resume funding of Capital Improvement Plan in order to fully implement planned improvements.

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Revenues

Revenues are outside sources of funding used to defray the cost of District operations and, accordingly, the extent to which member assessments (and reserve usage) are needed to finance District programs, their escalating costs, and program initiatives.

There are two basic categories of revenues, which both have several components, all discussed below.

State Aid

Revenue from the Commonwealth used to fund the District's operating budget consists of (1) State Aid for Public Schools per MGL Chapter 70 (hence, "Chapter 70 Aid"), (2) reimbursement for regional school transportation costs per MGL Chapter 71, Section 16D (Transportation Aid), (3) transition aid to reduce the financial impact of students living within the District but attending charter schools, and thereby transferring Chapter 70 Aid from the District (Charter Aid) and (4) partial reimbursement for high-cost special education students (Circuit Breaker, so-called). Revenue forecasts for the first three of these components will be discussed below; since the District uses Circuit Breaker reimbursement as an offset to out-of-district special education tuitions, it will be considered in a separate report on the District's FY22 budgeted expenditures.

1. Chapter 70 Aid

Actual Chapter 70 Aid, FY2020	\$15,185,311	
District Budgeted Aid, FY2021	\$15,345,811	
Preliminary (Initial Governor's Budget) Aid, FY2021	\$15,344,131	
Final (Adopted State Budget) Aid, FY2021	\$15,185,311	(-\$160.5K budget variance in FY21)
Preliminary Projected Chapter 70 Aid, FY2022	\$15,341,311	(-\$4.5K decrease from FY21 budget)

Last year, the state enacted the Student Opportunity Act (SOA), which was intended to significantly increase the Foundation Budget and related Chapter 70 Aid (statewide, a total of \$1.4 billion, not including inflation) over a seven-year period, beginning in FY21. While the District did not expect to realize any significant increase in Chapter 70 Aid during the initial years, the SOA did provide for a Minimum Aid annual increase of \$30 per student. The Governor's initial FY21 budget, presented last January, did reflect that additional \$30 per student, matching the District's budget in that regard.

However, due to the budgetary impact of the Covid pandemic on state finances, Chapter 70 Aid was ultimately level-funded (for most districts, including A-B) upon passage of the final state budget, in October.

The Governor's initial FY22 budget is expected to be presented in the last week of January. For purposes of our Preliminary Budget presentation, we are optimistically anticipating that the state will resume its implementation of the SOA and, at a minimum, provide one year's worth of Minimum Aid (\$30 per student) to all districts. Note that this would represent an increase in Aid to A-B over the final Chapter 70 amount in the state's FY21 budget but, because that increase represents the budgeted FY21 Minimum Aid increase we did not receive, the FY22 revenue estimate is basically level funded, adjusted for a small reduction in total student enrollment.

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2. Transportation Aid

FY2020 eligible transportation expenditures	\$2,540,004	
Estimated Cost Reimbursement Rate, FY2021	80.0%	
Estimated Transportation Aid, FY2021	\$2,032,003	
FY2021 estimated eligible transportation expenditures	\$2,413,000	
Projected Cost reimbursement Rate, FY2022	80.0%	
Projected Transportation Aid, FY2022 Budget	\$1,930,400	(-\$166.8K from FY21 budget)

Transportation Aid represents, as an economic inducement for regionalization, a partial reimbursement for prior year transportation costs of regional schools. Final FY2021 aid amounts will be determined during this year based on eligible FY2020 expenditures; the state's final aid distribution is typically announced each June.

Due to the Covid-related decreased need for transportation services in FY21, the District's projected transportation expenses are substantially reduced from the previous year, and Transportation Aid reimbursement for FY22 would be proportionately reduced.

Therefore, we are proposing the transfer of \$200,000, the estimated FY21 transportation budget savings, to the Transportation Stabilization Fund, which the District established several years ago. These transferred funds will be available as a revenue in FY22 to restore the expected reduction in state Transportation Aid. Recognition of this \$200,000 as a funding source will be discussed under Use of Reserves, in the next section of this memo.

3. Charter Aid

Actual Charter Aid, FY2020	\$ 82,427	
District Budgeted Charter Aid, FY2021	\$ 50,000	
Preliminary (Initial Governor's Budget) Aid, FY2021	\$ 41,425	
Final (Adopted State Budget) Aid, FY2021	\$116,502	
Preliminary Projected Charter Aid, FY2022	\$100,000	(+\$50K from FY21 budget)

This category of state aid represents statutory offset of a portion of lost Chapter 70 Aid for districts whose resident students opt to attend charter schools.

Again in FY21, because of various iterations of the state's budget and the prospect of changes to Charter formula reimbursements going forward (under SOA), there was uncertainty regarding this revenue item in FY2021, which uncertainty carries over to FY22.

Prior to release of the Governor's FY22 budget, we are projecting an amount based on the final FY21 Cherry Sheet (an increase over the District's budgeted amount), but reduced to account for the declining nature of this reimbursement program.

While this addition to budgeted funding sources appears to be positive, this projected increase in revenue is offset by an even larger increase in Charter assessments (the effective deduction from Chapter 70 revenues for resident students to attend charter schools).

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Other Revenues

Other District revenue is classified into the three categories discussed below:

1. Medicaid Reimbursement

Actual Medicaid Reimbursement, FY2020	\$150,028	
Budgeted, FY2021	\$250,000	
Projected, FY2021	\$250,000	
Projected, FY2022 Budget	\$250,000	(level funded w/ FY21)

Due to recent changes in the reimbursement mechanics, Medicaid revenues decreased in FY20. During FY21, the District engaged the services of a new consultant in an effort to identify all possible reimbursable claims and maximize revenue reimbursements going forward.

2. Investment Income

Actual Investment Income, FY2020	\$391,536	
Budgeted, FY2021	\$300,000	
Projected, FY2021	\$299,860	
Projected, FY2022 Budget	\$265,000	(-\$35K from FY21 budget)

Interest rates have continued on a downward trend into FY21. The District will need to consider the extent to which interest earnings, initially deposited as a General Fund revenue, might be transferred to other applications (e.g., capital project fund for the new twin school).

3. Rental Income and Miscellaneous

	<u>Rental Income</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	
Actual, FY2020	\$7,500	\$15,712	
Budgeted, FY2021	\$7,500	\$10,000	
Projected, FY2021	\$7,500	\$10,000	
Projected, FY2022 Budget	\$7,500	\$10,000	(level funded w/ FY21)

These two minor revenue sources are both budgeted level with current year projections. Rental income represents the use of one District classroom (Blanchard) by the CASE Collaborative; Miscellaneous Revenue is all other General Fund receipts not otherwise classified, including E-rate reimbursements, refunds, and unanticipated one-time revenues.

Revenue Summary (amounts in \$000s)

	FY2020 <u>Actual</u>	FY2021 <u>Budget</u>	FY2021 <u>Projected</u>	FY2022 <u>Budget</u>
State Aid-				
Chapter 70 Aid	\$15,185.3	\$15,345.8	\$15,185.3	\$15,341.3
Transportation Aid	2,185.9	2,097.2	2,032.0	1,930.4
Charter Aid	<u>82.4</u>	<u>50.0</u>	<u>116.5</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Total State Aid	\$17,453.6	\$17,493.0	\$17,333.8	\$17,371.7

FY2022 Budget Decrease = (\$121,322)

Other -				
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$ 150.0	\$ 250.0	\$ 250.0	\$ 250.0
Investment Income	391.5	300.0	299.9	265.0
Rental Income and Misc.	<u>23.2</u>	<u>17.5</u>	<u>17.5</u>	<u>17.5</u>
Total Other Income	\$ 564.7	\$ 567.5	\$ 567.4	\$ 532.5

FY2022 Budget Decrease = (\$35,000)

Total Revenues	\$ 17,384.8	\$ 17,534.6	\$ 17,722.7	\$ 17,960.5
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Total FY2022 Budget Decrease = (\$156,322) (-0.8%)

It should be noted that there will be additional federal Covid relief aid available to the District, including approximately \$430K already allocated for use through FY23. As a new administration assumes control, with a potentially sympathetic Congress, there is likely to be further relief aid. None of this additional relief has been factored into the foregoing revenue presentation; we will update projections based on new information as it becomes official.

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Use of Reserves

The FY2022 Preliminary Budget includes the use of reserve funds as described below:

- E&D - \$965K (reduced from \$1,145K used in FY21)

The school committee adopted a policy that the balance of the Excess and Deficiency Reserve should target between 4% and 4.5% of the following year's appropriated budget (capped under MGL at 5%).

E&D Reserve was certified as of July 1, 2020 at 3.54% of the FY21 budget. Therefore, the FY22 Preliminary Budget proposes to reduce E&D Reserve usage by \$180K, to \$965K, which we believe can reasonably be predicted to be replenished within the current operating year.

- Circuit Breaker - \$3.6M (no change from amount used in FY21)

In FY21, to offset costs of hiring additional staff associated with various Special Education Programs, the District reduced the line item budget for Out of District Tuitions by offsetting this amount with an increased use of Circuit Breaker Reserve funds. The FY22 Preliminary Budget reflects level use of Circuit Breaker Reserves in order to defray funding of Out of District Tuitions anticipated for FY22.

- Transportation Stabilization - \$200K (not applicable in FY21)

As discussed in the previous section, we are anticipating transferring \$200,000 (representing estimated transportation budget savings in FY21) to the Transportation Stabilization Fund. Those funds would be used to offset the expected reduction in state Transportation Aid in FY22, which is a cost reimbursement program. This will provide transparent consistency of transportation cost-based aid between years.

- Capital Stabilization - \$150K (not applicable in FY21)

In FY21, the District's appropriation for capital projects was limited to the first year of debt service on the bonds issued for the CIP plan. In order to begin to restore funding to the original level called for over the life of the plan (through FY2033), the Preliminary Budget includes \$345K appropriated for new capital projects, as discussed in the next section of this memo. To phase in the budgetary impact, we are proposing a drawdown of \$150K from the Capital Stabilization Fund (\$1M), which will be restored in future years, once the annual capital appropriation is restored to the CIP plan target level.

More detailed analyses of the District's reserves will be provided with later budget presentations, and as the Recommended Budget is further developed and refined.

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Program & Staffing Overview

Staffing Requests

The Preliminary Budget proposes to maintain staffing and other district resources at budgeted FY21 levels, adjusted for projected enrollment changes, and with no requested new positions. We are anticipating the return to fully in-person teaching and learning, recognizing that we are powerless to enforce Covid's compliance with this plan.

Further reductions from the overview presented here are likely to be made as we continue with budget development, since personnel costs remain the largest budget driver and - when necessary - most impactful source of budget reductions. Our goal will be to target what reductions could be made to the overview data presented here without adversely impacting the District's ability to serve students; there will be more detailed analysis of personnel costs accompanying presentation of our Recommended Budget.

The staffing request for the FY22 Preliminary Budget proposes a decrease of 1.0 FTE, representing the enrollment-based reduction of one elementary classroom teacher. Based on negotiated contractual adjustments, the Preliminary Budget request for personnel represents a 4.3% increase from FY21.

Administration anticipates the potential for further staffing reductions and reallocations, based on feedback from this presentation and discussions with leadership. Typically, information regarding attrition is refined during this period, as staff announce retirement plans. A more detailed analysis of FY22 proposed staffing costs, reflecting all such adjustments expected to be made in the weeks ahead during the budget development process, will be provided with the Recommended Budget presentation scheduled for February 4.

Capital Program

In FY20, the District adopted an aggressive Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Plan, part of which called for an additional increase in Capital Spending from a base of \$1.25M in FY20 through the life of the plan, ending in FY33. In FY21, to mitigate the impact of these costs to taxpayers, whose property taxes would reflect the vote to approve the new twin school, the District deferred spending on additional capital projects for one year.

The Capital Subcommittee has prioritized the return to funding the CIP plan to its original total of \$23M in total spending over its 13-year life. The FY22 Preliminary Budget proposes \$345K in such funding, subsidized by a drawdown from the Capital Stabilization Fund as discussed above; this proposal will be presented to the Capital Subcommittee. We will propose a structural revision to the CIP plan that provides the same amount of total spending as the original plan (\$23M) and systematically phases in the "catch-up" (caused by the FY21 deferral) over a multi-year period.

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All-Day Kindergarten

In F21, the District proposed a reduction in Kindergarten Tuition as part of a multi-year plan that might ultimately allow implementation of tuition-free All Day Kindergarten (ADK). As a result, School Committee voted to reduce ADK tuition by \$750 per student in FY21; however, as a result of Covid, ADK was not offered this year. It was agreed that the District's finances do not support full implementation of tuition-free ADK in a single year.

It may be that, in future years and under an aggressive resumption of the seven-year phase-in of the SOA (discussed above), the District could receive additional Chapter 70 funding that would be available to offset the loss of revenues under a transition to tuition-free ADK. But we believe that any such additional funding would be several years away, at a minimum.

Therefore, the FY22 Preliminary Budget reflects the same annual tuition level as was intended for FY21 (\$3,750 per student). Since that revenue assumption, and the shift of \$180K of ADK costs from the revolving fund to the operating budget, were reflected in the FY21 voted budget, there is no incremental impact on the FY22 budget.

Other Revolving Fund Programs

While not a component of the District's appropriated budget, we need to carefully consider the impact of the Covid-related loss of revenues upon our other fee-based (revolving fund) programs, including Food Services, Community Education, Extended Day, Athletics and Pre-Kindergarten. We believe that these programs are reasonably expected to end the current fiscal year with positive fund balances, which will help enable them to recover to pre-Covid strength once their operations fully resume. However, there may be the need, not reflected in the FY22 Preliminary Budget, to make financial decisions that impact the District's operating budget.

FY22 Preliminary Budget Highlights

The District's operating budget funds the general operation of the educational systems in Acton and Boxborough. It is funded primarily through assessments of the member communities, which vote appropriations at their Annual Town Meetings. The total proposed annual assessment is calculated as the operating budget request, less outside revenues (the subject of a separate section of this memo) and use of the District's Excess and Deficiency (E&D) and other Reserves.

The purpose of this section is to document the major year-to-year changes in the District's Preliminary FY22 Budget request, which represents "Level Service" operations (defined as providing the same level of services, funding supplemented by identified revenue sources and generally level-funded use of reserves). As we envision, optimistically perhaps, a return to fully in-person student learning, we felt that at this stage of the budget development process we would anchor our analysis on the costs associated with a Level Service budget model.

Preliminary FY22 Operating Budget Highlights – Total Budget Net Increase = \$3.6M (3.73%)

Not surprisingly, the major components of the Preliminary Budget net increase relate to the following Major Budget Drivers:

1. Personnel
2. Health Insurance Premiums (active and retired employees)
3. Middlesex County Retirement Assessment
4. Capital Improvement Program plan (debt service plus new project appropriations)
5. Out-of-District Special Education services (tuitions)

Additionally, the composite of budget changes from all other departments will be summarized below.

1. Personnel

FY2021 Appropriated Budget	\$61,265,175
FY2022 Preliminary Budget	<u>\$63,694,559</u>
Increase	\$ 2,429,384 (4.0%)

The preliminary FY2022 personnel budget reflects a provision for cost-of-living adjustments negotiated in labor contracts with the District's bargaining units, in addition to continued obligations such as steps and lanes in the teachers' contract. This estimated budget assumes no additional staff, but does reflect the reduction of one elementary classroom teacher due to a decrease in projected enrollment.

2. Health Insurance Premiums

FY2021 Appropriated Budget	\$9,009,056
FY2022 Preliminary Budget	<u>\$9,617,773</u>
Increase	\$ 608,717 (6.8%)

The preliminary FY2022 health insurance budget reflects initial guidance from the board of the Health Insurance Trust to expect a 5.0% increase in rates (paid by the District and Town of Acton, and its active and retired employees). The total cost of this item will reflect a modest increase in headcount of the retired employees participating in the insurance plans offered through the Trust.

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3. Middlesex County Retirement Assessment

FY2021 Assessment	\$2,845,329
FY2022 Preliminary Budget	<u>\$3,179,811</u>
Increase	\$ 334,482 (11.8%)

The FY2022 assessment to cover current and future benefits of the Middlesex County Retirement System (essentially, all eligible non-certified staff) is set actuarially in order to retire the unfunded liabilities of participating member municipalities and districts by 2036. In the System’s annual report, it projects annual increases on the actuarial component of the assessment of 6.5% through FY2027, with increases then declining to 4.0% through projected full funding in FY2036.

4. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	<u>CIP Plan*</u>	<u>FYI - Total Debt**</u>
FY2021 Appropriated Budget	\$ 900,000	\$6,387,442
FY2022 Preliminary Budget	<u>\$1,250,000</u>	<u>\$6,765,256</u>
Increase	\$ 350,000 (FYI – 39%)	\$ 377,814 (5.9%)

* - includes both capital outlay and debt service relating to the CIP plan

* - includes CIP, existing debt for the JH and SH projects and first year of new twin school debt

FY2021 was year #2 of the 13-year CIP plan, which originally called for another increase in capital investment from \$1.25M to \$1.5M annually, after which total capital expenditures were planned to grow at an annual rate of 2.5%. The District successfully issued \$7.5M in 10-year CIP bonds “under the wire” (one week before the Covid pandemic wrought havoc with the public financial market), as well as \$75M in 30-year bonds for the new twin school, both at historically low interest rates. However, in order to mitigate the overall capital costs to taxpayers, the District deferred spending on additional capital projects for one year. The budget increase noted above includes \$345K for new capital projects, and is part of a suggested revised plan to return CIP spending to its original 13-year target.

5. Special Education – Out-of-District Tuition, and Circuit Breaker (CB) Reserve offset

FY2021 Appropriated Budget -	Gross Tuition Cost	\$8,114,197	
	CB Reserve Offset	<u>(3,599,000)</u>	\$4,515,197
FY2021 Preliminary Budget -	Gross Tuition Cost	\$7,881,022	
	CB Reserve Offset	<u>(3,599,000)</u>	<u>\$4,282,022</u>
Net Decrease			\$ - 233,175 (-5.2%)

The preliminary FY2022 budget for out-of-district tuitions reflects the projection of FY22 costs for students currently identified as requiring such services. Note that the gross total tuition cost is currently projected to decrease by \$233K (-2.9%), before level usage of CB Reserve funding.

The District has significantly increased its capacity to provide special education services in-house, by adding numerous certified positions over the last three years for that purpose. While it may be too early to conclude that this planned infusion of FTE is a significant factor in the reduction in out-of-district costs, that relationship bears watching in upcoming years. What is not known, and impossible to quantify at this time, is the extent to which the pandemic’s duration might add to the need to provide special education services - both in- and out-of-district.

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6. Building and Departmental Budgets

In the aggregate, the preliminary budget requests for the District's eight schools, four educational departments (music, art, athletics and health/PE), plus in-District special education and Diversity/Equity/Inclusion increased by \$146,996 (3.1% above FY2021).

The bulk of the above increase is attributable to three factors: 1. Budgeted increase in special education transportation via CASE Collaborative (\$80K); 2. Restoration of the budget for contracted "wrap-around" (social/emotional) services through Assabet Valley Collaborative (\$48K); and, 3. Replacement of defibrillators throughout the District (\$12K, deferred in FY21).

Summary from Above (amounts in \$000s)

FY2022 Level Service Preliminary Budget Cost Increases/(Decreases):	(FYI, total = \$3,636.4K)
Personnel	\$2,429.4
Health Insurance Premiums	608.7
Middlesex County Retirement	334.5
Capital Improvement Program	350.0
Special Ed. Out-of-District Tuitions (net of CB)	(233.2)
Building and Departmental	147.0

Total FY2022 Preliminary Budget Increase, Level Services = \$3,612,942 (3.73%)

FY22 Preliminary Budget - Overall Budget and Impact

A final summary of the FY22 Superintendent's Preliminary Budget and Preliminary Assessments is as follows:

	FY21 Final Budget	FY22 Level-Service	
Total Budget	\$96,912,701	\$100,525,643	
\$ Increase from prior year - Regular Operating Budget	\$2,484,599	\$3,609,895	
First Year of New School Debt	\$3,445,991	\$3,047	
Total \$ Increase from prior year	\$5,930,590	\$3,612,942	
% Increase from prior year - Regular Operating Budget	2.73%	3.86%	
First Year of New School Debt	100.0%	0.09%	
Total % Increase from prior year	6.52%	3.73%	
Total Preliminary Assessments	\$77,707,165	\$81,306,429	
Acton TOTAL	\$65,584,049	\$68,460,013	
Acton % Change	7.10%	4.39%	
Boxborough TOTAL	\$12,123,116	\$12,846,416	
Boxborough % Change	5.21%	5.97%	

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

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

Superintendent's FY2022 Preliminary Budget

January 21, 2021

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Presentation Goals

- Review timeline and process for budget adoption
- Understand budget drivers, fixed costs and level service implications
- High-level overview of FY22 Budget (this is the preliminary presentation)
- Feedback about budget approach to inform next steps

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FY22 Budget Presentation Schedule

January 21, 2021	Presentation #1	Superintendent's Preliminary Budget Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Guidelines & District Goals Preliminary Revenues & Budget Drivers Aspects of Level Services Budget Overall Budgetary Impact on Reserves and Preliminary Assessments
February 4, 2021	Presentation #2	Superintendent's Recommended Budget v. 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Line Item Budget Details All Day Kindergarten (SC Vote Tuition Rate) CIP Project and Funding Update
February 11, 2021	Presentation #3	Superintendent's Recommended Budget v. 2 (if applicable) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Committee Preliminary Budget Vote (at least 20 days before expected final budget vote)
Thursday, March 4, 2021	Presentation #4	Comprehensive Budget and Program Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (in lieu of traditional Budget Saturday presentation)
March (11 or 18), 2021	Presentation #5	Superintendent's Final Budget Recommendation Public Hearing on Proposed FY22 Budget School Committee Votes FY22 Budget

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Important Dates - Regional Agreement

Town Meetings:

- Boxborough: Begins May 10, 2021
- Acton: Begins June (TBD), 2021
 - Budget vote deadlines are counted backwards from earlier Town Meeting*

Final SC Budget Vote:

- March (11 or 18), 2021 - Public Hearing
 - 45 Days before earliest Town Meeting
 - Vote is $\frac{2}{3}$ of weighted votes of full School Committee

Budget and Program Presentation:

- March 4, 2021

Preliminary SC Budget Vote:

- February 11, 2021
 - 25 Days before final budget deadline
 - Vote is majority of members from each town

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FY2022 Budget Guidelines

- Develop a flexible budget that is responsive to uncertainty caused by the pandemic and allows for a variety of educational models for FY22.
- Assume uncertainty with regard to state and federal funding for schools.
- Adequately fund education programs designed to expedite recovery from the pandemic, and ensure effective services and supports are in place for all students' social-emotional and academic needs.
- Evaluate opportunities to use existing resources to align services and supports across the district in a fiscally sustainable manner that balances student needs with the economic interests of the communities.
- Consider funding directly allocated to programs that support students with IEPs, English Learners, students whose families may be income insecure, students of color, or other groups who may have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and school closures.
- Prioritize anti-bias, anti-racist strategic initiatives.

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Budget Guidelines, continued

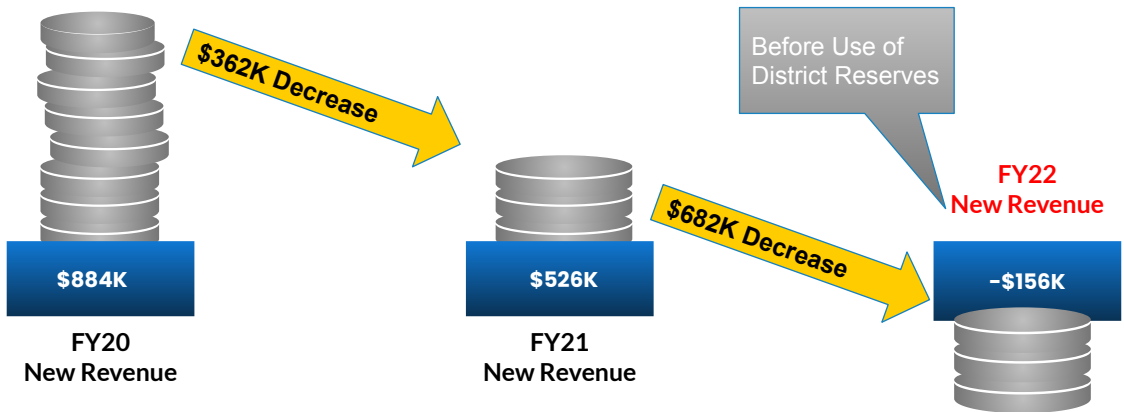
- Evaluate Kindergarten Enrollment Projections carefully in light of fluctuations in K enrollment due to the Pandemic.
- Evaluate All Day Kindergarten tuition in light of assumed resumption of All Day Kindergarten during FY22.
- Maximize opportunities to leverage alternative revenue sources, including, but not limited to state and federal grants.
- Monitor strategic use of reserves in light of economic uncertainty.
- Evaluate strategies to replenish revolving accounts that have been negatively impacted by pandemic-related costs and reduced revenues.
- Resume funding of Capital Improvement Plan in order to fully implement planned improvements.

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New Revenues & Budget Drivers

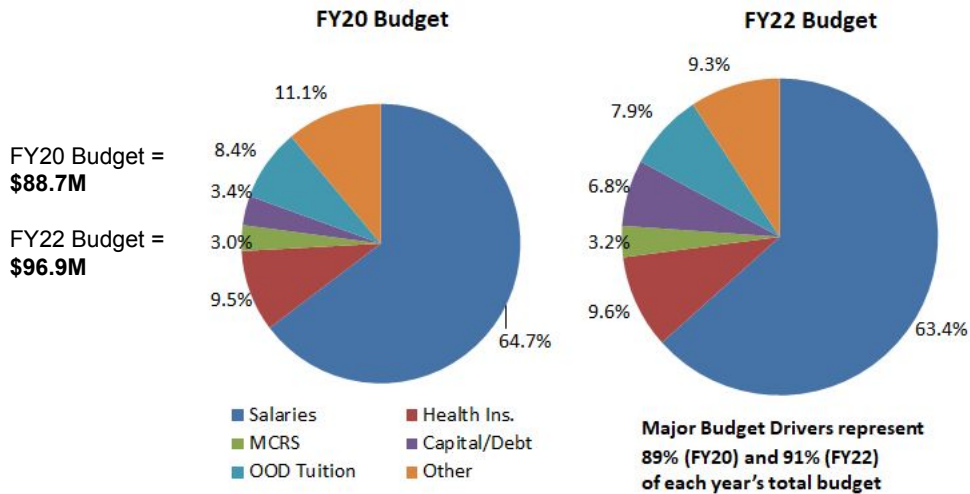
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Decreasing Revenues FY20-22



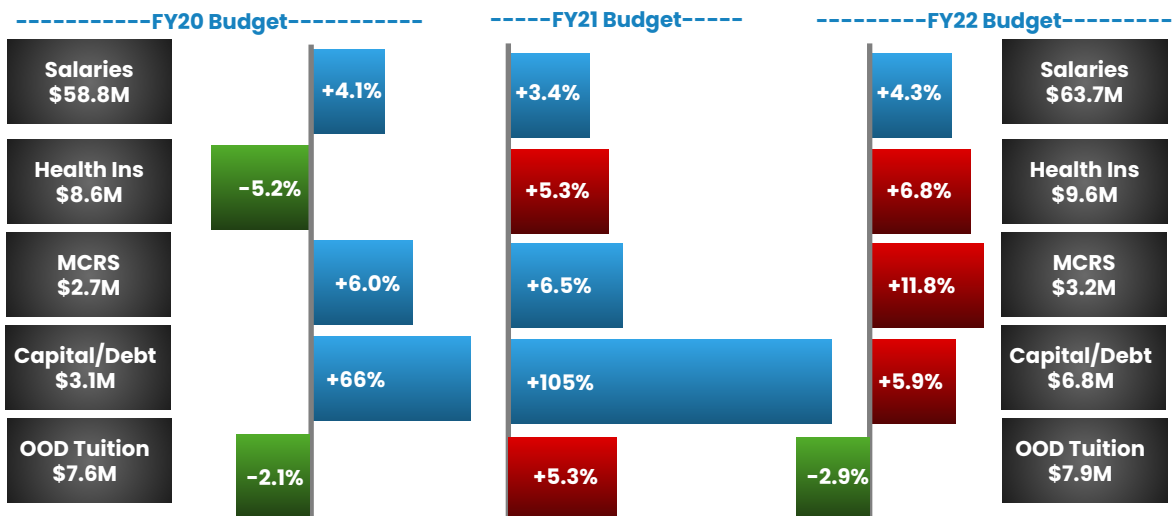
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Major Drivers - Impact on Total Budget



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Three-Year Analysis - Major Budget Drivers



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Level-Service Budget

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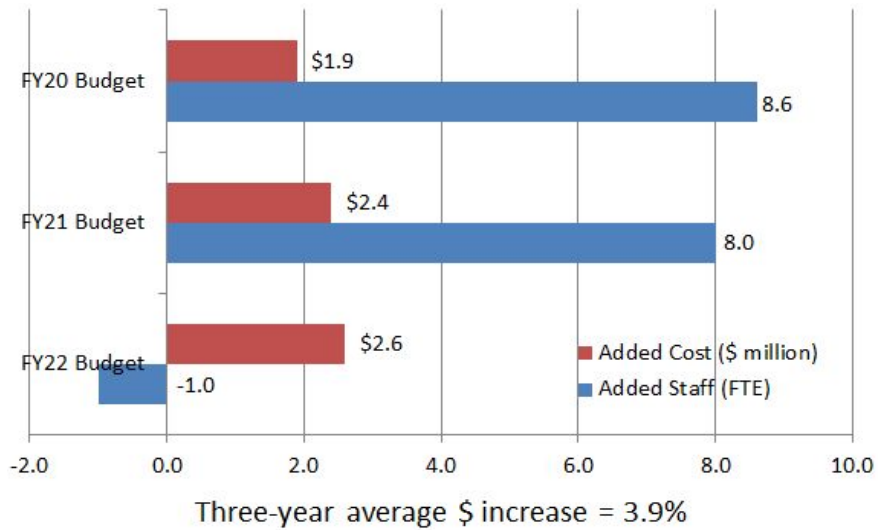
Level Service Budget

- Major Budget Drivers - cost increases/(decrease) as detailed
- Maintains same services in FY22 as in FY21 (no growth)
 - Reduce 1.0 FTE Elem. Classroom Teachers (projected enrollment)
 - Return to staff levels assumed in FY21 budget (in-person teaching)
 - No other personnel additions proposed
- Resume appropriated funding of CIP
- Assumes \$965K use of E&D Reserve (\$180K reduction from FY21)
- Assumes strategic use of other reserves (upcoming slides)

Level Service Net Budget Increase	\$3.6M	3.73%
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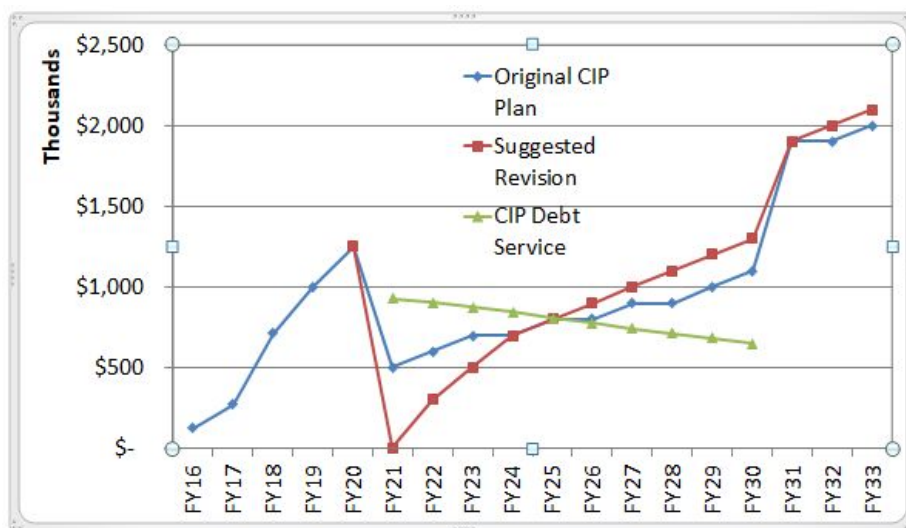
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Personnel - Appropriated Salaries by FY



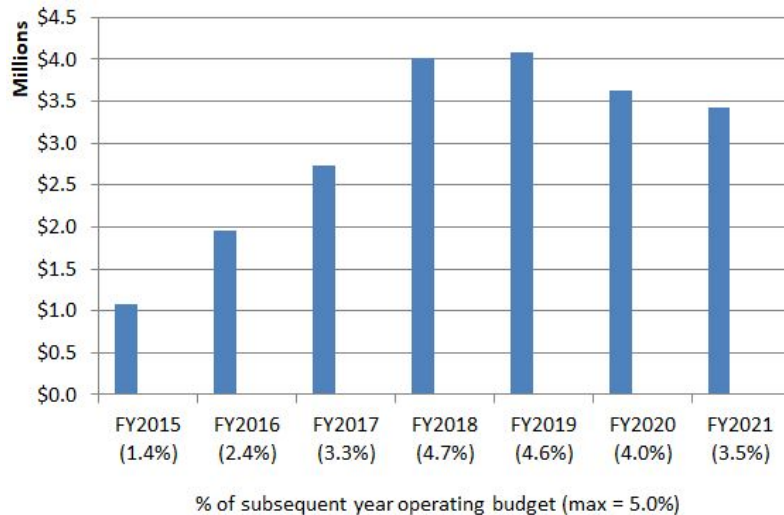
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Capital Funding - Appropriated Capital by FY



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Reserves - E&D Balance by FY



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Other Reserves - Proposed FY2022 Usage

Transportation Stabilization

- Approved in FY2017; to date never funded
- Anticipate transfer of transportation cost savings realized in FY2021 (est. \$200K)
- Result is to provide funds for what otherwise would be a loss of transportation aid (which is on a reimbursement basis)
- Use transferred funds in FY2022; no carryover

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Other Reserves - Proposed FY2022 Usage

Capital Stabilization

- Approved in FY2019; initial funding \$1 million
- CIP capital funding plan was paused in FY2021 as a cost/assessment-savings budgetary measure; the plan originally called for \$500K in appropriated funds
- Capital Subcommittee will be presented with a revised plan; it would restore the total appropriated CIP funding to the original level over the plan's life (through FY2033)
- The revised plan would draw down from Capital Stabilization over three years and replenish by FY2026
- Capital funding appropriation request in FY2022 = \$345K
- Use of Capital Stabilization Fund proposed = \$150K

Other Budget Factors

Reduce Kindergarten Tuition

Conclusions Presented for FY21:

- Operating budget cannot support immediate move to tuition-free ADK
- Relying completely on E&D would compromise reserves
- SC voted to reduce ADK tuition by \$750 (to \$3,750) in FY21, but...
- ADK was not offered in FY21 due to Covid

Recommended for FY22:

- ADK tuition remains at \$3,750
- Continue to offer scholarships
- Revisit tuition level in future years as appropriate for economic conditions

Next Steps

Timeline:

1. Preliminary Budget Presentation
2. SC provides feedback
3. Administration to review, refine, (reduce?)
4. January 27 - Governor's Budget (expected)
5. February 4 - Supt. Recommended Budget



Considerations:

- > Consider SC feedback by administration
- > Review priorities with Leadership
- > Identify streamlining opportunities
- > Impact on assessment; ALG input; etc.

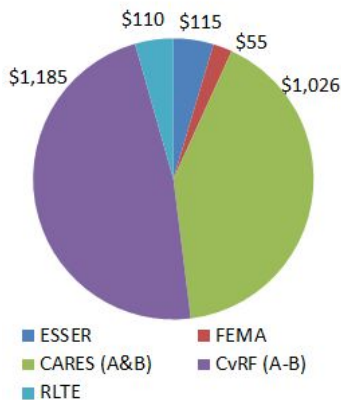
FY21 Preliminary Budget - Summary

	FY21 Final Budget	FY22 Prelim - Level Services	FY22 Recommended (TBD - Feb 4)
Total Appropriated Budget	\$96,912,701	\$100,525,643	
\$ Increase from prior year	\$5,930,590	\$3,612,942	
Percent Increase from prior year	6.5%	3.7%	
	(first year of new school debt)		
Revenue Offsets	(\$18,060,536)	(\$17,904,214)	
Use of Reserves:			
E&D	(\$1,145,000)	(\$965,000)	
Trans Stabilization	n/a	(\$200,000)	
Capital Stabilization	n/a	(\$150,000)	
Final / Preliminary Assessments	\$77,707,165	\$81,306,429	
Acton - Total Assessment	\$65,584,049	\$68,460,013	
% Change	7.10%	4.39%	
Boxborough - Total Assessment	\$12,123,116	\$12,846,416	
% Change	5.21%	5.97%	

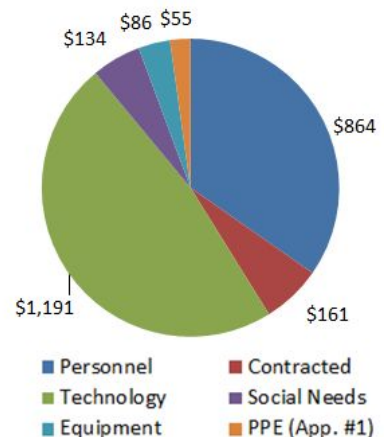
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Federal Stimulus (Covid Relief) Funding

Funding Sources to date
(in \$ thousands)



Identified Uses
(in \$ thousands)



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Town of Acton Multi-Year Financial Model

Prepared by the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and Finance Committee
 Town Meeting Recommendation for FY22
 Estimates for FY23 and FY24 are for planning purposes only and are subject to change

14-Jan-21

<u>Summary</u>	Approved FY21	Projection FY22	Projection FY23	Projection FY24
Municipal Funding Sources:				
Tax Levy (excluding debt exclusion)	\$ 89,417,953	\$ 92,370,902	\$ 95,397,674	\$ 98,500,116
State Aid	\$ 1,398,000	\$ 1,398,000	\$ 1,398,000	\$ 1,398,000
Local Receipts	\$ 5,562,000	\$ 5,562,000	\$ 5,562,000	\$ 5,562,000
Debt Exclusion	\$ 2,475,848	\$ 2,410,612	\$ 2,336,107	\$ 1,685,139
Estimate of North Acton Fire Station Debt	\$ 75,000	\$ 469,000	\$ 469,000	\$ 469,000
Estimate of ABRSD Elementary School Debt	\$ 2,906,270	\$ 3,051,000	\$ 3,036,000	\$ 3,057,000
Estimate of Minuteman Building Project Debt	\$ 335,426	\$ 531,404	\$ 570,572	\$ 550,000
SBAB Reimbursement	\$ 923,000	\$ 923,000	\$ 923,000	\$ 923,000
Add: Town Reserves (for capital)	\$ 1,163,738	\$ 1,150,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Acton Total Funding Sources	\$ 104,257,235	\$ 107,865,917	\$ 110,692,353	\$ 113,144,255
<u>Allocation to Budgets</u>				
Municipal Budget	\$ 36,865,202	\$ 38,246,460	\$ 39,680,702	\$ 41,168,729
Municipal Budget % Change	2.80%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%
Estimate of North Acton Fire Station Debt	\$ 75,000	\$ 469,000	\$ 469,000	\$ 469,000
Total Municipal Budget	\$ 36,940,202	\$ 38,715,460	\$ 40,149,702	\$ 41,637,729
Municipal Budget % Change - With New Debt	3.01%	4.81%	3.70%	3.71%
ABRSD Assessment (net of E&D usage)	\$ 62,677,779	\$ 65,478,000	\$ 68,436,000	\$ 71,740,000
ABRSD Operating Budget % Change	2.73%	3.55%	3.03%	3.20%
ABRSD Assessment % Change	2.36%	4.47%	4.52%	4.83%
Estimate of ABRSD Elementary School Debt	\$ 2,906,270	\$ 3,051,000	\$ 3,036,000	\$ 3,057,000
Total ABRSD Assessment	\$ 65,584,049	\$ 68,529,000	\$ 71,472,000	\$ 74,797,000
ABRSD Assessment % Change - With New Debt	7.10%	4.49%	4.29%	4.65%
Minuteman Assessment	\$ 1,397,557	\$ 1,742,635	\$ 2,225,726	\$ 2,325,726
Minuteman Assessment % Change	20.07%	24.69%	27.72%	4.49%
Estimate of Minuteman Building Project Debt	\$ 335,426	\$ 531,404	\$ 570,572	\$ 550,000
Total Minuteman Assessment	\$ 1,732,983	\$ 2,274,039	\$ 2,796,298	\$ 2,875,726
Minuteman Assessment % Change - With New Debt	19.05%	31.22%	22.97%	2.84%
Total Acton Budgets	\$ 104,257,234	\$ 109,518,499	\$ 114,418,000	\$ 119,310,455
Net Position	\$ 0	\$ (1,652,582)	\$ (3,725,648)	\$ (6,166,199)

<u>Table 6 Data</u>	FY21 ABRSD Revenues	FY22 ABRSD Revenues	FY23 ABRSD Revenues	FY24 ABRSD Revenues
<u>ABRSD Funding Sources:</u>				
State Aid Ch.70	\$ 15,345,811	\$ 15,345,811	\$ 15,496,000	\$ 15,280,000
Transportation	\$ 2,097,225	\$ 2,097,225	\$ 2,097,225	\$ 2,097,225
Regional Bonus Aid & Misc Revenue	\$ 567,500	\$ 567,500	\$ 617,500	\$ 275,000
Charter School Aid	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 35,000
Excess & Deficiency (Acton share est. @ 84.8%)	\$ 966,000	\$ 846,000	\$ 845,000	\$ 432,480
Total	\$ 19,026,536	\$ 18,906,536	\$ 19,105,725	\$ 18,119,705

Additional OPEB Contribution	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000
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<u>Town of Acton - Tax Impact</u>	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Total Valuation ('000s)	\$ 4,789,129	\$ 4,930,282	\$ 5,076,863	\$ 5,229,169
Tax Rate	\$ 20.03	\$ 20.19	\$ 20.19	\$ 20.08
SF Value	\$ 631,171	\$ 650,106	\$ 669,609	\$ 689,697
% Change in SF Value	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	-
SF Tax Bill	\$ 12,640	\$ 13,124	\$ 13,520	\$ 13,847
% Change in SF Tax Bill	7.21%	3.83%	3.02%	2.41%
\$ Change in SF Tax Bill	\$ 850	\$ 484	\$ 396	\$ 326

Draft ALG Minutes November 19, 2020. 8:30 AM via Zoom

Present: Bart Wendell, Facilitator; Jon Benson and Dean Charter, BoS: John Petersen and Amy Krishnamurthy, SC; Christi Andersen and Christine Russell, FC; John Mangiaratti, Peter Light, Steve Barrett, and Marie Altieri, Staff. Public: Dave Verdolino, finance director ABRSD, Charlie Kadlec (there may have been others which I did not see)

Extra information: Agenda; October Minutes with revised ALG Ground Rules and Charter; Town of Acton Multi-year financial model

I. Regular Business

1. Minutes. The Minutes of October 29 were accepted.

II. FY 21 Update

JM: we continue to closely monitor revenues and spending. We are trying to insure that the expenses we are spending for COVID are covered; the requirements seem to be changing. We have just gotten another grant which will be announced this afternoon. I'll share it with you later.

SB: our general operations are "yellow caution" Town Hall is still closed and we have had to slow down on our reopening plans. Everyone is wearing masks and we are doing a lot of work remotely. Offices in planning and finance are open by appointment and meetings are done outside at the picnic tables. Christen Alexander has set up a citizen, customer service hot-line which is getting a lot of use. People in Town Hall are working very hard.

On the financial side we are moving quarter-by-quarter. Nov. 1st tax bill has 98% year-to-date but right now the banks are reviewing records as the year moves on the collection rate will be higher. Our biggest revenue is the property tax which funds 92-93% of our operations. Our interest income is down but the good news is that the borrowing rates are also down; meals taxes are down; local receipts are down; we expect an increase in revenue in Feb. with the excise tax returns. We have to do some critical safety hires in the DPW; we are keeping close watch on the CARES revenues so that we do not have ineligible expenses. It seems that some of the regulations are changing.

Peter: we are under intense pressure from the Governor to open fully. The local public health numbers are not all that great. It's a challenge. For two months we had 10 cases; since Nov. 1 we've had 19. This is a significant increase but there is no evidence of the spread inside the schools. We have installed air purifiers across the district---this has been costly but it's unreasonable to keep the windows open. We watch the public health numbers and considered testing

programs; to test a ten –week program would be \$1.2m; we don't have any state direction; I wish I had better news.

Bart: any comments?

Christie: I thought that Gov. Baker's guidance came with funding for the schools.

Peter: there is no direct funding. In the testing program the rapid test is not reliable; they only tested those with symptoms and not those a-systematic.

III. ALG model

SB: no changes since last meeting. We are backing up the entities; working on the budgets as yet we do not have active budget numbers; we have a \$1.6m deficit; we will use 1,150K in reserves; free cash has been certified at \$3.754.

We need to retain reserve levels; we cannot depend on reserve replacement through replenishment; we cannot see the revenues being greater than the budget needs; we cannot depend on a \$1.3m turn back; we would have to have a growth in local aid and receipts; everything came to a stop last March and I don't think we can depend on things being the same as before.

Christie: we need to have a productive conversation on policy at the next meeting

IV. School building

Peter: on a positive note there are overhead photos so you can see the outline of the building; the footings have been poured for the wellness center

Our concern is the large number of change orders due mainly to the site conditions.

We found ledge where the electrical conduits were supposed to go---that has been changed. We have a full set of sub bids which are now being analyzed. We anticipate having the maximum price by the second or third week of December.

V. Fire Station

JM: nothing much new. The foundation is in and we are still working on the sidewalk ; getting some of the easements are a challenge. We are working with the neighbors; the project is on schedule.

VI. There were no comments on the revised ALG Charter and Ground Rules

VII. Budget calendar

John will develop a budget calendar. Everything will change because of the move of ATM to May; things will move approximately two months later; budgets have to be ready 60 days before the start of ATM. The budget workshops with the finance committee will likely be in March. The BoS will have extra time to help develop the budget and since it will be later it's hoped that there will be more information (especially from the state)

Peter: the delay will help the schools as well; we will have to coordinate with Boxboro

VIII. Agenda

There was a discussion on the date for the next meeting. Since budgets would not be ready there was a concern that the 12/10 meeting was not needed. There was a strong opinion for the need for a meeting in December and the 17th was necessary.

Christie said that the FC was nearly finished with their POV and she felt strongly that there needed to be a full discussion on the proposal to not have any tax increase for the coming FY.

Marie asked that the ALG meetings not happen the same day as there is a school committee meeting in the evening

Bart: the proposal is to have the ALG the second Thursday of the month. This met with agreement but Marie noted that at times there might need to be two meetings in a single month.

It was agreed to meet on 12/10 and if the meeting was not needed, meet on 1/14

Adjourned at 9:05

Ann Chang

ALG Minutes; October 29, 2020. 8:30 AM via Zoom

Present : Bart Wendell, Facilitator; Jon Benson and Dean Charter, BoS; John Petersen and Amy Krishnamurthy, SC; Christi Andersen and Christine Russell, FC; John Mangiaratti, Peter Light, Steve Barrett and Marie Altieri, staff. Public: Dave Verdolino, finance director ABRSD, Sahana Purohit, FC. [There may have been others I did not see]

I. Regular business

1. Minutes were accepted with a typo correction from John Petersen
2. Review of ALG charter and Ground Rules

Bart noted that the group is under no obligation to accept the rules from the previous years---each year starts anew. There did not seem to be any additions with the first two paragraphs,

Marie indicated that she wanted to have the ALG plan in the warrant.

JP: noted that the FC "carries the water" operationally for the warrant. He thought the plan should be in the warrant but have the FC present the findings of the ALG.

ALG Charter and Ground Rules (revised 2020)

The Acton Leadership group is made up of two members each from the Acton Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, the Regional School Committee, the Town Manager and designated staff, and the School Superintendent and designated staff. The primary goal of the Acton Leadership Group is to reach consensus on a multi-year financial plan for the Town of Acton to recommend to their respective boards. A secondary goal is to enhance communications and cooperation between the boards. Members provide two-way communications between their board and the ALG.

ALG recommendations are based on consensus after obtaining views from all boards. (Consensus is the unanimous opinion of all the ALG members) All opinions are heard and there is agreement that the recommendation is the best one possible. ALG members are expected to fully represent the recommendations of the ALG to their boards and support the consensus.

In Summary:

- Revenue projections, tax levy, reserves
 - Plan for building multi-year model
 - Recommended one-year model
 - Present plan in the warrant
-
- Budget proposal: A gross allocation budget and funding mechanism agreement to propose and support to the boards

- Enhancement of inter-board working relationships including information calendar
- Strategic direction: How do we meet objectives with limited resources, to be coordinated with long-range plans
- Leadership demonstrated by timely iterations and good faith consensus. All expected to 'move'
- Quorum: One member and one staff person per board with no substitutes [Finance committee does not have staff]
- Facilitator: Outside facilitator runs meetings, not required for a quorum
- Agenda: established at previous meetings, distributed by Town Manager
- Leadership: Demonstrated by timely iterations and good faith consensus. All expected to be willing to compromise
- Minutes taken by an outside party
- Weather cancellations, mimics ABRSD
- Public participation: public seated outside of working group; public comments near the end once all agenda items having been completed.

Bart went over the understanding for a consensus again noting that it was not a decision based on any percentages of the group. "A unanimous consensus is the best decision reached in agreement with everyone. Second, members are to champion and present the consensus to their boards at the best of their ability and third, you are to support the consensus in public."

There was general agreement that the decisions were the based on the best available also noting that if a board does not agree, the iterative process will begin again.

II. FY 21 Update

Steve Barrett: The First quarter collects were strong; this is an area where the town is keeping a close watch but it's been strong in the past and it is expected to remain so. The food tax and local growth receipts are low, but that we expected. We are starting to slowly rehire in some positions and also do some spending. But we are watching expenses and trying to insure that all expenses related to COVID are paid for under the CARES act. We are innovating on a weekly basis and the staff has stepped in to help with the election process. They have been wonderful and we are proud of their contributions.

Peter: we will Do FY 20 wrap up at school committee meeting. For FY 21 we are busy with grants and trying to reconcile expenses and slotting expenses into the right grant. We expect E&D use to be@ \$3.6m or 3.7% for FY operation; \$2.8m circuit; \$1,200 capital, OPEB just over \$6m. ESSER grant of \$115K for Chrome books; \$150K for remote learning; we have a FEMA grant of 55K and have added request for \$345 more; \$1.2m in COVID related costs have been submitted to the state; we made a formal request under CARES to the town based on the regional agreement (a request will also be made to Boxboro).

The challenges are having a hybrid system and how long it will last. We have an increase in numbers and additional expenses such as air filters for all the classrooms---we cannot keep the windows open all winter – we want to do in person teaching as long as possible.

For public health measures we have asked the Board of Health to do sewage testing so we can determine what’s happening on the campus.

The Food Service has been a shining star we have feed 600 individual families. We had to get a heated food trailer and a refrigerated truck. The Feds have extended the free school lunch program for another year.

The teachers have been fantastic---we have to be careful of burnout ; planning for kids in class and remote learners is time consuming taking 10-11 hours a day.

Bart: any questions?

Jon asked when the school year would end so plans could be made for an open-air town meeting. The projected date is the week of June 16th. Marie suggested that it might be safer to pick the week of June 22nd.

Jon asked for an explanation of E&D.

Dave Verdolino said that E&D was like free cash---it’s a fund balance and can be seen as a revenue source. There are restrictions on its size— a cap of 5% of the year’s operating budget and can be used to prepay expenses for the following year. Marie added that E&D shows up as part of the budget and is used to lower assessments.

III. CARES

John said that the town has \$2.1m in direct funding and has received \$190K. Claims are being processed and the goal is to use as much can be valid expenses. There is a long list of what you can apply for and what you can’t. Both Minuteman and ABRSD have made applications for funds. There are going to be continuing needs for PPE; we’ve spent money on emergency rental assistance and will do some assistance for mortgage payments; we are going to have to retro fit the HVAC system at the Library and fix a lot of faucets.

The town has also gotten a grant for a five-town region to help micro enterprises.

Christi asked if the town would be able to spend all the funds. John said he was trying hard to make it possible to get everything that was being allocated to Acton.

IV. Multi-year

Steve said that the plan now has the Finance committee’s proposal of not collecting any property taxes for the coming budget. Steve thinks this not a good idea. He read a note from the Town’s financial advisor; “ The Town is already on notice regarding potential rating

actions if reserves decline. What you are outlining below will certainly put the Town's AAA rating in jeopardy and ultimately result in higher borrowing cost. Losing the AAA rating will have a bigger affect on the market versus a community that has a rating downgrade of AA1 to AA or AA to AA1. The perception in decline in financials is more concerning—as you will be leaving the “elite” rating category.

The outline below is a significant shift in how the Town has approached its financial health and is concerning.”

Steve added that by not raising any of the levy will deplete the reserves which is also something that the finance committee discussed earlier and decided that there should be a floor for the reserves.

Christi: There are people in town who are hurting and we have taken a lot in taxes with the schools and fire house.

John: Food security is a fundable expense. The reason we were able to return \$170K is because we had a hiring freeze, closed buildings and cut spending. We now have to hire some people needed and spend some of the funds we stopped. There was a \$400K change in the ABRSD. The schools assessments are just estimates. If we collected \$0 in property taxes the reserve use would be \$1.150m

Marie: the school budget assessment is really a preliminary numbers. We don't have enrollment figures or state aid numbers.... If we take \$1.1m from E&D, the assessment will increase.

Christi: Why is the increase in FY 22 3.75%

SB: that's the original starting point from the June Town Meeting warrant---at that level it is the beginning estimate.

Christi: I think we need more time to discuss.

Bart: should it be an agenda item?

Steve noted that there were other reasons that seemed to indicate an excess---the major on being the COVID pandemic. He expressed concern that once the federal funds are spent, the town may be left with additional expenses.

John suggested that by depleting the reserves, the FinCom was looking at a permanent override. John Petersen added that there were some people in town who were struggling, but not all and that it was more detrimental to the smooth running of the town to deplete the reserves when not everyone was struggling.

After some more discussion and a show of great concern on the part of both the selectmen and district that the Finance committee was being too draconian in their position, it was agreed that both groups would attend a finance committee meeting on Nov. 10 and discuss the impacts of having a \$0 level levy increase.

It will also be added to the agenda.

V. School building

Peter: we are at the point now where the construction is starting--- foundations are being dug. 100% of the bids are at MSBA and some have come back lower than expected. We are now watching all the change

orders. We ran into some more ledge but that change will be covered by the contingency. So far nothing has had to be changed that impacted the education program. The steel will start to go up in December and that's exciting. There are progress reports and pictures on the school's website

VI. North Acton Fire

John: There has been a groundbreaking --- so it's a work in progress that should take 14 months. There are still some easement issues with the sidewalk but we are working on getting the necessary agreements.

VII. Public

There did not seem to be any public.

Marie noted that the calendar was changing. The Boxboro Town Meeting is scheduled for May 10 and now Acton is sometime in the week of June 22nd. This means that budgets can be developed later and there may be better information. It was not clear what the new ALG schedule would be nor the dates for the FinCom hearings on the budgets. John expects to give the BoS a preliminary budget in December.

The calendar will also be added to the agenda.

Next meeting November 19, 8 AM via Zoom

Adjourned at 10 AM

Ann Chang



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.a
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AGENDA ITEM TITLE	CONSENT AGENDA: Approval of Meeting Minutes, Gifts
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PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley
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SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Items on the Consent Agenda do not usually require discussion and are approved with one vote. After members are asked if any items should be held out for individual consideration, a motion to approve the consent agenda is made, seconded, and voted on. Any items held from the consent agenda are then discussed and voted on separately.
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WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	“Move that the ABRSC approve the consent agenda as proposed/amended.”
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FOLLOW-UP	
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APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min.
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ATTACHMENTS	Draft minutes of January 7, 2021 and donation letters
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To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
MEETING DRAFT MINUTES

Virtual Public Zoom Webinar Meeting

January 7, 2021

To attend open meeting: <https://abschools.zoom.us/j/95248771505>

7:00 p.m.

To call in: 312 626 6799

Live streaming: <https://www.youtube.com/actontv1>

Members Present: Evelyn Abayaah-Issah, Diane Baum (8:00 p.m.), Kyra Cook, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, John Petersen, Nora Shine, Angie Tso, Yebin Wang

Members Absent: none

Others: Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

1. **Call to Order**

The ABRSC was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chairperson Tessa McKinley.

She noted that the meeting was being conducted remotely via a Zoom webinar with the following 10 members in attendance via zoom: Evelyn Abayaah-Issah, Kyra Cook, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, John Petersen, Nora Shine, Angie Tso, Yebin Wang and herself. Diane Baum was expected at about 8:00. Per Remote Participation policy, BEDJA, all votes were done by roll call. The Chair stated that the meeting was being recorded and would be posted on Acton TV's website at actontv.org.

a. **Chairperson's Welcome** - *Tessa McKinley*

b. **ABRHS Student Representative Update** - *Rhik Mazumder*

Rhik shared his perspective on the current hybrid schedule. Many students feel it is better than all remote due to the social benefit of being in-person at least a few days a week. Extended screen time is difficult, as well as getting up early.

c. **Public Participation**

Due to the racial zoom incident that occurred at the 12/17/20 meeting, the Committee is increasing the security of their meetings and will require the public to state their name and address before being allowed to speak. Four members spoke. One person was in support and appreciation for the Committee's decision to retire the mascot and one against it. Another speaker expressed concern over the zoom bombing incident and urged people to try to have more one-on-one conversations. A final person appreciated Rhik's comments about remote learning stating that he feels the same way at his work.

Tessa read a statement correcting information that was shared the past few weeks by members of the public regarding the process leading up to the decision to retire the Colonial mascot. She concluded that the Committee will not reconsider their unanimous decision. See attached.

d. **Superintendent's Update** – *Peter Light*

Mr. Light's update included: COVID developments, update on incidents at 12/17 and 1/7 ABRSC meetings, MCAS Testing for FY21, Building Project update

regarding GMP being determined and an FY22 budget update. The next community coffee with the Superintendent and School Committee chair will be February 3 from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. All are invited. Mr. Light noted that the recent tax bills sent to residents included a noticeable increase especially in Acton due to the building project and other projects approved by voters.

2. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Student Learning Time Survey and VOTE on Changes or Waiver for Hybrid Program - Peter Light**

The results from the structured learning time surveys given to stakeholders prior to the break were reviewed. The district must either apply for a waiver of the learning time regulations to the DESE or make adjustments to the hybrid program prior to January 19. Waiver requests must be submitted by January 11. The district will be implementing the daily “live” check-ins for all students consistent with the regulation, but the Administration would like to request a waiver of the 35 hour minimum requirement for live instruction in hybrid programs. Although DESE does not require the Committee to vote this, Mr. Light asked for members’ support.

Comments included:

- Would we be missing opportunities to provide extra services for students with special education needs by requesting this waiver? A: DESE is very specific that if time does not apply to all students, it cannot be counted in the total learning time. Mr. Light would also be concerned about changing families’ routines in the middle of the year for a number of reasons.
- Diane Baum listened to DESE’s meeting and noted that students’ mental health was the real concern. She felt we were handling this area well.

Diane Baum moved that the School Committee support the District’s request for a waiver from DESE on structured learning time. Adam Klein seconded the motion.

Comments continued:

- When we look at the FY22 Budget, we need to attempt to close the gaps that have been created.
- What are we doing about the survey results that say only 30% of our high school students are satisfied? A: An extensive student engagement survey is being launched to better understand this. The administration will also look at how much asynchronous learning is being provided.
- More in-person learning time is being considered for some of our special education students.

Several members of the public shared their thoughts and concerns, identifying themselves by name and address.

At approximately 8:43 p.m., a member of the public gave a name and local address and proceeded to play several seconds of profanity laced music

including the “n” word, before he was cut off. Tessa stated that the racial incident would be followed up on.

She called for a vote on the motion that had been seconded earlier. Members unanimously **VOTED by roll call** and approved the motion to support the District’s request for the waiver.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Shine, Tso, Wang)

Tessa stated that the Committee would not stand for any more harassment of their members. She apologized again to Evelyn and Kyra for having to experience another disturbing incident at a meeting. Mr. Light also apologized. Tessa invited members to speak if they wished to.

Kyra Cook asked everyone to stop and consider that someone choose to call two of our School Committee members the “n” word in their capacity of service to everyone’s children. She suggested that everyone “Bear witness that this abuse has happened.” Evelyn agreed.

The Committee took a 5 minute break at 8:48 p.m.

When the meeting resumed, Tessa said that this second incident might jeopardize future public participation at meetings. People may need to email questions to the Committee.

b. FY22 School Calendar - First Read – Peter Light

Mr. Light reviewed the two proposed versions. Option 1 begins on August 30 and option 2 begins on September 8. The religious holidays of Good Friday, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are no school days, as has been done for many years in the District given the number of staff and students who would take those days off. Starting on August 30th would be a “choppy” start given the Friday before and Labor Day being off, compared to starting on September 8 which would make the last day of June 21 if no snow days. It was noted that DESE may not allow remote snow days next year. In the spirit of diversity and inclusion, Evelyn Abayaah-Issah asked if any of the muslim holidays could be incorporated into the calendar as no school days. Tessa responded that in a year where a wider calendar discussion is planned, that could be considered, as it has been in the past. Tessa served on the Calendar Subcommittee several years ago. There has to be a clear reason that a holiday impacts the student or teacher population for school not to be held. Evelyn agreed to wait until the next opportunity. Members were asked to email input on the proposed options before the next meeting to Peter and Beth. The calendar will be voted at the meeting on 1/21/21.

c. Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan - VOTE – FIRST READ – Peter Light

This was changed to a First Read with the vote at the next meeting to give members more time to read the material. Some of it was discussed last year. Funding for AB would not be received until year 5 or 6, if ever. We picked the target area of literacy as the area where we wanted to improve student outcomes. Mr. Light invited members and the public to email him and copy Beth Petr if they had feedback on the proposed plan. Although the submission to DESE deadline is January 15th, it was agreed that it would best to take the extra time and have a better plan.

In response to a question, Mr. Light said that the DEI Family Advisory Group and Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) could review the document and a revision could be submitted if necessary. It was requested that students with disabilities be added to the bullets on the first page. Mr. Light said ELL students would also be included. This is a two year plan that asks the District to identify students that need the most support and how we will address their needs. The comment was made that these literacy skills are foundational to students' lives.

3. ONGOING BUSINESS

a. Consent Agenda - VOTE - Tessa McKinley

- i. Approval of Meeting Minutes of 12/17/20 and 12/23/20 – VOTE
- ii. Approval of \$4,000 Donation from the Friends of the Acton Libraries to the 8 school libraries of the ABRSD – VOTE

Adam Klein moved, John Petersen seconded and it was unanimously, VOTED by roll call: to approve the consent agenda with gratitude. (YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Shine, Tso, Wang)

b. ABRSC FY21 Operating Protocols - Second Read - VOTE - Tessa McKinley

The protocols were first reviewed at the workshop in October with Tony Bent. Tessa reviewed the proposed changes.

Amy Krishnamurthy moved to approve the protocols. Kyra Cook seconded. Adam suggested adding something about the need to identify systemic racism in our community and the work to be done to address it. It was agreed that Adam and Nora would review the protocols and bring a new version to the next meeting for the Committee's consideration. Amy withdrew her motion. There was no objection.

c. Superintendent Goals 2020-2021 - Second Read - VOTE - Peter Light

John Petersen moved to approve the Superintendent's Goals as presented. Ginny Kremer seconded.

Mr. Light explained the edits that were made in response to feedback from the previous meeting. Several members felt the goals were ambitious and wondered if they should be scaled back to be more realistic given the priority that the pandemic has taken and continues to demand. Mr. Light described most of the goals as "work in progress". Although he may not complete them all, Mr. Light feels that significant progress is often as good as accomplishing a goal. John Petersen urged Mr. Light to be ambitious and set the bar slightly higher than you think, just as we do for our students and staff.

Members **VOTED by roll call** and unanimously approved the motion.
(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Shine, Tso, Wang)

- d. **Budget Update** - The first FY22 Budget Presentation will be at the next meeting.
 - i. *Discussion of Reserves Policy DK - Adam Klein*
The Budget subcommittee felt the Committee as a whole should review the Reserves policy and be clear that it sets a target reserve level of between 4% and 5% of operating expenses, not a requirement for E&D. MA General Laws limit regional school districts' total E&D to no more than 5% of the budget.
- e. **Subcommittee and Member Reports**
 - i. Building Committee: Final GMP 12/15/20 & Approved Minutes
This was covered in the Superintendent's Update by Mr. Light.
- f. **Statement of Warrants & Recommendation to Approve – VOTE – T McKinley**
Tessa McKinley moved, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED by roll call: see motion on memo.
(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Shine, Tso, Wang)
- g. **FYI** – Mr. Light highlighted several items below.

4. Adjourn

Adam Klein moved, Evelyn Abayaah-Issah seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED by roll call to adjourn the ABRSC meeting at 9:54 p.m.
(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Cook, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Shine, Tso, Wang)

NEXT MEETINGS (via zoom):

ABRSC: January 21 and February 4 at 7:00 p.m.

Next Community Coffee with the Superintendent & ABRSC Chair: February 3rd 7-8 p.m.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION (FYI)

- a. **ABRSC Racism Condemnation Statement, voted 12/23/20**
- b. **FY22 Budget Schedule, voted 11/19/20**
- c. **Acton 2021 Annual Election Calendar**
- d. **Boxborough Candidate's Checklist - Running for Town Office**
- e. **Thank you to Lueders Environmental, Inc. for \$75 Donation**
- f. **QPR Training: Next one: Jan 5 at 7**
- g. **DESE FY21 Assessment and Accountability Update, 1/5/2021**

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

Chairperson Tessa McKinley's statement

Public Participation

ABRSC Meeting 1/7/2021

As a committee, we rarely respond to comments and questions raised during public speak. The reason for this is that they are often items outside of the agenda. I need to clarify a few things, however, because over the course of the last few weeks, a few members of the community have persisted in presenting information that is incorrect. I understand that there are members of the community who disagree with our unanimous vote to retire the colonial mascot. They have persisted in presenting their concerns at all of our meetings since the decision was made. So, let me clarify. Prior to our decision to retire the mascot, all members of the committee were aware that two petitions had been created. While we were aware of both petitions, let me be clear: only ONE petition was officially presented to the committee (with all of its signatures) and that was created by the students of ABSEJ in their efforts to retire the mascot. In our efforts to understand the perspectives of all stakeholders, a request went out on September 25 for public comment.

“The Committee recognizes that the Acton-Boxborough community includes many members and groups who may have a variety of views on the issue before the Committee. The School Committee will deliberate on the petition again and consider action at its meeting on October 15, 2020. We invite the public to submit comments in writing by Wednesday, October 14th by emailing us at abrsc@abschools.org. While we recognize that public comment is not a vote, we are interested in hearing a variety of opinions on changing the mascot to help make our deliberation more meaningful.”

The creators of the petition to keep the mascot DID write to the committee and they DID meet with the superintendent about their concerns. When the students wrote to us originally, they made clear their desire to remain anonymous. The original request they made was to meet with the committee between meetings. Because we are a public body, we cannot as a committee meet with individuals outside of our open meetings, so the Superintendent met with them. One of these students later emailed us again as part of our request for public comment. The student made us aware of the second petition and that it had 2300 signatures, but the petition was not sent to us. Regardless, when we met to deliberate, we met with the knowledge of its existence and that there was a large group in the community who wished to preserve the colonial mascot.

We have heard comments that all sides were not represented but this is not accurate. As our request stated explicitly, public comment was NOT going to be considered a vote. Our mailboxes were flooded with comment; nearly 700 emails were received and read. While there were many impassioned letters about the merits of keeping the colonial, most of the responses we received from people interested in maintaining the mascot, were simply names with a subject line of “keep the colonial.” Let me repeat: This was not a public vote and it was never intended to be. As many members noted in the statements on 10/15, we all spent many hours reading the comments of our community members. Not only did we receive letters from current students and staff, we received letters from alumni, community members and elected officials. This unanimous decision was not made in a silo and it was made with the support of the high school principal and the superintendent as well as other members of the leadership team.

One of the most passionate community members wrote a letter that was shared by many who wished to keep the mascot. That member of ABRHS class of '89 was impassioned in his defense of the values he felt were at the core of the colonial mascot. After our unanimous decision, he again wrote to the committee.

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'd just like to say well done. Thank you for the well considered discussion of the retirement of the Colonial. You are each a credit to the town. I logged into the meeting very much in favor of keeping the Colonial. I left convinced that its retirement was the right thing for the school. I am prayerful that the community can quickly decide on a new mascot that all students can claim as their own. “

I understand that we are not all going to agree but to claim that we did not listen or consider all perspectives is false. This decision has been made by unanimous consent. We, as a committee, have many other responsibilities to the students of our district and we will not be reconsidering our vote.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720

978-264-4700

www.abschools.org

Peter J. Light

Superintendent of Schools

TO: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Members
FROM: Peter Light
RE: Anonymous Donation to the Student Assistance Fund
DATE: January 15, 2021

It is with much gratitude that I ask you to approve a recent anonymous donation of \$627 from a resident to the Student Assistance - Homeless and Food Assistance Fund. As you may remember, this fund was established a year or so ago to help support our children and their families.

We are truly fortunate to have such generous and caring members of our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

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TO: Peter Light, Superintendent
FROM: Dawn Bentley, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
DATE: 1/11/2021
RE: Approval of ABUW Mask Donation

The District has received an extremely generous donation of 2,000 triple-layer masks, valued at approximately \$2,000, and 1,000 fabric masks, valued at approximately \$2,000, from the Acton-Boxborough United Way (ABUW).

In an email dated 1/7/2021, ABUW Executive Director Griet Dehandschutter wrote the following:

After the school committee hate incident, A-B United Way wanted to give visible support to our school committee members who were targeted and to so many people in our community who felt harmed by this attack and the everyday racism they experience locally. The unfolding national tragedy - hate and violence on blunt display culminating in yesterday's unimaginable attack on our nation's Capitol - makes it more than ever important that we stand up as a community. Thanks to a generous gift of a donor, we have received 2,000 free triple-layered face masks... with "No place for hate" on them [for] students, teachers and/or staff.



Please present this gift to the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee for consideration and vote of acceptance.

Thank you.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.b
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Structured Learning Time Update		
PRESENTER(S)	Peter Light		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	This is an update on the waiver request that was submitted to DESE following the last meeting. Because it was not granted, the District must comply with the new DESE learning time regulations that take effect on January 21.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request formal action with a specific vote:
If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	min.
ATTACHMENTS	

5



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700
www.abschools.org

Peter J. Light
Superintendent of Schools

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
From: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools
Date: January 19, 2021
RE: Education Program Changes to Comply with new DESE "Live Learning Time" Regulations

The information below was shared with families on Friday January 15, 2021. At your meeting on January 7, you voted to support a waiver request from DESE regarding their new regulation which set the minimum number of "live" instructional hours for students in hybrid programs at 35. On January 8, we submitted the request to DESE and were notified on January 12 that this waiver request was denied by the commissioner. Our team had planned for this possibility and spent the second half of last week finalizing plans, soliciting feedback from our educators, and working with ABEA leadership to ensure as smooth a transition as possible to allow for revision to the education program. At our meeting on January 21, the committee will have a chance to discuss the changes that are being implemented beginning this week.

From our communication sent to families:

January 15, 2021

ABRSD Families,

My apologies for this long but important email regarding upcoming changes to our Hybrid Learning Program that will go into effect next week. (Please note, that these changes apply only to our hybrid program in grades 1-12 and they do not apply to students in the Preschool, Kindergarten, or the K-6 Remote Learning Program.)

This document is intended to provide general information about our plans moving forward. Your building principal and/or classroom teacher(s) will share additional information next week.

As you are aware, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released new regulations for "live" instructional time during the pandemic. When we learned of these new regulations, we determined that before taking any action to modify our instructional program, we would take an opportunity to listen to stakeholders. Through our initial surveys, we learned that our students, families, and educators expressed a generally high level of satisfaction with our current program. Based on this information, we applied for a waiver from DESE that would have allowed us additional flexibility around these new requirements.

Earlier this week, we learned that the Commissioner denied our waiver request. I expect that many in our community have a variety of different feelings about this news.

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Prior to learning the status of our waiver request, our leadership team planned for the possibility it would be denied and sketched out a framework for several options that would allow us to meet the new requirements. Since learning our request was denied, our leadership worked closely with our educators to finalize the changes that will go into effect next week.

Changing education models is an incredibly complex task in a normal year, when even minor changes to the program can cause unintended consequences for students, families, and educators who have planned lives around established schedules. Planning to open schools this year was a Herculean task of trying to meet the varying needs people in our district have during challenging and unprecedented circumstances. There is no saying more appropriate than we are “building the plane while flying it.” We want to recognize that making this type of change will present challenges for many within our district.

Principals in each school will provide more details about building specific plans, but we want to provide everyone an overview of what to expect. Because we recognize that our students and families have established schedules and routines, we will phase these changes in, gradually implementing them over the course of the next week or so. We fully expect that it will take all of next week to gradually introduce our students and families to this new plan.

Elementary Schools

We will add 45 minutes total of live streamed time for students on their asynchronous days during non-core instructional times. Students who are at home working remotely on their asynchronous days will Zoom into the classroom with their peers who are attending in person. Teachers will communicate specific times to families early next week. Some key aspects of this change are:

- Examples of non-core instructional times: morning meetings, closing meetings and read aloud times with the class.
- The time will be led by the classroom teacher
- To be respectful of educators’ decision-making, each classroom teacher may determine how best to use this time. Some teachers may prefer to use one longer instructional block of 45 minutes, while others may prefer to break up the time into two or possibly three sessions. We trust that our educators know their students’ and families’ needs the best.
- The check-in is a required part of the students’ day, when teachers will record attendance. This will be reported to families (who can be reassured that attendance is not part of a students’ permanent record).

We will also be adding slightly more asynchronous learning time to each students’ week. ***It is our target that students in grades 1-6 should be assigned 7.5 hours of asynchronous learning each week - an increase of 1.5 hours per week.*** You will likely see some gradual and moderate increases in the amount of asynchronous learning your child receives each week.

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Junior High School

The Junior High School plan focuses on plans for live check-ins with hybrid students on their at-home days, along with extending the fully remote Wednesday schedule. Specifically:

- ***When students are at home for their asynchronous days, they will now be scheduled into two separate check-in meetings with teachers within a single school day.***
 - The first check-in will be a 25-minute meeting within our lunch periods, and will be with an off-team teacher, counselor, or administrator.
 - The second check-in will be a 30-minute meeting during our school's Directed Study period at the end of the day. This meeting will be with a team teacher and each teacher's Directed Study will include students who are in-person, and students who are streaming in via Zoom.
- ***The Remote Wednesday schedule will now be extended by one hour.***
 - For half of the Remote Wednesdays, classes will be lengthened from 20 minutes to 29 minutes, with the class schedule ending at 1:00pm (and now including a 30-minute lunch from 11:30am to 12:00pm).
 - For the other half of Remote Wednesdays, classes will remain at 20 minutes and the class schedule ends at 11:30am. On these days, the JH Admin will facilitate a Wednesday Assembly Series that all students will attend (remotely) from 12:00pm to 1:00pm, and will feature speakers, performers, and panels that are linked to the Junior High curriculum, and our District's broader SEL and DEI goals.

High School

The high school will implement a daily advisory/check-in time for students on their asynchronous days and a longer fully remote Wednesday schedule.

Advisory/Check In Time

The current advisory period of 13 minutes will be extended to 26 minutes and will be a combined blue and gold cohort academic and advisory check-in. These will take place on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In the Hybrid Learning Program, this means that one cohort will be in person and the other will be connected via Zoom. In the Remote Learning Program, all meetings will continue to happen over Zoom. In addition to advisory activities, students will be given the opportunity to remotely and in person reach out to teachers to access support. The high school will work with students and teachers to plan implementation on Tuesday and Wednesday of next week. The change in the bell schedule will begin Thursday. Official student attendance for Advisory/Check in Time will begin with the start of second semester on January 28th.

Extended Remote Wednesday

The high school will extend Wednesdays by 82 minutes. This includes increasing each class period from 25 minutes to 41 minutes on Wednesdays and reducing passing time to four minutes across all days.

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All Levels: Implementation Plan

We recognize the challenges of implementing these changes in such a short period of time. Because DESE is requiring districts to implement changes effective Tuesday, January 19th, it is important that we begin a transition to this new plan early next week. We expect there will be early challenges and have created an implementation schedule that we hope provides an opportunity to focus first on communication with students and families and resolving technical challenges, and then gradually moving toward maximizing educational opportunities. We ask that our students and families be patient with educators as they adjust to these new changes.

As we move into next week and the week after, we will use the plan below as a general timeline to guide our implementation of this new schedule:

Week of January 18 through January 22

Monday (1/18) - No School, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Tuesday (1/19) - *Gold Cohort In-Person Day*

- Elementary:
 - Educators send home zoom login information and class zoom schedule to families
 - Explain changes to in-person students (Gold Cohort) so they know what to expect the following day
- Junior High:
 - Junior High will have sent information about specific schedules and will work with Blue Cohort students to stream into Directed Study classes that afternoon
- High School:
 - Schools send home information about specific schedules and instructions
 - Educators explain to in-person students (Gold Cohort) what to expect on Friday

Wednesday (1/20) - ***Blue Cohort In-Person Day*** - due to Monday Holiday

- Elementary and Junior High
 - Explain changes to in-person students (Blue Cohort) so they know what to expect the following day
 - Educators have Gold Cohort students log in remotely at scheduled time(s). This day is a “dry run” and only intended to be used to work out technical issues. It is not intended to be used as a full instructional block.
- High School
 - Explain changes to in-person students (Blue Cohort) so they know what to expect the following day

Thursday (1/21) - *Blue Cohort In-Person Day*

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- All Levels
 - Gold Cohort students log in remotely at scheduled time(s). The continued focus should be on resolving technical issues and helping students adjust to the new routine and the focus is not intended to be full instructional time.

Friday (1/22)

- All Levels
 - Educators have Blue Cohort students log in remotely at scheduled time(s). This day is a “dry run” and only intended to be used to work out technical issues. It is not intended to be used as a full instructional block.

Week of January 25 through January 29

Monday (1/25)

- All Levels
 - Gold Cohort students log in remotely at scheduled time(s). The continued focus should be on resolving technical issues and helping students adjust to the new routine and the focus is not intended to be full instructional time.

Tuesday (1/26)

- All Levels
 - Full implementation of model

Wednesday (1/27) - Fully Remote Wednesday

- Junior High implements extended Remote Wednesday Schedule
- High School implements extended Remote Wednesday Schedule



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

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

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

January 12, 2021

Peter Light
Superintendent
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
15 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
plight@abschools.org

Re: Student Learning Time Waiver Request for Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

Dear Superintendent Light:

I am writing in response to your request for a waiver of the Student Learning Time (SLT) regulations, 603 CMR 27.00. Specifically, in your letter sent on January 8, 2021, Acton-Boxborough Regional School District has requested the following:

- A waiver from the requirement to provide 35 hours of live or synchronous instruction in the hybrid learning model.

Based on the information provided, your request has been denied. Over the fall, there has been a distressing increase in the mental health challenges our students are facing. One way to prevent the isolation and disconnection that many students are feeling is frequent connections and interactions with teachers and peers. Such interactions are embedded in “live” instructional methods, including in both in-person and remote synchronous learning modalities.

Further, synchronous learning is defined as “learning that is directed by a teacher and that happens in real time with other students, such as during live, whole-class instruction, and small group work.” Synchronous learning may take many different forms. Please refer to the [SLT guidance](#) for more information about way to increase synchronous learning time for learners.

In addition to the above response, I would like to remind you of the minimum structured learning time requirements for the school year. 603 CMR 27.06. On July 27, 2020, to provide sufficient training and preparation time for educators and staff prior to the start of the new school year, I reduced the 180 day and student learning time requirements for the 2020-2021 school year to 170 days and 850 hours (for elementary schools) and 935 hours (for secondary schools), so long as districts began providing instruction to students no later than September 16, 2020. School districts are legally required to provide these total hours of structure learning time. As you work to implement the new amendments to the regulations related to live instruction for hybrid learning models and synchronous instruction for remote learning models, I encourage you to

review these minimum structured learning time requirements as well. Any district that does not comply with the regulations will be required to make up any structured learning time missed due to non-compliance by the end of the school year.

Please contact SLTsupport@mass.gov if you have any questions regarding this response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey C. Riley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "R".

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.c
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AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Recommendation to Approve Nonresident Tuition Rate for the RJGJHS STEP Program - VOTE
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PRESENTER(S)	Peter Light
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SUMMARY OF TOPIC	
-------------------------	--

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting
X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	"Move to approve the nonresident tuition rate for the RJGJHS Secondary Transition Education Program (STEP) as presented"
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APPROX. TIME ON AGENDA	min.
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5

ATTACHMENTS	Memo and Nonresident Tuition Charges policy JFABA
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Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

Special Education

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720

978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

To: Peter Light

From: Debbie Dixon, Interim Special Education Director

Re: Tuition Rate for Junior High Program

Date: January 19, 2021

For many years, the district has allowed students from neighboring communities to tuition students to our high school ODP (Occupational Development Program) and PACE (Practical Academics and Community Education) Programs. I would recommend extending that tuition offering to the junior high school counterpart, STEP (Secondary Transition Education Program), so that potential students may join our school community for the full continuum of programming starting at the earlier grade levels.

The junior high program, being comparable in staffing and services, should charge the same rate as each of the high school programs which is \$32,905.00 for 180 days.

Thank you for your consideration.

File: JFABA - NONRESIDENT TUITION CHARGES

Eligibility for enrollment in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD) is governed by Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), Chapter 76. Except as provided for in collective bargaining agreements, the School Choice Law, the McKinney- Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the Admission of Exchange Students Policy JFABB, or as set forth in this policy, the district will only admit students who reside in the towns of Acton or Boxborough. Residency is defined in Policy JF Residency and Student Enrollment.

The Superintendent may enter into a contract with a neighboring community for an Acton or Boxborough student to attend school in that community or for a student from another community to attend school in ABRSD providing the student qualifies for special education services pursuant to Mass Gen Laws chapter 71B (Chapter 766) and/or related federal laws. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the School Committee shall set the tuition rate for special education programs that may accept non-resident students each year in the spring whenever the rate changes. The tuition rate for special education programs shall be based on the actual costs of the specific special education program.

If any other students from outside Acton or Boxborough wish to enroll on a tuition basis, the School Committee must approve such application. The School Committee, at its sole discretion, will approve such application only if space and resources are available. In the event the School Committee chooses to accept tuitioned students, the Committee shall set the rate for tuition upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. The tuition set pursuant to this policy shall be the average expense per pupil (including in such average both regular education costs and special education costs) for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 76:6; 76:12, 76:12A, 76:12B, 71:6A

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Approved: 4/11/19

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.d
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AGENDA ITEM TITLE	FY22 School Calendar DRAFT OPTIONS - Second Read - VOTE
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PRESENTER(S)	Marie Altieri
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SUMMARY OF TOPIC	<p>The School Committee VOTE to adopt a calendar for the 2021-22 year.</p> <p>Option 1 has teacher professional days on August 25 and 26 and school starting on Monday August 30. Note that there are holidays on September 6, 7, and 13. The last day of school would be on June 15 and 22 depending on snow days.</p> <p>Option 2 has teacher professional days on September 1 and 2 and school starting on September 8. The last day of school would be between June 21 and June 28 depending on snow days.</p> <p>After discussions with ABEA, we are also recommending the committee move the elementary early release day from Thursdays to Wednesdays for the 2021-22 school year.</p>
-------------------------	---

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting
X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

SUGGESTED MOTIONS	<p>"I move to approve proposed calendar 1, with a start date for students of August 30, 2021 and staff professional days scheduled on August 25 and 26. The last day of school would be June 15, 2022 plus snow days. Elementary early release days are scheduled on Wednesdays."</p> <p>OR</p> <p>"I move to approve proposed calendar 2, with a start date for students of September 8th, 2021 and staff professional days scheduled on September 1st and 2nd. The last day of school would be June 21, 2022 plus snow days. Elementary early release days are scheduled on Wednesdays."</p>
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ATTACHMENTS	Option 1 starts on Aug 30. Option 2 starts on Sept 8.
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Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
OPTION #1 SCHOOL CALENDAR, 2021-2022

Bold BOXED Dates = No School Days

Aug.	M	T	W	T	F
	23	24	25	26	27
Sept.	30	31	1	2	3
	6	7	8	9	10
	13	14	15	16	17
	20	21	22	23	24
	27	28	29	30	

Teachers' Prof Learning 25,26
 Rosh Hashanah – Sept 7
 Labor Day - Sept 6 (no school, 3)
 Schools Open – Aug 30
 Yom Kippur – Sept 13-16
School Days – 20

Oct.	M	T	W	T	F
					1
	4	5	6	7	8
	11	12	13	14	15
	18	19	20	21	22
	25	26	27	28	29

Indigenous Peoples' Day – Oct 11*
School Days – 20

Nov.	M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4	5
	8	9	10	11	12
	15	16	17	18	19
	22	23	24	25	26
	29	30			

Prof Learning Day – Nov 2
 Election Day – Nov 2
 Veterans Day – Nov 11
 Early Release Day – Nov 24
 Thanksgiving Recess – Nov 25-26
School Days - 18

Dec.	M	T	W	T	F
			1	2	3
	6	7	8	9	10
	13	14	15	16	17
	20	21	22	23	24
	27	28	29	30	31

Winter Recess - Dec. 24 – Jan
School Days - 17

Jan.	M	T	W	T	F
	3	4	5	6	7
	10	11	12	13	14
	17	18	19	20	21
	24	25	26	27	28
	31				

Schools Open - Jan 3

Martin Luther King Day - Jan 17
School Days - 20

Feb.	M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3	4
	7	8	9	10	11
	14	15	16	17	18
	21	22	23	24	25
	28				

Presidents' Day - Feb 21
 Winter Recess - Feb 21-25
School Days – 15

Mar.	M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3	4
	7	8	9	10	11
	14	15	16	17	18
	21	22	23	24	25
	28	29	30	31	

School Days - 23

Apr.	M	T	W	T	F
					1
	4	5	6	7	8
	11	12	13	14	15
	18	19	20	21	22
	25	26	27	28	29

Good Friday – Apr 15
 Patriots Day – Apr 18
 Spring Recess - Apr 18-22
School Days - 15

May	M	T	W	T	F
	2	3	4	5	6
	9	10	11	12	13
	16	17	18	19	20
	23	24	25	26	27
	30	31			

Memorial Day - May 30
School Days - 21

June	M	T	W	T	F
			1	2	3
	6	7	8	9	10
	13	14	15	16	17
	20	21	22	23	24
	27	28	29	30	

Graduation – June 3
 Last Day/Early Rel– June 15
School Days –11 - for total of 180
 Last day if 5 snow days – June 22

Some major religious and cultural holidays are found on page 2. *Columbus Day has been changed to Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Weeks with a no-school holiday will have students in school on the Wednesday.

No School and Delayed Opening Announcements air on TV Channels 4, 5 and 7 and radio stations WBZ and WEIM. See postings at <http://abschools.org>
 Acton Town Meeting begins April x, 2022. Boxborough Meeting begins May x, 2022.

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meetings are usually held twice a month. See https://www.abschools.org/school_committee for more information.

EARLY RELEASE DAYS will be added at a later date

12/14/2020

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
SCHOOL CALENDAR, 2021-2022

Major Religious and Cultural Holidays –
(some are school days, some are not)

July 20-23	Eid al-Adha
September 7-8	Rosh Hashanah
September 16	Yom Kippur
November 4	Diwali begins
November 29	Chanuka begins
December 25	Christmas
December 26-Jan 1	Kwanzaa
February 1	Lunar New Year
April 15	Good Friday
April 16-23	Passover
April 17	Easter
April 3 – May 2	Ramadan
May 3	Eid al-Fitr

The observance of both Jewish and Muslim holidays begins at sundown of the preceding day. Please see our Religious and Cultural Holidays policy IMD on the school website for more information at:
https://www.abschools.org/school_committee/policies

Direct School Phone Numbers:

Blanchard:	978-263-4569
Conant:	978-266-2550
Douglas:	978-266-2560
Gates:	978-266-2570
McCarthy-Towne:	978-264-3377
Merriam:	978-264-3371
All Other Schools:	978-264-4700

2021 - 2022 School Start Times

Carol Huebner Early Childhood Programs:

Morning Session	8:30 – 11:15 am
Afternoon Session	12:15 – 3:00 pm
All-Day Session	8:30 am – 3:00 pm

Kindergarten:

AM	8:50 -11:30
PM	12:40 - 3:20

All Elementary Schools:

8:50 am – 3:20 pm

Secondary Schools:

AB Regional High School 8:00 am – 2:47 pm
(Early Dismissal 11:22 am)

R.J. Grey Junior High School 8:00 am – 2:36 pm
(Early Dismissal 11:10 am)

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
OPTION #2 SCHOOL CALENDAR, 2021-2022

Bold BOXED Dates = No School Days

Aug.	M	T	W	T	F
	23	24	25	26	27
Sept.	30	31	1	2	3
	6	7	8	9	10
	13	14	15	16	17
	20	21	22	23	24
	27	28	29	30	

Teachers' Prof Learning Sept 1&2
 Rosh Hashanah – Sept 7
 Labor Day - Sept 6
 Schools Open – Sept 8
 Yom Kippur – Sept 13-16
School Days – 16

Oct.	M	T	W	T	F
					1
	4	5	6	7	8
	11	12	13	14	15
	18	19	20	21	22
	25	26	27	28	29

Indigenous Peoples' Day – Oct 11*
School Days – 20

Nov.	M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4	5
	8	9	10	11	12
	15	16	17	18	19
	22	23	24	25	26
	29	30			

Prof Learning Day – Nov 2
 Election Day – Nov 2
 Veterans Day – Nov 11
 Early Release Day – Nov 24
 Thanksgiving Recess – Nov 25-26
School Days - 18

Dec.	M	T	W	T	F
			1	2	3
	6	7	8	9	10
	13	14	15	16	17
	20	21	22	23	24
	27	28	29	30	31

Winter Recess - Dec. 24 – Jan
School Days - 17

Jan.	M	T	W	T	F
	3	4	5	6	7
	10	11	12	13	14
	17	18	19	20	21
	24	25	26	27	28
	31				

Schools Open - Jan 3

Martin Luther King Day - Jan 17
School Days - 20

Feb.	M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3	4
	7	8	9	10	11
	14	15	16	17	18
	21	22	23	24	25
	28				

Presidents' Day - Feb 21
 Winter Recess - Feb 21-25
School Days – 15

Mar.	M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3	4
	7	8	9	10	11
	14	15	16	17	18
	21	22	23	24	25
	28	29	30	31	

School Days - 23

Apr.	M	T	W	T	F
					1
	4	5	6	7	8
	11	12	13	14	15
	18	19	20	21	22
	25	26	27	28	29

Good Friday – Apr 15
 Patriots Day – Apr 18
 Spring Recess - Apr 18-22
School Days - 15

May	M	T	W	T	F
	2	3	4	5	6
	9	10	11	12	13
	16	17	18	19	20
	23	24	25	26	27
	30	31			

Memorial Day - May 30
School Days - 21

June	M	T	W	T	F
			1	2	3
	6	7	8	9	10
	13	14	15	16	17
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12/14/2020

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
SCHOOL CALENDAR, 2021-2022

Major Religious and Cultural Holidays

(some are school days, some are not)

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(Early Dismissal 11:22 am)

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(Early Dismissal 11:10 am)



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.e
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AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Student Opportunity Act Plan - Second Read - VOTE
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PRESENTER(S)	Peter Light
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SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Last year the legislature passed the student opportunity act. While funding allocated to districts had been delayed and AB will likely not see any funding for several years, each district must submit a plan, approved by the school committee, to DESE.
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WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?

	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting
X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	"Move to approve the Student Opportunity Act Plan as presented"
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APPROX. TIME ON AGENDA	min.
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ATTACHMENTS	Revised Memo
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Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700
www.abschools.org

Peter J. Light
Superintendent of Schools

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
From: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools
Date: January 19, 2021
RE: Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan - Second Read - VOTE

At your meeting on January 7, you provided input into the District's Student Opportunity Act Plan. Since that time, our leadership has used that feedback to revise the plan accordingly. Specifically, we added two additional subgroups to the plan: Students with Disabilities and English Learners. We also reviewed and revised the data sources used to more clearly describe why we identified these subgroups for the plan.

I have also shared this plan with our Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) leadership and DEI Family Advisory Group, although due to our focus on implementing the new "live" time requirements per DESE and our power outages on Friday, we were only able to share the plan today. Based on input we receive, we may make additional revisions to the plan prior to Thursday's meeting.

We are asking the committee to vote to approve the plan at the upcoming meeting on January 21, 2021. Plans were due to DESE on Friday, January 15, 2021.

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.





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

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT

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

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District **Student Opportunity Plan: SY 2021-2023**

Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

Which student subgroups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?

- Black Students
- Hispanic/Latino Students
- Students who are Economically Disadvantaged (ED)
- Students with IEPs (SWD)
- Students who are English Learners (ELs)

Rationale for Selecting: As noted in our strategic plan, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD) is committed to ensuring each of our students achieves success in school and after graduation. However, we recognize that not all student groups have experienced the same level of success to date. Based on a review of our district data, our Black and Hispanic/Latino students, students who are ED, students with an IEP, and our students who are ELs, are not experiencing the same outcomes as their peers.

Between 2017-19 MCAS ELA data for Grade 3 indicates that overall, our third graders showed a 19% increase in percent proficient or advanced. If we disaggregate that three-year trend data by subgroup:

- *Black Students:* cohort too small (<10)
- *Hispanic/Latino Students:* 15% increase in students who are proficient or advanced
- *Students who are Economically Disadvantaged:* 19% increase in students who are proficient or advanced
- *Students with IEPs:* 26% increase in students who are advanced
- *Students who are ELs:* 0% increase in students who are proficient or advanced

Our iReady data from Fall 2020 indicates that overall, 25% of our 3rd grade students scored one or more grade levels below grade three. Disaggregated by subgroup, students scoring below grade level are as follows:

- *Black Students:* (Grade 1) 81%, (Grade 2) 63%, (Grade 3) 70%
- *Hispanic/Latino Students:* (Grade 1) 76%, (Grade 2) 62%, (Grade 3) 32%
- *Students who are Economically Disadvantaged:* (Grade 1) 67%, (Grade 2) 75%, (Grade 3) 71%
- *Students with IEPs:* (Grade 1) 63%, (Grade 2) 84%, (Grade 3) 65%
- *Students who are ELs:* (Grade 1) 76%, (Grade 2) 72%, (Grade 3) 70%

Our focus is on implementing research-based early literacy programs in K-3 general education classrooms because research indicates that high-quality classroom instruction can help over 90% of early elementary students read on grade level (Al Otaiba, S., & Foorman, B. (2008). Early Literacy Instruction and Intervention. *Community literacy journal*, 3(1), 21–37). We are committing to intensive work to close achievement and opportunity gaps for these student

subgroups and recognize that this important work will take not just the efforts of district staff, but also our families and community.

Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps

What evidence-based programs will your district adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps?

Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades (E, F, and G)

- **A high-level summary of the program in FY21 and any expected changes for the following two years:**
Please see [December 2020 Structured Literacy Presentation to School Committee](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RkB8Oed78Ue6aLiFdQEeFisJJEGRsuBq/view?usp=sharing) (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RkB8Oed78Ue6aLiFdQEeFisJJEGRsuBq/view?usp=sharing>).
- **Which schools in the district will be impacted by the program:** District-wide
- **Which student subgroups the program will address:** Students who are Black, Hispanic, or Economically Disadvantaged, have IEPs, or are ELs

What resources will you allocate to these programs? The district will allocate a variety of resources to these programs, including human capital (Reading Specialists and ELA Curriculum Coordinators/Coaches) and budgeted funds to pay for stipends, supplies, books, and professional learning.

FY21 budget item	Amount	Foundation Category
SEED Workshop and Partner Stipend Fees	\$3,520	Professional Learning
Classroom Libraries	\$12,500	Educational Supplies
iReady Assessment and Literacy Pro	\$57,000	Educational Software
Foundations and Dyslexia Workshops, Materials	\$19,500	Professional Learning
Decodable Texts, Phonemic Awareness Instructional Materials	\$18,130	Educational Supplies
Reading Specialists and ELA Curriculum Coordinators/Coaches	\$720,000	Salaries
Evidence-based program identified by DESE: Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary		
SOA program categories: (E, F, and G)		

Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets

What metrics will your district use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups? Select from the list of DESE metrics or provide your own. (Please note that targets will be added to this section once SY 2020 data is released this fall.)

1) DESE outcome metrics:

- ✓ **Student Achievement:** English language arts (ELA) achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS

2) Custom district metrics:

- ✓ **Student Achievement:** Harvard Early Bird Kindergarten Screener scores
- ✓ **Student Achievement:** iReady Grades 1-3 ELA Scores

Commitment 4: Engaging All Families

How will your district ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the district regarding their students' needs?

We believe that working together with families will best set children up for reading and school success. We have

engaged in the following activities to engage families in the area of early literacy:

- Family learning series, where parents learned about supporting their child’s literacy.
- Listening sessions with SEPAC families about literacy and dyslexia concerns and questions.
- Family engagement activities through Title I (regularly seeking parent feedback,
- We are fortunate to be partnering for the fourth year with founder & CEO, Joan Kelley of [Abound Parenting](#) (formerly “Pup Reading”). This partnership began in PK and has now been expanded to K, 1, 2. As a partner, ABRSD families receive free access to the Abound Parenting app. Joan Kelley designed this app as a former teacher and researcher at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and it encourages families to start quick-but-meaningful daily conversations that build different types of reading skills, including vocabulary and knowledge. It is built around 2-week themes and has book suggestions and specific conversation starters.
- Our AB Literacy Site- <https://sites.google.com/a/abschools.org/ab-literacy/> is filled with suggestions and resources to support families in reading to and with their children.
- First Connections is a local organization that equips families with practical tools, strategies, and connections to other families and the community to foster healthy parenting and guide them through the early years. Our PK-2 Literacy Coordinator, Sharon Ryan, is on their Advisory Board and offers early literacy workshops.
- The District has an ongoing partnership with our two local town libraries to foster a love of literacy and reading with families, support students getting library cards, and promoting/supporting literacy events.
- We have a few schools that are Title One (Federal grant) that targets grades one and two, as well as the JHS. We provide family outreach through Reading Connections (monthly), parent survey, as well as family engagement events.
- Little Free Libraries, as well as literacy nights are two other ways we keep families and schools connected.
- The District is in the process of creating grade-specific pamphlets so parents can understand and support structured reading instruction.

Certifications:

By checking here, I certify that our district has engaged stakeholders in our district in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act.

Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:

As part of the Superintendent's entry process in 2018, the district had an opportunity to engage with a variety of stakeholder groups throughout the community, including our SEPAC and our school committee. Early literacy practices arose as a concern within a subset of the community, specifically among families whose children had been diagnosed or had not received a diagnosis of dyslexia. During the 2019-20 school year SEPAC sponsored a listening session with families of students who had been diagnosed with dyslexia or a reading disability late in elementary school, which the Superintendent and Director of Special Education attended, to hear about the impact late identification had on their children's education. In 2019-20, the District convened a Literacy Committee composed of educators, coordinators and administrators to study research and best practices that would inform the growth of our literacy program and has consulted with multiple experts in the field to develop a framework for an evidence-based approach to structured literacy. The District has engaged in professional learning efforts and has presented the new literacy plan publicly at a school committee meeting for which special notice was provided to the public and over 150 families and members of the public were in attendance.

By checking here, I certify that our district’s school committee voted on our Student Opportunity Plan.

Date of vote: XX/XX/2021

Outcome of vote:



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.f
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AGENDA ITEM TITLE	ABRSC FY21 Operating Protocols
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PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley
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SUMMARY OF TOPIC	These operating protocols have been revised to reflect feedback provided at the last school committee meeting. We are requesting the committee vote to adopt the revised protocols.
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WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?

	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information	
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required for Subcommittees policy	
X	Request formal action with a specific vote:	
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:	
		for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting or
	X	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

SUGGESTED MOTION	“Move to approve the ABRSC FY21 Operating Protocols as proposed.”
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FOLLOW-UP	
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APPROX. AGENDA TIME	min.
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ATTACHMENTS	Proposed Protocols
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Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

FY21 Operating Protocols

voted 9/20/18

As elected members of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee and ambassadors of the District, we are advocates for our schools and supporters of public education. We pledge to conduct our business in a professional, respectful, thoughtful and efficient manner, and commit to the following protocols in our work with the Superintendent, the Staff/Administration and the general public. We will:

Support the educational welfare and well-being of ALL students in a positive district climate and culture

- Work collaboratively to support the adopted vision and mission of the School District.
- Create policies, develop budgets and ensure administrative accountability to sustain continuous improvement in teaching and learning.
- Support the Superintendent and staff and hold them accountable for their implementation of policies and operations that are inclusive and equitable.
- Prioritize student needs and interests above all else in the decisions we make.
- Work from a unified vision which defines success and accountability for the Committee, Superintendent, staff and students.
- Commit to the work of being an actively anti-racist community

Demonstrate professional and collegial relations at all times

- Empower School Committee members to freely express their opinions, concerns and ideas in a climate of trust and mutual respect, even in times of disagreement.
- Be aware of our own unconscious biases, and actively work to value the diversity of lived perspectives that make up our communities.
- Base our decisions on available facts, vote our convictions, and strive to take anti-racist actions avoid bias.
- Once a decision is made, all members will uphold and support the Committee's decision.
- Recognize that authority rests only with majority decisions of the Committee and make no independent commitments or take any independent actions that may compromise the Committee as a whole.
- Debate respectfully, effectively and efficiently so that meeting time is used wisely, being mindful of our large committee.

Dedicate ourselves to establishing and maintaining effective communication

- Channel requests for information, reports and data through the Superintendent and the Chair rather than directly to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member has equal access to this information in a timely manner and that information will be shared to the extent possible.
- Welcome respectful, thoughtful input from the public and the School Committee in shaping Committee decisions.

At ABRSD, our mission is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS EQUITY ENGAGEMENT



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

FY21 Operating Protocols

voted 9/20/18

- While our meetings are open to the public, and we invite and encourage all citizens to join us, they are not public meetings. Public participation is subject to MA General Law Chapter 30A Section 20g and our School Committee policy BEDH.
- Address questions and concerns in the most efficient manner, by directing parent/guardians to the appropriate person within the district chain of communication via the Parent Communication Map found on abschools.org.
- Communicate questions/concerns as soon as possible, ideally before a meeting.
- Refrain from addressing issues that have not been previously brought to the attention of the Chair and/or Superintendent, except in emergency situations.
- Strive to make our meetings as efficient as possible:
 - Add meetings to address topics requiring lengthy discussion.
 - Recognize that discussion on certain issues may be delayed.
 - Limit the number of agenda items in order to keep meetings to a reasonable time frame.
 - Discourage use of meeting packet addendum items.
 - Come to meetings prepared by reviewing materials thoroughly ahead of the meeting.

All members are familiar with the Committee's Policy Section B: *School Board Governance and Operations* (posted on abschools.org) and agree to follow the policies and encourage fellow members to do the same.

Evelyn Abayaah-Issah

Diane Baum

Kyra Cook

Adam Klein

Ginny Kremer

Amy Krishnamurthy

Tessa McKinley, Chairperson

John Petersen

Nora Shine

Angie Tso

Yebin Wang

Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools

At ABRSD, our mission is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS EQUITY ENGAGEMENT



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.g.i
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Subcommittee and Member Reports		
PRESENTER(S)	various		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Customary updates from the Subcommittees, ALG, BLF and EDCO if they have met since the last School Committee meeting		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	5 min.
ATTACHMENTS	none

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.g.ii
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	Statement of Warrants and Recommendation to Approve		
PRESENTER(S)	Tessa McKinley		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	Warrants are the listing of all payments made by the school district for the period, including payroll, vendors and others. The School Committee approves these at every meeting.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
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X	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
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If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	See motion in memo in the packet from D. Verdolino
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	2 min
ATTACHMENTS	Summary memo from D. Verdolino in the addendum and posted folder of individual warrants

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

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

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

January 21, 2021

To: School Committee Chair
From: Dave Verdolino /dav/
Re: School Committee Agenda - Warrants

Members –

Below please find a summary of warrants for which I am respectfully requesting your consideration and approval at tonight's regular meeting.

The Warrant Subcommittee has previously reviewed these warrants, for the purpose of check distribution. A majority of the Subcommittee conveyed their approval electronically and the related disbursements have been made. The full School Committee should vote its authorization of these expenditures of budgeted and other funds in its custody. All members have received for each warrant the information provided as shown below, namely:

1. (for vendor warrants, including payroll withholding remittances)
 - Declining balance register of payments ("Declining Dollar report")
 - Warrant detail (payments by vendor)
2. (payroll)
 - Payroll Warrant summary

As you know, these Warrants are customarily provided to you in hard copy format for your review and manual signature. Obtaining your approval in this manner will eliminate the future need to produce what could be many paper reports, all requiring your signatures.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation with this request.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

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

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

<u>Warrant Type</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Warrant #</u>	<u>Amount</u>
PAYROLL	01/14/2021	P2115	\$ 2,754,830.97
VENDOR	01/07/2021	21-014	\$ 573,951.88
	01/14/2021	21-015PR	\$ 556,154.17

Recommended Motion Wording

I move that the School Committee vote to approve:

Payroll warrant(s) as follows –

Number P2115 dated 1/14/2021 in the amount of \$2,754,830.97;

Payroll deduction warrant(s) as follows –

Number 21-015PR dated 1/14/2021 in the amount of \$ 556,154.17;

Vendor warrant(s) as follows –

Number 21-014 dated 1/7/2021 in the amount of \$ 573,951.88.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Meeting Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE	1-21-21	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	3.h
AGENDA ITEM TITLE	For Your Information (FYI)		
PRESENTER(S)	The Chairperson and/or Superintendent may highlight individual items		
SUMMARY OF TOPIC	A variety of items may be found in the FYI: announcements, awards, publicity, reference materials, etc. that do not need discussion.		

WHAT ACTION (if any) DO YOU WISH SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO TAKE?	
X	No action requested - this is a short update or presentation of information
	Request input and questions from the School Committee, but no vote required
	Request formal action with a specific vote:
	If formal action is requested, is this item being presented:
	for the first time, with a request that the School Committee vote at a subsequent meeting OR
	with the request that the School Committee take action immediately

If formal action is requested, include a suggested motion or contact Beth Petr.

SUGGESTED MOTION	
FOLLOW-UP	
APPROX. TIME FOR THE AGENDA ITEM (MIN.)	
ATTACHMENTS	various

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

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

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

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District – FY2022 Budget Development Schedule

Based on Boxborough's Town Meeting (scheduled on May 10) being the earlier of the two towns.
voted 11/19/2020

11/19/20	<u>School Committee:</u>	Budget schedule adopted (SC vote) (Guidelines were approved at November 5 meeting)
11/20/20		FY2022 budget workbooks, forms and instructions transmitted to administrators Administrators prepare FY22 budget requests (personnel; non-personnel; capital)
12/03/20	<u>School Committee:</u>	(TBD whether any FY22 budget-related agenda)
12/17/20	<u>School Committee:</u> (last year 11/05)	Enrollment and class size update; Full-day K update Federal relief program grant update (grants expire Dec. 30)
12/18/20		Completed Budget Request Forms submitted to Finance
Thereafter:		> Input department budget requests (Munis); review with CO administrators > Staffing and salary budget review/update & updated enrollment projections > Capital Committee review CIP status and any recommendations
1/07/21	<u>School Committee:</u>	FY2021 CIP update; Full-day K decision (SC vote)
1/21/21 (added meeting)	<u>School Committee:</u> (last year 12/05)	Budget Presentation #1 ("Supt. Preliminary Budget") Preliminary Assessment projection
Wednesday, 1/27/21		Expected release of Governor's proposed FY22 Budget; Cherry Sheet estimates
2/04/21	<u>School Committee:</u> (last year 1/09)	Budget Presentation #2 ("Supt. Recommended Budget") Line item detail and projected Assessment update
2/11/21	<u>School Committee:</u> (last year 1/25)	PRELIMINARY BUDGET VOTE (20 days before final budget vote)
Friday, 2/26/21		Budget Binders Distributed (last year 1/17)
Thursday, 3/04/21	<u>School Committee:</u> (last year Saturday, 1/25)	(in lieu of traditional Budget Saturday) Comprehensive budget and program presentation
3/11/21 or 3/18/21	<u>School Committee:</u>	Budget Public Hearing (last year 2/06) Superintendent's Final Budget Recommendation (last year 2/06) FINAL BUDGET VOTE (45 days before earlier T/M) (last year 2/13)

TOWN OF ACTON 2021 ANNUAL ELECTION CALENDAR

Annual Town Election is Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Annual Town Meeting is TBD

Last day to obtain nomination papers February 5, 2021

Last day to file nomination papers with Board of Registrars February 9, 2021

Last day to object / withdraw February 25, 2021

Last day to register voters March 10, 2020

Last day to post town warrant March 16, 2020

TOWN OFFICIALS TO BE ELECTED IN 2021 - TERM OF OFFICE

Moderator

1 Member – 1 year term

Acton Board of Selectmen

1 Member - 3 year term

School Committee

2 Members - 3 year term

Trustees Memorial Library

1 Member - 3 year term

Acton Housing Authority

1 Member – 5 year term

1 member – 4 year term (unexpired term due to resignation)

Water Supply District of Acton

1 Water District Moderator - 3 years

1 Water District Commissioner – 3 year term

TRUSTEES - TO BE ELECTED AT ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MUST BE NOMINATED AT TOWN MEETING

Temporary Moderator

1 Member - 1 year term

Trustees, West Acton Citizen's Library

1 Member – 3 year term

Trustees, Charlotte Goodnow Fund

1 Member – 3 year term

Trustees, Elizabeth White Fund

1 Member– 3 year term

Trustees, New Fireman's Relief Fund Acton

1 Member- 3 year term



BOXBOROUGH TOWN CLERK

29 Middle Road, Boxborough, Massachusetts 01719

Phone: (978) 264-1727 • Fax: (978) 264-3127

emarkiewicz@boxborough-ma.gov

ELECTION CALENDAR 2021

Annual Town Meeting: Monday, May 10

Annual Town Election: Tuesday, May 18

Monday, January 11: Nomination papers for elected town offices available from town clerk's office. Offices to be on the 2021 town ballot are as follows:

Moderator, one-year term: 1 seat

Selectman, three-year term: 2 seats

School Committee, three-year term: 1 seat

Planning Board, three-year term: 1 seat

Library Trustees, three-year term: 2 seats

Board of Health, three-year term: 1 seat

Constable, three-year term: 1 seat

Tuesday, March 30: Last day to file nomination papers with the Board of Registers/Town Clerk in order to be on the ballot for the May 18 Town Election. Papers are due in the Town Clerk's office by 5:00PM. A minimum of 28 signatures is required.

Thursday, April 15: Last day to withdraw name from nomination for town office.

Tuesday, April 20: Last day to register to vote for Annual Town Meeting and the Town Election. The Town Clerk's office will be open from 9:00AM-Noon on that day. Voter registration will continue at the Boxborough Police Station, 520 Mass. Ave., from Noon-8:00PM. Residents can also [register online](#) until midnight.

Monday, May 10: Annual Town Meeting begins at 7:00PM. Location TBD

Tuesday, May 22: Annual Town Election, Boxborough Town Hall, 29 Middle Road. Polls will be open from 7:00AM-8:00PM.

Candidate's Check List: Running for Town Office

Elected Offices include: Board of Selectmen, Board of Health, Library Trustees, Planning Board, School Committee, Town Moderator, Town Clerk and Constable.

How to Get on the Ballot:

1. Be certain you are a registered voter in Boxborough.
2. Obtain Nomination Papers from the town clerk's office at Boxborough Town Hall.
 - must obtain nomination papers in person
 - verify with clerk the number of signatures required to get on ballot
 - verify submission deadline for completed nomination papers
3. Fill in the top portion of all nomination papers with your name, address, office sought, etc., BEFORE circulating for signatures.
4. Be sure to sign the written acceptance line on at least one nomination paper.
5. Only voters registered in Boxborough are eligible to sign nomination papers.
6. Voters must sign their name and fill in the address where they are registered to vote.
7. Don't miss the deadline date and time for submitting nomination papers to the clerk for certification. The deadlines are shown on each nomination paper. Papers must be physically received and stamped as such by the clerk by the deadline.
8. Submit more than the minimum number of required signatures!

Campaign Finance Law Requirements:

1. Talk to clerk as soon as you decide to run about Campaign Finance Law requirements, appropriate forms and deadlines.
2. Obtain a copy of the campaign guide for municipal office candidates. This is available from the clerk or online from the Office of Campaign & Political Finance at http://files.ocpf.us/pdf/guides/muni_candidate_2012.pdf

For more information on town government and running for office, please contact Liz Markiewicz, the Town Clerk, at 978-264-1727 or emarkiewicz@boxborough-ma.gov.



WORRIED ABOUT A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE?

**YOU NEVER KNOW
WHEN YOU MAY BE
CALLED UPON TO
HELP.**

**PLEASE JOIN US IN
SAYING YES TO
SAVING A LIFE.**

Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)
teaches three simple steps anyone can
learn to help save a life.

As a QPR-trained Gatekeeper you will learn to:

- Recognize the warning signs of suicide
- Know how to offer hope
- Know how to get help and save a life



We are unable to record QPR training sessions.
To sign up for one of the QPR sessions listed below,
scan the QR code or click here: bit.ly/ABQPR.



ONLINE Training Dates and Times:

- Wednesday, December 9, 2020.....7:00pm-9:00pm
- Tuesday, January 5, 2021.....7:00pm-9:00pm
- Wednesday, February 24, 2021.....1:00pm-3:00pm
- Thursday, March 25, 2021.....7:00pm-9:00pm
- Monday, April 26, 2021.....10:00am-12:00pm
- Wednesday, June 2, 2021.....7:00pm-9:00pm

**AB CARES IS A COMMUNITY-BASED COLLABORATIVE EFFORT THAT SEEKS TO PREVENT
SUICIDE ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN AND SUPPORT ALL WHO ARE IMPACTED BY SUICIDE.**

Actual Acton-Boxborough Grade K-6

Remote Grades	Blanchard	Conant	Douglas	Gates	McCarthy-Towne	Merriam	Total RLP	Total Sections	Avg. Size
K									
Gr. K	14	20	10	15	16	18	93	4	23.3
Gr. 1	15	26	10	20	22	8	101	4	25.3
Gr. 2	33	30	9	17	14	15	118	5	23.6
Gr. 3	23	34	11	21	26	19	134	5	26.8
Gr. 4	19	24	12	24	13	11	103	4	25.8
Gr. 5	21	23	15	38	20	22	139	5	27.8
Gr. 6	12	18	9	36	17	14	106	4	26.5
Total RLP	137	175	76	171	128	107	794	31	25.6
Total Elementar	491	400	378	372	481	436	2558		

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS 2020-2021

Levels	Sept. 1				Oct. 1				Nov. 1				Dec. 1				Jan. 1				Feb. 1							
	A	B	C	Tot	A	B	C	Tot	A	B	C	Tot	A	B	C	Tot	A	B	C	Tot	A	B	C	Tot				
* Preschool services	11	4	0	15	11	4	0	15	11	3	0	14	11	3	0	14	12	4	0	16								
Pre-school	55	15	3	73	55	15	3	73	55	14	3	72	56	15	3	74	57	16	3	76								
Preschool Total	55	15	3	73	55	15	3	73	55	14	3	72	56	15	3	74	57	16	3	76								
K	223	55	8	286	223	55	8	286	224	56	8	288	223	56	8	287	222	56	8	286								
1	267	51	3	321	267	51	3	321	267	51	3	321	268	51	3	322	270	51	3	324								
2	294	65	6	365	294	65	6	365	295	64	6	365	294	64	6	364	295	65	6	366								
3	299	70	3	372	299	70	3	372	298	71	3	372	301	72	3	376	303	72	3	378								
4	337	61	6	404	337	61	6	404	337	60	6	403	337	60	6	403	337	59	6	402								
5	314	69	6	389	314	70	6	390	313	71	6	390	312	71	6	389	311	72	6	389								
6	343	66	6	415	342	66	6	414	340	65	6	411	342	65	6	413	342	65	6	413								
Elem Sub Total	2077	437	38	2552	2076	438	38	2552	2074	438	38	2550	2077	439	38	2554	2080	440	38	2558								
OOD Pre k-6	14	3	0	17	14	3	0	17	15	3	0	18	12	1	0	13	12	1	0	13								
Elem. Total	2091	440	38	2569	2090	441	38	2569	2089	441	38	2568	2089	440	38	2567	2092	441	38	2571								
7	352	50	6	408	353	50	7	410	353	50	7	410	354	51	7	412	355	51	7	413								
8	355	57	9	421	354	58	9	421	354	58	9	421	353	58	9	420	353	58	9	420								
J.H.S. Total	707	107	15	829	707	108	16	831	707	108	16	831	707	109	16	832	708	109	16	833								
9	332	62	12	406	332	62	12	406	332	62	12	406	332	62	12	406	333	61	12	406								
10	391	67	7	465	391	67	7	465	390	67	7	464	392	68	7	467	389	69	7	465								
11	381	65	4	450	381	65	4	450	382	65	4	451	382	65	4	451	382	65	4	451								
12	348	75	3	426	348	75	3	426	349	75	3	427	348	76	3	427	348	76	3	427								
13	3	1	0	4	3	1	0	4	3	1	0	4	3	1	0	4	3	1	0	4								
P.G.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0								
H.S. Total Secondary Total	1455	270	26	1751	1455	270	26	1751	1456	270	26	1752	1457	272	26	1755	1455	272	26	1753								
OOD 7-13	59	13	0	72	59	13	0	72	60	13	0	73	58	13	0	71	62	12	0	74								
Reg. Total	2221	390	41	2652	2221	391	42	2654	2223	391	42	2656	2222	394	42	2658	2225	393	42	2660								
Preschool Total	55	15	3	73	55	15	3	73	55	14	3	72	56	15	3	74	57	16	3	76								
Elem Total Secondary Total	2091	440	38	2569	2090	441	38	2569	2089	441	38	2568	2089	440	38	2567	2092	441	38	2571								
Grand Total	4367	845	82	5294	4366	847	83	5296	4367	846	83	5296	4367	849	83	5299	4374	850	83	5307								

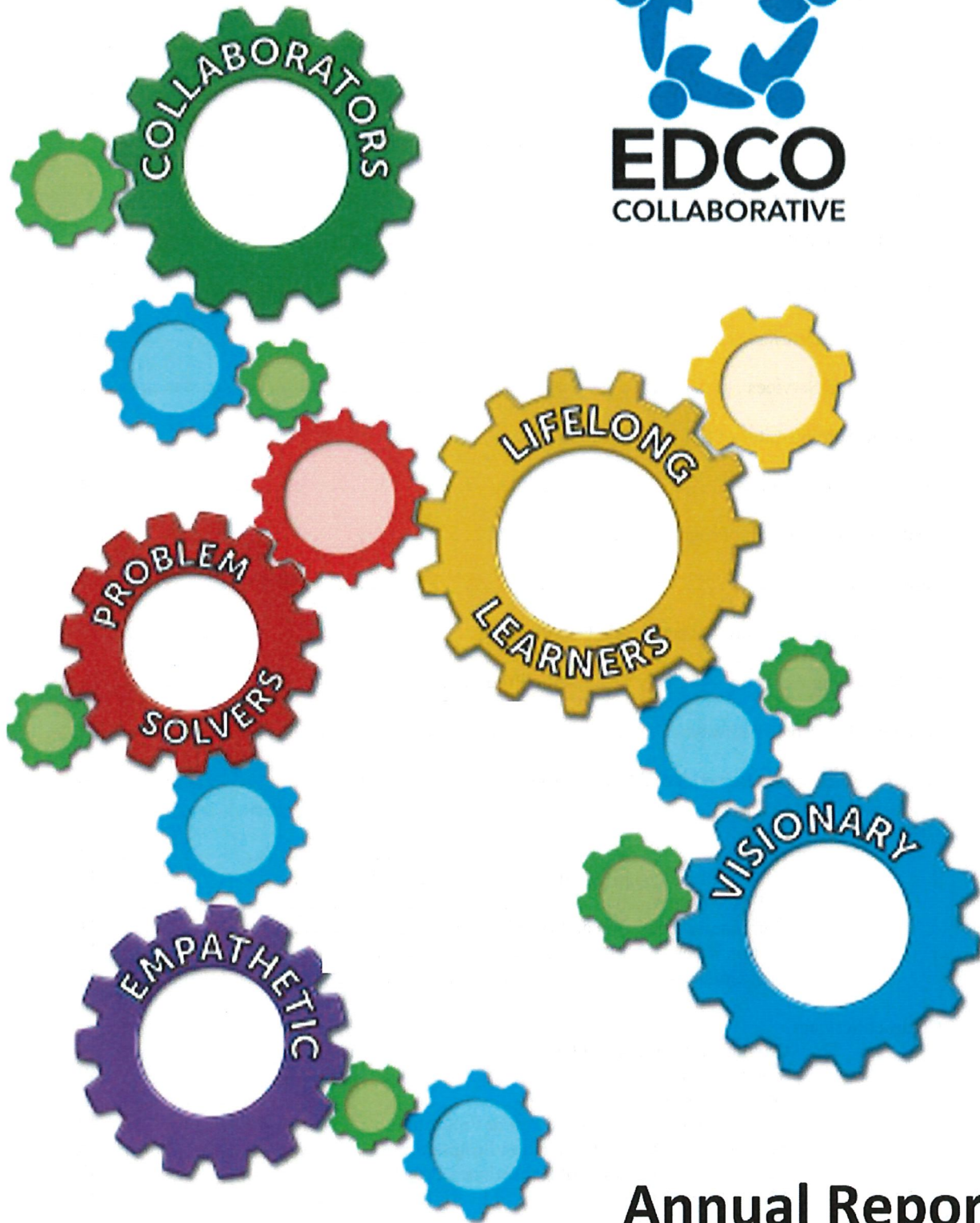
* Preschool Preschool Student Services: Speech, OT, PT only not included in Totals

A = ACTON	Pre-School	In D. = In Distri Distribution:	P. Light	D. Verdolino	All Principals (2)
B = BOXBOROUGH	P.G. = Post Graduates		M. Altieri	A. Bisewicz	
C = Choice/Staff/Tuitic Ungr. = Ungraded			D. Bookis	K. Nelson	
			D. Bentley	J. Nichols/J. LaShombe	
				S. Cunningham	

Students other than Choice counted under column C:
 Staff Students -
 Tuition In Students -

REV: 1.1.2021

*This document is
posted separately.*



Annual Report 2019-2020

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*This document is
posted separately.*

EDCO Collaborative

Financial Statements

**For the Year Ended
June 30, 2020**

EDCO Collaborative
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(see additional pages)