

**JOINT  
ACTON/ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

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Library  
RJ Grey Junior High School

September 6, 2007  
7:30 pm

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*Members Present:* Bruce Sabot, Jonathan Chinitz, Michael Coppolino, Brigid Bieber, Heather Harer, Xuan Kong, Sharon McManus, Rebecca Neville, John Ryder  
*Also Present:* William Ryan, Susan Horn, Marie Altieri, Sharon Summers, citizens and press

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The joint meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Bruce Sabot and Jonathan Chinitz, respective Committee chairs.

**CHAIRPERSONS' INTRODUCTION**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The joint meeting minutes of July 11 & 12, 2007 were approved as read.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**1. Massachusetts Association of School Committees' (MASC) Membership**

- Bruce Sabot reported that Boxborough will not join MASC this year. The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District has joined.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. FY'09 Budget Schedule**

- Bill Ryan referred to a draft of the FY'09 budget timeline/schedule. He noted that the schedule has been moved up about a month (starting in October vs. November). He asked the Committee to review. He noted that David Tobin will make a presentation at the November 1 School Committee meeting to discuss new financial regulations - alternative assessment methodology. Jonathan Chinitz suggested adding a line item about transmitting draft budgets to the Finance Committee. The Superintendent will add this to the December schedule.

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

- Bill Ryan referred to several items.
- Susan Horn told the Committee about her selection as a participant in the China Exchange Initiative program this year. The exchange begins in October with someone from China visiting here, and then Sue will return the visit to China in April.
- Jonathan Chinitz commented on the excellent Pupil Services newsletter, **OnTeam**, and asked if it is available on the district website. He said it would answer a lot of questions for parents.
- Referring to the S&Ps Town of Acton credit rating, John Ryder noted that our bond rating is very good - AA+.
- Bill Ryan read a note from George Blakeslee, stating that he is resigning from his longtime role as chair of CTAC. He and his wife will be moving to Vermont. Bill thanked George for all his contributions to this committee. The School Committee will write a note of appreciation. Michael Coppolino, who served on CTAC with George, also recognized his excellent leadership.
- Marie Altieri gave an update on enrollment numbers, noting that these are first-day figures and

will change. ABRHS has about 2000 students, and the JH about 970. APS has about 2534 students, total. She noted that grades 3 and 4 have especially large class sizes and are above SC guidelines. However, Kindergarten numbers are 15 below the projection. We placed a larger number than usual over the summer -135 students. All but five students are in their first choice school.

Jonathan Chinitz felt we should do something to help the large 3 & 4th grade classes, and we need to plan for that roll forward in the budget.

John Peterson, citizen, commented on continued pressure on schools, and said we need to publicize the pressures, not just the successes. We need to revise the class size guidelines or change our operating strategy. Bill Ryan noted that we have highest class sizes of any communities around us.

- Marie Altieri reported that, this year, we will work together with Blanchard to place subs.

### **ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE**

- Committee assignments for the year were made.
- Two Acton Public School warrants were signed.

At 8:10 pm, the Joint Committee meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah T. Lawton,  
Secretary