



Joint Meeting
of the
Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional
School Committees

September 6, 2007

7:30 p.m.

R.J. Grey Junior High Library

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

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 6, 2007
7:30 pm

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 11 and 12, 2007

- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- IV. OLD BUSINESS
 1. MASC Membership – Possible Boxborough Membership

- V. NEW BUSINESS
 1. FY'09 Budget Schedule – DRAFT – *(will be brought to meeting)*

- VI. FOR YOUR INFORMATION
 1. **OnTeam** – September issue
 2. FY'08 Grant Allocations
 3. Letter from District Attorney's Office re: Open Meeting Law
 4. Letter from China Exchange Initiative – Susan Horn selected to participate.

- VII. ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE
 1. Review School Committee Goals and Committee Assignments for 2007-08
 2. Cable Committee Meeting, Sept. 17, 7 pm, Acton Town Hall

- VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Joint School Committee Workshop Minutes

July 11, 2007, 6:00 pm
Sargent Library in Boxborough

Members: Brigid Bieber, Jonathan Chinitz, Michael Coppolino, Heather Harer, Xuan Kong,
Sharon Smith McManus, Rebecca Neville, John Ryder, Bruce Sabot
Also: Marie Altieri, Susan Horn, Liza Huber, Bill Ryan, Bart Wendell

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm by the respective Committee chairs.

1) **External Budget Process**

The Committees discussed the budgeting processes in Acton and Boxborough, and how the ALG and BLF fit into the regional and local schools' budgeting processes. The consensus was that ALG reps will bring school revenue projections to School Committee(s) before bringing them to ALG.

2) **Internal Budget Process**

The Committees reviewed past school budget timelines and discussed ideas for improving the process. Suggestions for change:

- Add separate budget presentation in November where School Committee members will hear resource needs and educational outcomes from the principals and department heads.
- Provide written budget materials to School Committee members and FinComs in December.
- January budget workshop is with FinComs and public.

3) **Discussion of '07 -'08 Goals and Objectives**

Four "buckets" were set up as goal categories.

Bucket #4 – Items to be discussed by the Committee as a whole (not in priority order)

- K-12 Technology
- Capital Plan
- Demographic (Information)

Bucket #3 – Items to be discussed by Subcommittees (action assumed) (not in priority order)

- SPED Financial Task Force
- 990 Mandate
- Legislative (Health Insurance – GIC; Chapter 70)
- Salary Compensation Study (with FinComs)
- Support working families - All-Day Kindergarten/Extended Day/Late Bus

Bucket #2 – Items for study committee (no commitment to action) (not in priority order)

- Gender Learning

Bucket #1 – Reality check

- Strengthen communication

August School Committee agenda items:

- Review goals and assign members
- Review 2005 Summer Workshop Outcomes (agenda management, etc.)

4) **Executive Session Meeting Minutes Protocol**

Committee is comfortable; review minutes for release annually in March.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Altieri

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

Library
RJ Grey Junior High School

July 12, 2007
7:45 pm

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

The joint meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by Bruce Sabot and Jonathan Chinitz, respective Committee chairs.

CHAIRPERSONS' INTRODUCTION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The joint minutes of June 7 and 21, 2007 were approved as read.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. ALG Discussion

- Discussion continued regarding feedback to Jonathan Chinitz's presentation at the Acton meeting and the proposal to take to ALG. Sharon McManus noted that last year's budgeting process before Town Meeting was difficult. She was concerned going forward that whatever we bring to ALG should not destroy the culture of ALG, that we are all in this together. Xuan Kong asked if our reserves could take care of blow-outs. Jonathan explained how E&D at the region works, and how Free Cash at the Town works as reserves. Bill Ryan said the region is in good shape in reserves.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Report of Leadership Conference

- Bill Ryan reported that it was a very successful conference, which focused on Promoting Safe Schools. Richard Cole, former Asst Attorney General, led the conference. Bart Wendell also did an excellent job as facilitator. Susan Horn reported that the staff Professional Day on November 6 will include a K-12 morning workshop dealing with follow-up on these issues.

2. Report of Joint School Committee Workshop

- Bruce Sabot gave a summary report on the topics discussed. The budgeting process in Acton and Boxborough was the main topic. Also discussed were the School Committees' budgeting process and timeline, and goals for next year. In August, subcommittee assignments will be made. Also discussed was Exec. Session meetings protocol.

ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE

1. Report of SPED Financial Task Force

Xuan Kong reported that SPED Financial Task Force has met three times. He summarized meeting discussions. Liza Huber attended one meeting and gave the members information about SPED State

and Federal requirements. The TF would like input for all citizens, School Committee, staff. Topics to address: better understanding of cost drivers, better model to project SPED requirements, cost effective ways to deliver transportation, etc. They hope to survey peer schools to get best practices. They desire to find an advocacy role to modify certain ways of state reimbursement. Bill Ryan suggested inviting Gerry Mazor or Ed Orenstein, former CASE Collaborative directors, to attend a meeting. Jay Sullivan from DOE is knowledgeable about circuit breaker and transportation.

2. MASC Membership

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of joining MASC this year. Becky Neville said Boxborough does not have the money to join.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

**VOTED: That the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee would join
MASC for 2007-08.**

Boxborough will decide in August what they want to do.

At 9:00 pm, the Joint Committee meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah T. Lawton,
Secretary

OnTeam

September, 2007

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am very pleased to welcome you to the 2007-2008 school year. Enclosed please find the following documents: a Directory Sheet (blue), specific information pertaining to FERPA (lime green), and specific information pertaining to Independent Educator Evaluations (teal green). We have made it easy for you should you want to detach any of the information for your resource files (and or the refrigerator!).

At this time, I'd like to extend a special welcome to Matthew Kidder, our new Out-of-District Coordinator. In addition to a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Connecticut, Matt also has a Master's Degree in Special Education. With his many years of teaching and administrative experience in both public and private education, Matt is already proving himself to be an engaged, supportive and responsive educational leader. I know you will enjoy getting to know him better.

Looking Forward.....

Regarding the OnTeam Parent/Guardian Survey issued in May 2007, we are extremely pleased to share that there was a 47% response to our survey. This certainly speaks to the legitimacy of the survey as well as the level of parent/guardian involvement in our community. As we are all aware, input from our teachers, specialists and clinicians, as well as from parents, influence future planning. As a preliminary observation, results confirm the excellent services provided within the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Schools. Our mission will be to sustain this level of excellence and continue to move to a higher level. A summary report will be shared in the October edition of OnTeam which will include general themes and conclusions and how they influenced my Action Plan for 2007-2008. A more detailed report will be available on line.

Welcome Back....

Being the instructional leader of a school brings daily challenges with complex responsibilities and an emphasis on solving problems quickly, but effectively; clearly, but compassionately. Success is maximized by good planning and preparation. Nothing is more important than calming emotional waters, resolving conflicts, and plotting a successful course for a student's progress and growth.

Being the parent of a child with disabilities is, in many ways, the same. Equally challenging; equally complex. I view my commitment to administration - a commitment to listening, learning and leading - as a lifestyle choice, not a job. As parents and guardians, we share this mutual commitment.

In this journey, we have many things in common. As parents and as educators, we improve our ability to serve our children - to be effective advocates - with accurate information. As such, throughout the year, I am planning to address a range of topics pertaining to educational law and regulations pertaining to children with special needs. This month, I'm giving special attention to the issue of student records, covering the rights of students and parents/guardians.

My very best wishes for a wonderful year.

Pupil Services

Directory Information

I am tremendously proud to be working with a leadership team who is committed to offering the finest education services and am sharing a list of the Pupil Services Chairpersons and Coordinators with their areas of responsibility.

Out-of-District Coordinator
Matthew Kidder

264-4700, extension 3266

Coordinator of Early Childhood Services and
Elementary Out-of-District
Carol Huebner

264-2700, extension 3268

Coordinator of Pupil Services – Grade K-6
Lynn Mulrooney

264-4700, extension 3268

Coordinator of Pupil Services – Grade 7-12
Mary Emmons

264-4700, extension 3266

Chairperson of Counseling and Psychological Services – Grade K-6
Ginny Conway

264-4700, extension 3762

Chairperson of Counseling and Psychological Services – Grade 7-12
Stephen Hitzrot

264-4700, extension 3430

Chairperson of Nursing Services – Grade K-6
Jenny Gormley

264-4700, extension 2058

Chairperson of Nursing Services – Grade 7-12
Diana McNicholas

264-4700, extension 3418

FERPA

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

While the law is full of acronyms, our focus for this month is on FERPA, which stands for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. FERPA was originally enacted as a species of civil rights legislation, and is a federal statute designed to protect the rights of students and their parents. In Massachusetts, we also adhere to statutes and state regulations on this same topic. As such, the federal law must be considered in tandem with state law, as well as local law and policy.

The challenge is to read the laws together in a way that makes sense.

In general, the Massachusetts regulations are more protective of students' rights than the federal regulations. So, you will find that the district's response is generally more conservative when interpreting the law in specific situations.

Together, FERPA and the Massachusetts regulations, when read together, provide parents and eligible students (those who have reached the age of 14 or who have entered the ninth grade) certain rights with respect to the student's educational record. These include:

1. The **right to access** the student's education record by submitting their request to the building principal.
2. The **right to request** an amendment of the record, again, by directing a request to the building principal.
3. The **right to consent** to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the records.

The student record includes:

- Health records
- Special education records
- The Cumulative record (the student record that follows a child throughout his/her school career)

The following people have access to the student record without obtaining written consent:

- Parents and/or legal guardians
- School personnel who have a legitimate educational interest (need to know) in reviewing the record to "fulfill their professional responsibilities"
- Student, age 14, or in the 9th grade
- Office staff who maintain the record

Within the “student record”, the school committee designates what selected student records are considered “directory information”. This is information not generally considered harmful if released.

For elementary students, the following has been designated as directory information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date of birth
- Grade
- Classroom Assignment

For middle and high school students, the following is designated as directory information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date of birth
- Graduating class
- Team/class assignment
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Honors and awards

Important exceptions to be aware of:

We can now disclose certain designated directory information **without parent/guardian consent** (outlined above). The rationale is to help schools facilitate a connection to an outside organization, e.g. a class ring manufacturer, a yearbook publisher, fund raising for the Parent Teacher School Organization (PTSO), military recruiters, college planning, etc.

We can also disclose the complete student record to another school, **without parent/guardian consent**, as long as the student is seeking or intending to enroll in this other school, and is currently in attendance in Acton or Acton-Boxborough.

In other words, if one of the district’s schools receives a request from another school for a child’s student record after the student has already left our school, then Acton cannot forward the record without obtaining parent/guardian consent at our end.

A school official within Acton-Boxborough who has a legitimate interest in reviewing a child’s record may do so, **without parent/guardian consent**, if the official needs to review the record to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.

Additional Information:

Since 1998, Massachusetts law has had a detailed process regulating the access a parent without physical custody of his/her children (“non-custodial parent”) has to his/her child’s student records. Until recently (2006), non-custodial parents have had the burden of producing documents showing that there are no court documents rendering them ineligible for access to their children’s student records. After receiving a complaint from a Massachusetts non-custodial parent, the federal government informed the Massachusetts

Department of Education that Massachusetts law conflicted with the access rights given to parents under FERPA. The Massachusetts legislature amended the state statute addressing a non-custodial parent's access to student records (MGL ch. 71, section 34H) so that now the burden is on the custodial parent to produce any documents showing that the non-custodial parent is not entitled to access to their child's student records. The process now works as follows:

1. The non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the records to the principal.
2. The school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that the non-custodial parent has requested the records and that the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the records after 21 days unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access (based on factors set forth in Massachusetts statute and regulations).
3. If the custodial parent does not produce any documentation showing the parent is ineligible to access the records, the school provides the requested records. The school, however, must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either the work or home locations of the custodial parent from the student records and must mark the records to indicate that they must not be used to enroll the student in another school.
4. If the school subsequently receives a court order prohibiting the distribution of the student record information, the school must notify the non-custodial parent that it must stop providing access.

Questions and Answers:

In a divorce situation, how am I to understand the difference between physical and legal custody?

Massachusetts law focuses only on physical custody and who gets it. In most instances, both parents are granted legal custody. It is rare in Massachusetts to have joint physical custody. What is typically ordered is that one parent has physical custody and the other parent has visitation rights. So - you have one custodial parent and one non-custodial parent.

If I am holding a divorce agreement that stipulates JOINT physical and JOINT legal custody – an even sharing of responsibility – are both parents entitled to everything?

Yes. While this is atypical for Massachusetts, it does happen. In this case, you do not have a custodial/non-custodial parent and both parents have equal entitlements when it comes to the child.

Let's say I know who the custodial parent is and I know who the non-custodial parent is. I also know they are both entitled to the record. Does the school have an affirmative duty to send "everything" from the school to both parents?

No, there is no affirmative duty to send "everything" from the school. However, the school district must meet Ch.71, Section 34H requirements **if requested in writing by the non-custodial parent.** 34H requirements are: report cards and progress reports, the results of intelligence and achievement tests, notification that a child requires a special education assessment, notification of enrollment in an ELL program, notification of absences, illnesses,

detentions, suspensions, expulsions, and notification of withdrawal from school. 34H also speaks to the school district making “reasonable efforts” to share information.

If it hasn’t been requested, does the school have an affirmative duty to initiate the sharing of information with the non-custodial parent?

No, but it is the right thing to do. Supporting divorced parents in remaining involved with their children is best for children and adolescents.

When the non-custodial parent requests the record, does the school district simply release it?

No. We still send a letter to the **custodial** parent letting him/her know that the record will be released after 21 days unless the custodial parent produces information that would restrict access. We also send a letter to the non-custodial parent to inform him/her of the process. Please note that the request from the non-custodial parent should be in writing.

If we don’t hear from the custodial parent, does the school have an affirmative duty to release the educational record after the 21 days have passed?

Yes, we are obligated to provide the requested student records and we need to make sure we do so immediately following the 21 day period. Tracking days becomes important.

What’s included in the educational record?

The educational record includes all information concerning a student that is organized by the student’s name or in a way that the student can be individually identified.

If a representative from another school calls and requests the educational record for a student, is the school allowed to produce it even though they don’t have a signed release from the parent or eligible student?

Yes, as long as the school official has a legitimate reason to request it, i.e, the student is seeking or intending to enroll in their school. As a general rule, however, schools need the written consent of a parent or the eligible student before releasing student record information and it would be more prudent to ask that the receiving school put the request in writing. Acton and Acton-Boxborough strongly prefer and encourage obtaining a parent’s written consent.

However, Massachusetts and federal law allow school staff, upon request, to forward a student’s records to another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll as long as the district has given notice to parents that this is the school district’s practice. Our district has provided the required notice in the school committee’s policy regarding student records and in the annual notice that is sent home to parents.

If a student has already left Acton or Acton-Boxborough and has enrolled in a new school, can the district respond to the new school’s request for records even without a signed release from the parents or eligible student?

No. This exception to the general rule only applies if the student is seeking or intending to enroll in another school. Once the new school enrolls the student, it’s too late to use this exception. You now need a written release to respond to the request.

Outside Agency Forms

Pertaining to Independent Education Evaluations

There have been some questions regarding some Independent Evaluations, and as a result, we have revised our guidelines consistent with the regulations. I thought the following information might be helpful to you as a reference for the future.

While there are parameters the school district must follow, our goal is to provide our parents/guardians with the most accurate and thorough picture of their child's performance and progress in school.

When a parent disagrees with an initial evaluation or re-evaluation done by the school district, the parent may request an independent education evaluation (IEE). At times, outside agencies completing these evaluations will request information from classroom teachers, specialists and clinicians working with your child. It is important to recognize that any document completed by the school becomes part of your child's student record and as such, we are careful when responding.

When submitting your request, please let us know the name, address, phone number, and contact person to whom the completed report will be sent. In order to meet the copyright standards and those of authenticity, we require that any forms submitted for completion are original documents. Photocopied documents cannot be accepted.

You can expect that the outside agency form you have submitted to the school will be completed and sent back to the agency within three weeks of having received your request. A copy will be sent to you and also become part of your child's student record.

We have also initiated a new practice of sending you a letter acknowledging receipt of your request, as well as a release of information. A signed parent/guardian release often facilitates communication between the outside evaluator and the school; clarification and understanding regarding the perspective of both parties is achieved more efficiently. The letter further outlines the district's parameters and a timeline for responding. Most importantly, the letter lets you know who to call for any questions or concerns you may have, including what documents/assessments might best address your child's unique needs.

Please be aware that teachers, specialists and clinicians can only respond objectively to questionnaires and forms within their area of expertise. Thus, certain questions may not be able to be answered by the respective staff. In some cases, the outside agency may request information about attention, organizational skills and/or behavior. Please note that staff, including the counselor and/or the principal, will only rate observable behavior so that all team members (parent, outside agency, and school) will have a clear understanding of your child's educational needs. These are the situations where a signed release allows school staff to speak directly with the independent evaluator and

clarification and understanding regarding the perspectives of both parties is achieved more effectively and efficiently.

As we examine the unique and individual needs of your child, we rely upon the student record and if applicable, the special education record, to fully answer the questions being asked. As such, when answering narrative questions, it is our practice to use the actual documents from the student record, rather than rewording information. It is our experience that materials sent from the school, with written permission from the parent/guardian, usually answer both home and agency questions. Sometimes, asking school staff to complete a Teacher Assessment Form or to write a two to three paragraph report on your child is more useful than simply filling out a form. The school wants to be helpful in using the method that is most comprehensive to assist in educational planning.

Please mail or drop off your written request to whoever is easier for you. That being said, please note that:

- Forms for regular education students route from the classroom teacher to the school counselor, the Counseling Chairperson, and/or the Building Principal.
- Forms for special education students route from the classroom teacher/school counselor/specialist to the Pupil Services Coordinator. Specifically, all forms for special education students must be routed to the Pupil Services Coordinator in the Pupil Services office.
- Please see your Counseling Chairperson, the Pupil Services Coordinator, or the Director of Pupil Services should you have any questions.

Payment for an independent education evaluation is complex. A parent may obtain such an evaluation at private expense at any time when there is a disagreement with the school evaluation, as stated above. However, there are provisions set forth in the 766 regulations for public funding of such evaluations, based upon a sliding fee scale, the type of independent assessments sought, the timetable for both eligibility and completion, the responsibility of the school team to reconvene the TEAM including the parent to consider the new information, and the exceptions to the rule. Because of the complexity of the guidelines for the sliding scale, the Pupil Services Team is more than willing to discuss each parent's needs regarding such a request.

Grant Allocations for FY2008

Entitlement Grants

Grant	AB 2005	AB 2006	2007	AB 2008	APS 2005	APS 2006	2007	APS 2008	2008 <i>Consolidated</i>
Title I S. Horn	63,997	54,397	46,238	49,902	76,644	65,394	60,551	66,968	
Title II A Teacher Quality S. Horn	32,223	31,359	30,391	31,044	38,141	38,594	37,771	38,336	69,380
Title II D Enhanced Educational Technology S. Horn	2,699	1,677	791	939	2,569	2,186	1,129	1,265	2,204
Title IV Safe and Drug Free Schools S. Horn	7,553	6,851	6,828	6,430	7,374	6,838	6,836	6,020	12,450
Title V Innovative Programs S. Horn	4,857	3,268	1,738	1,755	4,695	3,098	1,538	1,545	3,300
240 Special Education Entitlement L. Huber	471,451	498,087	516,642	533,729	483,929	511,892	509,911	518,632	
274 SPED Program Improvement L. Huber	13,891	10,000	24,334	17,207	13,417	10,000	22,150	15,341	
262 Special Education -Early Childhood L. Huber	X	X	X	X	25,182	25,054	25,045	25,045	
632 Academic Support S. Horn/S. Serino	?	6,680	6,500	?	X	X			
TOTAL	596,671	615,319	633,462	641,006 ?	651,951	663,056	664,931	673,152	

+7,544?

+8,212

Competitive Grants

Grant	AB	2005-6	2006-7	AB	2007-8
TELS Technology Enhanced Learning in Science S.Horn	5,000	10/05	10/06	6,500	TBD
CSL Living Democracy S. Horn	11,110	7/05	9/06	7,920	X
Community Service Learning S. Horn	32,500	7/05	X	X	X
United Way S. Horn/S. Serino	20,000	6/05	6/06	18,000	15,000
TOTAL					



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MIDDLESEX DISTRICT ATTORNEY
40 THORNDIKE STREET CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141
WWW.MIDDLESEXDA.COM

ENG. IV. 4

GERARD T. LEONE, JR.
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Tel: 617-679-6500
Fax: 617-225-0871

July 13, 2007

Jonathan Chinitz
Chairperson, Acton Public School Committee
3 Wingate Lane
Acton, Massachusetts 01720

Bruce Sabot
Chairperson, Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee
93 Joseph Road
Boxborough, Massachusetts 01719

Re: Open Meeting Law

Dear Mr. Chinitz and Mr. Sabot:

This office received a complaint from Michael R. Scanlon, dated June 18, 2007, alleging that the Acton Public School Committee ("Committee") and the Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee ("Regional Committee") violated the Open Meeting Law, G. L. c. 39, §§ 23A-24, by failing to follow statutory procedure for convening in executive session. A copy of that complaint is enclosed.

The Open Meeting Law permits a governmental body to convene privately for nine enumerated purposes. G. L. c. 39, § 23B. A proper executive session may convene only after: 1) the Board has first convened in an open session for which notice has been given; 2) a majority of members formally vote to go into closed session; 3) the presiding officer announces the purpose of the closed session; and 4) the presiding officer states whether the Board will reconvene in open session after the executive session. See Ghiglione, 376 Mass. at 73; G. L. c. 39, § 23B. The governmental body must cite the purpose for which it is convening the session to ensure that executive sessions are not used as a subterfuge to retreat from open session meetings. See District Attorney for the Northwestern District v. Board of Selectmen of Sunderland, 11 Mass. App. Ct. 663, 666 (1981).

Under the Open Meeting Law, the District Attorney is vested with the responsibility of investigating this matter. G. L. c. 39, § 23B, ¶ 10. In reviewing open session minutes provided to this office by Mr. Scanlon, the minutes reflect that executive sessions were entered "to discuss

strategies relative to collective bargaining or litigation under Chapter 39, Section 23 B, paragraph 3." See Minutes of 2/1/07, 2/15/07, 3/1/07, 5/3/07, and 5/17/07. It is not clear whether the purpose of the executive sessions were for discussion of litigation, collective bargaining or both. Therefore, in order to assess the merits of the complaint, please provide this office with an explanation of the exact purpose(s) for which the executive sessions were convened.

In addition, please provide this office with any and all information that you believe may be helpful to the resolution of this matter. If you have any questions regarding the complaint, please do not hesitate to contact me at the number below.

Sincerely,



KerryAnne Kilcoyne
Assistant District Attorney
(617) 679-6596

Enclosure

美中校际交流组织
The China Exchange Initiative
140 Brandeis Road
Newton, Massachusetts 02459
Telephone: 617 559 6730; Facsimile: 617 559 6701
Website: <http://www.TheChinaExchangeInitiative.org>

June 12, 2007

Susan Horn, Assistant Superintendent
Acton and Acton-Boxborough School Districts
16 Charter Road
Acton, Massachusetts 01720

Dear Susan Horn:

We are delighted that you have been selected for and will participate in the 2007-2008 U.S.-China Principal Shadowing Project (PSP), which we describe below. You will join ten colleagues from other Massachusetts school systems for an enriching professional development experience. As has been featured in the Boston *Globe* recently, Massachusetts has seen trade with China increase 89% over the last seven years, exports have been up 30% during each of the last three years. The Mass Trade Office has set up a branch in Shanghai to serve Massachusetts interests. At meetings of A.I.M. (The Associated Industries of Massachusetts) business leaders have repeatedly talked about the need to devise China strategies in order for their businesses to survive and grow. It is essential for our students to learn about that part of the world, both for its rich culture and its rapid, modern development, in order to prepare for work in the global economy.

The PSP program involves a two-part commitment:

I. Fall. Visiting Chinese principals will arrive in Boston in the third week of October 2007 for a program of lectures and seminars that we at The China Exchange Initiative will provide prior to the school visits to help them understand the structure of our school systems, education reform, pedagogy, and comparisons of U.S. and China educational systems. This program will make them more effective observers in the schools. At the end of October each of them will shadow a counterpart in a school community, visiting classes, attending meetings, participating in school and community activities, and living in a host family. Before returning to China, our visitors will travel to New York and Washington DC.

II. Spring. The Massachusetts delegation will depart in mid-April 2008 for Beijing for seminars, lectures, and discussions provided by CEAIE (The China Education Association for International Exchange) of the Chinese Ministry of Education. Topics will include schools, education reform, modern development, and international affairs in China. Additionally, you will visit places of historic and cultural interest, including the Great Wall and the Forbidden City. Following those activities, each member of the delegation will visit his/her counterpart's school for five days, shadowing the principal, meeting the faculty and students, and observing classes. (You may want to look closely at how science, math, and English are taught so successfully.) The program will end in Shanghai for return to Boston.

Cost. For the entire trip, travel, accommodations, and meals will be provided, partially funded by the Freeman Foundation. The cost to each participant is \$1500.

We can assure that the trip will be educationally and professionally enriching, as well as personally enjoyable. You will be traveling with other Massachusetts administrators whom you will get to know through a series of orientation and planning sessions throughout the next school year and during the fall 2007 visit from the Chinese administrators.

Sincerely,
Carolyn Henderson
Charlotte Mason
Directors

D R A F T – 7/12/07

Acton/Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committees
2007-2008 Committee Assignments

ALG	Jonathan/Sharon
ACTON LIBRARY FIVE-YR. PLANNING	?
BLF	Becky/Brigid/Bruce
BOS LIAISON	Becky/John
CAFY	
CTAC	
EDCO	
Board	Bill/Sharon
Public Policy	Sharon
New School Comm.	Heather/Xuan
School Comm. Leadership	Sharon
ELECTRONIC FUNDRAISING	Brigid
ELECTRONIC INFORMATION ACCESS	Jonathan
FIN COM LIAISON	
HEALTH INSURANCE TRUST	John
990 MANDATE	Sharon/Brigid
POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE	Becky/Brigid/Sharon
SPED FINANCIAL TASK FORCE	Mike/Xuan
SPED PAC LIAISON	
SUCCESSION	Becky/Sharon

7/12/07