



# Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School

10 New Bond Street Worcester, MA 01606

Phone: (508) 854-8400 Fax: (508) 854-8484

[www.akfcs.org](http://www.akfcs.org)

## Education Committee Meeting Agenda

Thursday, December 10, 2020 / 7:45 a.m.

<https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/j/95971612826?pwd=bUJ2Ui9PNkRISVM5UVdGaUNMcWN4QT09>

**Meeting ID:** 959 7161 2826 **Passcode:** 720053

**By phone:** 1-929-205-6099 **Meeting ID:** 959 7161 2826

- I. Call to Order- Shelly Yarnie, Committee Chair
- II. Attendance Recorded
- III. Review of the November 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes
  - a. Motion: To approve the minutes from the November 12, 2020 Education Committee Meeting.
- IV. AKF's Hybrid Model Plans for January- Ms. Paluk
  - a. Elementary School (continuing what is in place)
  - b. Middle School
    - i. Building needs
    - ii. Staffing needs
  - c. High School
    - i. Building needs
    - ii. Staffing needs



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## Education Committee Meeting Minutes DRAFT

Thursday, November 12, 2020 / 7:45 a.m.

<https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/j/96731227968?pwd=bjEyN3JvanRiM0R0TGZydk1mUFhHQT09>

Meeting ID: 967 3122 7968 Passcode: 662054

By phone: 1-301-715-8592 Meeting ID: 967 3122 7968

The meeting was Called to Order-Celia Blue, Board Chair (in place of Ms. Yarnie) at 7:49 a.m.

Attendance Recorded

**Board Members:** Celia Blue, Patrick Royce, Bibiche Zagabe-Ndiku

**Committee Members** not in Attendance: Shelly Yarnie, Jie Park

Additional attendees attached

The review of the October 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes was tabled until the December 10th meeting.

Ms. Paluk led the conversation about the AKF's Hybrid Model presently in place at the Elementary School. Approximately 45-47% of students remained remote, at their choice. There have been multiple CoVID cases over the last four weeks at the Elementary School, with only one defined cluster in the Kindergarten. The staff have continued to make the Hybrid Model work despite this. There has not been negative feedback from families over the Hybrid Model.

The Middle and High Schools are looking to move forward with a Hybrid Model in January. They are planning to conduct a survey of families to gather information on the number of students who might return and of those who will need transportation. Bussing is and will continue to be a challenge for this school year, given the limited number of students per bus.

Concerns from students returning to the Middle School include making sure there is air flow and purification within the classrooms. Abby Kelley will be participating in a large state wide purchase of air purifiers, which will result in some cost savings, but there will be a cost to Abby Kelley for this purchase. It was noted that the upgraded electrical system in the Middle School would be able to handle the additional pull on electricity from the air purifiers.

Ms. Puliatico noted that there would need to be some staff recalls for those who had been working from home for the past few months, to accommodate students who return in person. Ms. Puliatico noted that the student's return would be a family decision and she and her staff are



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working and planning for these needs of those students who elect for in-person learning or opt to stay remote come January.

At the High School Mr. Kursonis noted the students who are at school now for in-person learning are there as defined by the State. These students are receiving morning and afternoon supports while at school. The High School offered additional students the opportunity to come to school for in-person instruction after it was noted they had declining marks/progress reports.

Mr. Kursonis stated that the leveling that exists in the High School has held the school back from bringing more students back in person. They continue to work with this to bring students back in-person in January. Mr. Kursonis noted that the High School had Conferences coming up with families to allow for additional check-ins between families and teachers.

Following a question from Mr. Royce about whether or not Abby Kelley is doing enough outreach to families to give them peace of mind to assure them our schools are safe to return to, Ms. Paluk responded that while everyone is trying to do that, perhaps more could be done. Ms. Paluk spoke about the information which we should continue to share with families; the twice a week deep cleaning and spraying which is done, the daily cleanings, the availability of cleaning supplies and PPE for staff and students and the Ms. Paluk addressed that there might be gaps in the knowledge bases for families relative to CoVID, which is something the District needs to find balance with.

When asked about how teachers were adjusting to the remote learning model at the High School. Mr. Kursonis noted that they had become comfortable with the system. As the High School is offering longer class periods, the staff has been able to work at a slower pace, which the staff has liked. He noted that increasing the number of students in the building would take additional adjustment for all.

Ms. Pulifico addressed the question of how the staff were doing by saying that they have fallen into the rhythm of the remote model, and have found that it has slowed their teaching pace down. Grades 4 and 5 were doing well with the model but Grades 6 and 7 were challenging. She suggested this might be because students in Grades 4 and 5 might have more adult supervision as they are younger and perhaps not as capable to be home alone, while students in Grades 6 and 7 might be home alone.

The Committee moved to the topic of Admissions, specifically the Lottery which opened in late October. Ms. Little noted that the Lottery had over 200 applicants thus far, and would be open through January. Ms. Little explained to the Committee that back in 2001 Abby Kelley moved to include Holden in our enrollment footprint. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recently notified Abby Kelley that Holden is part of a regional district, not a “stand alone” district and Abby Kelley needs to make a determination to begin accepting additional students from the Wachusett Regional District or remove the Holden as a sending District. There was some conversation from the Board and Ms. Paluk of things to consider around this; past conversations to increase enrollment, transportation concerns (as Abby Kelley



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would have to add additional routes for any potential students, and what removing Holden from the list of sending districts meant for students already enrolled. Ms. Paluk asked the Committee about bringing this matter to the January board meeting, which they agreed upon. Ms. Paluk noted that she and Ms. Little would prepare for this upcoming discussion, provided the board with student enrollment stats and other information to assist in making these decisions. Ms. Paluk noted that a final decision is due to DESE in June 2021.

A question about the status of MCAS testing within the District was raised. MCAS are being planned for as the State is requiring them. Students will have to come in school, in-person to take these tests, which raises several issues; spacing, students are required to have a flu shot as of December 31st, how to proceed with students whose families will not send their student(s) in for testing (DESE is generating a response to this question) and finally how, if it is needed will students be able to review the materials for the test as in some cases the materials were not able to be covered with the closing of schools in the spring. These were all things Mr. Kursonis and his staff are working to address and they feel confident the students will be successful with MCAS testing this year.

Ms. Blue asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku made the motion, Mr. Royce seconded the motion. The Committee adjourned at 8:49 a.m.