

Amherst School District

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Annual Report and Guide to Official Ballot Voting

**March 10, 2009
Souhegan High School
6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

Please bring this Guide with you to Ballot Voting on March 10, 2009.

The Voters' Guide has been paid for by the Amherst School District,
c/o SAU 39, P.O. Box 849, Amherst, NH 03031
www.sprise.com

Officers and Agents of the School District

Amherst School Board

Dwight Brew, Chair

Peg Bennett

Peter de Bruyn Kops

Robert Graybill

Nancy Head

School District Moderator

Carol Holden

School District Clerk

Jan Bunker

School District Treasurer

Jan Bunker

Amherst Ways & Means Committee

Deb Naro, Co-Chair

Mark Vincent, Co-Chair

Steven T. Cummings

Ted Landon

Dana Redmond

David Yabroud

Office of the Superintendent

Mary Athey Jennings, Superintendent of Schools

Elizabeth A Shankel, Business Administrator

Renea Sparks, Director of Special Instructional Services

Nicole Heimarck, Director of Curriculum & Professional Development

School Administration

Porter Dodge, Principal

Amherst Middle School

Gerry St. Amand, Principal

Clark & Wilkins Schools

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Message from the Amherst School Board Chairperson

Thank you for taking the time to review this information about the Amherst School District and the warrant articles that the Amherst School Board is bringing forward this year.

The Amherst School Board, our school administration and the Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee have all spent a great deal of time preparing and refining article 12, the operating budget for the 2009-2010 school year; articles 13 and 14, a new three year agreement with our support staff; and article 15, a new ten year agreement to educate Mont Vernon 7th and 8th graders at the Amherst Middle School. In addition, article 16 requests that voters will formally approve the practice of listing the tallies of both the Amherst School Board and the Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee on the official ballot.

All six warrant articles were presented and discussed at the Amherst School District Deliberative Session which was held at 7:00 PM on Thursday, February 5th at Souhegan High School. If you have any questions about any of these warrants, I encourage you to contact a member of the Amherst School Board. Our phone numbers and e-mail addresses are listed below.

2008-2009 in Review

The Amherst School Board would like to commend the administrators and staff for their stewardship of the resources that are entrusted to them. By increasing revenue, bidding competitively and carefully managing the budget, the Amherst School District was able to return an FY08 surplus of about \$335,000 to the Amherst residents to reduce taxes. This savings will be applied to the December 2008 and July 2009 tax bills.

In March 2008, in addition to approving the Amherst School District operating budget, the school board was very pleased that the voters approved a \$3,995,000 bond warrant article to renovate all three Amherst School District schools. The renovation warrant article is the major element of an overall plan that addresses the renovation needs of our schools. The renovations to Clark, Wilkins and Amherst Middle Schools started in the summer of 2008 and are expected to be completed in the summer of 2009. I would like to give special thanks to Nancy Head, the chair of the Master Plan Committee, and Jim Miner, Director of Buildings and Grounds, for all of their work in developing this solid plan and then overseeing the renovations at all three schools. Both Nancy and Jim have made sure that the quality of the renovations is top notch, and that we are receiving the maximum value for our dollar.

In the 2007-2008 school year, we completed the multi-year process of reviewing, evaluating, and revising our science curriculum. Teachers and administrators met on a regular basis throughout the year, examining all aspects of the science curriculum. Changes to the science curriculum were implemented in September 2008. During the 2009 academic year this work continues with the development of inquiry kits that promote science process skills and collaboration with community resources integrating our local environment into students' learning experiences

We are continuing our use of the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessment. Teachers and administrators have found the almost immediate feedback from this testing very beneficial. Teachers use the results to hone instructional strategies for specific skills and create

flexible groups within the classroom; parents receive the NWEA results in teacher/parent conferences, and learn what challenges lie ahead for their learner.

In keeping with our goal of "engaging, challenging and supporting all learners", teachers from both Clark / Wilkins and from the Amherst Middle School have adopted student focused goals based on individual student improvement using NWEA assessment data. We will get our first look at progress in this area this spring, and we will provide support to our staff so that we can continue to make gains in overall student achievement.

2009-2010 Looking Forward

The operating budget and other warrant articles proposed this year all support the initiatives that make the Amherst School District one of the top performing school districts in the state.

The specific wording of each warrant article, along with detailed commentary from both the Amherst School Board and the Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee on each warrant article appears below. I hope that you will take the time to become more familiar with these warrant articles.

As mentioned earlier, if you have any questions about the Amherst School District or these warrant articles, please contact a member of the Amherst School Board.

Sincerely,

Dwight Brew

Amherst School Board Chairperson

Amherst School Board		
Peg Bennett	peg.bennett@comcast.net	673-1404
Dwight Brew	dbrew@sprise.com	673-5336
Peter de Bruyn Kops	dbk@acugen.com	673-3551
Nancy Head	njhead@verizon.net	673-1389
Rob Graybill	rob.graybill@yahoo.com	672-4793

Voting in Amherst

Amherst School District follows the guidelines of Senate Bill 2 (SB2) which are outlined in RSA 40:13. Voting on budgets, appropriations, and other articles culminates with ballot voting; however, prior to the March ballot vote was the Deliberative Session, which was held February 5, 2009 and the Public Hearing, which took place in January.

The Deliberative Session is the first session of the annual meeting and consists of explanation, discussion, and debate of each article on the warrant. Only voters registered in Amherst can amend wording and dollar amounts and vote on approving the warrant articles.

All warrant articles that were presented at the Deliberative Session, including articles that were amended, are then placed on the official ballot and moved to the second session (ballot voting) of the annual meeting for a final vote.

Voting in Amherst is a Two-Step Process

Deliberative Sessions

7:00 p.m.
SHS Auditorium

February 3rd: Souhegan Cooperative School District
February 4th: Town of Amherst
February 5th: Amherst School District

Ballot Vote

6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
SHS Gymnasium

March 10th

Please contact the Amherst Town Clerk for voter registration information and for absentee ballots.

www.amherstnh.gov/townclerk/voters.html

Warrant Articles

The following pages contain the wording of the warrant articles, including any and all amendments made at the Deliberative Session, plus school board commentary (noted in italics). A detailed report of recommendations by the Ways & Means Committee follows these articles and commentaries.

**AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANNUAL MEETING WARRANT
February 5, 2009 and March 10, 2009
AMHERST, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

To the inhabitants of the Amherst School District, in the Town of Amherst, County of Hillsborough, and State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in District affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet at Souhegan High School in said district on Thursday, February 5, 2009, at 7:00 p.m., for Session I (Deliberation), for the transaction of all business other than voting by official ballot. This session shall consist of the explanation of all the warrant articles and the discussion and debate of warrant articles 12-17. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended and (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for final vote on the main motion, as amended.

You are hereby further notified to meet at Souhegan High School on Tuesday, March 10, 2009, between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. to vote by official ballot for the election of School District officers and other action required to be inserted on the official ballot (warrant articles 11 through 17.)

IMPORTANT NOTE ON WARRANT ARTICLE NUMBERS: To avoid confusion caused by having two warrant articles with the same number, Souhegan Cooperative School District Warrant Articles are numbered 1 through 10, Amherst School District warrant articles are numbered 11 through 20 and Town of Amherst warrant articles are numbered 21 and above.

ARTICLE 11

To elect all necessary School District officers for the ensuing terms by official ballot vote on March 10, 2009, Souhegan High School, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

- Election of one (1) members of the School Board for the ensuing three (3) years.
- Election of one (1) member of the School Board for the ensuing one (1) year.

ARTICLE 12

Shall the Amherst School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant, or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **\$23,163,153**? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$22,963,809**, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Amherst School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

**The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.
The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.**

Amherst School Board Commentary

The proposed Amherst School District operating budget for the 2009-2010 (FY 2010) school year is \$23,163,153. This is an increase over last year's budget of \$452,473, or 1.99%.

Increases to this budget include health increases of 7.8%; dental increases of 3.7%; an increase in the state retirement for teachers of 20%; and a contractual wage increase for our teachers. In addition, the prices of supplies and utilities have also increased.

These increases, all significant, have been offset, in part, by decreasing enrollment. It is expected that there will be approximately 50 fewer students next year. Consequently, we will be reducing our professional staff by 4.8 teacher positions at Clark-Wilkins and .6 positions at AMS and our support staff by 4.5 members.

This budget supports staffing for the desired student / teacher ratio at all grade levels and across curriculum areas, provides appropriate instructional materials at all levels, continues with planned replacement of aging computer equipment, and provides adequate support for Special Education needs.

Although we have made every effort to keep costs down wherever possible, we have also continued our commitment to maintaining high quality programs for our children.

The Amherst School Board urges you to support this operating budget.

ARTICLE 13

Shall the Amherst School District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Amherst School Board and the Amherst Support Staff Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Increase
2009 – 2010	\$51,849
2010 – 2011	\$61,195
2011 – 2012	\$59,600

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$51,849** for the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year.

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

**The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.
The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.**

Amherst School Board Commentary

We are pleased that we have been able to reach a new three year agreement with our support staff. This agreement will begin on July 1, 2009 and run through June 30, 2012.

Net increases for this new agreement due to wages and health insurance premiums are 2.98% in year one (FY 2010), 3.52% in year two (FY 2011), and 3.39% in year three (FY 2012). The total increase for year one is \$51,848, for year two is \$61,195 and for year three is \$59,600. The estimated tax impact is \$0.03 per \$1,000 of valuation for each of the three years or \$12 per year for each year for a property valued at \$400,000.

As a result of this agreement, members of the ASSA are more vested in the cost of health care. Over the course of this agreement, the employee contributions for the most costly medical insurance provider have been increased from 9% to 20% and this plan has been eliminated for new employees. Employee contributions for the remaining plans have increased from 9% to 10½%.

An additional aspect of this new agreement allows us to comply with a recent NH Retirement Fund ruling and avoid a future retirement liability to the school district. The board and the ASSA worked together to eliminate the base plus add-on methodology of determining salary, and by restructuring how wages are calculated, we have avoided this potentially very large financial exposure due to this NH Retirement Fund ruling.

Per new RSA 273-A:12, VII -- For all collective bargaining agreements entered into after July 15, 2008, if the parties are at impasse when the agreement expires, then all terms of the collective bargaining agreement will continue to be in effect, including the continuation of any pay plan included in the agreement other than cost of living increases, until a new agreement is executed.

The Amherst School Board appreciates the Amherst Support Staff Association's willingness to work with the board to craft an agreement that is fair to our employees and that also meets the needs of the school district.

The Amherst School Board requests that you support our support staff and approve this three year agreement.

ARTICLE 14

Shall the Amherst School District, if Article 13 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 13 cost items only?

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

**The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.
The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.**

Amherst School Board Commentary

If Article 13 is defeated, the passage of this article will allow the Amherst School Board to continue to negotiate with the Amherst Support Staff Association and have the option of holding a special election to address the cost elements of a new agreement with the Amherst Support Staff Association.

If Article 13 were to be defeated, the Amherst School Board would have to carefully consider numerous factors before deciding to call for a special election, but urges the voters to make this option available to the school board by approving this warrant article.

ARTICLE 15

Shall the District vote to approve a tuition agreement with Mont Vernon School District for the education of Mont Vernon Middle School students at the Amherst Middle School as negotiated by the School Board which, among other things, provides for an initial term of ten (10) years beginning July 1, 2011 and calls for the payment of tuition based on the school's operating cost per pupil together with the payment of a capital charge based on the per pupil net cost of capital improvements to the middle school; and further authorize the School Board to take such other and further action as necessary to give effect to this vote, including the adoption of minor amendments to the agreement from time-to-time during its term without further action by the School District?

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

**The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.
The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.**

Amherst School Board Commentary

The Mont Vernon 7th and 8th graders are currently educated at the Amherst Middle School and are covered by a tuition agreement between the Amherst School District and the Mont Vernon School District. The term of the current tuition agreement is ten years and is due to expire on June 30, 2011.

We have negotiated a new ten year agreement and are bringing it before the voters in both school districts now to provide stability for both the Amherst and Mont Vernon school districts.

The new agreement is a 10 year agreement (as was the last one) and it will begin on July 1, 2011 and end on June 30, 2021.

The per student cost for this agreement will be based on the actual net operating expenses of the Amherst Middle School.

The total annual Mont Vernon tuition costs for this agreement will be based on the per student cost times the number of Mont Vernon students.

New capital expenditures will be calculated and shared on a per pupil basis.

As in the past agreement, outside Special Education costs and transportation to and from AMS are the responsibility of the student's home district.

Special Education services provided by the Amherst School District staff are included as part of the Amherst Middle School expenses and will be included in the per student cost and shared equally on a per student basis.

This agreement is financially fair to both the town of Amherst and the town of Mont Vernon and it benefits both Amherst and Mont Vernon students who will continue on to high school together at Souhegan.

A full copy of this agreement is available at the SAU office and is also posted on the SAU website under Amherst School Board. The Amherst School Board hopes that you will support this warrant article.

ARTICLE 16

Shall the Amherst School District require all votes of the Amherst School Board and the Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee relative to warrant articles to be recorded votes and that the numeric tally of any such vote be printed in the School district warrant next to the affected warrant article?

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

**The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.
The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.**

Amherst School Board Commentary

The Amherst School District has historically included the vote tallies of both the Amherst School Board and the Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee on warrant articles on the official ballot. Based on a recommendation from the State Attorney General, we are placing this article on the ballot to make this past practice official.

The Amherst School Board feels that making the tallies of both the school board and the ways and means committee available on the official ballot is an aid to the voter and requests that you support this warrant article.

ARTICLE 17

To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

**Amherst School District
Ways & Means Committee
Report and Recommendations on FY10 Warrant Articles**

Overview

The Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee is appointed by the Amherst School District Moderator, Carol Holden. It is the responsibility of the committee to review the proposed budget and provide a recommendation to the Amherst School District. Two new members were added this year, bringing the total committee to six members.

The committee worked with SAU39 Superintendent Dr. Mary Jennings; SAU39 Business Administrator, Betty Shankel; Amherst Middle School Principal, Porter Dodge; Clark and Wilkins Schools Principal, Gerry St. Amand; Special Education Director Renea Sparks; Curriculum and Professional Development Director, Nicole Heimarck; and all the district department heads. We were very pleased with the level of cooperation received and the professionalism of these individuals as well as the Amherst School Board. The budget figures, supplemental data, and quick response to questions raised by the committee, enabled the review process to be conducted in an efficient and timely manner.

The Ways and Means committee unanimously supports the FY10 proposed budget (Warrant Article 12). The FY10 proposed operating budget includes a fiscally conservative increase of 1.99%. This modest increase takes into account the impact on the Amherst taxpayer while ensuring a continued high quality education for Amherst School students.

During this budget season, the Amherst School Board negotiated a new 3 year contract with the Amherst Support Staff Association (ASSA). The Ways & Means committee unanimously supports this new agreement which is both fair to the support staff employees and to the Amherst taxpayer.

The Amherst School Board has also negotiated a new 10 year tuition agreement with Mont Vernon for their 7th and 8th grade students. This new agreement establishes tuition based on the net annual operating expenses at Amherst Middle School and this includes new capital expenditures. As such, this is an agreement that is fair to both districts. The Ways & Means Committee is unanimously in support of this new agreement.

We strongly urge the taxpayers of Amherst to attend the Deliberative Session on February 5, 2009, and to vote on March 10, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Vincent, Co-Chair
Deb Naro, Co-Chair
Tedd Landon
David Yabroudy
Steve Cummings
Dana Redmond

Article 11 – School Board elections

Ways & Means takes no position on this article.

Article 12: Operating Budget

Ways & Means unanimously supports this article.

The Ways and Means Committee commends the Amherst School District Administration and the Amherst School Board in the development of the FY10 school budget. The budget reflects a modest 1.99% increase over last year's budget. The increase the administration is proposing is well below the current rate of inflation, and is driven primarily by contractual increases in salaries and benefits as defined in collective bargaining agreements, as well as debt service for the recently passed renovation bond.

The administration followed a disciplined budget process that focused on balancing the needs of our school children and the fiscal realities facing Amherst taxpayers.

The Ways and Means Committee unanimously urges you to support this year's school budget.

Article 13: ASSA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Ways & Means unanimously supports this article.

The Ways & Means Committee commends the Amherst School District negotiating team on arriving at this new 3 year agreement. This new contract contains provisions to increase efficiencies in the management of support staff and includes a reasonable salary increase for staff members. This agreement is fair and equitable both for the members of the ASSA and for the taxpayers of Amherst.

The Ways & Means Committee unanimously urges you to support this warrant article.

Article 14: Special Meeting to consider ASSA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Ways & Means unanimously supports this article.

The Ways & Means Committee respects the will of the voters of Amherst. However, if the new ASSA collective bargaining agreement is voted down, we also believe the Amherst School Board should be allowed to call a special meeting to address the cost items involved in article 13.

The Ways & Means Committee unanimously urges you to support this warrant article.

Article 15: Mont Vernon Tuition Agreement

Ways & Means unanimously supports this article.

The Ways & Means committee unanimously supports the new 10 year agreement reached with the Mont Vernon School District to continue to tuition in Mont Vernon students to the Amherst Middle School. We believe that inclusion of these students into AMS provides benefit to both

groups of students and makes good fiscal sense for both districts. The agreement includes equitable cost sharing between both districts that is fair to the taxpayers in both towns.

The Ways & Means Committee unanimously urges you to support this warrant article.

Article 16: Printing of Vote Tallies on Ballots
Ways & Means unanimously supports this article.

The vote tallies of the Amherst School Board and the Amherst School District Ways & Means Committee provide valuable information to the voter. We strongly support continued inclusion of this information on the town election ballot.

The Ways & Means Committee unanimously urges you to support this warrant article.

**Amherst School District
FY10 Budget Proposal Summary by Function**

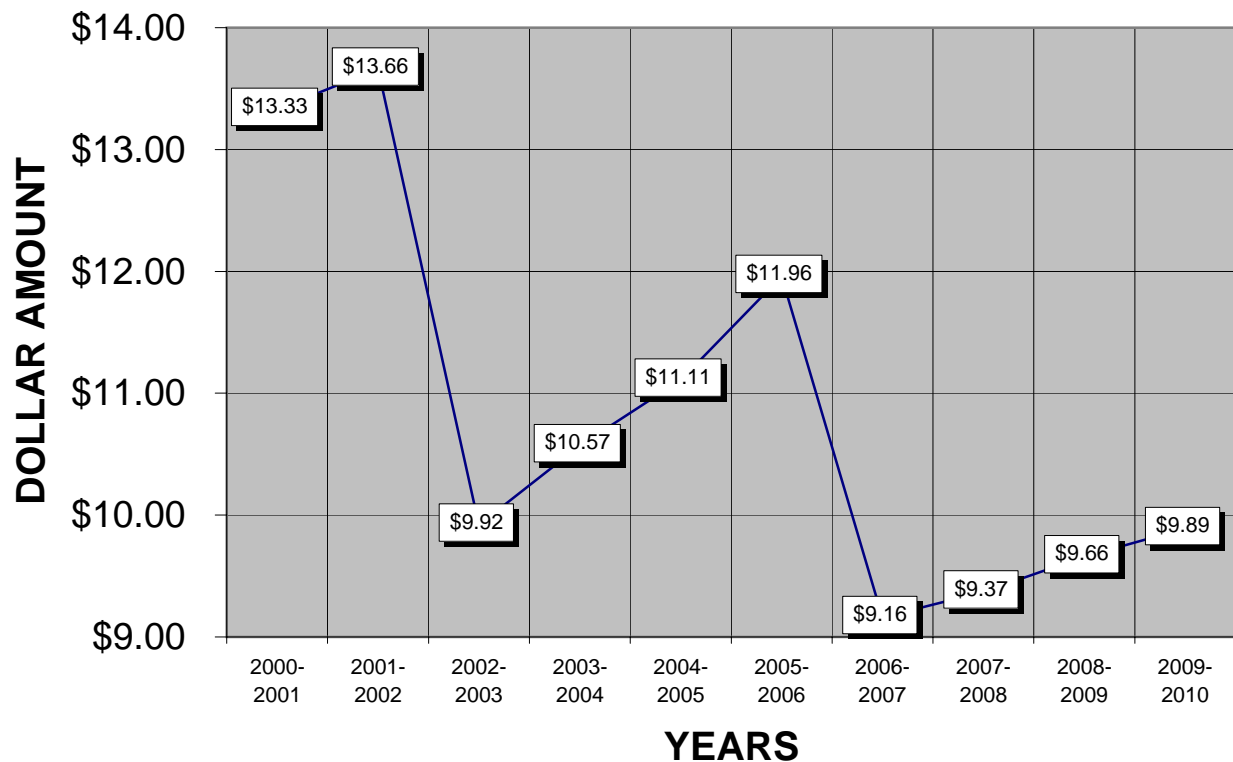
Function	Description	FY09 Adopted Budget	FY10 Proposed Budget	Variance \$	Variance %	FY10 Proposed Budget - New Format
1100-1199	Regular Education Programs- Teacher salaries, textbooks, substitutes, supplies	\$7,757,752	\$7,820,279	\$62,527	0.81%	\$11,078,848
1200-1299	Special Education Programs- Teacher salaries, aides, substitutes, evaluators, textbooks, supplies, and items specific to SPED	\$3,307,067	\$3,478,514	\$171,447	5.18%	\$4,760,569
1400-1499	Other Programs - Interscholastics, intramurals, student body activities	\$86,373	\$88,590	\$2,217	2.57%	\$99,339
2000-2199	Student Support Services- Guidance, health, nurses, and SRO salaries	\$650,810	\$678,152	\$27,342	4.20%	\$898,315
2200-2299	Instruction Support Services- Library salaries, supplies, curriculum coordinators, professional development, consultants	\$428,563	\$389,467	-\$39,096	-9.12%	\$446,479
2300-2319	School Board- Treasurer, moderator, SB stipends, SB minute taker	\$113,789	\$114,389	\$600	0.53%	\$115,034
2320-311	District Assessment - SAU 39 ASD portion of the SAU budget	\$973,225	\$1,013,847	\$40,622	4.17%	\$1,013,847
2400-2499	School Administrative Services- Principal salaries, office staff, office equipment	\$774,489	\$723,792	-\$50,697	-6.55%	\$968,594
2500-2599	Business- Printing costs	\$1,890	\$2,400	\$510	26.98%	\$2,400
2600-2699	Operation and Plant Maintenance- Custodial salaries, electricity, heating oil, water, trash, loss and liability insurance premiums, building maintenance	\$1,143,407	\$1,154,647	\$11,240	0.98%	\$1,365,469
2700-2799	Student Transportation- Bus contract, fuel	\$556,397	\$571,997	\$15,600	2.80%	\$571,997
2800-2899	Support Service - Technology Technology staff salaries, local and wide area network costs	\$187,028	\$194,684	\$7,656	4.09%	\$251,086
2900-2999	Support Services - Employee Benefits Health, dental, life insurance, worker's compensation, disability insurance, FICA, Medicare taxes, retirement, annuities	\$5,283,076	\$5,341,219	\$58,143	1.10%	\$0
4000-4999	Facilities Acquisition & Construction - Portable classrooms, site and building improvements	\$226,015	\$141,539	-\$84,476	-37.38%	\$141,539
5000-5199	Debt Service - Principal & Interest	\$431,310	\$672,914	\$241,604	56.02%	\$672,914
5200-5299	Fund Transfers	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	0.00%	\$5,000
	Total Fund 10	\$21,926,191	\$22,391,430	\$465,239	2.12%	\$22,391,430
	Fund 21 - Food Service	\$509,089	\$453,858	-\$55,231	-10.85%	\$453,858
	Fund 22 - Title Grants/IDEA Grant	\$275,400	\$317,865	\$42,465	15.42%	\$317,865
	Total General Budget	\$22,710,680	\$23,163,153	\$452,473	1.99%	\$23,163,153

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL WARRANT ARTICLES AND FINANCIAL TAX IMPACT

If all articles on the warrant pass, the estimated school tax rate for the upcoming 2009-10 school year will be \$9.89.

		Amount	Tax Rate/\$1,000 Town Assessed Valuation
2008-09 Annual Amherst School District Tax Rate		\$ 22,710,680	\$ 9.66
Article 12	Operating Budget	\$ 23,163,153	\$ 0.20
Article 13	ASSA Collective Bargaining Agreement	\$ 51,849	\$ 0.03
FY10	2009-10 Amherst School District Estimated Tax Rate	\$ 23,215,002	\$ 9.89

AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT TAX RATE HISTORY (K-8)



Amherst School District Enrollment

Historical* and Projected Amherst District K-8 Enrollments

	Projected	Actual
2000-01	1726	1743
2001-02	1695	1708
2002-03	1655	1705
2003-04	1657	1695
2004-05	1761	1703
2005-06	1726	1657
2006-07	1654	1647
2007-08	1662	1579
2008-09	1550	1547
2009-10	1498	

Historical* and Projected Grade by Grade Enrollments

	K	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 ^a	8 ^a	Total
2000-01	110	34	160	158	172	187	204	239	237	242	1743
2001-02	110	17	165	157	163	174	198	207	279	238	1708
2002-03	131	13	149	166	160	173	183	195	254	281	1705
2003-04	129	0	185	161	180	174	176	190	245	255	1695
2004-05	138	0	168	189	178	189	178	181	228	254	1703
2005-06	130	0	185	164	183	172	186	174	230	233	1657
2006-07	120	0	165	182	162	185	184	187	224	238	1647
2007-08	102	0	142	174	184	161	190	185	211	230	1579
2008-09	108	0	129	145	178	186	169	196	221	215	1547
2009-10	108	0	132	132	147	181	188	170	220	220	1498

^aIncludes Grades 7 and 8 students from Mont Vernon.

*As reported to the N.H. Department of Education on October 1.

**AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT
FY10 REVENUE PROJECTION**

Ln	Acct #	Item	2008-2009 DRA	2009-2010 Proposed	Change
1		General Fund Expenditures	\$21,926,191	\$22,391,430	\$465,239
2		Special Revenue and Food Service	\$784,489	\$771,723	(\$12,766)
3		Capital Fund - Renovations	\$3,995,000		(\$3,995,000)
4		Budgeted Expenditures (All Funds)	\$26,705,680	\$23,163,153	-\$3,542,527
5	770	Unreserved Fund Balance	\$335,730	\$231,632	(\$104,098)
6		State Aid			
7	3210	School Building Aid	\$75,461	\$75,461	\$0
8	3230	Catastrophic Aid	\$142,000	\$130,000	(\$12,000)
9	3260	Child Nutrition	\$0	\$0	\$0
10	3280	Medicaid	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$30,000
11	3290	Other	\$0	\$0	\$0
12		Subtotal: State Aid	\$237,461	\$255,461	\$18,000
13		Federal Aid			
14	4500	Grants In Aid	\$266,200	\$308,665	\$42,465
15		Subtotal: Federal Aid	\$266,200	\$308,665	\$42,465
16		Other Revenue			
17	5100	Sale Of Bonds / Notes	\$3,995,000	\$0	(\$3,995,000)
18	5230	Transfer From Cap. Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
19		Subtotal: Other Revenue	\$3,995,000	\$0	(\$3,995,000)
20		Local Revenue			
21	1311	Tuition - Parents	\$8,000	\$7,000	(\$1,000)
22	1320	Tuition - Mont Vernon	\$972,000	\$949,066	(\$22,934)
23	1510	Interest Income	\$145,000	\$100,000	(\$45,000)
24	1600	Food Service	\$509,089	\$453,858	(\$55,231)
25	1910	Rentals	\$17,588	\$16,400	(\$1,188)
26	1920	Spaulding/Lawrence Trust Fund	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0
27	1920	Boutelle Grant	\$3,200	\$3,200	\$0
28	1951	Services Provided Other LEA's	\$77,046	\$26,500	(\$50,546)
29	1990	Other	\$40,000	\$35,000	(\$5,000)
30		Subtotal: Local Revenue	\$1,777,923	\$1,597,024	(\$180,899)
31		Assessment:			
32		Budgeted Expenditures (All Funds)	\$26,705,680	\$23,163,153	(\$3,542,527)
33		Less Unreserved Fund Balance	\$335,730	\$231,632	(\$104,098)
34		Less Subtotal: State Aid	\$237,461	\$255,461	\$18,000
35		Less Subtotal: Federal Aid	\$266,200	\$308,665	\$42,465
36		Less Subtotal: Other Revenue	\$3,995,000	\$0	(\$3,995,000)
37		Less Subtotal: Local Revenue	\$1,777,923	\$1,597,024	(\$180,899)
38	1111	Current Appropriation	\$20,093,366	\$20,770,371	\$677,005
39	1111	Current Appropriation	\$20,093,366	\$20,770,371	\$677,005
40	1112	Deficit Appropriation			
41		Total Appropriation	\$20,093,366	\$20,770,371	\$677,005
42		Total Appropriation	\$20,093,366	\$20,770,371	\$677,005
43		Less Adequacy Aid Grant-ASD Portion	\$2,343,192	\$2,658,717	\$315,525
44		Subtotal-Appropriation paid by Local & State Tax	\$17,750,174	\$18,111,654	\$361,480
45		Less State Property Tax - ASD Portion	\$2,524,325	\$2,506,753	(\$17,572)
46		Amherst School District Tax Assessment	\$15,225,849	\$15,604,901	\$379,052
47		Local Assessed Valuation - with Utilities	\$1,842,351,200	\$1,842,351,200	\$0
48		Local Assessed Valuation - less Utilities	\$1,808,507,200	\$1,808,507,200	\$0
49		Estimated Tax Impact			
50		ASD State Property Tax Rate (per \$1,000)	\$1.40	\$1.39	(\$0.01)
51		ASD Local Education Tax Rate (per \$1,000)	\$8.26	\$8.47	\$0.21
52		Total ASD Tax Rate (Local + State)	\$9.66	\$9.86	\$0.20
53		Adequacy Grant Aid savings to ASD Rate	\$1.27	\$1.44	\$0.17

*1,2 Amherst is a receiver town - any decrease in the State Property Tax has an offsetting increase in the Local Education Tax

*3 The estimated Amherst School District Local and Amherst School District State tax rate for next year is \$9.86 per \$1,000

Amherst School District FY10 Default Budget Calculation

Adopted 2008-2009 Budget		\$ 22,710,680
REDUCTIONS		
	Staff Reductions	\$ 270,255
	Technology & Instructional Furniture & Equipment	\$ 72,974
	Testing	\$ 1,525
	Professional Development & Curriculum	\$ 11,131
	School Administration Supplies & Equipment	\$ 23,144
	Library Furniture	\$ 29,566
	Building Repairs, Supplies, Utilities	\$ 66,866
	System Tech Support	\$ 15,055
	Building Site Improvement	\$ 84,476
	Food Service	\$ 55,386
	Subtotal	\$ 630,378
ADDITIONS		
	Contractual Salary Increases	\$ 271,539
	Special Education Supplies & Services	\$ 257,199
	SAU Management Services	\$ 40,622
	Audit	\$ 600
	Debt Service	\$ 241,604
	District Share of Employee Benefit Premiums	\$ 56,343
	Transportation	\$ 15,600
	Subtotal	\$ 883,507
	FY 2009-2010 Default Budget	\$ 22,963,809
	FY 2009-2010 Proposed Budget	\$ 23,163,153
	Difference Between Default Budget and Proposed Budget	\$ 199,344

**ABSENTEE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION
AMHERST, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 10, 2009**


SCHOOL DISTRICT CLERK

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- A. TO VOTE, completely fill in the OVAL to the RIGHT of your choice (s) like this: ☒
- B. Follow directions as to the number of candidates to be marked for each office.
- C. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name on the line provided and completely fill in the OVAL.

FOR SCHOOL BOARD

Vote for not
(For 1 YEAR) more than ONE

DWIGHT BREW ☐

☐

(Write-in)

FOR SCHOOL BOARD

Vote for not
(For 3 YEARS) more than ONE

PETER MARESCO ☐

☐

(Write-in)

ARTICLES

ARTICLE 12

Shall the Amherst School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant, or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **\$23,163,153**? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$22,963,809**, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Amherst School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

YES ☐

NO ☐

ARTICLE 13

Shall the Amherst School District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Amherst School Board and the Amherst Support Staff Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Increase
2009 - 2010	\$51,849
2010 - 2011	\$61,195
2011 - 2012	\$59,600

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$51,849** for the 2009 - 2010 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year.

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

YES ☐

NO ☐

ARTICLE 14

Shall the Amherst School District, if Article 13 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 13 cost items only?

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

YES ☐

NO ☐

TURN BALLOT OVER AND CONTINUE VOTING

ARTICLES CONTINUED

ARTICLE 15

Shall the Amherst School District vote to approve a tuition agreement with Mont Vernon School District for the education of Mont Vernon Middle School students at the Amherst Middle School as negotiated by the School Board which, among other things, provides for an initial term of ten (10) years beginning July 1, 2011 and calls for the payment of tuition based on the school's operating cost per pupil together with the payment of a capital charge based on the per pupil net cost of capital improvements to the middle school; and further authorize the School Board to take such other and further action as necessary to give effect to this vote, including the adoption of minor amendments to the agreement from time-to-time during its term without further action by the School?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

ARTICLE 16

Shall the Amherst School District require all votes of the Amherst School Board and the Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee relative to warrant articles to be recorded votes and that the numeric tally of any such vote be printed in the School district warrant next to the affected warrant article?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Majority ballot vote required to pass.

The Amherst School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article.

YOU HAVE NOW COMPLETED VOTING

AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Superintendent's Report

Mary Athey Jennings, Superintendent of Schools

The Amherst School District can report another year of commitment and work in the 2007-08 school year towards its mission “to engage, support and challenge all learners.” With a staff of 246 employees and 1,547 students, we worked together on our broad educational program, while focusing on year two of our Five-year Strategic Plan.

The FY08 budget, not including the renovation bond, was \$22,710,680. At year's end, we were able to return \$335,730 of this budgeted amount to the Amherst residents to reduce taxes. This return was due largely to careful monitoring of energy expenses and an increase in unanticipated revenues. Business Administrator, Elizabeth Shankel, and her SAU staff did an excellent job of managing the budget.

In March 2008, in addition to approving the Amherst School District operating budget, the voters approved a \$3,995,000 bond warrant article to renovate all three Amherst School District schools. Work began on this project almost immediately in the spring of 2008 and is expected to be completed in the summer of 2009.

Staff in all three districts focused their professional development efforts on our Literacy initiative, with all of them reading and discussing a reading-comprehension text, Strategies That Work. On a monthly basis they came together to discuss the new reading strategies they were using and how they were integrating them into their teaching styles. Literacy coaches at both Clark-Wilkins and at the Middle School, and school-wide Literacy teams supported this professional development.

Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, Nicole Heimarck, and her staff not only led the Literacy Initiative, but also worked with teachers to complete a three-year project of revising the K-12 science curriculum. In addition to science curriculum revision, a Mathematics Task Force completed a 15-month study on the delivery of mathematics instruction K-12. A result of this study is that students in grade K-6 now are flexibly grouped to better meet individual learning needs.

In summary, the District has continued to move forward by focusing its efforts, maximizing the talents of its staff, and collaborating with all constituencies. 2007-08 has been a great year for most staff and students, and serves as a strong foundation for our work in 2008-09.

Clark & Wilkins Schools' Report

Gerard J. St. Amand, Principal

The first day of school in August 2007 ended with an electrical fire that originated in the computer lab at Wilkins School. Thanks to our regular review of emergency procedures, added to the calm and assured demeanor of all staff members, everyone safely evacuated from Wilkins School to Clark School, where students met their buses and families. Remarkably, staff and students at Wilkins missed only one day of school due to this unexpected emergency. Our computer lab temporarily relocated to our conference room for a couple of months during the clean up period. The fire also supported our proposal for building renovations at both Clark and Wilkins that would focus on items such as window replacements, new lighting and electrical upgrades, office and art room renovations, as well as improved health offices, main offices, and conference areas.

In unison with our five year strategic plan, which targets improved student performance across all academic areas via a focus on literacy, Clark-Wilkins brought on board our first, full time literacy coach whose responsibilities target the training and professional development of all staff members in effective teaching strategies in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Additionally, staff members began to receive training in interpreting and analyzing a variety of formal assessments including: the computerized NWEA—Northwest Evaluation Assessment, which is administered to all students in grades two, three, and four in the areas of reading and mathematics, as well as DIBELS—Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills, a diagnostic assessment that targets developing reading skills of primary level students.

All third and fourth grade students continue to take the state assessment--NECAP—the New England Common Assessment Program—in the areas of reading and mathematics in grades three and four. For the first time in May of 2008, fourth graders also took the Science NECAP. This particular assessment determines whether or not individual schools throughout the states of New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island, as well as targeted subgroups at each school, are making adequately yearly progress—AYP—in all assessed areas.

Science took on a focus as a curriculum area that was reviewed and revised, with units of study and areas of focus being tied in to our state grade level equivalents. Teacher representatives from all grade levels worked on this SAU-wide committee, along with colleagues from all other schools in Amherst and Mont Vernon. Our science programs also include a collaborative effort with PMEC—the Peabody Mill Environmental Center—that connects children with the great outdoors and a variety of programs ranging from hikes and bird watching, to snow shoeing and the study of pond life.

Thanks to the combined efforts of our PTA and the budget, both Clark and Wilkins sport new playground equipment, picnic tables, ground cover, and additional recess items that support all of our students with their physical and social development. The new equipment also enhances our physical education and Field Day activities.

Clark and Wilkins students and staff members continued throughout the year to benefit from the strong level of support that the Amherst citizens display for their elementary schools. Our schools continue to serve as models of excellence for public education in New Hampshire.

Amherst Middle School Report

Porter Dodge, Principal

It is with great pleasure that I present my fourth annual report to the citizens of Amherst and Mont Vernon. Both communities' commitment to the education and safety of our children continues and is visible in our schools every day. Our dedicated and caring professional and paraprofessional support staffs make a major difference in the lives of our children.

Highlighting some of the major accomplishments, under the direction of Nicole Heimarck, Director of Curriculum and Development, we have entered year two of the SAU #39 five-year Literacy Initiative. Shifting personnel similarly to last year, we created a new Math Coach position for the fall of 2008 to complement our Literacy Coach. It is designed to help support math teachers in grades five and six in promoting new strategies such as Flexible Grouping and Differentiated Instruction. The school continues to include reading and writing across all grades and subjects. Under the leadership of Director of Technology Bruce Chakrin, we continue to actively promote technology integration throughout the school with plans to create another technology lab early next year. The AMS Jazz Band, Grades 5-8 Band, Chorus, Theater Club, and Solo Ensemble performances are always excellent examples of the performing arts. Financial and volunteer support from the Amherst PTA and the Amherst Junior Women's Club enhance education in areas where the budget cannot support us, and they deserve to be recognized.

Middle School students participated in the Environmental Schools at grades six and eight again this year. The OXFAM Project in grade seven exceeded last year's success. Other notable thematic units such as HIV/AIDS, Project Safeguard, Mock Trial, Greek Week, Wells Public Speaking, Geography Bee, The Sixties, Science Fair, and Spelling Bee provide integrated learning experiences throughout the school.

Our Interscholastic Athletics continue to be successful, with well over 300 boys and girls participating. Field Hockey, boys' and girls' Soccer, Cross Country, Track, boys' and girls' Basketball, Cheerleading, Softball and Baseball are offered. The Souhegan Boys and Girls Club offers a wide variety of programs in its After-School Enrichment Program.

A school-wide theme of mutual respect for people and property begins with the individual, and we strive to hold every child accountable. AMS is a friendly place to learn and our goal is to make our school a safe and bully-free environment. For this to be achieved, we need every parent to get involved with their child's education as much as possible. Our staff, and School Resource Officer, Mike Knox, work to develop positive relationships with students and be visible in the hallways, cafeteria, classrooms, and events. They can't do it alone!

Finally, I once again want to thank the individuals who help us to be successful, yet often go overlooked in reports: our students. We need to encourage them to accept and exceed the academic rigor and challenge that their schools bring to them.

For more information about our Middle School, visit our website at www1.spride.com/ams.

Special Instructional Services Report

Renea Sparks, Director

It is a pleasure to present my first Annual Report to the citizens of Amherst as the new Director of Special Instructional Services for the Amherst School District.

During the 2007-2008 school year, the Special Instructional Services Department throughout the Amherst School District continued working alongside their colleagues and have assisted wherever and whenever needed in providing specific instructional techniques and services for students who have different learning needs. They are vital contributors and providers of instruction in support of the five year goal: “Each student will demonstrate improved performance in all subject areas as measured annually through multiple assessments.” The Special Instructional staff not only assure that individualized specialization occurs as required by the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), but they also are taking on leadership and supporting roles to build Leadership Literacy teams, Professional Development committees, Response to Intervention teams, while managing early intervening services and various other Clark, Wilkins and Amherst Middle School initiatives.

As the District works toward the implementation of Response to Intervention, the Special Instructional staff is called to lead and assist as trained interventionists. They also are working diligently with all building personnel in collecting and interpreting assessment data. In collaboration with Nicole Heimarck, Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, and the Amherst Building Administrators, efforts continue to provide professional development for all staff in differentiated instruction.

The Special Education department continues to use the IEP Case management system and will be converting to an improved version of this system next school year.

Finally, on June 30, 2008, Kathy Skoglund retired after serving the Amherst School District as the Director of Special Instructional Services for over 23 years. Her tireless efforts and leadership have been an inspiration to countless students and families. Amy Sarsfield has become the Assistant Director of Special Instructional Services for the SAU. Although there is a significant transition at the SAU Administrative level, it is my sincere belief that the students, families, faculty and staff of the Amherst School District are continuing to receive quality instruction, services, and support.

Amherst School District
Actual Expenditures for Special Education Programs and Services
FY 2006-2007 and FY 2007-2008 per RSA 32:11a

ITEM	FY 2006-2007	FY 2007-2008
REVENUES		
Catastrophic Aid	\$232,079	\$109,756.26
IDEA Grant	\$289,737	\$226,359.25
Medicaid	<u>\$83,301</u>	<u>\$85,666.56</u>
Total Revenues	\$605,117	\$421,782.07
EXPENDITURES		
Salaries	\$2,627,649	\$2,679,878
Employee Benefits	\$1,059,299	\$1,083,746
Purchased Services	\$635,883	\$482,280
Supplies	\$28,868	\$28,589
Equipment	\$11,633	\$10,128
Other	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
Total Expenditures	\$4,363,332	\$4,284,621
Net Cost of Special Education	\$3,758,215	\$3,862,839
Source DOE 25		

Amherst School District
Report of the Treasurer to the Amherst School Board
Fiscal Year 07/01/2007-06/30/2008

Cash on hand- as of 07/01/2007	3,305,779.81
Total Receipts- 07/01/2007-06/30/2008	20,059,691.18
Total Payments-07/01/2007-06/30/2008	<u>(22,729,372.36)</u>
Cash Balance- as of 06/30/2008	636,098.63

Note 1: This represents the combined activity of three bank accounts.

/S/
Janice Bunker, Treasurer



MELANSON HEATH & COMPANY, PC

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
MANAGEMENT ADVISORS

102 Perimeter Road
Nashua, NH 03063-1301
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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the School Board
Amherst School District
Amherst, New Hampshire

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Amherst School District, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2008, which collectively comprise the District's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Amherst School District's management. Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinions.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Amherst School District, as of June 30, 2008, and the respective changes in financial position thereof and the respective budgetary comparison for the General Fund for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

The management's discussion and analysis, appearing on the following pages, is not a required part of the basic financial statements but is supplementary information required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of

America. We have applied certain limited procedures, which consisted principally of inquiries of management regarding the methods of measurement and presentation of the required supplementary information. However, we did not audit the information and express no opinion on it.

Melanson, Heath + Company P.C.

Nashua, New Hampshire
November 21, 2008

AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT
GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2008

	<u>General</u>	<u>Capital Projects Fund</u>	<u>Expendable Trust Fund</u>	<u>Nonmajor Governmental Funds</u>	<u>Total Governmental Funds</u>
Revenues:					
School district assessment	\$ 19,289,154	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,289,154
Intergovernmental	1,075,645	34,344	-	360,179	1,470,068
Charges for services	-	-	-	492,804	492,804
Investment income	148,657	10	5,141	-	153,808
Miscellaneous	107,378	-	-	1,113	108,491
Total Revenues	<u>20,620,734</u>	<u>34,354</u>	<u>5,141</u>	<u>854,096</u>	<u>21,514,325</u>
Expenditures:					
Current:					
Instruction	7,727,840	-	-	33,452	7,761,292
Special education	2,955,449	-	-	214,190	3,169,639
Co-curricular	72,201	-	-	-	72,201
Student services	616,953	-	-	20,236	637,189
Professional development	195,452	-	-	17,357	212,809
Library	166,154	-	-	21	166,175
School Board services	69,992	-	-	-	69,992
SAU management	917,356	-	-	-	917,356
Principals' office	784,226	-	-	-	784,226
Operations and maintenance	1,275,982	-	-	-	1,275,982
Transportation	522,995	-	-	-	522,995
Employee benefits	4,944,279	-	-	8,588	4,952,867
Technology support	192,849	-	-	-	192,849
Food service operations	-	-	-	503,834	503,834
Other	2,684	-	-	60,306	62,990
Capital improvements and acquisitions	190,725	370,757	28,553	-	590,035
Debt service	318,203	-	-	-	318,203
Total Expenditures	<u>20,953,340</u>	<u>370,757</u>	<u>28,553</u>	<u>857,984</u>	<u>22,210,634</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	(332,606)	(336,403)	(23,412)	(3,888)	(696,309)
Other Financing Sources (Uses):					
Proceeds of capital leases	-	283,000	-	-	283,000
Transfers in	-	-	60,000	-	60,000
Transfers out	(60,000)	-	-	-	(60,000)
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	<u>(60,000)</u>	<u>283,000</u>	<u>60,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>283,000</u>
Change in fund balances	(392,606)	(53,403)	36,588	(3,888)	(413,309)
Fund Balances, at Beginning of Year, as restated	<u>1,125,331</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>88,469</u>	<u>82,495</u>	<u>1,296,295</u>
Fund Balances, at End of Year	<u>\$ 732,725</u>	<u>\$ (53,403)</u>	<u>\$ 125,057</u>	<u>\$ 78,607</u>	<u>\$ 882,986</u>

See notes to the financial statements.