

# **Amherst School District**

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## **Annual Report and Guide to Official Ballot Voting**

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**March 9, 2010  
Souhegan High School  
6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

***Please bring this Guide with you to Ballot Voting on March 9, 2010.***

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](http://www.sprise.com)

## **Officers and Agents of the School District**

### **Amherst School Board**

Nancy Head, Chair  
Dwight Brew  
Peg Bennett  
Robert Graybill  
Peter Maresco

### **School District Moderator**

Carol Holden

### **School District Clerk**

Nancy Baker

### **School District Treasurer**

Jan Bunker

### **Amherst Ways & Means Committee**

Mark Vincent, Chair  
Steven T. Cummings  
Stephanie Hall  
Ted Landon  
Deb Naro  
Paul Prescott  
David Yabroudy

### **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 School

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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 2010-2011 school year. The warrant articles were presented and discussed at the Amherst School District Deliberative Session which was held at 7:00 PM on Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> at Souhegan High School. If you have any questions about the warrant, please contact a member of the Amherst School Board. Our phone numbers and e-mail addresses are listed below.

### **2009-2010 in Review**

The Amherst School Board would like to commend the administration 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 FY09 surplus of \$470,252 to the Amherst residents to reduce taxes on the December 2009 and July 2010 tax bills.

The renovations for Clark, Wilkins, and the Amherst Middle School, begun in the summer of 2008, were completed this past summer. As a result of these renovations, our schools are safer, healthier, more efficient, and more cost effective. I would like to thank Jim Miner, Director of Buildings and Grounds for all the work that he did in overseeing the project from start to finish. Thanks to Jim and his staff, the work went smoothly. Emphasis was on quality and fiscal responsibility—getting quality where quality counted and always keeping in mind the long-term costs involved in maintenance as well as the immediate costs.

In 2009 we implemented phase two of the Scott Foresman Core Reading Program. It is presently being used in all kindergarten classrooms and two classrooms at grades 1 and 2. Next year the program will be expanded to all classrooms at grades 1 and 2 and two classrooms at each of grades 3 through 6. Along with the highly valued guided reading program already in place, the Scott Foresman Program provides a strong literacy foundation for all students and reflects the district's strategy of emphasizing reading and writing across the curriculum.

The newly revised science curriculum is in year two of implementation and continues to expand with a focus on inquiry based science as seen in the real world.

In October 2008 the failure of a sub-group of children to achieve expected results in math on the state tests led to an examination of the math program at the elementary level with resulting benefits for all students. A committee formed to identify causes for the math deficits and develop an action plan to meet the School In Need of Improvement (SINI) requirements recommended changes that included enhanced math instruction focusing on the mastery of basic math facts; dedicated instructional blocks for math instruction; community, volunteer, and parent outreach to improve student mastery of material; and expansion of flexible grouping.

A successful new initiative in 2009 was the Response to Intervention Program which has resulted in lowered special education numbers. This program is geared toward the early identification and remediation of learning problems and provides varying tiers of support for children found to

be in need. At the heart of this program is a comprehensive testing program and increased sophistication in teacher use of test results to identify specific needs of individual children.

Teachers have been working at interpreting and using the results of the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) and DIBELS assessment for teaching purposes. Delayed start workshops initiated in 2008 have allowed in-depth teacher training in this area as well as time for the staff to analyze the data. Using the assessment data to identify instructional needs, the teachers from both Clark/Wilkins and the Amherst Middle School have pursued student focused goals consistent with the district's goal of "engaging, challenging and supporting all learners."

### **2010-2011 Looking Forward**

The operating budget warrant article 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 the operating budget warrant article appears below. I hope that you will take the time to become more familiar with these warrant articles. Because collective bargaining between the Amherst Educational Association and the Amherst School Board did not result in a contract this year, the expected warrant article outlining negotiated costs will not be presented.

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

Sincerely,

*Nancy Head*

Amherst School Board Chairperson

### **Amherst School Board**

Peg Bennett	peg.bennett@comcast.net	673-1404
Dwight Brew	dwight@brewgroup.com	673-5336
Rob Graybill	rob.graybill@yahoo.com	672-4793
Nancy Head	njhead@myfairpoint.net	673-1389
Peter Maresco	pmaresco@yahoo.com	423-1064

## 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 4, 2010 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

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#### **Deliberative Sessions**

7:00 p.m.  
SHS Auditorium

February 4<sup>th</sup>: Souhegan Cooperative School District  
February 3<sup>rd</sup>: Town of Amherst  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>: Amherst School District

#### **Ballot Vote**

6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
SHS Gymnasium

March 9<sup>th</sup>

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

[www.amherstnh.gov/townclerk/voters.html](http://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.

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**AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANNUAL MEETING WARRANT  
February 4, 2010 and March 9, 2010  
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 4, 2010, 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 article 12. 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 9, 2010, 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 12.)

*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 9, 2010, Souhegan High School, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

- Election of two (2) members of the School Board for the ensuing three (3) years.
- Election of school district clerk 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 **\$23,371,144**? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$23,007,421**, 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 by a vote of 4 to 0. The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.**

### Amherst School Board Commentary

*The proposed Amherst School District operating budget for the 2010-2011 (FY 2011) school year is \$23,371,144. This is an increase over last year's budget of \$156,142 or 0.67% over the FY2010 adopted budget.*

*Increases to this budget include health increases of 22.5%; dental increases of 5.5%; an increase in the state retirement for teachers of 15.23%; and a contractual wage increase for our support staff. In addition, the price of supplies and utilities has also increased.*

*Enrollment is predicted to be relatively flat overall. With shifting grade enrollments, however, it has been possible to reduce our professional staff by 3.5 teacher positions and our support staff by 2 positions. The budget continues to support adequate staffing at all grade levels and across curriculum levels, provide appropriate instructional materials at all levels, continue with the planned replacement of aging technical equipment, and provide adequate support for special education needs.*

*We have made every effort to keep costs down while continuing to maintain the quality of education that we want for our children. The Amherst School Board urges you to support this operating budget.*

### **ARTICLE 13**

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

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**Amherst School District  
Ways & Means Committee  
Report and Recommendations on FY11 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 to provide a recommendation to the Amherst School District. Two new members were added this year, bringing the total committee to seven members.

The committee worked with SAU39 Superintendent, Dr. Mary Jennings; SAU39 Business Administrator, Betty Shankel; Amherst Middle School Principal, Porter Dodge; Clark-Wilkins School Principal, Gerry St. Amand; Director of Special Instructional Services, 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 that of 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 FY11 proposed budget (Warrant Article 12). The FY11 proposed operating budget includes a minimal increase of 0.67%. This small increase, even in the face of very large benefit premium increases for health insurance and retirement contributions, shows the hard work, ingenuity and overall fiscal responsibility of the Amherst School Board and the administration. Once again, they have been able to maximize the efficient use of tax dollars, taking into consideration the difficult economic times that we are in, and still ensure a continued high quality education for Amherst School students.

We strongly urge the taxpayers of Amherst to attend the Deliberative Session on February 4, 2010, and to vote on March 9, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Vincent, Chair  
Deb Naro  
Tedd Landon  
David Yabroudy  
Steve Cummings  
Paul Prescott  
Stephanie Hall



## **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 FY11 school budget. The budget reflects a very minimal 0.67% increase over last year's budget. The increase the administration is proposing is driven primarily by an extremely high guaranteed maximum health insurance premium increase of 22.5% and an additional 5% retirement contribution mandated by the State. Yet, even faced with these sizeable spending increases, the overall budget increase is minimal. The Administration and the Amherst School Board did an exceptional job of balancing spending increases in some areas with cuts in others as well as resource allocation changes that result in increased efficiencies as well as cost savings. We can also see return on investment from the renovation project in the form of reduced fuel costs due to increased energy efficiency of the school buildings. Ways and Means would like to commend the Director of Buildings and Grounds, Jim Miner, for his excellent stewardship of this project and his continued efforts to get the most out of every tax dollar.

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.

**Amherst School District  
FY11 Budget Proposal Summary by Function**

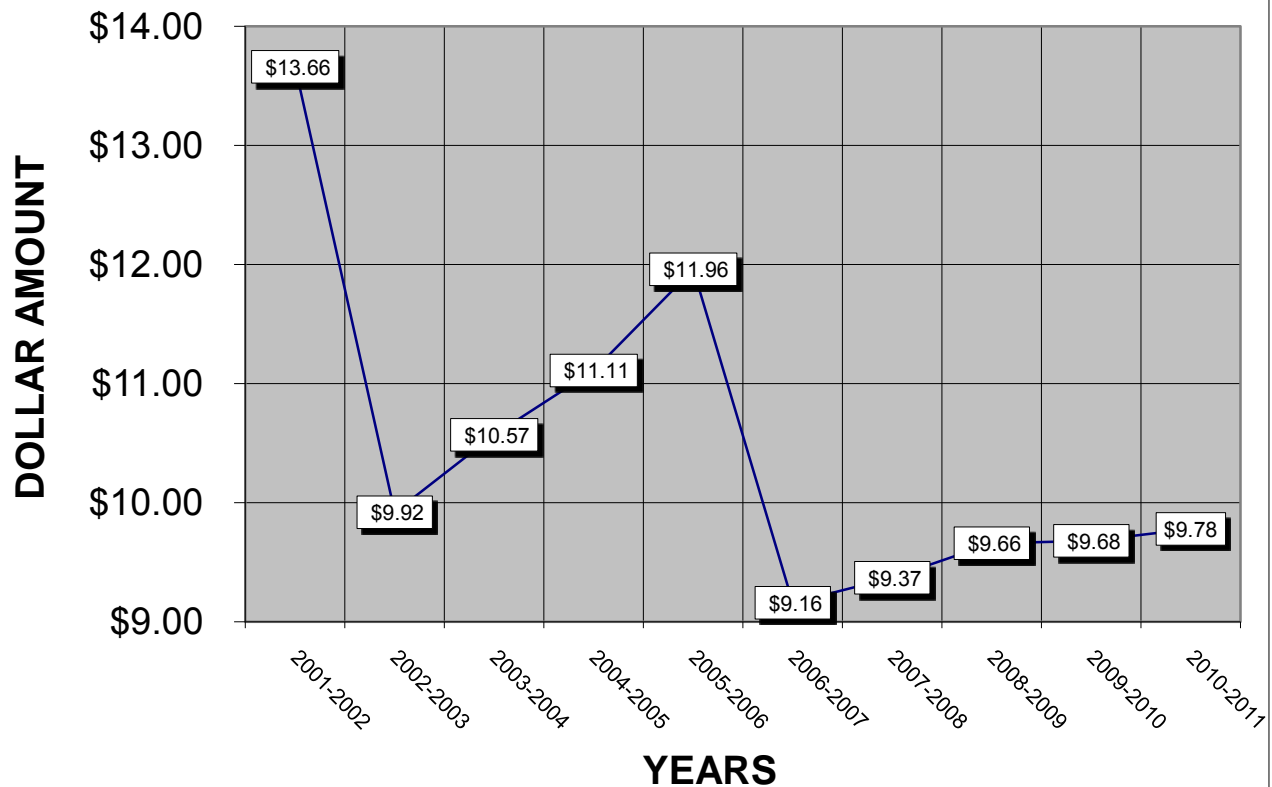
Function	Description	FY10 Adopted Budget	FY11 Proposed Budget	Variance \$	Variance %
1100-1199	<b>Regular Education Programs-</b> Teacher salaries, textbooks, substitutes, supplies	11,088,420.00	11,280,171.00	\$191,751.00	1.73%
1200-1299	<b>Special Education Programs-</b> Teacher salaries, aides, substitutes, evaluators, textbooks, supplies, and items specific to SPED	4,802,086.00	4,676,711.00	-\$125,375.00	-2.61%
1400-1499	<b>Co-Curricular Programs -</b> Interscholastics, intramurals, student body activities	99,339.00	101,199.00	\$1,860.00	1.87%
2000-2199	<b>Student Support Services-</b> Guidance, health, nurses, and SRO salaries	898,315.00	953,012.00	\$54,697.00	6.09%
2200-2299	<b>Instruction Support Services-</b> Library salaries, supplies, curriculum coordinators, professional development, consultants	446,479.00	463,091.00	\$16,612.00	3.72%
2300-2319	<b>School Board-</b> Treasurer, moderator, SB stipends, SB minute taker	115,034.00	82,847.00	-\$32,187.00	-27.98%
2320-311	<b>District Assessment - SAU 39</b> ASD portion of the SAU budget	1,013,847.00	1,043,806.00	\$29,959.00	2.95%
2400-2499	<b>School Administrative Services-</b> Principal salaries, office staff, office equipment	964,566.00	997,007.00	\$32,441.00	3.36%
2500-2599	<b>Business-</b> Printing costs	2,400.00	2,430.00	\$30.00	1.25%
2600-2699	<b>Operation and Plant Maintenance-</b> Custodial salaries, electricity, heating oil, water, trash, loss and liability insurance premiums, building maintenance	1,365,469.00	1,316,745.00	-\$48,724.00	-3.57%
2700-2799	<b>Student Transportation-</b> Bus contract, fuel	571,997.00	578,618.00	\$6,621.00	1.16%
2800-2899	<b>Support Service - Technology</b> Technology staff salaries, local and wide area network costs	251,086.00	339,925.00	\$88,839.00	35.38%
4000-4999	<b>Facilities Acquisition &amp; Construction -</b> Portable classrooms, site and building improvements	141,539.00	59,013.00	-\$82,526.00	-58.31%
5000-5199	<b>Debt Service - Principal &amp; Interest</b>	672,914.00	658,447.00	-\$14,467.00	-2.15%
5200-5299	<b>Fund Transfers</b>	5,000.00	10,000.00	\$5,000.00	100.00%
	<b>Total Fund 10</b>	<b>22,438,491.00</b>	<b>22,563,022.00</b>	<b>\$124,531.00</b>	<b>0.55%</b>
	<b>Fund 21 - Food Service</b>	<b>458,646.00</b>	<b>482,885.00</b>	<b>\$24,239.00</b>	<b>5.28%</b>
	<b>Fund 22 - Title Grants/IDEA Grant</b>	<b>317,865.00</b>	<b>325,237.00</b>	<b>\$7,372.00</b>	<b>2.32%</b>
	<b>Total General Budget</b>	<b>\$23,215,002.00</b>	<b>\$23,371,144.00</b>	<b>\$156,142.00</b>	<b>0.67%</b>

## SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL WARRANT ARTICLES AND FINANCIAL TAX IMPACT

If all articles on the warrant pass, the estimated school tax rate for the upcoming 2010-11 school year will be \$9.78.

		Amount	Tax Rate/\$1,000 Town Assessed Valuation
2009-10 Annual Amherst School District Tax Rate		\$ 23,215,002	\$ 9.68
Article 12	Operating Budget	\$ 23,371,144	\$ 0.10
FY11	2010-11 Amherst School District Estimated Tax Rate	\$ 23,371,144	\$ 9.78

### 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	1504
2010-11	1500	

### Historical\* and Projected Grade by Grade Enrollments

	K	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 <sup>a</sup>	8 <sup>a</sup>	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	92	0	147	134	153	184	189	165	216	224	1504
2010-11	102	0	140	147	134	156	184	196	220	221	1500

<sup>a</sup>Includes Grades 7 and 8 students from Mont Vernon.

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

**AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FY11 REVENUE PROJECTION**

<b>Ln</b>	<b>Acct #</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>2009-2010 DRA</b>	<b>2010-2011 Proposed</b>	<b>Change</b>
1		General Fund Expenditures	\$22,438,491	\$22,563,022	\$124,531
2		Special Revenue and Food Service	\$776,511	\$808,122	\$31,611
3		<b>Budgeted Expenditures (All Funds)</b>	<b>\$23,215,002</b>	<b>\$23,371,144</b>	<b>\$156,142</b>
4	770	<b>Unreserved Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$470,252</b>	<b>\$233,711</b>	<b>(\$236,541)</b>
5		<b>State Aid</b>			
6	3210	School Building Aid	\$156,988	\$145,500	(\$11,488)
7	3230	Catastrophic Aid	\$183,502	\$135,000	(\$48,502)
10	3280	Medicaid	\$50,000	\$85,000	\$35,000
12		<b>Subtotal: State Aid</b>	<b>\$390,490</b>	<b>\$365,500</b>	<b>(\$24,990)</b>
13		<b>Federal Aid</b>			
14	4500	Grants In Aid	\$308,665	\$319,037	\$10,372
15		<b>Subtotal: Federal Aid</b>	<b>\$308,665</b>	<b>\$319,037</b>	<b>\$10,372</b>
16		<b>Local Revenue</b>			
17	1311	Tuition - Parents	\$7,000	\$3,500	(\$3,500)
18	1320	Tuition - Mont Vernon	\$829,275	\$1,088,960	\$259,685
19	1510	Interest Income	\$100,000	\$50,000	(\$50,000)
20	1600	Food Service	\$453,858	\$482,885	\$29,027
21	1910	Rentals	\$16,400	\$1,500	(\$14,900)
22	1920	Spaulding/Lawrence Trust Fund	\$6,000	\$3,000	(\$3,000)
23	1920	Boutelle Grant	\$3,200	\$3,200	\$0
24	1951	Services Provided Other LEA's	\$26,500	\$25,000	(\$1,500)
25	1990	Other	\$35,000	\$33,000	(\$2,000)
26		<b>Subtotal: Local Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,477,233</b>	<b>\$1,691,045</b>	<b>\$213,812</b>
27		<b>Assessment:</b>			
28		Budgeted Expenditures (All Funds)	\$23,215,002	\$23,371,144	\$156,142
29		Less Unreserved Fund Balance	\$470,252	\$233,711	(\$236,541)
30		Less Subtotal: State Aid	\$390,490	\$365,500	(\$24,990)
31		Less Subtotal: Federal Aid	\$308,665	\$319,037	\$10,372
32		Less Subtotal: Local Revenue	\$1,477,233	\$1,691,045	\$213,812
33	1111	<b>Current Appropriation</b>	<b>\$20,568,362</b>	<b>\$20,761,851</b>	<b>\$193,489</b>
34	1111	Current Appropriation	\$20,568,362	\$20,761,851	\$193,489
35		<b>Total Appropriation</b>	<b>\$20,568,362</b>	<b>\$20,761,851</b>	<b>\$193,489</b>
36		Total Appropriation	\$20,568,362	\$20,761,851	\$193,489
37		Less Adequacy Aid Grant-ASD Portion	\$2,658,717	\$2,658,676	(\$41)
38		Subtotal-Appropriation paid by Local & State Tax	\$17,909,645	\$18,103,175	\$193,530
39		Less State Property Tax - ASD Portion	\$2,506,753	\$2,413,776	(\$92,977)
40		<b>Amherst School District Tax Assessment</b>	<b>\$15,402,892</b>	<b>\$15,689,399</b>	<b>\$286,507</b>
41		Local Assessed Valuation - with Utilities	\$1,856,029,700	\$1,856,029,700	\$0
42		Local Assessed Valuation - less Utilities	\$1,820,483,500	\$1,820,483,500	\$0
43		<b>Estimated Tax Impact</b>			
44		ASD State Property Tax Rate (per \$1,000)	\$1.38	\$1.33	(\$0.05) *1
45		ASD Local Education Tax Rate (per \$1,000)	\$8.30	\$8.45	\$0.15 *2
46		<b>Total ASD Tax Rate (Local + State)</b>	<b>\$9.68</b>	<b>\$9.78</b>	<b>\$0.10</b> *3
47		<b>Adequacy Grant Aid savings to ASD Rate</b>	<b>\$1.43</b>	<b>\$1.43</b>	<b>(\$0.00)</b>

\*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 \$9.78 per \$1,000

# Amherst School District FY11 Default Budget Calculation

<b>Adopted 2009-2010 Budget</b>		<b>\$ 23,215,002</b>
<b>REDUCTIONS</b>		
	Teacher Salaries	\$ 353,975
	Support Salaries	\$ 11,974
	Technology & Instructional Equipment	\$ 32,680
	Teaching Supplies & Textbooks	\$ 54,161
	Contracted Services	\$ 36,825
	School Board Expense	\$ 1,293
	Building Operations & Site Maintenance	\$ 153,215
	Electric/Fuel	\$ 53,670
	Debt Service	\$ 14,467
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 712,260</b>
<b>ADDITIONS</b>		
	Transportation Expenses	\$ 6,621
	Out of District Tuition	\$ 38,964
	SAU Assessment	\$ 29,959
	District Share of Employee Benefits	\$ 404,477
	Food Service Fund (Benefits)	\$ 17,286
	Grant Fund	\$ 7,372
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 504,679</b>
	<b>FY 2010-2011 Default Budget</b>	<b>\$ 23,007,421</b>
	<b>FY 2010-2011 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>\$ 23,371,144</b>
	<b>Difference Between Default Budget and Proposed Budget</b>	<b>\$ 363,723</b>

**ABSENTEE  
OFFICIAL BALLOT  
ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION  
AMHERST, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
MARCH 9, 2010**

  
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 3 YEARS) more than TWO

**"PEG" BENNETT**

☐☐

(Write-in)

☐

(Write-in)

**FOR SCHOOL  
DISTRICT CLERK**

Vote for not  
(For 1 YEAR) more than ONE

**NANCY T. BAKER**

☐☐

(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 **\$23,371,144**? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$23,007,421**, 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 by a vote of 4 to 0. The Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.**

**YES** ☐

**NO** ☐

## **AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT 2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

### **Superintendent's Report**

#### **Mary Athey Jennings, Superintendent of Schools**

The 2008-09 School Year in the Amherst Schools marked the third year of our Five-year Strategic Plan focusing on individual student achievement. We continued to work on our goal of improved literacy instruction for all students while expanding our professional skills in the use of student data.

The FY09 budget was \$23,163,153. At year's end we were able to return \$470,252 of this budget amount to the Amherst residents to reduce taxes. With declines in student enrollment and attendant declines in staffing, we were able to keep the current year's budget increase at 1.99%. The Amherst professional staff, AEA, was in the second year of a three year contract, while the Amherst support staff, ASSA, was in the third year of a three year negotiated settlement.

At AMS, Principal Porter Dodge and Assistant Principal Deb Martel continued to lead the school, while at Clark/Wilkins, Principal Gerry St. Amand and Assistant Principal Meg Trainor added Susan Blair to the administrative team. With the continued use of Late Starts for professional development, both schools worked closely with their faculties to closely monitor student work and to learn new skills.

Joining with Mont Vernon and Souhegan, the Amherst Schools have worked to create a seamless educational experience for all students, full of educational opportunities and personal attention for each student. We appreciate the support of the Amherst community for our educational program and for the budget that supports it.

### **Clark-Wilkins School 2009 Annual Report**

#### **Gerard J. St. Amand, Principal**

Phase One of the Clark-Wilkins building renovations began during the 2009 fiscal year with the replacement of many windows, improvements to the Wilkins School kitchen and cafeteria, the expansion of storage areas, and remodeling to the foyers of both schools. Phase Two renovations will continue throughout fiscal year 2010, including redesigned main offices, conference areas, health offices, heating systems, lighting, art room renovations, installation of lifts and greater handicapped accessibility.

In addition to a full time literacy coach, Katy Kennedy, who provides professional development and training to all staff members in the areas of reading, writing, and speaking, Clark-Wilkins also brought on board our first mathematics coach-mathematics



specialist, Jennifer Eccleston, who supports all teachers and students in the area of mathematics. The mathematics coach provides professional development and training to all staff members, while the mathematics specialist provides direct support to at-risk students in the area of mathematics.

We continue to expand our knowledge base and expertise in the area of data collection and analysis in order to use data to better inform our instructional practices. All students continue to take the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills—DIBELS—at least three times per year in grade levels Kindergarten through four. Additionally, all students in grades two, three, and four take the computerized Northwest Evaluation Assessment—NWEA—in the areas of reading and mathematics. All of our third and fourth graders participate in the state mandated New England Common Assessment Program—NECAP—in the fall in the areas of reading and mathematics. Fourth graders also take the science NECAP in May. Overall, our students continue to make progress and demonstrate growth with all assessments, although Clark-Wilkins did not make Adequate Yearly Progress—AYP—in the area of mathematics with our educationally disabled subgroup. A Clark-Wilkins School Improvement Team began work in June 2009 to address our designation as a School In Need of Improvement, based on the results of the 2008 October NECAP.

Various committees continue to look at our curriculum areas and programs such as reading, with the hope of continuing to help all students at Clark-Wilkins become proficient readers, writers, and speakers at their designated grade levels. Our science curriculum continues to involve a strong connection to the Peabody Mill Environmental Center and our students benefit from the hands-on learning this relationship provides. In the area of social studies, our third graders continue to study the Amherst community, past and present, with a strong connection to the Amherst Historical Society and visits to many of the older homes in Amherst Village. Our elementary students continue to increase their “technology literacy” and have exposure to and experience with a wide range of technology tools to support their learning across all curricular areas.

The Amherst PTA continues to provide tremendous support to Clark-Wilkins through a wide offering of curriculum enrichment activities at all grade levels, the funding of teacher grants in the spring, and by offering a variety of programs such as Reflections, the Chili Cook-off, and Family Mathematics Night. The Clark-Wilkins Volunteer Program continues to log thousands of volunteer hours contributed by parents, neighbors and community members who support activities ranging from field trip chaperones and lunchroom helpers, to classroom and Field Day volunteers. The support of the Amherst PTA, the Clark-Wilkins Volunteer Program, and the general support of the Amherst community continue to benefit all of the students who attend Clark-Wilkins.

## **Amherst Middle School Report**

### **Porter Dodge, Principal**

It is hard to believe that this is my fifth annual report to the citizens of Amherst and Mont Vernon. As principal, I am proud of our continued commitment to the education and safety of our children. Every day, our dedicated and caring professional and paraprofessional support staffs work hard to challenge all learners and make a positive difference in the lives of our children.

We are mid-way through year three of the SAU #39 five-year Literacy Initiative. Our Math and Literacy Coaches help support teachers in grades five and six in promoting cutting edge strategies such as *Understanding by Design*, *Flexible Grouping*, and *Differentiated Instruction*. The entire school strives to include more reading and writing across all grades and subjects. We continue to actively promote technology integration throughout the school, and our two technology labs and multiple wireless computer carts are booked solid by the classroom teachers. The AMS Jazz Band, Grades 5-8 Bands, 5-8 Choruses, Theater Club, and Solo Ensemble promote the performing arts. Where often the budget cannot support programs, financial support comes from the Amherst PTA and the Amherst Junior Women's Club to enhance education.

Middle School students participate in the Environmental Schools at grades six and eight each year. The grade seven OXFAM Project, thematic units such as HIV/AIDS, Project Safeguard, Mock Trial, Greek Week, Wells Public Speaking, Geography Bee, The Sixties, Science Fair, and Spelling Bee, are some examples where we provide excellent integrated learning experiences each year.

Our Interscholastic Athletics and Co-Curricular programs see 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, plus a wide selection of clubs and after-school intramural sports. We have an active Student Council that sponsors events and promotes programs throughout the year. Additionally, the Amherst Recreation Commission works closely with us to provide needed space and programs to our students. The Souhegan Boys and Girls Clubs offer a wide variety of experiences in its After-School Enrichment Program at their Milford site where participating students are bussed each day.

Each year AMS promotes a school-wide theme of mutual respect for people and property, and we strive to hold every child accountable. Our school is a friendly place to learn and our goal is to create a safe and bully-free environment. For this to be achieved, we ask every parent to get involved with their child's education as much as possible. Our staff, and School Resource Officer, Mike Knox, work hard to develop positive and trusting relationships with students. Our most precious resources, we encourage them to accept and exceed the academic rigor and challenge that their schools bring to them.

## **Special Instructional Services' Report**

### **Renea Sparks, Director**

During the 2008-2009 school year, the Special Instructional Services Department throughout the Amherst School District worked toward the implementation of Response to Intervention. In addition, Special Educators at Clark/Wilkins were in classrooms providing early intervening services to assist students in the classroom.

As the 2008-2009 school year was my first year as Director of Special Instructional Services, I employed the strategies of "The Entry Plan Approach" to gather as much information as I could prior to making any significant organizational changes. I interviewed over 50 personnel (or over 10% of the staff) throughout the SAU. I also worked with a small group of parents and we developed a survey that was sent to each of the families of children with special needs in order to assess further training needs. I would like to thank all families who participated in the survey. The return rate of the survey was over 16%. The information will be invaluable to the training plan for the district. I presented the results of the interviews, observations, and the survey to the SAU School Board in May, 2009.

In addition, I held regular meetings with the Guidance and Nursing departments for the District. As I have come to know these individuals over the past year, I am impressed with their dedication and commitment to their students and families. They are an amazing group of professionals!

The Special Education teachers and Related Services providers continue their roles as 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 continues to assure that individualized specialization occurs as required by the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and they have continued to take on leadership and supporting roles to building Leadership Literacy teams, and Professional Development committees.

In the spring of 2009, the District had to make plans for the H1N1 virus. We did this by working with the NH Regional Disaster Preparedness Coordinator as well as the NH Department of Education. As the predictions were made known, the district responded with making the appropriate preparations for not only last spring, but also for the current school year.

I would also like to recognize the work of the Support Staff of the Amherst School District. I have gotten to know many of these individuals as part of my Entry Plan interviews and observations and I am so proud of their commitment to our students. I am pleased that the Amherst Support Staff Association contract was approved by all for the next three years.

At the end of the 2008-2009 school year, the District was informed that they would be receiving funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The Special Education Department worked with the Building Administrators to thoughtfully plan for the use of these funds and I look forward to providing ongoing information as this initiative continues until 2011.

Respectfully submitted,  
Renea A. Sparks  
Director of Special Instructional Services

Amherst School District  
Actual Expenditures for Special Education Programs and Services  
FY 2007-2008 and FY 2008-2009 per RSA 32:11a

ITEM	FY 2007-2008	FY 2008-2009
REVENUES		
Catastrophic Aid	\$109,756.26	\$90,539.43
IDEA Grant	\$226,359.25	\$256,606.48
Medicaid	<u>\$85,666.56</u>	<u>\$91,441.69</u>
Total Revenues	\$421,782.07	\$438,587.60
EXPENDITURES		
Salaries	\$2,679,878	\$2,956,151
Employee Benefits	\$1,083,746	\$1,243,218
Purchased Services	\$482,280	\$586,557
Supplies	\$28,589	\$29,164
Equipment	\$10,128	\$22,604
Other	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$250</u>
Total Expenditures	\$4,284,621	\$4,837,944
Net Cost of Special Education	\$3,862,839	\$4,399,357
Source DOE 25		

Amherst School District  
Report of the Treasurer to the Amherst School Board  
Fiscal Year 07/01/2008-06/30/2009

Cash on hand- as of 07/01/2008	636,098.63
Total Receipts- 07/01/2008-06/30/2009	22,697,247.27
Total Payments-07/01/2008-06/30/2009	<u>(21,784,990.26)</u>
Cash Balance- as of 06/30/2009	1,548,355.64

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

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/ S /  
Janice Bunker, Treasurer

MH&Co

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, 2009, 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, 2009, 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, and the supplementary information appearing on page 31, are not a required part of the basic financial statements but are supplementary information required by

*Additional Offices:*

*Andover, MA Manchester, NH Greenfield, MA Ellsworth, ME*

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 23, 2009

AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT  
GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS  
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2009

	<u>General</u>	<u>Capital Projects Fund</u>	<u>Expendable Trust Fund</u>	<u>Nonmajor Governmental Funds</u>	<u>Total Governmental Funds</u>
<b>Revenues:</b>					
School district assessments	\$ 20,093,366	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,093,366
Intergovernmental	1,220,988	-	-	413,506	1,634,494
Charges for services	-	-	-	441,251	441,251
Investment income	46,779	53,396	1,864	-	102,039
Miscellaneous	84,081	-	-	475	84,556
Total Revenues	<u>21,445,214</u>	<u>53,396</u>	<u>1,864</u>	<u>855,232</u>	<u>22,355,706</u>
<b>Expenditures:</b>					
Current:					
Regular programs	10,555,779	-	-	62,059	10,617,838
Special programs	4,533,457	-	-	259,384	4,792,841
Other instructional programs	81,543	-	-	-	81,543
Student services	858,731	-	-	-	858,731
Instructional staff	506,740	-	-	12,828	519,568
General administration - SAU level	1,080,582	-	-	-	1,080,582
School administration	965,387	-	-	-	965,387
Operation/maintenance of plant	1,520,070	-	-	-	1,520,070
Student transportation	564,909	-	-	-	564,909
Centralized services	267,242	-	-	-	267,242
Food service operations	-	-	-	509,470	509,470
Other	2,026	-	-	34,715	36,741
Capital improvements and acquisitions	266,315	2,375,104	-	-	2,641,419
Debt service	414,771	-	-	-	414,771
Total Expenditures	<u>21,617,552</u>	<u>2,375,104</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>878,456</u>	<u>24,871,112</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	(172,338)	(2,321,708)	1,864	(23,224)	(2,515,406)
<b>Other Financing Sources (Uses):</b>					
Bond proceeds	-	3,995,000	-	-	3,995,000
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	<u>-</u>	<u>3,995,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,995,000</u>
Change in fund balances	(172,338)	1,673,292	1,864	(23,224)	1,479,594
Fund Balances, at Beginning of Year	<u>732,725</u>	<u>(53,403)</u>	<u>125,057</u>	<u>78,607</u>	<u>882,986</u>
Fund Balances, at End of Year	<u>\$ 560,387</u>	<u>\$ 1,619,889</u>	<u>\$ 126,921</u>	<u>\$ 55,383</u>	<u>\$ 2,362,580</u>

See notes to the financial statements.