

SAU #39 Board

Thursday, November 15th 2018

Meeting Minutes-Approved 12 20 18

Administrative Team: Adam Steel- Superintendent, and Christine Landwehrle- Assistant Superintendent

Amherst School Board: Galen Tremblay- Chair, Elizabeth Kuzsma- Vice Chair, John Glover- Secretary, and Terri Behm.

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Jim Manning- Chair, Pim Grondstra- Vice-Chair, Howard Brown, Amy Facey, and David Chen.

Mont Vernon School Board: Thomas Driscoll-Chair, Sarah Lawrence-Vice Chair, Kim Roberge and Stephen O'Keefe.

Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

Public: Joe Bennett- Community Council Liaison

I. Call to Order

Chair Ms. Amy Facey called the meeting to order at 6:07PM

II. Public Input

No Public Comment

III. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Mr. Adam Steel discussed that he has been in touch with NH Government Officials and they may or may not have school tomorrow it will be an early decision. They are expected to get about 6-8 inches of snow.

Ms. Facey introduced the Community Council Liaison, Mr. Joe Bennett, noting that he is a non-voting member but will be sitting with the Board during meetings.

Mr. Steel noted that Director of SAU #39 Operations, Mr. Porter Dodge, will hold a Public Forum on Wednesday December 5th. He will have more details, they will then publish a survey and then he will give his recommendations.

The Joint Facilities Committee has been meeting every week and they have requested a joint meeting with the ASB and the SCSB on Monday, December 3rd to give them their recommendations. He just wanted to let the MVVSB know.

In regards to Strategic Planning, he has started to meet with individual faculty getting feedback and starting to roll out the elements, leading into the Deliberative Sessions. That is the time we have the most engagement with the community.

He then reviewed the Current State.

He then reviewed the foundational strategies. With Advisory, it is important that someone at the school has a relationship that spans multiple of years. At the HS they are redesigning their program, at AMS, they are designing their program and at the elementary level they are doing this with Responsive Classroom. Second, Articulated Curriculum, largely they are in great shape there. Third, Performance Assessment, a group of educators visited from NM earlier this week and they were highly impressed. Fourth, Grading and Reporting, they have had a huge transformation and it has been very successful for them. The students will be demonstrating what they have learned. Fifth, Effective Human Resources, this means the right number of staff with the proper training. Those five things are building blocks.

Next, Instructional Strategies, they have changed how they report out and articulate, with things like project based learning becoming normative behavior. Adequate learning Spaces, that are appropriate for the curriculum, air quality, lighting, acoustic separation and temperature, etc. these are critical. Schedule Design, they are not changing their school year, the school day has to be thought out. That is a big change and down the road. Last, this is all leading to having a pathway and a plan for each learner. It has to be fiscally prudent along the way.

This will go to the faculty and then the communities and they will continue the implementation process.

Mr. Brown added that there has to be assurances to the parents that the colleges will be accepting of their students.

Mr. Steel replied that he agreed and added that it is his belief that they will be at an advantage as they can properly tell colleges what the students have learned.

He then reviewed the SAU wide goals (next 1-3 year timeframe).

- Complete curriculum articulation P-12 and establish on-going review cycle.
- Redesign and implement Advisory 1-12.
- Extend implementation of performance assessment
- Complete implementation of grading and reporting transformation.
- Design strategy to on-board new staff and continually build capacity of existing staff to new strategic directions.
- Develop long-term building and facilities plan that supports out direction, (ties into consolidation discussion).
- Prepare instructional strategy redesign process, (several years' project, they are in the early years).
- Design future road-map for schedule redesign and plan for each learner.

Ms. Facey commented that they never got to get information from the individual boards.

Chair of the MVVSB, Mr. Tom Driscoll, noted that they have been discussing the budget and staffing. They have had increases in special education and Principal of AMS, Ms. Bethany Bernasconi, came and talked about the transition process. They also had Fall NWEA results, which were good.

72 The Board thanked Mr. Driscoll.

73 Chair of the SCSB Mr. Jim Manning, noted that there is a new SHS play and the athletic
74 programs are doing very well. The big thing is the budget and the biggest driver is special
75 education costs. The reason for that is because they had shifted it to outside providers and they
76 now need to provide those services as well.

77 Mr. Driscoll asked if it is because they have new students.

78 Mr. Manning replied that they now have to provide services to those students that are coming
79 from AMS.

80 Mr. Glover asked if that is to build the programs.

81 Ms. Roberge asked about tuitioning in students.

82 Superintendent Steel mentioned that once it is established and if they have excess capacity then
83 they will take students in from other districts.

84 Mr. Manning remarked that they have outstanding special education programs.

85 Superintendent Steel added the programs are better for kids and much less expensive.

86 The Board thanked Mr. Manning.

87 Vice-Chair of the ASB, Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma, discussed that they are also adding teachers and
88 discussing the budget. Board Member, Mr. Kevin Shea is leaving the board due to a relocation in
89 employment to FL. They are hoping to fill the role, potentially, by their next Board Meeting,
90 Monday, December 10th. Anyone interested is requested to send a Letter of Interest to
91 Superintendent Steel asteel@sprise.com This will fill until March and then it will be up for a
92 two year cycle.

93 The Board thanked Ms. Kuzsma.

94 The Board thanked Superintendent Steel.

95 IV. Consent Agenda

96 **Mr. Pim Grondstra motioned to accept the Consent Agenda 1. Minutes of October 2nd,**
97 **2018, 2. Treasurer's Report 3. SAU Budget Transfer and 4. SAU 39 Q1 Expenditure**
98 **Report. Mr. Thomas Driscoll seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

99 Ms. Facey reminded the Board that at the October or November meeting last year they approved
100 a new Superintendent Evaluation Form. She is requesting that the Board fill it out by Saturday,
101 Jan 15th 2019 to give Superintendent Steel the full 6 months. Please submit it to her and she will
102 pass it along to Mr. Steel. It is also online and she can have his Assistant, Ms. Marie Maruca
103 send it out.

104 The asked the Board if they had any questions. They have more time to discuss it at the next
105 SAU meeting.

- 106 Mr. Chen asked about the process afterwards.
- 107 Ms. Facey replied that SAU Chair will meet with him and all of the forms. Superintendent Steel
108 has requested to see the individual forms.
- 109 Mr. Steel added that it is important that they complete this by next October. It is stated in his
110 contract that they need to notify him prior to November 1st if he is no longer needed for the
111 following July 1st.
- 112 Mr. Glover asked about the SAU budget and his increases.
- 113 Superintendent Steel replied that the SAU does not have a default budget. His contract for the
114 second year does not include an increase.
- 115 Ms. Lawrence asked about clarification and is looking for direction.
- 116 Mr. Steel replied that each board set goals this year and some that are SAU wide. They might
117 want to articulate goals for him next year.
- 118 The Board thanked Superintendent Steel.
- 119 Ms. Facey suggested they use their individual board goals to complete the form.
- 120 V. FY 20 Budget
- 121 Superintendent Steel noted that each of the Board Members should have received a link to the
122 Google Docs last week.
- 123 He further discussed that health insurance has gone up with increases and then two employees
124 have elected to take health insurance, that it is about a \$77,881 increase.
- 125 Salary and Position Adjustments are (-\$13, 117), Legal Expenses have risen \$9,000, and some
126 minor things have increased \$946. The total increase is \$74,710.
- 127 He then discussed the Apportionment, Amherst 56.28%, Mont Vernon 7.95%, Souhegan 35.77%
128 for a total of 100%.
- 129 Discussion ensued over the SAU Budget Committee.
- 130 Tonight they will review the proposed budget, then the SAU Budget Committee will prepare
131 their recommendations and then on 12/20/18 they will have a Public Hearing and they will
132 approve the budget.
- 133 Mr. Steel noted that in the future they will need additional staff in the area of Curriculum,
134 Assessment and Grading. They are not including a position this year, although they certainly
135 could use it, they will wait a year.
- 136 Ms. Tremblay asked for a link for questions.
- 137 Superintendent Steel replied that he will send it out.
- 138 Mr. Driscoll asked about the health insurance rates plus elections.

139 Mr. Steel replied that it was two people and then rate increases of approximately 10%. That is
140 the guaranteed maximum rate.

141 Mr. Driscoll asked about the incentive.

142 Mr. Steel responded that they did offer an incentive and \$1,000 is not a great amount to keep
143 people on their spouse's insurance.

144 The Board thanked Superintendent Steel.

145 VI. Consolidation Discussion

146 Ms. Facey commented that they have been discussing consolidation for quite some time now.
147 They had a 4 Chairs Meeting yesterday and the possible configuration is to increase the SCSD to
148 include 5th or 6th grade. Mont Vernon would then keep their school from Pre K to either grades 5
149 or 6 and Amherst would decrease to Pre K- to grade 4 or 5. They need time tonight to talk about
150 it and if they want to move forward and possibly put something on the ballot for this year.

151 She is looking for each Board Chair to weigh in.

152 Mr. Driscoll responded that their board did not talk about that option. They had a fair amount of
153 public attendance at their last meeting discussing consolidation. They reviewed the history and
154 looked as it was proposed. For cost and reason, it was lacking. The audience was supportive in
155 doing what is best for the students. With the 6th grade students there is a lot of opportunity there.
156 There are still some questions and costs and how would that work.

157 Ms. Tremblay discussed that idea of expansion to the 5th or 6th wasn't discussed much. They are
158 willing to talk about it and are at capacity at Wilkins already. They have some tough decisions
159 and they go hand in hand. Additionally, they are not sure whether it will pass or not. They see
160 the benefit and know there is a challenge in the transition from 8th to 9th grade. It is a question of
161 where the kids are going to go in either situation.

162 Mr. Manning noted that he spoke with each of the board members and they all agree that
163 consolidation needs to happen in some way. One Board Member noted that they were cautiously
164 support of it. Their position is to find a common ground that works.

165 Ms. Facey asked for other Board Member thoughts.

166 She then asked Superintendent Steel to articulate what they have to gain.

167 Superintendent Steel responded that there are some challenges. First, they have a split middle
168 school experience for their 5th and 6th graders (in both towns), challenging learning environments
169 (air quality, inefficient design, outdated finishes) and last, they have an artificial "grade" barrier
170 at the 8th grade.

171 The Building and Facility Projects, SAU Design Issues, all seem to dovetail together.

172 He then reviewed the potential Expanded Cooperative School District:

173 Grades 5-12: continues athletics/EC participation to 5th grade, will require moderate expansion of
174 AMS, and implementation likely a year sooner than alternative.

175 Grades 6-12: turns into a typical middle school model in NH are grades 6-8, will require more
176 extensive CW construction project, less extensive renovation to AMS- no addition, and
177 implementation likely a year or two later than alternative.

178 He and his leadership team have been discussing the possibilities between the two options and
179 they both have pros and cons.

180 He then explained the timeline: Now-Confirm strategic direction, FY 19-FY 20-Determine
181 Building Programs, March 2020-Obtain voter approval, 2020-2022/2023- Construction Projects,
182 and July 1st 2021-2023-Implement.

183 Mr. Driscoll asked about the cost associated with the buildings.

184 Mr. Steel explained how the coop is currently configured. He added that he is not sure.

185 Ms. Roberge commented that this is the first that they are discussing this option. She asked if
186 they are looking to put another committee together. There is lots of discussion that is still needed.
187 That would be exciting for their 6th graders.

188 Ms. Kuzsma asked if it is a possibility to expand the cooperative to 5-12 but MV would choose
189 not to send their 5th graders.

190 Mr. Steel replied, probably not, but he will have to ask legal counsel.

191 Mr. Manning commented that if you do not clearly articulated vision the public, or your market,
192 will fill it in with their own worst fears. There are some pragmatic pieces to this. They are going
193 to have to give up traditional, comfortable stuff. They have to believe in where they are going.
194 He recommended that they get a group together to answer the questions, a month or two, there is
195 no reason to wait.

196 Ms. Behm remarked that they need to get their own house in order before, and believes that it is
197 too soon. She needs to know where they are going to put students first.

198 Mr. Kuzsma remarked that there is some of this that can overlap in the timeline.

199 Ms. Behm remarked that she does not want to have anything on the ballot this year,

200 Mr. Chen asked if there are costs related to put it on the ballot this year.

201 Mr. Steel added that it can be done in a few different ways.

202 Mr. Chen asked about the deadline dates and how does it affect anything. He added that there
203 will be expenses, such as legal fees.

204 Mr. Steel replied, late Jan, but if there are appropriation costs then it is sooner. There is no
205 backing out once voters have approved it.

206 Mr. Chen asked if it was a supermajority. He added that he agrees with Ms. Behm in that he is
207 concerned.

208 Superintendent Steel replied that he will check NH RSA 195.

209 Mr. Manning mentioned that he is talking about exploring it now and get a read. He added that
210 they need to look at the educational experience and they need to have that “why” first.

211 Ms. Lawrence agreed with Mr. Manning in that she is also greatly concerned with the
212 educational experience. She then asked what is the model that they are going for.

213 Mr. Glover remarked that he does not want to limit the new committee to any particular
214 consolidation and suggested that they look at the best configuration.

215 Ms. Roberge commented that they did not find much benefit for their K-5. She thinks that is
216 backtracking and they have already done that. She is looking for Mr. Steve Coughlan’s Analysis
217 Chart on Risks and Benefits.

218 Ms. Behm remarked that it (consolidation) has been visited so often and this new structure is
219 exciting and could possibly help everyone. She is not against starting to talk about it but they are
220 in budget season and now the holidays. Their current spaces are at capacity. She is a part of the
221 Joint Facilities Committee and they talk a lot about teaching the kids the way they are moving
222 towards.

223 Mr. Grondstra mentioned that he agrees with Ms. Behm. He commented that in the past there has
224 been a lot of push back from MV. With the new configuration, he is excited to see the
225 momentum. He suggested that they have a targeted mission and do it the right way.

226 Ms. Kuzsma noted that they are in the perfect timing opportunity right now. She then suggested
227 that they talk about it at the Public Hearing and Deliberative Session, with the greatest amount of
228 citizen involvement. They don’t need to have anything on the ballot for this March. They can
229 start these discussions sooner, and are in a good spot. This is the first option that can get buy-in.
230 They can also tell the voters that they haven’t forgotten and are still working on it. She will serve
231 on that committee if needed.

232 Mr. Chen asked about having a checkpoint on the ballot and get voter input. He then asked if
233 there was an intermediate way that they can do this.

234 Ms. Lawrence added that people are ready to have this discussion and if they are going to talk
235 about it do it now with this momentum. It is the right time to do something and further the
236 discussion.

237 Superintendent Steel added that the Amherst facilities issue dovetails with configuration of
238 consolidation quite well. He is curious about Board Member opinion about 5th grade being
239 included and it seems like there are strong feelings about that. He is wondering, from a legal
240 standpoint, if Amherst 5th graders can be a part of the coop while MV 5th graders are not. He
241 added then the timeline can be much more aggressive if it needed to be.

242 Mr. Glover commented that he is pleased with the way the conversation is going in general. He
243 suggested that they present it to their respective towns in that this is what this will look like, with
244 facilities, curriculum, etc. and to be ready for movement on the ballot. That will keep it moving
245 and it is consistent with what Mr. Manning had been saying.

246 Ms. Tremblay remarked that it would be great if the 6th, 7th and 8th graders could all be together.

247 Mr. Manning commented that new things get voted down in the beginning, although, not in
248 every case. He commented on the practical problems of decreasing enrollment at SHS and
249 increasing enrollment at AMS. He then suggested that they work to economies of scale. He
250 emphasized that they do their work now for the Town and the children, or else they will miss an
251 opportunity. It is important for their communities to listen to each other and strike while the iron
252 is hot.

253 Ms. Behm amended her original message and suggested that they investigate it and come to the
254 Deliberative Session with the same general message.

255 Ms. Facey asked what needs to happen to put it on the ballot and asked the Board how they felt if
256 Superintendent Steel and his team looked into it. They would have to go back to their respective
257 Boards for further discussion.

258 Mr. Steel replied mid-January, they would have to amendment of the Articles of Agreement, a
259 timeline associated with that (an effective date would have to be a year out). There are lots of
260 questions that have not been answered yet. All of the staffing issues, logistical issues, would
261 need to be worked out and addressed. The legal process isn't as intense as the logistical and
262 political process.

263 Mr. Grondstra asked if those questions have to be answered before it goes on the ballot.

264 Mr. Steel replied that it would be an acquisition not a merger.

265 Mr. Chen asked if voting in March is the point of no return, there are some things that could stop
266 it.

267 Superintendent Steel suggested that they have a meeting with legal counsel to answer more
268 questions.

269 Ms. Kuzsma suggested having one representative from each board.

270 Discussion ensued.

271 Mr. Glover asked what is the question that will be on the ballot.

272 Ms. Facey suggested that they do their work and be ready.

273 Superintendent Steel noted that he will set up a meeting with legal counsel.

274 Mr. O'Keefe suggested that they use video conferencing.

275 The Board thanked Superintendent Steel.

276 VII. Policy Review and Adoption

277 Ms. Tremblay noted that there are some policies in the packet.

278 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy ACA-Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence**
 279 **to the individual boards. Mr. John Glover seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous,**
 280 **motion passed.**

281 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy IHBAA- Evaluation Requirements for Children**
 282 **with Specific Learning Disabilities to the individual boards. Mr. John Glover seconded the**
 283 **motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed**

284 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy IHBG-Home Education Instruction and Access**
 285 **to Curricular and Co-Curricular Programs to the individual boards. Mr. John Glover**
 286 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed**

287 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy IHBH- Extended Learning Opportunities to the**
 288 **Souhegan Cooperative Board. Mr. John Glover seconded the motion. The vote was**
 289 **unanimous, motion passed**

290 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy IHBI- Alternative Learning Plans to the**
 291 **Souhegan Cooperative Board. Mr. John Glover seconded the motion. The vote was**
 292 **unanimous, motion passed**

293 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy IKFC- Alternate Diploma for Students with**
 294 **Significant Cognitive Disabilities to the Souhegan Cooperative Board. Mr. John Glover**
 295 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed**

296 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy ILBA- Assessment of Educational Programs to**
 297 **the individual Boards. Mr. John Glover seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous,**
 298 **motion passed**

299 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy IMBA- Distance Education to the individual**
 300 **Boards. Mr. John Glover seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed**

301 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy IMBC- Alternative Credit Options to the**
 302 **individual Boards. Mr. John Glover seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion**
 303 **passed**

304 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy JJJ- Access to Public School Programs by**
 305 **Nonpublic Charter School and Home Educated Pupils to the individual Boards. Mr. John**
 306 **Glover seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed**

307 Ms. Tremblay added Policy JLCA-Physical Examination of Students had been reviewed by the
 308 nurses.

309 Ms. Landwehrle added that Ms. Marie Maruca, Superintendent Steel's assistant, just got the
 310 updated version today and went out late. It was a minor language change.

311 Ms. Facey asked what was the change.

312 Ms. Kuzsma noted that with JLCA, No Child Left Behind does not exist.

313 Ms. Facey replied that Policy JLCA will be Back next month.

314 Ms. Roberge asked about policy JLCB.

315 Mr. Manning asked about non-immunized students.

316 Discussion ensued.

317 Ms. Facey remarked that policy JLCB is going back to the Policy Committee.

318 Ms. Tremblay mentioned that Policy JLCC is about head lice. This was taken from Hollis

319 Brookline as they did not have that policy.

320 **Ms. Kim Roberge motioned to move Policy JLCC- Pediculosis Management to the**
 321 **individual boards. Mr. John Glover seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion**
 322 **passed.**

323 Ms. Kuzsma commented that it does not line up with the NHDOE and what is needed.

324 VIII. Grading and Reporting Update

325 Ms. Landwehrle noted that they just sent home standards based progress reports at the middle
 326 school. Students got a mid-semester report through MMS and that was somewhat traditional.

327 They have had some parent forums for 5th and 6th and then 7th and 8th and it was really critical. It
 328 was a packed Open House and the info was clear and helpful. There were a few concerns but
 329 overall it went really well.

330 At C/W, she and Assistant Principal, Ms. Kathleen Murphy, were there during conferences, and
 331 although they did not have new progress reports, they wanted to be onsite if there were any
 332 questions.

333 They also had a CC subcommittee for grading and they have talking about GPA's and what that
 334 means with a competency based grading and reporting system. They have a great group of
 335 students.

336 They have gotten a lot of great feedback and AMS Principal, Ms. Bethany Bernasconi met with
 337 all 8th grade students and she pushed into all ELA classes and the students had great, they have
 338 come really far and it is hard to get to know a new system. They have been able to support
 339 teachers, and there has so much progress that has been made by all teachers.

340 Ms. Facey added that she is on the CC subcommittee and it has been great work to involve the
 341 students on CC.

342 The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle.

343 IX. Non-Public Session

344 Mr. Pim Grondstra motioned to enter into Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II (a) at 8:
345 40PM. Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion
346 passed.

347 Ms. Facey called a Roll Call: Facey-Yes, Tremblay-Yes, Glover-Yes, Kuzsma-Yes, Behm-
348 Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Chen-Yes, Manning-Yes, Brown-Yes, Roberge-Yes, Driscoll- Yes,
349 Lawrence-Yes, and O'Keefe- Yes.

350 Motion to leave nonpublic session by Jim Manning, seconded by Pim Grondstra.

351 Public session reconvened at 8:52PM

352 Motion to end the meeting by Pim Grondstra and seconded by Galen Tremblay. Motion
353 passed.

354 Meeting adjourned at 8:53PM.

355