

## SAU #39 Board Meeting

Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2019

Meeting Minutes- Approved 09 19 19

## Attendees:

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

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

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Jim Manning-Chair, Pim Grondstra- Vice Chair, Laura Taylor- Secretary, Steve Coughlan, Amy Facey and David Chen.

Mont Vernon School Board: Sarah Lawrence- Chair, Peter Eckhoff- Vice-Chair and Stephen O'Keefe.

Board Minutes: Danae Marotta

Public: Peggy Silva, Amherst NH, Kelly Schmidt, Amherst NH, Shannon Gascoyne, Amherst NH, Ava Beaulieu, Amherst NH.

## I. Call to Order

**Chair of the SAU #39 Board, Ms. Amy Facey, called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.**

Ms. Facey added that the reason why they are in this location is that it is a central location for families from MV. She then asked if Board Members were comfortable with their meeting being filmed and then put online.

Mr. Coughlan commented that it is the Law and is in support of the meeting filmed and put on online.

Ms. Facey added that they are now being recorded.

## II. Public Input

No Public Comment

## III. Individual Board Updates

Mont Vernon Village School

Chair of the MVVSB, Ms. Sarah Lawrence, noted that they had a great last meeting, with some test scores, and end of school year initiatives. All is going well.

Mr. O'Keefe explained that they had tried to implement a morning fruit program and it was a little challenging with the execution. The kids loved it although, they are trying to do it more efficiently.

The Board thanked Ms. Lawrence.

34 Amherst School Board

35 Chair of the ASB, Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma, remarked that next year the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> will be using  
36 PACE and they are taking a year off of PACE assessment at AMS.

37 Also, at the meeting just before this they realized that they will be returning almost \$780,000  
38 back to the taxpayers.

39 The Board thanked Ms. Kuzsma.

40 Souhegan Cooperative

41 Mr. Chen remarked that they will be returning \$600,000.

42 Superintendent. Mr. Adam Steel, replied that it is mostly due to special education.

43 The Board thanked Mr. Chen.

44 IV. Committee Updates

45 Ms. Lawrence remarked that they had their last SAU #39 Reconfiguration Sub-Committee  
46 meeting June 13<sup>th</sup> and addressed some potential labor issues. They have some work to do over  
47 the summer with the new BA starting in looking at potential financial scenarios.

48 Ms. Facey asked the Board if they had any questions.

49 There were no questions and the Board thanked Ms. Lawrence.

50 V. Superintendent's Report

51 School Start Time Sub Committee

52 Superintendent Steel asked Ms. Behm if she would like to update the Board regarding the later  
53 start time subcommittee.

54 Ms. Behm remarked that they have been meeting with Butler Bus Company regarding  
55 efficiencies in bus routes. They also have been talking to other school districts and noted that  
56 although change is difficult, at the end of the day no one wants to change back. They are also  
57 looking for lessons learned.

58 They are also talking to sports clubs and doing Master Schedule work in all of the districts. She  
59 then explained that they are trying to find a way to help in the short term and with the initial  
60 change.

61 Mr. Glover asked about the extra time after school.

62 Ms. Behm replied that most of the fields that they are using do not have lights. She then  
63 explained that they are taking everything into consideration. They are trying to get efficiencies  
64 and do things that make sense. They do not want to have to learn everything the hard way.

65 Ms. Kuzsma added that they are also talking to the after care programs. They have come up with  
66 a list that is pretty exhaustive.

67 Mr. Glover asked if they had spoken to local Martial Arts businesses, etc.

68 Ms. Behm replied that they are not there at this point but are getting there.

69 Ms. Facey asked about the 45-minute time frame at Souhegan with either extra help or  
70 participation in clubs. It is important to Souhegan's Culture.

71 Ms. Kuzsma remarked that it is definitely discussed at every meeting that they have.

72 Ms. Behm noted that they are looking at addressing all students and they want to make sure that  
73 all kids have access to that. It would be some of the time and they are trying to be creative.

#### 74 Personnel Changes at the SAU

75 Mr. Steel remarked that the Data Coordinator Position, to control the Empower system and Data  
76 Dashboard, had been posted and Ms. Galen Tremblay has accepted the position and starting on  
77 Monday.

78 Ms. Michelle Croteau, their new Business Administrator, will also be starting Monday. She was  
79 hired months ago.

80 They also reconfigured the HR Department, in that there will be two fully dedicated positions.

81 Ms. Karen Rimol will be moving to the ASD and Dr. Lisa Femia Hou will be moving to the  
82 SAU.

83 They are also in the process of hiring a new Executive Assistant, a position open since April, and  
84 will be speaking to a candidate next week.

85 Ms. Grudzien asked for clarification on Ms. Karen Rimol's position.

86 Superintendent Steel explained that she is currently the SAU-wide Assistant Director of Special  
87 Education and Dr. Femia-Hou is the Director of Special Programs in Amherst.

88 Mr. Coughlan asked if the Data Coordinator Position will remain half time.

89 Mr. Steel replied, yes, it is half time.

90 Ms. Facey asked if the new EA could create a new org chart with the updated changes.

91 Superintendent Steel replied, yes, they can definitely do that.

92 Mr. Glover asked about shift in the Policy Season.

93 Mr. Steel explained decided that the Policy Committee decided to shift their work for over the  
94 summer. They will be asking the SAU Board in March of 2020 to identify all the policies to  
95 review in that season. There is a 6-year rotation of all policies, some policies that are reviewed  
96 every year, and anytime a board member can always request policies to be reviewed.

97 Mr. Glover, Policy Committee Member, added that they have a full day scheduled for the Policy  
98 Committee next month and the concept is to come up with an idea for a theme for next year. He  
99 is thinking it is wrapped around Strategic Plan with policies that may be tied into that and be  
100 reviewed for better implementation.

101 VI. Consent Agenda

102 Mr. O’Keefe asked for clarification on the policies in the Consent Agenda.

103 Mr. Glover asked about an approval date in the Heading.

104 He then discussed that it is a liability control issue.

105 Mr. Chen asked about the process.

106 Mr. Glover explained the policy adoption process.

107 Mr. Chen asked when does adoption occur for Souhegan.

108 Ms. Facey remarked that there is some confusion there can be policies for all three districts and  
109 then the SAU.

110 Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Christine Landwehrle remarked this is for the SAU Organization.

111 Ms. Facey suggested that it should state “SAU Board” Policy.

112 Mr. Glover noted that they are collecting all the ones that apply to the SAU and updating them to  
113 the individual Boards as well as applying them to the SAU.

114 **Mr. Steve Coughlan motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda items 1. Draft Minutes of May**  
115 **23, 2019, 2. SAU Budget Transfer 2019 006, and 3. Policies from May 2019 SAU Meeting-**  
116 **Policy Packet DBF, DBI, DBJ, EHB, EHB- R and KE/KEB. Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma**  
117 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

118 VII. Data and Security Plan- Approval

119 Ms. Landwehrle noted that Technology Director Mr. Bruce Chakrin, is vacation and available by  
120 phone. He was at the last meeting and can answer more questions.

121 Mr. Chen asked about the template.

122 Superintendent Steel replied that this was in response to HB1612- relating to Data Security in  
123 Schools. They hired the ATOM Group [www.atomgroup.com](http://www.atomgroup.com) to help them develop this plan.

124 Ms. Landwehrle noted that the pieces are based on the HB requirements.

125 Ms. Taylor asked about Confidential Data Information and remarked that it is a little broad.

126 Ms. Landwehrle added that this is related to student data and making sure that their systems are  
127 secure.

128 Mr. Steel then referenced the page containing Personally Identifiable Information.

129 Ms. Taylor added that a name is a broad definition of confidentiality. She then asked if this  
130 format/ definition and structure is defined by law.

131 Mr. Steel replied that their policies are cross referenced with State Law.

132 Ms. Taylor commented that she takes confidential information seriously.

133 Mr. Chen asked if Mr. Chakrin had this reviewed by security specialists.

134 Superintendent Steel replied that the Atom Group has worked with a number of schools.

135 Mr. Glover asked Ms. Taylor to clarify what her concerns are and to give specific examples.

136 Mr. Taylor replied, the names of students and the names of staff.

137 Superintendent Steel then gave an example for Ms. Taylor.

138 Mr. Coughlan remarked that the idea is to separate the names of the students from data about the

139 students.

140 Ms. Facey noted that this policy needs to be approved before June 30<sup>th</sup> and Administration can

141 continue to further revise. If you have any questions they would be happy to answer them.

142 **Mr. Steven O’Keefe motioned to adopt the Data and Security Plan. Ms. Terri Behm**

143 **seconded the motion. 12 in Favor 1 abstention. Motion passed. Ms. Laura Taylor**

144 **abstained.**

#### 145 VIII. NWEA Insights Report

146 Ms. Landwehrle noted that she has a few highlights to share. She then explained that this is their

147 Fall 2017 to Fall 2018 results. These are Kindergarten students to 10<sup>th</sup> grade in Amherst, Mont

148 Vernon and Souhegan.

149 She then explained that District median growth is in the 54th percentile.

150 Ms. Facey asked Ms. Landwehrle to explain why growth is important.

151 Ms. Landwehrle replied that the NWEA is a normed referenced test vs a criterion based test.

152 There are about 10 million students that take this international test. She then explained the that

153 the Fall 2017 achievement scores show a larger proportion of students in the top quartile than

154 national norms.

155 Mr. Glover asked about the National Norms.

156 Ms. Landwehrle replied that the norming population is an international group.

157 Ms. Taylor asked about the 6% that are below average.

158 Ms. Landwehrle replied that it could be due to a variety of reasons.

159 She then reviewed Growth by Quartile. Lowest-quartile students grew substantially faster than

160 top-three-quartiles students from fall to fall.

161 Mr. Chen asked if they have to reconcile growth, balance the two and report out.

162 Ms. Landwehrle noted that the parents see a bar chart of their student with the District growth.

163 Ms. Grudzien asked about the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade and scoring.

164 Ms. Landwehrle explained that they have looked at realigning 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and they had concerns

165 with pacing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

166 Mr. Chen asked if they are going away from heterogeneous groupings.  
167 Ms. Landwehrle replied that they have a curriculum and scope and sequence.  
168 Mr. Chen commented that it makes sense to keep the grouping with math together.  
169 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that math is not just one track that they are on and research does not  
170 support breaking them up.  
171 Ms. Taylor asked about the status.  
172 Ms. Landwehrle replied that is their achievement levels, looking at each grade level and what  
173 percentile.  
174 Ms. Facey asked the Board if there were other questions.  
175 The Board had no further questions and thanked Ms. Landwehrle.  
176 IX. Strategic Plan Approval  
177 Superintendent Steel remarked that this is meant to be the launching point for the Board and not  
178 a final document. They have to set the direction.  
179 He then reviewed the history reminding the Board that there were 5 Pillars.  
180 He added that he spent some time building the Pyramid and surveying the Board.  
181 They hired Battelle for Kids they provided them with a Current State Analysis. He wants to  
182 highlight that they are open to innovation. He then explained the Souhegan model.  
183 He then showed the Board and public how school has changed over the years.  
184 He noted that the world has changed with the three waves of globalization. The waves of  
185 innovation have shortened due to technology and Industry has completely changed.  
186 He then discussed the Strategic Plan and noted the Core Beliefs. Every student deserves a unique  
187 roadmap to success, a challenge, an anchoring adult, and an affordable next step.  
188 He then reviewed the required outcomes with 70% of students reaching growth targets, our  
189 school system routinely tanks in the top 5 of achievement testing, 70% of voters support our  
190 budget and initiatives, our value must out pace our peers, and 85% of students have their next  
191 step available to them.  
192 Superintendent Steel remarked that our students solve the world's problems. He then gave an  
193 example from a Souhegan Graduate.  
194 He then showed the graphic of a SAU #39 Portrait of a Graduate, this is with community  
195 involvement.  
196 He then noted the 4 areas of focus:

- Student Success: We will provide every student an exceptional education grounded in high expectations and tailored to meet individual needs, interests, and passions ensuring future opportunities.
- Culture & Connections: We will cultivate our vision of respect, trust, and courage that ensures a culture of safety and promotes meaningful relationships which will inspire each learner to thrive.
- Community: We will increase sustainable partnerships, both within our schools and our larger communities, to strengthen relationships and provide meaningful learning opportunities for all.
- Learning Environment: We will improve our learning environment to maximize educational opportunities and increase the efficiency and use of our facilities. (the following ideas may need to be sequenced as part of a coherent plan).

He then reviewed the Key Strategies:

- Every student will have an individualized learning plan in place by August, 2024
- Half of the class of 2026 will graduate high school with two years' worth of college credits
- By FY22, four-year advisory systems will be in place in each school
- Students at both ends of the achievement span will access specialized interventions/programming by FY23.

He then reviewed the Key Components:

- Assessments
- Identified Barriers to Learning
- Personal Goal Statements (Outcome hopes & dreams)
- Quantifiable guideposts
- Specific Goals in Multiple Domains (academic, social/emotional/physical)
- Interventions
- Non-Academic Real-World Certification Option (pilot's license)
- Communication Plan
- Parent engagement plan including summer options

Mr. Steel explained the Strategies and Resources, MTSS, Data Dashboard, Advisor as an anchoring adult, and flexible scheduling.

A Longitudinal advisory system is for each student to have an anchoring adult.

He then explained the Leap Forward Opportunity and the key components including a key partnership with a higher-ed partner, Student Success Plans open pathways to high school credits, flexible schedules provide key acceleration where needed, standards-based reporting legitimizes student pace, 50% of our students leave with 2 years of college credit.

He then reviewed the Key Measures: % of students who achieve goals in their plans, voter support each March, Growth Targets achieved as a system, they need to balance with State-wide rankings on high stakes tests, and finally, qualitative rankings by our key constituents.

236 If they are doing everything right, these secondary measures should improve: graduation rates,  
 237 home values, enrollment, student/parent satisfaction with next step options, student attendance  
 238 rates, and cost relative to peers.

239 He then reviewed what needs to be in place for their success starting with a fully articulated  
 240 curriculum, standards based reporting system, effective administrative team, constant teacher  
 241 feedback, appropriate school year calendar with start times, school board support, community  
 242 support and higher ed partner.

243 Leveraging Technologies: OKR as a management structure, Data Dashboard, etc. These are a lot  
 244 of important internal systems that they use.

245 He then reviewed the Action Plan, starting with Communication, produce an online video series,  
 246 and meeting with community members. The time that people are the most engaged is during  
 247 February.

248 They will be building different individual level plans and their budget development needs to be  
 249 reflective of strong priorities.

250 Mr. Glover asked what is he asking from the Board for tonight.

251 Superintendent Steel replied that he would have preferred more time to get community support.

252 Ideally, if they have major issues to identify them now, and adopt the strategic plan. There will  
 253 be several opportunities for Board and Community engagement and involvement. He is looking  
 254 for a sense in that this is the general direction of where they need to go.

255 Ms. Facey remarked that it was important to do some heavy lifting and get this SAU wide plan  
 256 adopted. Each building will have their own mini strategic plan. It makes more sense to have the  
 257 teachers, staff, parents and community members engaged. She then applauded Superintendent  
 258 Steel for having such high goals for their district.

259 Ms. Grudzien commented that as a parent, she sees inconsistency from building to building. She  
 260 then suggested that the core values remain the same from school to school. Next, she asked Mr.  
 261 Steel about the feedback he received from the Board. Last, she commented that the mental health  
 262 piece and the Whole Child.

263 Mr. Chen asked about building a combined budget for the whole SAU, it is doable.

264 Mr. Steel thanked Mr. Chen for his comments and that it makes sense to look at it as a whole  
 265 system.

266 Ms. Taylor noted that she sent Superintendent Steel feedback and information regarding Social  
 267 and Emotional Learning.

268 Mr. Steel thanked Ms. Taylor.

269 Ms. Behm remarked that the individual plan gives that opportunity for each student and it is  
 270 worthy of a goal to have. Giving that opportunity to all kids and to say that every child is their  
 271 own success story. She Project Safeguard was a wonderful experience and they are looking at  
 272 whole students.



273 Ms. Grudzien asked about the 2-Year college credit. She is concerned about the maturity and  
274 level of classes.

275 Mr. Steel replied that the higher ed partner they are working with and still want the 4-year  
276 college experience in some form.

277 Ms. Grudzien then suggested that it be part of an Individualized Learning Plan.

278 Mr. Glover noted that this is just half and they can have community partnerships with businesses.

279 Ms. Grudzien noted that there are a lot of expectations and mindful of the larger issues with  
280 mental health.

281 Ms. Facey added that this is for students that because of cost are going to NCC, taking their  
282 general ed classes and then transferring.

283 Superintendent Steel remarked that they are not giving enough challenge to their students.

284 Mr. Manning noted that they have to build the strategy on that. They need to boil down what  
285 they are trying to do in 3 minutes or less. They have to have that clarity. He then gave his support  
286 with Superintendent Steel's presentation.

287 Ms. Kuzsma remarked this should lessen anxiety and the students will have support.

288 Ms. Taylor asked if teachers are going to have time for interaction.

289 Ms. Facey replied that is a good point and there will be an anchoring adult.

290 Ms. Lawrence asked about the students that are not self-directed learners and she is not hearing  
291 anything about a safety net.

292 Mr. Steel commented on the Advisory Program and shared his experience of being an Advisor.

293 Ms. Lawrence remarked that teachers are doing a lot already.

294 Discussion ensued.

295 Mr. Glover remarked that the foundational cornerstones of this plan are already in place. They  
296 have been building this for 10 years.

297 Mr. Manning remarked that this is much more challenging than what they are prepared for. He  
298 added that he sees it as a major investment in people. That is why he asked what are they not  
299 going to do. It is a major strategic detail. He gave his great support but it will be a lift and they  
300 need to be ready for it.

301 Discussion ensued.

302 Mr. Manning gave his support; they should commit to it but it will not be easy. They have to be  
303 focused and they have to decide what not to do.

304 Ms. Facey added that a lot of the work will have to be done at the individual districts.

305 Ms. Peggy Silva, Amherst NH suggested that the teachers get together to discuss what the high  
 306 school wanted to be. She added that she is in support for Superintendent Steel's presentation.  
 307 Second, she is concerned with the high pressure in students. She has a caution about the students  
 308 doing more and are doing so much already. She added that she is excited about it.

309 Ms. Kelly Schmidt commented that she is proud that they are talking about Advisory. Whatever  
 310 system that you put in place needs to be flexible enough with the student. She then added that it  
 311 deserves training as well. She does not want it to be a stamped on position.

312 Superintendent Steel thanked them for their feedback and discussed the different roles of the  
 313 teacher.

314 Ms. Shannon Gascoyne, Amherst NH, gave her support. She then added that they do need a  
 315 Strategic Plan and it is critical. How it looks at each school will be different and she has concerns  
 316 with community buy-in. How you roll it out, when you roll it out is important. She then added  
 317 that they have aging physical infrastructures.

318 Ms. Ava Beaulieu, Amherst NH, remarked that Superintendent Steel articulated a vision for the  
 319 future and it makes a whole lot of sense. Without clear articulation it might get trampled and they  
 320 need to have a really compelling story. This is amazing and there is huge potential here.

321 Mr. Steel remarked that he is curious about action and emphasized transparency.

322 Ms. Beaulieu replied that it requires more communication and it's an amazing vision. She then  
 323 commented that a Strategic Vision is part of a Strategic Plan and she is very excited about it.

324 Ms. Facey asked if they Board was comfortable with calling it a Strategic Vision and the  
 325 Administration coming back to the Board with next steps.

326 Ms. Behm remarked that the language matters a lot. She then noted that she became more  
 327 involved she would like to commit to and it will take time to work out the logistics. They want it  
 328 to be a cohesive experience.

329 Ms. Facey added that this has been a great discussion and thanked the community for their  
 330 feedback.

331 Mr. O'Keefe added that he would feel more comfortable with an addition of mental health  
 332 concerns.

333 **Mr. Steven O'Keefe motioned to approve the presentation as a Strategic Vision of the SAU**  
 334 **#39, with the inclusion of mental health concerns. Ms. Ellen Grudzien seconded the motion.**  
 335 **The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

336 Mr. Glover asked if the motion should include future acts and if future agendas should have  
 337 strategic vision updates.

338 Mr. O'Keefe added that they are not there yet but are getting there. They need to have  
 339 momentum.

340 Superintendent Steel replied that they will continue to work on making it a reality.

341 Ms. Facey noted that she always asks for a Strategic Planning Updates.

342 X. Public Comment

343 *Included in general discussion.*

344 XI. Non-Public Session

345 None

346 XII. Meeting Adjourned

347 **Mr. John Glover motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. Ms. Ellen Gruzdien**  
348 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**