

ASD Ways and Means
December 5, 2022

Names of Members:

Dwayne Purvis (Chair) - Present
Jeff Candito - Present
Greg Fritz - Present
Mike Akillian - Absent
Mozammel Husainy - Present
Steve Frades - Remote
Rick Barnes - Present
Marilyn Gibson (Alternate) - Absent

Person(s) appearing before the Committee

Steve Chamberlin (Superintendent) - Present
Amy Facey (SAU) - Present
Brian Coogan (JFAC) - Present

A brief description of the subject matter discussed and final decisions

Ways and Means reports will continue as planned. There will be a short summary at the end which encapsulates the major takeaways from all reports.

There was a discussion about the CBA report. There were several lines of questioning related to retirement, benefits, career progression, and backpay for the rejected contract offered to voters last year. The following two questions were also raised. (1) "What is the problem with the contract? i.e. What problem are we solving? (2) What is a fair contract? There was no clear quantities or metrics offered in response to these questions and topics.

The SAU budget committee's final report to the SAU was discussed. It was mentioned that the working budget is less than the proposed budget and that our SAU is out of line with the other SAUs in our comparisons. Dwayne was the rep from Ways and Means to the SAU budget committee and he mentioned that he opposed the budget based on past increases and possible runaway budget over time.

Facilities:

A summary of our tour of the Amherst Middle School was made. Thanks was expressed to Principal Gauthier and the staff for the tour. The leaks in the Middle School was viewed as the Districts highest facilities problem. Some members did not understand why the Wilkins school was viewed as a higher priority; other members explained the reasoning reiterating the view expressed by JFAC and the ASB including fire safety at Wilkins.

It was noted that the leaks in the Amherst Middle School are also in the "new" section which is 20 years old. This should dispel the belief that the oldest facilities are the most in need of replacement/repair.

Brian Coogan (JFAC) participated in a lengthy conversation about why the JFAC conclusions were reached. He mentioned that the lower interest rates last year partially drove the decision to put the larger project on the warrant last year. It is noteworthy that the rates are higher this year so the cost for the same work will be higher than the cost of last years rejected warrant article. A history of how we got here was shared from Brian and Ways and Means members; all-day Kindergarten made an impact on space, staffing, and recurring costs; special services

in house changed requirements for space and staff. We discussed enrollment population vs town population and the effects on school projections. We heard a discussion about teacher pay vs facilities pay from a fixed pot of taxpayer funds.

Steve Chamberlin mentioned that the Wilkins school library is not inspirational for reading.

Some members mentioned that the Wilkins school was overcrowded and has pods. The existing space is based on old requirements and needs to be updated.

There was a short discussion on the need for a multiyear strategic plan that includes facilities, teaching styles, space, and utilization of the resources across the SAU.

The committee was reminded that we were told previously about the cost to maintain is related to the size of the building and not the year of the building so there would be no cost savings expected on the maintenance lines whether the proposed facility is built or the current facility is repaired.

It was mentioned that administration staff have said that they will deliver the same quality education regardless of the building which makes it a higher value decision to maintain the current structure than to build a new structure.

It was mentioned that there could be money from New Hampshire if the warrant article passes. It was not mentioned how likely this money is to come in.

Meeting was ended