



AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT

DELIBERATIVE SESSION
FEBRUARY 5, 2024 6:00PM
SOUHEGAN HIGH SCHOOL

Amherst School District – Officers & Agents

School Board

Tom Gauthier – Chair
Jason White – Vice Chair
Terri Behm – Secretary
Shannon Gascoyne
Timothy Theberge

Moderator

Ellen Grudzien

Clerk

Tony Ortiz

Treasurer

Margaret Bennett

Ways & Means Finance Committee

Caleb Baird – Chair
Matthew Comstock – Secretary
Matthew Borden
Brittany Donovan

Office of the Superintendent

Michael Berry – Superintendent
Steven Chamberlin – Assistant Superintendent
Christine Landwehrle – Assistant Superintendent
Amy Facey – Business Administrator
Meg Beauchamp – Director of Student Services

Clark-Wilkins Elementary School

Kathleen Murphy – Principal

Amherst Middle School

Kristen Gauthier – Principal

Christopher Goodrich
Peter Maresco
Caitlin Thompson



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 is the Deliberative Session, which is held February 5, 2024 and the Public Hearing, which took place in January.

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

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

Voting in Amherst is a Two-Step Process:

Deliberative Session: February 5, 2024, 6:00 p.m. Souhegan High School Theater

Ballot Vote: March 12, 2024, 6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Souhegan High School Gymnasium

Please contact the Amherst Town Clerk for voter registration information and for absentee ballots: <https://www.amherstnh.gov/town-clerk>

Moderator's Rules of Procedure

The Moderator will not follow Robert's Rules. The moderator will use the following general rules of procedure, whose main purpose is to keep things moving, and not get bogged down in procedural quagmires.

1. Every resident who wishes to vote must have checked in with the Supervisors of the Checklist outside the auditorium door and have a colored dot visible on their clothing.
2. The Moderator will take Articles in the order they appear on Warrant unless the Moderator announces the intent to take Articles out of order.
3. Motions to amend must be made in writing and will be voted separately. Amendments will not be allowed to accumulate.
4. Each speaker shall state name and limit their time at the microphone to three minutes. No individual will be allowed to speak a second time until all others wishing to speak for the first time have done so.
5. Speakers wishing to address the meeting should form a line at the microphones. The moderator will attempt to alternate pro and con points.
6. The moderator will only accept a motion made at a microphone.
7. No motion to call the question shall be accepted by the moderator until there has been sufficient debate on the article.
8. A motion to restrict reconsideration in accordance with RSA 40 Section 10 should be made immediately following the announcement of the vote on that article.
9. The moderator will dispense with reading the warrant at this time; however, each warrant article will be read when it is moved to the floor for deliberation and action. The warrant is also printed in the Voters' Guide. The Annual Report and Voters' Guide to Official Ballot Voting will be sent to all residents prior to March 5th.

Ellen Grudzien
Amherst School District Moderator



Message from the Amherst School Board Chair

Thank you for taking the time to review the articles up for your vote in this year's school elections. Much like last year, there are several items that will determine the immediate and long-term future of the Amherst School District. Please review the articles (12-16) and know that this board has full belief that they are important pieces to allowing the students of this district to flourish over the coming years. We look forward to seeing you at the polls Tuesday, March 12.

Respectfully,
Tom Gauthier
Chair, Amherst School Board

Article 12 – Wilkins Elementary School Project Bond - \$49,997,214

Review of 2023

Following a defeated bond request for a PK-5 elementary school in March 2023, the Amherst School Board surveyed the community and held community feedback sessions (March-May 2023). These surveys and sessions revealed three main areas that taxpayers wished to see addressed:

1. Reduction in cost and scope
2. Alternative options fully designed and estimated
3. The future of the Clark School building

With this in mind, the Amherst School Board directed the SAU Leadership, along with the Building and Grounds Committee and the Building administration at Clark-Wilkins School to work with Banwell Architects and DEW Construction to develop two fully costed proposals - a renovation/addition and a build to suit with cost breakdowns for a Grade 1-5 Wilkins School configuration on the existing site. Moving Grade 5 to the Elementary remains a critical component of the plan to alleviate space constraints at the Amherst Middle School. This plan also maintains the Clark School for pre-K and Kindergarten, which we will continue to maintain and plan for program needs through our operating budget and capital reserve funding.

Warrant Article 12 seeks to strike a balance between taxpayer response to previous proposals and what best meets the needs of our students and educators.

Numerous design iterations of a renovation/addition option and a build to suit option were reviewed and refined by the SAU Administration and the Amherst Building and Grounds Committee. Ultimately, the build to suit option was favored unanimously by the committee and Amherst School Board. This option represents a reasonable and conservative design based on the needs of students and our educational program. It is a timeless and functional design that meets present needs and is built to carry the town into the future for decades to come.

Facility Project Goals

1. Right-size the elementary school to match current student enrollment and programming
2. Alleviate space constraints at Amherst Middle School and provide a developmentally appropriate environment by moving Grade 5 to the Elementary School
3. Create learning spaces that are code compliant to present day standards
4. Create spaces that provide the highest levels of safety and security for staff and students
5. Address aging and end of life mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. HOW DOES THIS DIFFER FROM PREVIOUS REQUESTS?

2023 Proposal (FY24)	2024 Proposal (FY25)
Bond Amount: \$54,250,179 (\$56.3M 4% escalation)	Bond Amount: \$49,997,214
Total Cost (25 year level debt): \$103,384,725	Total Cost (25 year level principal): \$76,247,088
Grades PK-5	Grades 1-5
146,229 sq.ft	119,248 sq. ft
Eliminates need for Clark School	Maintains Clark School PK & K
Larger footprint on site	Smaller footprint on site

Q. HOW DOES THIS COMPARE TO THE EXISTING BUILDING?

Instructional Spaces	Existing Rooms	Proposed Rooms
Grades 1-5*, Music and Art, Library, Gym, Technology	27	43
Square footage increase to meet needs	24,330	

**5th grade is currently at Amherst Middle School*

**Music is currently taught on stage in the cafeteria (MPR)*

**Physical Education currently takes place in the cafeteria (MPR)*

**Technology is currently on a cart*

**Four 4th grade classrooms are in detached portable buildings behind Wilkins*

Student Services	Existing Rooms	Proposed Rooms
My Time Program, Intervention & Enrichment, Speech Language Pathology*, Occupational/Physical Therapy, Stars Program, Calming Spaces, Flex Rooms**	8	32
Square footage increase to meet needs	7,206	

**SLP/Intervention & Enrichment currently exist in shared spaces*

***Flex Rooms used for Student Services and/or Instructional Spaces as needed*

Q. WHAT ABOUT CLASS SIZE & STUDENT ENROLLMENT?

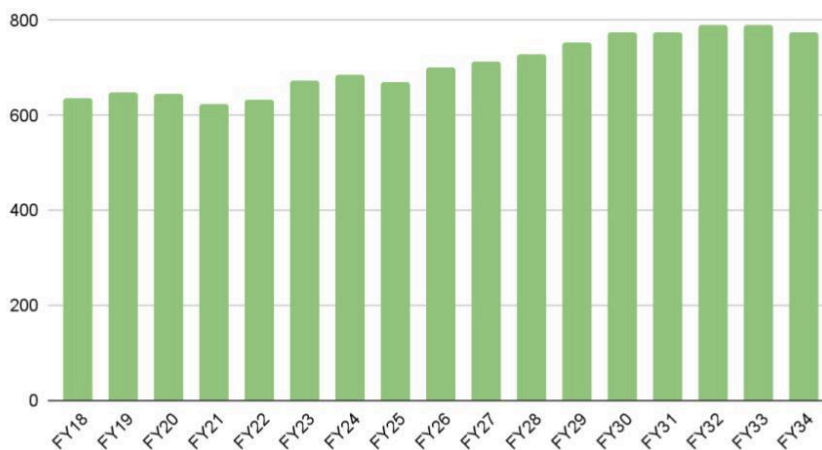
Keeping class sizes reasonable to allow for better interaction between students and teachers continues to be a priority.

The Amherst School District has addressed staffing to meet the desired student-teacher ratio over the last five years. Class sizes are presently within a reasonable range but this exacerbates the sacrifices to educational space. For example, when an additional classroom is needed to maintain manageable and appropriate class size targets, the result is integrated arts teachers move from a dedicated space to a push-in model in individual classrooms or another shared location in the building. This is inefficient, leads to a loss of instruction time, and can be highly disruptive.

Since class size ratios have been addressed, additional teachers are not projected as a result of the building project. The addition or reduction of staff will be driven by enrollment demands. Enrollment projections are steady and allow the Board to feel confident in the size of the proposed project. The following graphic highlights our enrollment projections for the next 10 years. The plan has a design Capacity of 756 students or 7 classrooms per grade with 3 flexible classroom spaces built in to be used for programming or classroom space as needed to serve bubble years, student services and programs needs.

Supports Current and Future Enrollment

Enrollment Grades 1-5 Current and Projected



**Based on Fall 2023 NESDEC Projections*



Should a need arise for additional space in the future, the building is designed to accommodate an addition with a core enrollment capacity of 864 (referring to core spaces such as the cafeteria, media center, and gym).

Q. HOW DO BONDS WORK?

NH RSA 33 describes the bond process in NH.

In general, the District sells municipal tax-free bonds either directly on the bond market or through an intermediary like the NH Municipal Bond Bank. Once the bonds are sold, the District is obligated to pay them back when they mature just like corporate bonds. The interest rate, coupon rate, par value, etc. are determined at the time the bonds are sold. The most recent interest rate estimate is 4%.

For additional information:

<https://www.nhmunicipal.org/town-city-article/abcs-borrowing-municipalities>

Q. WHAT IS THE TOTAL COST OF THE PROJECT?

Bond Requirements: Placing a dollar amount on the ballot for voters requires the formation of a cost estimate that becomes the legal high-water mark for district borrowing and spending on the project. The cost of the project is \$49,997,214. This cost includes all design work, system upgrades, renovations, additions, and sitework. As a result of the necessary high-water mark figure, when deciding what amount to put forward to voters, the board has chosen to be conservative in selecting a number that includes contingencies for unknown costs that may arise.

To assure residents that every possible step will be taken to keep costs down, a construction manager (CM) will oversee construction of the project and coordinate subcontractors. When the project is fully designed, the CM bids the entire project to subcontractors and works with the district to select the best bid for the community. Once that process concludes, the CM agrees to a guaranteed maximum price (GMP) to complete the project and is bound to deliver the project at that GMP. The district and community have full transparency into the bidding and costs of the project from start to finish.

By working with the New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank (NHMBB), the taxpayers are granted a level of oversight that remains steady despite inevitable change in board members or administrators. The NHMBB will review our investments and refinance, if appropriate, throughout the life of the loan.

The board plans to structure the bond repayment over a 25-year period. The board is focused on level-principal repayment of the bond. Based on the assumptions, a \$482,000 home will see a tax impact decreasing over time from \$798-\$653 per year, or roughly \$67-\$54 per month over the next 10 years.

Tax Impact and Total Cost-Level Principal 25 Years

Tax Impact and Cost Assumptions	
Payment Type	Level Principal
Assessed Valuation	\$2,390,811,306
Average Home	\$482,000

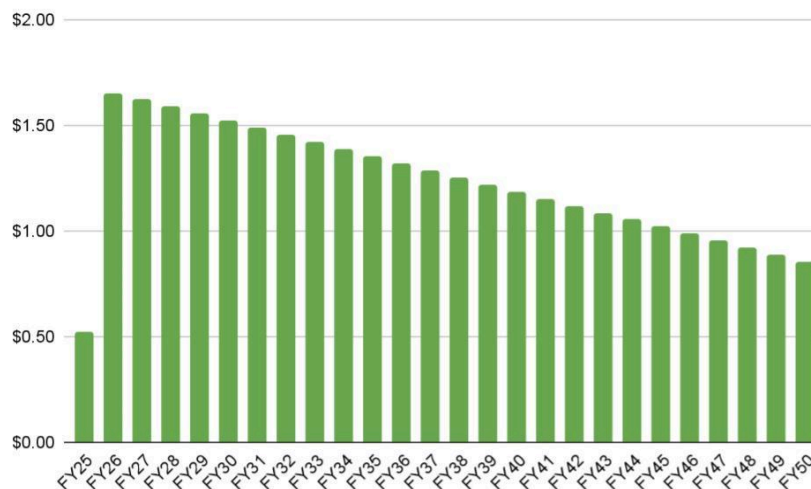
Total Cost	\$76,247,088
Bond Amount	\$49,997,214
Term *	25 Years
Interest Rate *	4.0%

Year	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33	FY34	FY35
Est. Tax Impact	\$0.52	\$1.66	\$1.62	\$1.59	\$1.56	\$1.52	\$1.49	\$1.46	\$1.42	\$1.39	\$1.36
Est. Cost/Ave Home	\$252	\$798	\$782	\$766	\$750	\$734	\$718	\$702	\$685	\$669	\$653

**NHMBB using 4.0% for 25 year term bonds for budgeting purposes*



Bond Financing - Level Principal



Q. HOW WILL THE NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BENEFIT THE BROADER COMMUNITY?

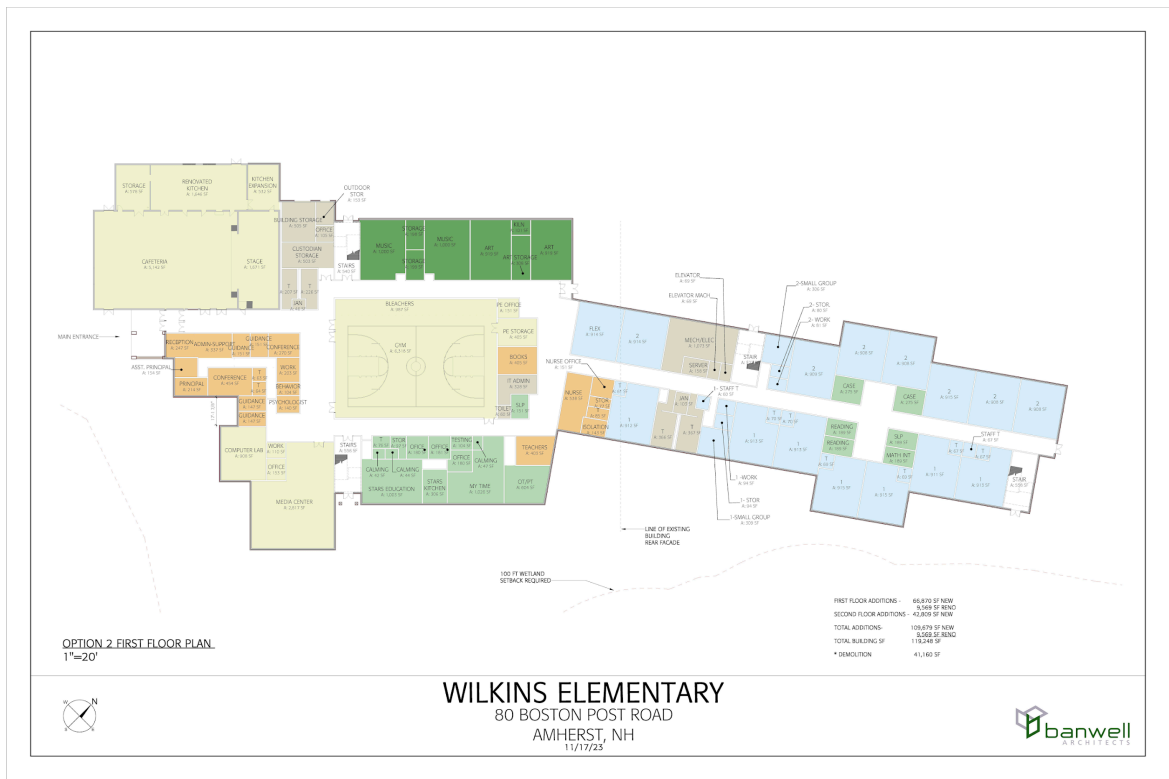
Town and community groups will be able to utilize the core spaces of the building after school hours. The new Wilkins building offers several common use spaces at the front of the building accessible and separate from classroom spaces. These include a full-size gym for recreation programming, library/media center, and the renovated multi-purpose room with stage and mini-gym. The new site plan also offers improved traffic flow through the village during school drop-off and pick-up and increased parking for school and community events.

Q. WHAT WILL THE BUILDING LOOK LIKE?



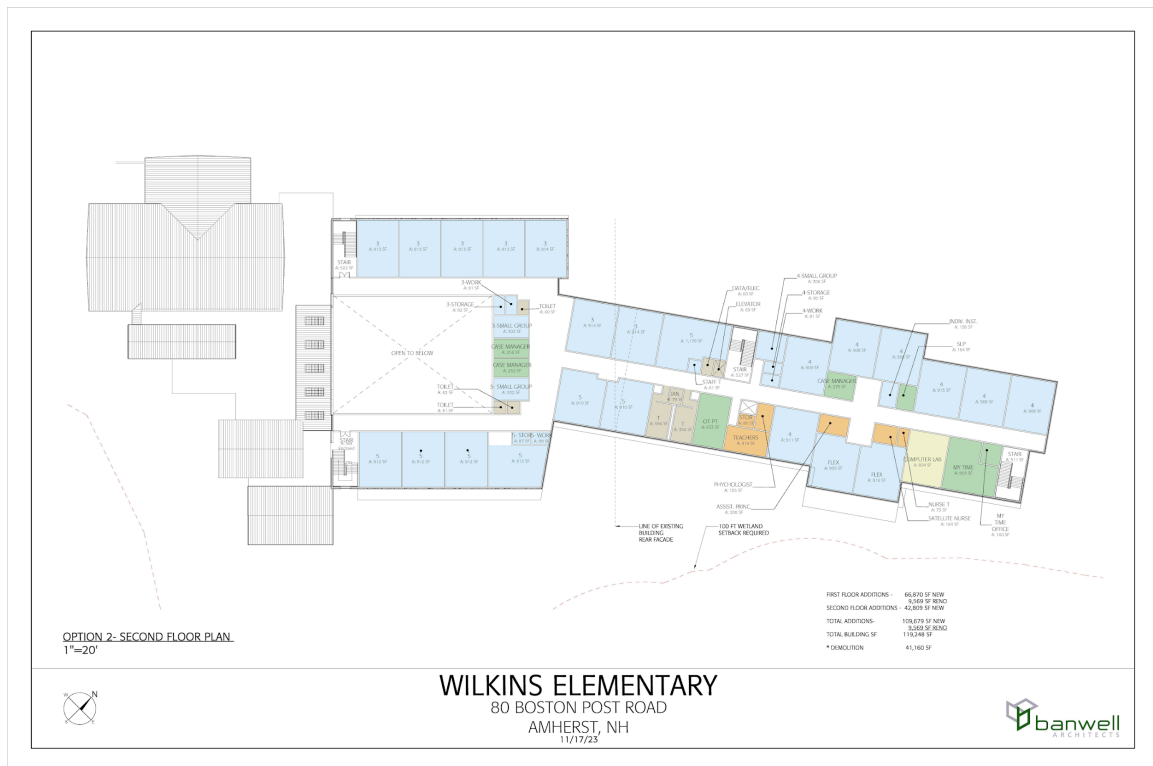
The conceptual renderings take on a look, feel, and profile similar to what has existed in the village for the last 57 years. A classic Amherst, N. H., school building appearance with a functional and right-sized design.

First floor



- The first floor will renovate the existing multi-purpose room into a full-size cafeteria that will provide the school and community with a stage and recreation space. Asbestos will be remediated from this space during renovation.
- The first floor includes a secure entrance in line with Homeland Security Emergency Management specifications, offices, library/media center, and integrated arts at the front of the building.
- The center of the building will include a proper gymnasium, which will serve students and the community. The community will be able to reserve and access community spaces in the building after school hours. Currently, our recreation department utilizes the multi-purpose room as a gym for after-hours programming once the after-school care has closed for the day. The addition of this gym will add recreational opportunities.
- During non-school hours, the interior of the building will be accessible through the front entrance, while the back of the building will be secure and closed to the public.
- Classrooms for grades 1-3 along with associated supports and student services will be located on the first floor.

Second floor



Q. WHEN WILL THE PROJECT BEGIN AND END?

Should Article 12 pass, construction is expected to begin in summer of 2025 with completion projected in time for the 2027-2028 school year. During construction, all schools will remain open, utilizing current space to avoid rental costs of portable classrooms where possible.

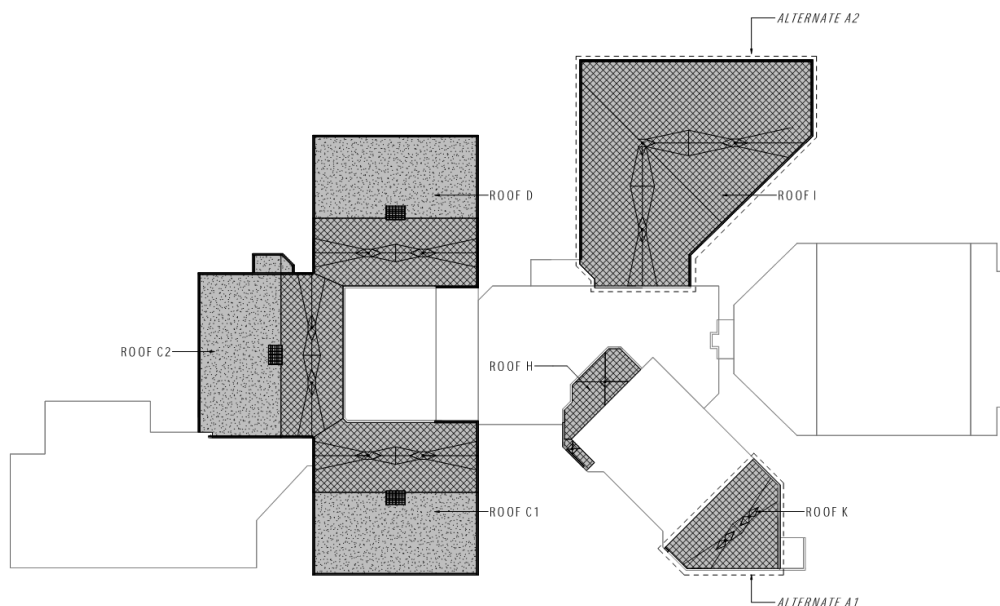
Q. WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS FOR AMHERST MIDDLE SCHOOL AND CLARK BUILDING?

Article 12 includes plans for grades 1-5. Maintaining Clark School and Amherst Middle School will continue through the Capital Maintenance Reserve Fund and Operating Budget.

Through targeted savings over the last five years into the capital reserve fund and paying close attention to the capital needs assessment, we have identified maintenance requirements and a long term funding plan to take necessary steps in facility improvement at AMS and Clark.

In recent years, AMS has experienced water damage from roof leaks and unit ventilator floods. These items were identified as part of the 2017 capital needs assessment and are part of the list of projects to be funded through the capital reserve funding.

Last summer (2023) we completed a small section (Roof H) of the roof at AMS utilizing Capital Maintenance Reserve Fund and thanks to continued voter support of this fund, we will be completing a larger phase of the roof/hvac at AMS (Roof C1) this Summer 2024, as we laid out in last year's deliberative session. We anticipate phasing over 10 years, dependent on voter support and funding of capital reserve funds and operating budgets.



The space constraints at AMS will be lessened by moving fifth grade to the elementary school while not requiring an addition to AMS.

Should Article 12 pass, a new elementary school building would allow the capital maintenance reserve funding to focus on the projects at the Amherst Middle School and Clark School.

Q. WHAT ARE THE OVERALL ADVANTAGES:

Functional spaces with a classic design

- Developmentally appropriate educational space Grades 1-5
- Spaces designed to meet curriculum and student needs
- Aligned tightly with current and projected enrollment

Enhanced Safety & Security

- Removes need for detached portables
- Front entrance designed to meet homeland security emergency management specifications
- Comprehensive camera, alarm, phone, and improved fire safety systems

New Systems

- Addresses aging, out of compliance, end of life systems with energy efficient systems
- Provides excellent indoor air quality and temperature control

Improved Traffic Flow

- Addresses Boston Post Road traffic concerns by utilizing driveway around building to hold 75 cars
- Expands parking capacity

For a full review of the proposed project please visit wilkins-project-sau39.org

This is an important moment in the trajectory of our community school buildings. The Amherst School Board encourages in-depth review of this article. If you have questions please contact us at asb@sau39.org.

We hope that you and all eligible members of your household will come to the polls on March 12th to vote.

ARTICLE 13 - FY25 Proposed Budget - \$34,055,985

The proposed budget for FY25 is \$34,055,985, an increase of 3.8% of the current operating budget. That FY24 budget is the result of a second straight failed budget vote, leaving the district operating in a default two years running.

With the desire to avoid a third consecutive default, the board and administration went back and forth to ensure there was a small set of priorities funded in order to make room for key line items that are part of the default budget.

The priorities for this budget include:

- Increased focus on literacy competency and achievement.
- Capture and expand instructional time.
- Supervision and evaluation of teachers.

Major budget drivers:

- **Health Insurance.** The largest impact on the budget is a 21.8% increase in health insurance premiums. By comparison, last year's health insurance increase was roughly four percent.
- **New contracts.** There are two years of the new collective bargaining agreements in the default budget after last year's successful vote in support of Amherst Education Association and Amherst Support Staff Association. These contracts were overwhelmingly approved by voters, providing increased educational time for students (a continued goal of the board as mentioned above), financial and developmental gains for teachers, and stability for the district.

Beyond these increases, we are proposing the following items, which total roughly \$900,000 but are not built into the default budget. If we end up in a default, the board and administration will need to fund some of these objects (such as bussing), which means reducing further in other areas. Others could be left out altogether.

- Non-union wage and benefits increases.
- long and short-term nurse substitutes.
- 0.6 FTE LEA representative to monitor and implement IEPs for students at Amherst Middle School. This will allow building administrators to spend more time observing students and teachers in classrooms, helping meet our teacher evaluation goals.
- Kindergarten paraprofessional to meet a seventh K cohort.
- 0.4 FTE library assistant to assist in building the literacy building blocks.
- Other wages/benefits including stipends for extracurricular activities.
- Facilities - utility increases, preventative maintenance, security, etc.
- Technology - equipment replacement, network supplies
- Bus contract increases, fuel, and a 16th bus to help students arrive to school on time more consistently
- St. Anselm College reading fellows
- Miscellaneous furniture, equipment, phones, supplies, printing, etc.

We are eliminating a teaching position at AMS due to class size demand, and we expect anticipated revenue growth in food service and grants, which help to keep this increase to a modest 3.8%.

Much like last year, our focus is on gaining voter approval for a budget. Should this fail, it would leave us in a third straight default, which is all based on an FY22 budget. This means that it's increasingly difficult to meet the district's everyday needs, and it would continue to restrict the opportunity to pursue our goals, including the educational building block of literacy achievement for all students.

ARTICLE 14 - Facilities Capital Reserve Fund - \$675,000

Our current buildings continue to need maintenance and repairs. The school district has a long-term plan to fund major capital projects and this capital reserve fund is key to fulfilling those plans. In particular, this summer, we are withdrawing approximately \$1.7 million to conduct phase two of the Amherst Middle School roof and HVAC project. The construction will begin Monday, June 17 in order to have the building functional again before school restarts in September.

This withdrawal will leave the fund with more than \$300,000 - roughly \$100,000 set aside for each Amherst school building in case of emergency. We are proposing another contribution of \$675,000 this year. The money raised by this warrant will not come through added taxes but from surplus funds at the end of the current school year.

ARTICLE 15 - Technology Capital Reserve Fund - \$75,000

In order to stabilize the yearly impact to the budget, the board is proposing the creation of and first deposit to a new technology capital reserve fund. Functioning in much the same way as the facilities fund, this new reserve vehicle will allow us to plan for yearly technology expenses that can have major impacts to the budget on an uneven basis. The funds would be used to replace equipment - such as new grade-wide computers for students, projectors, cables, etc. - and software needed to keep district technology modern, safe, and secure. These funds would be expended on a yearly basis based on the long-term planning of the SAU information technology team. No new taxes would be raised as this funding would come from year-end surplus.

ARTICLE 16 - Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund - \$30,000

Another new capital reserve fund would be used to make purchases of vehicles to supplement district transportation needs, particularly extracurricular activities. For myriad reasons, bus transportation for after-school activities (athletics, clubs, etc.) has been hard to provide on a consistent basis for students and families. To provide a more stable alternative, the district would like to purchase large passenger vans that can be used for smaller athletics teams, field trips, and other extracurricular activities. The district is already looking at the purchase of a large passenger van later this year, should funds be available. This fund would give the district flexibility to add to the fleet in later years as needs arise. No new taxes would be raised as this funding would come from year-end surplus.

Please note - the order of the articles for the capital reserve funds is important. They will be funded in order of their appearance on the ballot. Surplus will be directed to the facilities fund first, followed by technology and then vehicles if enough funds are available at the end of the year.

We are grateful for your continued support of our schools and we look forward to seeing you on voting day. If you have questions, please email ASB@sau39.org or attend one of our monthly meetings. The board meeting schedule is available on www.SAU39.org.

Amherst School District Ways & Means Committee Report

Introduction:

The Amherst School District (ASD) Ways & Means Committee is a group of community members appointed to objectively review and comment on the school budget and related fiscal requests while considering the needs of the schools and community it serves. It is the responsibility of the committee to review the proposed budgets, provide recommendations to the ASD, and vote on the associated warrant articles.

This year's Way & Means (W&M) Committee consisted of Caleb Baird (chair), Matt Comstock (secretary), Matt Borden, Brittany Donovan, Chris Goodrich, Peter Maresco, and Caitlin Thompson, appointed by ASD Moderator Ellen Grudzien. Among others, W&M worked with Superintendent Michael Berry, the leadership team, various department heads, staff at Clark-Wilkins Elementary School and Amherst Middle School, the Amherst School Board (ASB), and Amy Facey, Business Administrator for SAU 39.

W&M would like to thank the SAU 39 administration for a smooth and transparent process of information sharing throughout the budget process. All W&M members had access to the entire ASD budget for FY25. The W&M reviewed the budget by breaking it into sub-categories. A W&M member was assigned to each category and met with members of the ASB and SAU staff. Meeting recaps were then shared with the entire W&M group for each category and discussion followed at our W&M meetings. All meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the SAU 39 website (www.sau39.org). ASB members and Business Administrator Amy Facey attended the majority of these meetings. Any follow up questions were submitted to Mrs. Facey. All questions were answered, and there are currently no information requests outstanding.

Accordingly, W&M respectfully submits this report:

Article 12 – Wilkins Elementary School Project Bond

The Ways and Means committee unanimously supports Article 12 with a 7-0 vote.

This warrant article to see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of forty nine million nine hundred and ninety seven thousand two hundred fourteen dollars (\$49,997,214) (gross budget) to finance the major addition, reconstruction and renovation project for the Wilkins Elementary School building.

Members of the Ways and Means committee are confident that an exhaustive effort was undertaken by the School Board and the SAU administration to bring forward this article that strikes a balance between addressing school facility needs while maintaining a high level of fiscal prudence. Approving this article will create a facility that would meet the current and future space needs for the district, provide a learning environment for students and staff to facilitate high academic achievement, and deliver the highest standards for student and staff

safety. Taking into account the fiscal concerns of the residents of Amherst, this plan minimizes the tax impacts as much as possible while still fulfilling needs of the district. Were this article not approved, it is estimated that Wilkins School would still require maintenance throughout the next decade which would create a similar tax liability to the town but only address structural and mechanical issues (HVAC, roof etc.) without resolving any space constraints or address sub optimal learning environments and high safety concerns. Considering all this plus construction costs likely will continue to rise in the coming years, the Ways and Means committee unanimously agrees that this project is in the best fiscal interest of the town at this time.

ARTICLE 13 – FY25 Proposed Budget

The Ways and Means committee unanimously supports Article 13 with a 7-0 vote.

This warrant article seeks approval of a district operating budget of \$34,055,095. During the process of developing this budget, a Ways and Means member took part in the working group meetings for each subsection of the budget. Each member came away with similar responses - the use of Zero-Based Budgeting led to the development of the most efficient budget. Given the budget pressures from the voter approved teacher's salary increase as well as the tremendous increase in medical costs, the staff was able to develop a budget that minimized the impact on taxpayers while maintaining the focus on student performance. The Ways and Means members asked many detailed questions which led to many trade-offs which maintained focus on the students but minimized cost. The Ways and Means committee strongly supports this Warrant Article.

ARTICLE 14 – Facilities Capital Reserve Fund

The Ways and Means committee unanimously supports Article 14 with a 7-0 vote.

This warrant article allows for the district to allocate up to \$675,000 of existing funds towards capital improvements identified by the Amherst School Board as necessary to maintain our schools. For example, these funds will be used to continue the Amherst Middle School roof project that is already underway. This warrant article has a \$0.00 tax impact to the Amherst taxpayers and enables the Board to continue to plan for needed updates and maintenance of the buildings. The capital reserve fund is fiscally responsible and is in line with the goals of the Board for capital improvements, while not increasing taxes for the community.

ARTICLE 15 – Technology Capital Reserve Fund

The Ways and Means committee unanimously supports Article 15 with a 7-0 vote.

This warrant article allows for the district to allocate up to \$75,000 of existing funds towards maintaining and updating services and equipment related to technology. Currently the school district relies on various technological services and equipment to run not only the day-to-day operations of the district, but also to maximize student outcomes and communicate with students, families, and staff. This warrant article ensures that our students, family, and staff can have consistent access to all available technological resources while also not increasing the tax burden to the citizens of Amherst.

ARTICLE 16 – Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund

The Ways and Means committee unanimously supports Article 16 with a 7-0 vote.

This warrant article allows for the district to save money towards the purchase of vehicles to be used by the schools for transportation including interscholastic sports transportation. Over the last three years, this line item has been included in the budget at a cost of \$13,000 to \$22,000. This cost is driven mainly by the rental of buses and drivers. Owning vehicles will decrease this cost in the future. The Souhegan district has previously purchased vehicles for the high school and has realized a \$9,000 savings in the first year after purchase. Given that this warrant article will have no additional tax impact to the Amherst taxpayers, it makes logical and financial sense to support this warrant article.

**Amherst School District
Annual Meeting Warrant
February 5, 2024 and March 12, 2024
Amherst, New Hampshire**

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

You are hereby notified of the following Annual School District Meeting schedule:

First Session of Annual Meeting (Deliberative)

You are hereby notified to meet at Souhegan High School, 412 Boston Post Rd., Amherst, NH in said District on the 5th day of February 2024 at 6:00 p.m. This session shall consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of warrant articles numbered 12 through 16. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended, (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended, and (c) no warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article. An amendment that changes the dollar amount of an appropriation in a warrant article shall not be deemed to eliminate the subject matter of the article.

Second Session of Annual Meeting (Official Ballot Voting)

You are hereby notified to meet on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. to vote by official ballot on warrant articles numbered 11 through 16.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON WARRANT ARTICLE NUMBERS: To avoid confusion caused by warrant articles with the same number, Souhegan Cooperative School District warrant articles are numbered one (1) through ten (10), Amherst School District warrant articles are numbered eleven (11) through nineteen (19), and Town of Amherst warrant articles are numbered twenty-one (21) and above.

Article 11. Election of Officers (voting by official ballot March 12, 2024)

To the following school district offices:

- a. To choose one (1) School Board Member for the ensuing three (3) years.

Article 12.

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of forty nine million nine hundred and ninety seven thousand two hundred fourteen dollars (\$49,997,214) (gross budget) to finance the major addition, reconstruction and renovation project for the Wilkins Elementary School building, located at 80 Boston Post Road, Amherst, NH and to authorize the issuance of not more than forty nine million nine hundred and ninety seven thousand two hundred fourteen dollars (\$49,997,214) of bonds or notes under and in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act, RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended; to authorize the School Board to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; to authorize the School Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver said bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to authorize the School Board to take any action or to pass any other vote relative thereto, and further to raise and appropriate an additional sum of one million two hundred forty nine thousand nine hundred thirty dollars (\$1,249,930) for the first year's interest payment on the bond. **3/5 ballot vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee) (7-0)

Estimated tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.52 per thousand.

**Amherst School District
Annual Meeting Warrant
February 5, 2024 and March 12, 2024
Amherst, New Hampshire**

Article 13.

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 amounts 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 thirty four million fifty five thousand nine hundred eighty five dollars (\$34,055,985)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be thirty three million one hundred sixteen thousand five hundred nine dollars (\$33,116,509) 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 vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee) (7-0)

Estimated tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.56 per thousand.

Estimated tax impact of not passing this article is: \$0.17 per thousand.

*NOTE: Warrant Article 13 (operating budget) does not include appropriations proposed in any other warrant articles.

Article 14.

Shall the Amherst School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to six hundred seventy five thousand dollars (\$675,000) to be added to the Amherst School District Capital Facilities Repair, Maintenance and Improvement Expendable Trust Fund, previously established in March 2003? This sum to come from the June 30, 2024 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2024. No amount to be raised from new taxation. **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee) (7-0)

Estimated new tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand.

Estimated new tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.28 per thousand.

Article 15.

Shall the Amherst School District establish a Technology Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 198:20-c, V for the purpose of purchasing, updating, maintaining, and replacing hardware, software, services, and technology infrastructure, and to raise and appropriate the sum of up to seventy five thousand dollars (\$75,000) to be placed in this fund? Further, to name the Amherst School Board as agents to expend from said fund. This sum to come from the June 30, 2024 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2024. No amount to be raised from new taxation. **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee) (7-0)

Estimated new tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand.

Estimated new tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.03 per thousand.

**Amherst School District
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Article 16.

Shall the Amherst School District establish a Vehicle Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 198:20-c, V for the purpose of purchasing new vehicles, replacing existing vehicles, and for vehicle repairs, and to raise and appropriate the sum of up to thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) to be placed in this fund? Further, to name the Amherst School Board as agents to expend from said fund. This sum to come from the June 30, 2024 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2024. No amount to be raised from new taxation. **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee) (7-0)

Estimated new tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand.

Estimated new tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.01 per thousand.

Given under our hands as said Amherst, New Hampshire, on the day ²¹ of January 2024.

Tom Gauthier

Tom Gauthier, Chair

Jason White

Jason White, Vice Chair

Terri Behm

Terri Behm, Secretary

Shannon Gascoyne

Shannon Gascoyne

Tim Theberge

Timothy Theberge

Signature Certificate

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Signer	Timestamp	Signature
Shannon Gascoyne Email: sgascoyne@sau39.org Sent: 19 Jan 2024 15:51:48 UTC Viewed: 19 Jan 2024 15:57:56 UTC Signed: 19 Jan 2024 15:58:15 UTC Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified 19 Jan 2024 15:57:56 UTC		 IP address: [REDACTED] Location: [REDACTED] United States
Tom Gauthier Email: tgauthier@sau39.org Sent: 19 Jan 2024 15:51:48 UTC Viewed: 19 Jan 2024 16:04:55 UTC Signed: 19 Jan 2024 16:05:47 UTC Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified 19 Jan 2024 16:04:55 UTC		 IP address: [REDACTED] Location: [REDACTED] United States
Tim Theberge Email: ttheberge@sau39.org Sent: 19 Jan 2024 15:51:48 UTC Viewed: 19 Jan 2024 16:02:45 UTC Signed: 19 Jan 2024 16:07:39 UTC Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified 19 Jan 2024 16:02:45 UTC		 IP address: [REDACTED] Location: [REDACTED] United States

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Recipient Verification: ✓Email verified	19 Jan 2024 17:57:45 UTC	IP address: [REDACTED] Location: [REDACTED] United States

Jason White Email: jwhite1@sau39.org Sent: 19 Jan 2024 15:51:48 UTC Viewed: 21 Jan 2024 11:51:39 UTC Signed: 21 Jan 2024 11:52:13 UTC		
Recipient Verification: ✓Email verified	21 Jan 2024 11:51:39 UTC	IP address: [REDACTED] Location: [REDACTED] United States

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