

Amherst School District – Officers & Agents

School Board

Shannon Gascoyne – Chair
Jason White – Vice Chair
Brian Gould – Secretary
Terri Behm
Greg Fritz

Office of the Superintendent

Michael Berry – Superintendent
Robert Jozokos – Assistant Superintendent
Amy Facey – Business Administrator
Heather Jennings – Director of Student Services

Moderator

Matthew Comstock

Principals

Kathleen Murphy – Principal, Clark Wilkins Elementary School
Kristen Gauthier – Principal, Amherst Middle School

Clerk

Stephen Coughlan

Treasurer

Margaret Bennett

Ways & Means Finance Committee

Caitlin Thompson – Chair
Matthew Borden – Secretary
Caleb Baird
Katie Cokely

Tom Gauthier
Jennifer Herrmann
Peter Maresco
Michael Almeida (alternate)

Amherst School District Voting

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 in February and the Public Hearing in January.

All warrant articles that are presented at the Deliberative Session, including articles that are amended, are then placed on the official ballot and moved to the second session (ballot voting) of the annual meeting for a final vote. Please contact the Amherst Town Clerk for voter registration information and for absentee ballots:

<https://www.amherstnh.gov/town-clerk>

Ballot Vote: March 10, 2026, 6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Souhegan High School Gymnasium

Table of Contents

General Information	1
SAU 39 Introduction	2
CW Principal Report	3
AMS Principal Report	4
Amherst School Board & Ways & Means Reports	5 – 12
Sample Ballot	13 – 16
Frequently Asked Questions: Open Enrollment	17 – 18
Frequently Asked Questions: AEA Contract	19 – 20
Frequently Asked Questions: ASSA Contract	21 – 22
Frequently Asked Questions: Mont Vernon Tuition Agreement	23
Director of Student Services Report	24
Treasurer Report	25

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT THIRTY-NINE

Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan Cooperative School Districts

MICHAEL BERRY
Superintendent of Schools

ROBERT JOZOKOS
Assistant Superintendent

AMY FACEY
Business Administrator

DR. HEATHER JENNINGS
Director of Student Services



Introduction Amherst School District For Amherst Residents

February 2026

This guide is the culmination of a six-month process to develop a budget and provide critical information to Amherst's residents. The Amherst School District is governed by a School Board that cares deeply about students' educational experience and the stewardship of community resources.

The Board adopted and committed to the 2025-2026 school year goals:

- Advance Facilities to Support Learning and Safety that reflect the values of the community.
- Support Current Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Work.
- To successfully negotiate AEA, ASSA, and MV Tuition Agreements.
- Improve Communication.

The Amherst School Board, administration, faculty, and staff appreciate the students' engagement in learning. This year, there are noticeable achievements in mathematics and literacy, as well as participation in clubs and activities.

For the past six months, Board members, administrators, and SAU staff have worked with the Amherst Ways and Means to prepare an appropriate budget for the coming year. The proposed FY27 Amherst School District budget shows a 1.3% increase.

Highlights of this warrant include a citizen's petition article for funds to renovate Wilkins School, an article addressing open enrollment, and a new tuition agreement with Mont Vernon School District. The Amherst School Board and Amherst Ways and Means Committee agree on every article.

As you review the warrant and accompanying articles, you will notice a change. Due to state law, information that used to be provided separately is now included on the warrant itself.

Thank you for your care as you review the budget and information.

We hope this Voter Guide provides the information necessary to make an informed decision.



2025-2026



CLARK-WILKINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



WHO WE SERVE

- Student population: 695
 - Clark School: Grades PK-K
 - Wilkins School: Grades 1-4
- Clark School houses our integrated early childhood preschool program



ENGAGING ACADEMICS

- US News 2026 Rankings: Top 6% of NH Public Elementary Schools
- 2025 Grade 4 Achievement:
 - 80% Proficiency in Mathematics
 - 68% Proficiency in English Language Arts



CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

- Evidence-based literacy curriculum
- High-quality mathematics curriculum with a focus on conceptual understanding, building a solid foundation for mathematics
- Play-based learning opportunities for our youngest learners



SUPPORT FOR THE WHOLE STUDENT

- Responsive Classroom Approach: Establishing a strong sense of belonging, significance and fun each day
- Access to guidance counselors, social workers, and specialists to support all students



PARENT ENGAGEMENT

- Frequent opportunities for parent volunteers
- Teacher Led Parent Book Club - The Gift of Failure, with a second book this year!
- Strong value of parent partnerships



INTEGRATED ARTS

- Art, Music, Technology, Library, and Physical Education instruction weekly
- Grade-level concerts and performances
- Artists in Residencies: Circus Arts and Comic Book Arts



ENRICHMENT

- 300 Students Participated in After-School Clubs, with another 200 for the Spring Session
- Northeast Passage - Similarity Awareness
- Visiting Planetariums and Wildlife Encounters



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Amherst PTA: Community Boosterthon, Enrichment, Family Dance Events, Math and Science Night, Holiday Storytime
- Amherst Lions Club: Vision Screenings for Early Learners

Engage. Challenge. and Support

Clark-Wilkins Elementary

Principal: Kathleen Murphy



2025-2026

AMHERST MIDDLE SCHOOL



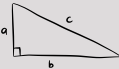
MIDDLE SCHOOL MODEL

- Student population: 621
 - Lower School: Grades 5-6
 - Upper School: Grades 7-8
- Designated administrator & counseling team
- Students assigned to interdisciplinary teaching teams



ACADEMIC GROWTH

- Competency-based grading & reporting system
- Standards-based & traditional
 - We encourage clear, actionable feedback
 - Student work shared with students and families
 - Emphasis on growth & ownership



CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

- $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$
- New research- & evidence-based academic programming
 - Math (Grades 6-8)
 - Humanities (Grade 5)
 - Social-Emotional Learning (Morning Meeting & Advisory)



SUPPORT FOR THE WHOLE STUDENT

Eagle Support Team

- Admin, Counselors, Social Workers, Nurse, SRO
- Focus: lessons, small groups, family partnerships
- New School Resource Officer: Kyle Cordero



FOCUS ON LEARNING

Personal device-free school day & digital hall passes

- More engaged students, fewer distractions
- Strongest impact in Grades 7-8



INTEGRATED ARTS

Grades 5-6:

- Art, Music, Technology, Wellness, Physical Education, Makerspace, Literacy Lab

Grades 7-8: Student Electives

- 16+ different courses
- Practical Arts, Performance arts, Visual arts



STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

- Cocurricular experiences: field trips, speakers, author visits, artists in residence
- Athletics: >3/4 of students participate
- Clubs: 32+ seasonal and year-long clubs
- Dances, social events, fundraisers



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Amherst PTA partnership → classroom grants, volunteers, & enrichment
- Community service & fundraising
 - Manchester Veterans Association, Operation Delta Dog, SHARE

We have the Courage to Care

Amherst Middle School
Principal: Kristen Gauthier

Amherst School Board Report

Thank you for your continued engagement in our budget process and for your commitment to the long-standing facility needs of our schools. Whether through attending meetings, asking thoughtful questions, or submitting citizen petition articles, your participation reflects a community deeply invested in the future of its students. The Board is sincerely grateful for that dedication.

As many residents know, the past four years have included significant bond requests for the Amherst School District. The two most recent proposals earned majority support, 54% and 55%, but did not reach the 60% threshold required for passage. In mid-December, the Board reviewed two new elementary facility proposals developed with our architect and project management partners. These options, priced at \$48.9 million and \$54.4 million for a further-reduced grade 1–4 building on the Wilkins site, carried costs and designs similar to prior requests. After careful evaluation, the Board chose not to advance either proposal, as we did not believe they offered the right balance between taxpayer investment and community value. Our past ballot experience has reinforced that public support depends not only on demonstrated need but also on confidence that scale, cost, phasing, and benefit are appropriately aligned.

In January, residents brought forward their own ideas through citizen petition warrant articles. We want to express our appreciation for the time, thought, and genuine concern that went into these efforts. Community-driven proposals demonstrate a shared desire to find solutions, and the Board values and respects the initiative shown by those who contributed their perspectives. One of these petition warrant articles was amended from \$19.3 million to \$37 million at Deliberative Session and will appear on the March ballot. If it passes, the Board and administration will fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities by determining how the approved funds can best meet the warrant article's stated objectives. This includes ensuring that any plan undergoes full public and professional vetting, complies with educational and regulatory requirements, and proceeds through a competitive bid process consistent with policy.

We encourage you to review all of the articles carefully. Articles 14–26 were crafted by the Board and include important Amherst Education Association (AEA) and Amherst Support Staff Association (ASSA) contracts that provide stability for our educators and help us retain the talented professionals who support our students every day. These articles also include the revised tuition agreement with Mont Vernon, an agreement that offers students a strong educational experience while serving as a significant source of revenue for the Amherst School District. The Board firmly believes these articles are essential to supporting our students and helping them thrive in the years ahead.

In lieu of a major bond request this year, we have put forward articles that address immediate needs while supporting long-term planning. These include funding for two portable classrooms to relieve space constraints at Wilkins Elementary, as well as additional contributions to replenish the Amherst School District Capital Facilities Expendable Trust Fund, which serves all schools in the district. Together, these measures provide short-term relief and preserve flexibility as we continue working toward a phased, long-term facilities approach that reflects community feedback and can earn broad taxpayer support in 2027. Finally, article 26 creates an expendable trust fund that would allow the District to accept voluntary donations which can be saved until a capital project requires funding. By setting aside these contributions, the District can utilize these funds to reduce the amount that must be raised through taxation for future capital projects.

We are grateful for your continued engagement. If you have questions, please email us at ASB@sau39.org

Amherst School Board

Shannon Gascoyne (Chair), Jason White (Vice Chair), Brian Gould (Secretary), Terri Behm, Greg Fritz

Ways & Means Committee Report

The Amherst School District (ASD) Ways & Means Committee (W&M) 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. 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 FY27. 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.

Please refer to the QR code provided for a link to our reports on the subsections of the Amherst School District budget.

Way & Means Committee

Caitlin Thompson (Chair), Matt Borden (Secretary), Caleb Baird, Katie Cokely, Tom Gauthier, Jennifer Herrmann, Peter Maresco, and Michael Almeida (alternate)



Article 12 – Citizen Petition Warrant Article #1 - \$37,000,000

Not Recommended by the Amherst School Board (0-5)

Not Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee)(0-5-1)

W&M:

The members of the Ways and Means Committee voted not to support Warrant Article 12, with one abstention, due to several significant concerns regarding process and feasibility. Chief among these was the lack of appropriate vetting of project costs. Committee members felt that the financial estimates presented were not supported by sufficiently detailed or competitive quotes, limiting the ability to confidently assess the fiscal impact on the town and its taxpayers. In addition, the project plans were not finalized at the time of review. Key elements of the design and scope remained unresolved, creating uncertainty around both total cost and long-term operational implications. Without finalized plans, the committee determined it was difficult to responsibly endorse a project of this magnitude. Finally, the proposed timeline was viewed as unrealistic. Members expressed concern that the schedule did not adequately account for the remaining planning, design refinement, regulatory approvals, and potential unforeseen delays. Rushing the process risked cost overruns, change orders, and implementation challenges. Taken together, these concerns led the Ways and Means Committee to conclude that while investment in school infrastructure is important, this particular proposal was not sufficiently developed to warrant support at this time. While the majority of the group did vote not to support the warrant article, one member did abstain due to their involvement with this citizen's petition.

Article 13 – Citizen Petition Warrant Article #2 - \$1

Not Recommended by the Amherst School Board (0-5)

Not Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee)(0-5-1)

W&M:

The Ways and Means Committee voted not to support Warrant Article 13, with one abstention. While the Ways and Means Committee agrees that there is a need to fund a Wilkins Elementary School Project, this article, as presented, does not achieve that purpose.

ARTICLE 14 – Open Enrollment

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee)(6-0)

BOARD:

New Hampshire's Open Enrollment Law, RSA 194-D, allows students to enroll in schools outside their assigned district unless a local district takes formal action to define how it will participate. If no action is taken, decisions default to the state framework rather than remaining under local control. Under that default, the sending district must pay the receiving district no less than 80% of the sending district's average cost per pupil, as determined by the NHDOE using the most recent available data. This has a direct impact on our local school budget. Warrant Article 14 is a proactive measure. It enables the Amherst School District to clearly define how it will participate in open enrollment in a way that aligns with our community values, financial responsibilities, and long-term planning. The article does two key things. First, it designates the Amherst School District as an open-enrollment district but sets the number of students accepted from outside of the district at one (1). At this time, we do not believe the district can accommodate additional students beyond this without changes to staffing or facilities. Second, it sets the percentage of Amherst School District students who may enroll in other SAUs at 0%, providing predictability and stability for the district at this time.

W&M:

This warrant article allows for the district to adopt an open enrollment school program that would designate the Clark-Wilkins School and the Amherst Middle School as open enrollment schools. This would enable the district to admit non-resident students to each school. The admission details would:

- Allow 100% of eligible resident pupils to attend Clark-Wilkins School and Amherst Middle School,
- Allow 0% of eligible resident pupils to attend open enrollment schools outside of the district, and,
- Limit the number of non-resident pupils who may attend Clark-Wilkins School and Amherst Middle School to no more than one student.

Ahead of any larger state-wide legislation, it makes logical sense to support this warrant article. The Ways and Means Committee supports this warrant article unanimously.

ARTICLE 15 – Operating Budget - \$35,603,094

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

The proposed budget for FY27 operating is a 1.3% increase or \$461,286 increase over the FY26 adopted budget. This proposed budget allows us to meet the district's everyday needs while continuing to pursue the Framework for Success. The SAU 39 Framework for Success is a districtwide roadmap that aligns Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan schools around a shared commitment to Engage, Challenge, and Support every learner. It focuses on five core priorities: strengthening student learning through high-quality instruction; supporting the whole child's academic, social, and emotional needs; investing in educators through meaningful professional development and systems that help them thrive; building strong partnerships with families and the community; and stewarding financial, human, and facility resources responsibly. Together, these elements guide decision-making, promote continuous improvement, and ensure that all students have the opportunities and support they need to succeed. This budget includes a reduction of the paraprofessional staff at Clark-Wilkins and AMS, which is based on an analysis and audit of student needs. This budget also includes the cost of the new transportation contract with Student Transportation of America, for home to school and athletics bus service.

W&M:

The Ways and Means Committee voted unanimously in support of the proposed school budget. During the process of developing this budget, Ways and Means Committee members took part in the working group meetings for each subsection of the budget. The use of zero-based budgeting led to the development of an efficient budget that minimized the impact on taxpayers while maintaining the focus on student performance. There were continued substantial increases in insurance costs, as we've seen in the previous year's budget, and the district was able to balance those increases while maintaining focus on the true needs of the district.

The Committee asked many detailed questions and was satisfied with the responses received, some of which led to further refinement of the budget. The Committee strongly supports this Warrant Article.

FY26 Operating Budget	\$35,141,808	% Change
Curriculum	\$214,641	0.6%
Capital/Misc.	\$194,785	0.5%
Transportation-Regular & Special Ed	\$152,056	0.4%
Administration	\$98,119	0.3%
Technology	\$32,227	0.1%
School Nutrition Services	\$20,881	0.1%
Facilities	(\$68,638)	(0.2%)
Student Services	(\$182,785)	(0.5%)
Total Change	\$461,286	1.3%
FY27 Proposed Budget	\$35,603,094	

ARTICLE 16 – AEA Collective Bargaining Agreement - 1 year

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

This one-year contract provides cost of living increases and stability for our classroom teachers, library media specialists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, school psychologists, school counselors, Board Certified Behavior Analysts, and nurses. If this contract does not pass, the current contract remains in effect. About 30 employees will fall two steps behind on the salary schedule, and another 85 will fall one pay step behind on the salary schedule. The instructional time and health care gains in this contract will not take effect. If this contract does not pass the ability to attract and retain high-quality faculty will be impacted.

W&M:

In lieu of a multi-year agreement, the board is presenting a one-year contract with Amherst Education Association. Ways and Means unanimously support this agreement. While multi-year deals are preferred to provide stability and cost control over a longer period of time, a one-year agreement is a better alternative than leaving teachers at their current salary step and wages for another year. The agreement provides teachers with a three percent cost-of-living allowance, which is in line with current inflation trends, while also advancing teachers a step on the salary scale. There is an increase in instructional time with the conversation of a teacher professional development day into a student education day. There is also an increase in the employee share of health insurance deductibles, providing relief for the district.

ARTICLE 17 – Special Meeting for AEA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (4-1)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee)(6-1)

BOARD:

If Article 16 is defeated, this authorizes the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 16 cost items only.

W&M:

If Article 16 should fail, this ballot question would authorize the board to call a special meeting to re-address cost items in Article 16. Ways and Means supports this measure by a 6-1 margin. This would allow the board to come up with a revised salary proposal with AEA to cover the next year while attempts at another long-term proposal to appear on the ballot in March 2027. This is a required article of the warrant. The no vote on the committee was cast due to skepticism of hosting another potential election, resulting in a potentially smaller voter turnout and increased costs for another voting day.

ARTICLE 18 – ASSA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

This article presents a new four-year collective contract with the Amherst Support Staff Association, replacing a three-year agreement that expires June 30, 2026. This contract provides our essential support staff with competitive, reasonable increases and greater stability. If the contract does not pass, the current contract remains in effect. Support Staff members will not receive an increase, and attracting and retaining employees in this category will pose a challenge for the district.

W&M:

The Ways and Means committee supports the proposed agreement with the Amherst Support Staff Association by a 7-0 vote. This agreement covers a wide variety of non-teaching positions critical to the daily functioning of Clark-Wilkins and Amherst Middle Schools. The agreement is more costly on a year-over-year basis than previous agreements but Ways and Means recognizes the need for these positions to be better compensated for attracting and retaining employees. When the school district is hiring for these positions, not only are they competing with surrounding school districts, but the private industry as well. The committee supports the new salary structure and annual increases to wages. We also recognize the district's creativity in providing additional benefits, from extended bereavement leave to longevity bonuses to parental leave. W&M also commends the school board and ASSA for agreeing to modify the health insurance contribution ratios and options.

ARTICLE 19 – Special Meeting for ASSA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (4-1)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee)(6-1)

BOARD:

If Article 18 is defeated, this authorizes the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 18 cost items only.

W&M:

If Article 18 should fail, this ballot question would authorize the board to call a special meeting to re-address cost items in Article 18. Ways and Means supports this measure by a 6-1 margin. This would allow the board to come up with a revised salary proposal with AEA to cover the next year while attempts at another long-term proposal to appear on the ballot in March 2027. This is a required article of the warrant. The no vote on the committee was cast due to skepticism of hosting another potential election, resulting in a potentially smaller voter turnout and increased costs for another voting day.

ARTICLE 20 – Tuition Agreement with Mont Vernon School District

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

This four-year Agreement secures a significant revenue source for the Amherst School District and continues the long-term partnership with the Mont Vernon Community.

W&M:

This warrant article allows for the Amherst School District to ratify and approve a new four-year tuition agreement with the Mont Vernon School District to allow for continued education of Mont Vernon students at the Amherst Middle School beginning July 1, 2026. This tuition agreement is consistent with prior agreements and the Committee supports this measure unanimously.

ARTICLE 21 – Portable Purchase (2 classrooms) - \$770,585

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (4-1)

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

BOARD:

This article is being recommended to address the immediate space constraints at Wilkins Elementary School. It is intended solely as a short-term measure and should not be interpreted as a long-range or permanent solution. The District will continue its work toward developing a comprehensive, voter-supported plan to meet the community's long-term needs.

W&M:

This warrant article allows the district to raise up to \$770,585 in new taxation to fund the purchase and installation of a portable building housing two classrooms. This portable building will be used to alleviate space constraints at Wilkins School. This portable building can also be used in any construction or renovation project in the future, offsetting the cost. This is a fiscally responsible way of adding space in the near term while ensuring the portable building's future use can also offset costs of potential projects. The Committee supports this warrant article unanimously.

ARTICLE 22 – Capital Facilities Expendable Trust Fund (Taxation) - \$325,000

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

Our current buildings continue to need maintenance and repairs. The school district has a long-term plan to fund major capital projects in the Amherst School District and this expendable trust fund is key to fulfilling those plans. This article seeks to raise additional funds through taxation to ensure our ability to further replenish this fund. The Capital Facilities Expendable Trust Fund will be utilized to sustain the long-term capital improvement plan for Amherst Middle School (AMS), maintain contingency funds for unexpected events in all of our buildings across the Amherst School District and address immediate building interior and safety needs at Wilkins Elementary School.

W&M:

This warrant article allows the district to raise up to \$325,000 in new taxation to fund capital improvements identified by the Amherst School Board as necessary to maintain buildings in the district. Specifically, the anticipated use of these funds will be at Wilkins School to remediate critical safety issues. The funds will also be used to maintain and repair the building envelope at Wilkins. These necessary items are critical to maintaining a safe learning environment and proactive remediation is fiscally responsible. The Committee supports this warrant article unanimously.

ARTICLE 23 – Capital Facilities Expendable Trust Fund (UFB) - \$675,000

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

We are proposing an additional contribution of \$675,000 this year. The funds generated by this warrant will not require any increase in taxes; they will come solely from any surplus funds remaining at the end of the school year. No new taxes would be required for this contribution, as the funding would be drawn from the year-end surplus. These funds are essential to sustaining the long-term capital improvement plan for Amherst Middle School (AMS) and maintaining contingency funds for unexpected events in all of our buildings across the Amherst School District. The AMS work is part of an ongoing, multi-phase effort. Two major sections, encompassing roof, HVAC, and interior upgrades, have already been completed with the support of voters. The next phase of this project is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2026.

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Contribution</u>	<u>Withdrawal</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>Planned Project(s)</u>
FY25			\$1,066,000	
FY26	\$400,000 \$675,000 *\$20,000	\$135,000 \$150,000	\$1,876,000	Crack-Fill & Sealcoat (AMS, Clark), AMS Elevator Cab, Clark MPR Roof, Clark Exterior Walls, Clark Emergency Lights; Clark Lead Abatement, Wilkins MPR Repair
FY27	\$675,000 \$325,000 *\$10,000	\$1,800,000 \$325,000	\$761,000	Roof C2, Interior C Renovation Project, Wilkins CNA Projects
FY28	\$675,000 *\$10,000	\$222,000	\$1,224,000	Wilkins CNA Projects, AMS Transformer / Pump Upgrades, Clark Boiler Controls, Clark DHW Generation, AMS Movable Partitions
FY29	\$675,000 *\$10,000	\$1,600,000	\$309,000	AMS Roof D, Interior C Renovation Project (cont.)
FY30	\$675,000 *\$10,000	\$200,000	\$794,000	Bean House Grounds Building Project

W&M:

This warrant article allows 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. This warrant article is funded via the anticipated FY25 unassigned fund balance. There is no net new tax to the Amherst taxpayers to fund this warrant article. The warrant article enables the Board to continue to plan for needed updates and maintenance of the buildings in the district. The capital reserve fund is fiscally responsible and it makes logical and financial sense to support this warrant article. The Committee supports this warrant article unanimously.

ARTICLE 24 – Vehicle Expendable Trust Fund (UFB) - \$45,000

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

This expendable trust fund is designated for the purchase of vehicles necessary to support district operations. These vehicles serve essential functions within both the facilities and athletic departments. No new taxes would be required for this contribution, as the funding would be drawn from the year-end surplus.

Current Fleet of Vehicles & Replacement Schedule

Facilities: 2008 Truck (replace w/Truck & Salter FY26), 2002 Sedan (replace w/Transit Connect FY28), 2008 Minivan (replace w/Transit Connect FY29), 2012 Gator (replace FY30). Athletics: 2024 10 Passenger Van (replace FY40)

W&M:

This warrant article allows the district to save money towards the purchase of vehicles to be used by the school for transportation, including interscholastic sports transportation. The district currently has four vehicles ranging in age from 14 years old to 24 years old. The current plan is to replace these vehicles over a five-year span. Approval of this warrant article would support the purchase of the first of these four vehicles this year while maintaining a small balance in the vehicle project fund to be used for future vehicle purchases. Since there is

no doubt that these vehicles will all need to be replaced, it seems to be a fiscally responsible choice to approve this warrant article to allow the replacement of the first vehicle now before the prices go up. The Committee unanimously supports this warrant article.

ARTICLE 25 – Technology Expendable Trust Fund (UFB) - \$75,000

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

This fund supports long term savings for infrastructure including; Telecommunications (telephones, alarms systems), Network (Switches, Firewall, Access Points), Wide Area Network (Interconnection between buildings). No new taxes would be raised as this funding would come from year-end surplus.

W&M:

This warrant article allows 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. Additionally, the district has a proactive long-term plan for managing its aging technology that is forward-looking and ultimately less costly than a reactive stance with less volatility to the annual budget. This warrant article would provide the district with funds to implement the first phase of a wireless upgrade project while adding to the fund balance which will be used to support future phases of the project. The Committee unanimously supports this warrant article.

ARTICLE 26 – Capital Facilities-Donations Expendable Trust Fund; Accept Donated Gifts, Legacies, Devises

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

BOARD:

The establishment of this fund enables residents, organizations, and estates to contribute directly to the District's capital facilities needs. All donated funds are legally restricted for the repair, maintenance, and improvement of capital facilities. The Trustees of Trust Funds will oversee and manage the fund in accordance with state law. Establishing this fund does not require any new taxes.

W&M:

This warrant article allows for the establishment of an expendable trust fund specifically designated for private donations. While the district has a history of funding expendable trust funds for certain capital maintenance needs and projects, this specifically designated expendable trust fund provides a legal avenue for the district to accept private donations for capital improvements. The district would be able to use these funds with the ability for flexibility in timing of when these funds could be spent. Previously, donations would need to be allocated and spent in a certain period of time, normally within a year. The creation of this expendable trust fund would enable the district to accept donations and thoughtfully use these funds over time to meet the goals of the district. The Committee fully supports this measure with a 7-0 vote in favor.

Please note - the order of the articles for the expendable trust 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 vehicles and then technology if enough funds are available at the end of the year.***

**ABSENTEE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION
AMHERST, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 10, 2026**

BALLOT 1 of 2

Steph W. Ayler
SCHOOL DISTRICT CLERK

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

1. **To Vote:** Completely fill in the oval to the right of your choice like this: . For each office vote for up to the number of candidates stated in the sentences: "Vote for not more than 1;" or "Vote for up to X;" "X will be elected." If you vote for more than the stated number of candidates, your vote for that office will not be counted.
2. **To Vote by Write-in:** To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write in the name of the person in the "write-in" space and completely fill in the oval to the right of the "write-in" space like this .

FOR SCHOOL BOARD <small>(3 Years) Vote for up to 2; Two will be elected</small>	FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT MODERATOR <small>Vote for not more than 1</small>	FOR SCHOOL CLERK <small>(3 Years) Vote for not more than 1</small>
OBADIAH DART <input type="radio"/>	(3 Years) <input type="radio"/>	VICTORIA PARISI <input type="radio"/>
MICHAEL ALMEIDA <input type="radio"/>	MATTHEW COMSTOCK <input type="radio"/>	(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>
TERRI BEHM <input type="radio"/>	(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
KATIE COKELY <input type="radio"/>	FOR SCHOOL TREASURER <small>Vote for not more than 1</small>	
(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	(3 Years) <input type="radio"/>	
(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	TOM GAUTHIER <input type="radio"/>	
	(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	

ARTICLES

Article 12. Citizen Petition Warrant Article #1

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty seven million dollars (**\$37,000,000**) (gross budget) to finance the major addition 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 thirty seven million dollars (**\$37,000,000**) 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, accept and expend 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 nine hundred and twenty five thousand dollars (\$925,000) for the first year's interest payment on the bond. **3/5 ballot vote required.**

TAX IMPACT

Year #1	\$ 925,000.00	\$0.38/\$1,000
Year #2	\$2,561,547.75	\$1.05/\$1,000
Year #3	\$2,560,671.50	\$1.05/\$1,000
Year #4	\$2,563,166.00	\$1.05/\$1,000
Year #5	\$2,563,945.50	\$1.05/\$1,000

Not Recommended by the Amherst School Board (0-5)

Not Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee) (0-5-1)

YES

NO

Article 13. Citizen Petition Warrant Article #2

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one dollar (**\$1.00**) (gross budget) for the purpose of financing the major addition, reconstruction and renovation of the Wilkins Elementary School, located at 80 Boston Post Road, Amherst, New Hampshire, and to authorize the issuance of not more than one dollar (**\$1.00**) in bonds or notes under and in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act, RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended. Further, to authorize the School Board to apply for, obtain, and accept any federal, state, or other aid that may be available for said project; to comply with all laws applicable thereto; to issue, negotiate, sell, and deliver such bonds or notes; to determine the rate of interest, maturity, and other terms thereof; and to take any other action or pass any other vote relative thereto. And further, to raise and appropriate the additional sum of \$0 dollars (\$0) for the first year's interest payment on said bonds. **3/5 ballot vote required.**

Not Recommended by the Amherst School Board (0-5)

Not Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee) (0-5-1)

YES

NO

TURN BALLOT OVER AND CONTINUE VOTING

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 14. Open Enrollment

Shall the Amherst School District vote to adopt an open enrollment school program, designating the Clark Wilkins School and the Amherst Middle School as open enrollment schools pursuant to NH RSA 194-D, for the purpose of enabling the district to admit non-resident students to Clark Wilkins School and Amherst Middle School, with one hundred percent (100%) of its eligible resident pupils permitted to attend Clark Wilkins School and Amherst Middle School and up to zero percent (0%) of its resident pupils permitted to attend open enrollment schools located outside of the District, and further, to limit the number of non-resident pupils who may attend Clark Wilkins School and Amherst Middle School under the provisions of RSA 194-D to up to one (1) non resident student. Majority vote required.

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (advisory budget committee) (6-0)

YES

NO

Article 15. Operating Budget

The average cost-per-pupil for the preceding year as calculated in accordance with RSA 189:75, I(a) is \$23,894. ELA Proficiency: 68%; Math Proficiency: 69%; Science Proficiency: 48%

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-five million six hundred three thousand ninety four dollars (\$35,603,094)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be thirty four million nine hundred fifty three thousand nine hundred eighty three dollars (\$34,953,983) 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: \$0.17 per thousand.

Estimated tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.09 per thousand.

*NOTE: Article 15 (operating budget) does not include appropriations proposed in any other warrant articles

YES

NO

Article 16. AEA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Shall the Amherst School District approve all cost items included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement reached between the Amherst School Board and the Amherst Education Association (AEA) which calls for the following estimated increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase	Estimated Tax Impact
2027	\$655,017	\$0.27 per thousand

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$655,017 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? Majority vote required.

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (Advisory Budget Committee) (7-0)

YES

NO

Article 17. Special Meeting for AEA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Shall the Amherst School District, if Article 16 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 16 cost items only? Majority vote required.

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (4-1)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (Advisory Budget Committee) (6-1)

YES

NO

GO TO NEXT BALLOT AND CONTINUE VOTING

**ABSENTEE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION
AMHERST, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 10, 2026**

BALLOT 2 of 2

Steph W. Cagle
SCHOOL DISTRICT CLERK

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 18. ASSA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Shall the Amherst School District approve all cost items included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement reached between the Amherst School Board and the Amherst Support Staff Association (ASSA) which calls for the following estimated increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase	Estimated Tax Impact
2027	\$167,298	\$0.07 per thousand
2028	\$160,342	\$0.07 per thousand
2029	\$159,111	\$0.07 per thousand
2030	\$166,294	\$0.07 per thousand

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$167,298** for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (Advisory Budget Committee) (7-0)

YES

NO

Article 19. Special Meeting for ASSA Collective Bargaining Agreement

Shall the Amherst School District, if Article 18 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 18 cost items only? **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (4-1)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (Advisory Budget Committee) (6-1)

YES

NO

Article 20. Tuition Agreement with Mont Vernon School District

Shall the Amherst School District ratify and approve a new four (4) year tuition agreement with the Mont Vernon School District to allow for continued education of Mont Vernon students at the Amherst Middle School beginning July 1, 2026 in accordance with the proposed Tuition Agreement on file with the School District Clerk? **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

Recommended by the Amherst School District Ways & Means (Advisory Budget Committee) (7-0)

YES

NO

Article 21. Portable Purchase (2 Classrooms)

Shall the Amherst School District authorize the Amherst School Board to purchase and install a portable (2 classrooms) at the Clark/Wilkins Elementary School for the total amount of seven hundred seventy thousand five hundred eighty five dollars (**\$770,585**), and to raise and appropriate the sum of seven hundred seventy thousand five hundred eighty five dollars (**\$770,585**) for that purpose (purchase and installation of a portable (2 classrooms) at the Clark/Wilkins Elementary School)? This sum to come from new taxation. **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (4-1)

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

Estimated tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.32 per thousand.

YES

NO

Article 22. Capital Facilities Expendable Trust Fund (Taxation)

Shall the Amherst School District raise and appropriate the sum of three hundred twenty five thousand dollars (**\$325,000**) 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 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 tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.13 per thousand.

YES

NO

TURN BALLOT OVER AND CONTINUE VOTING

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 23. Capital Facilities Expendable Trust Fund (UFB)

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, 2026 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2026. 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 tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand.

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

YES

NO

Article 24. Vehicle Expendable Trust Fund (UFB)

Shall the Amherst School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to forty five thousand dollars (**\$45,000**) to be added to the Vehicle Expendable Trust Fund previously established in March 2024? This sum to come from the June 30, 2026 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2026. 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 tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand.

Estimated tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.02 per thousand.

YES

NO

Article 25. Technology Expendable Trust Fund (UFB)

Shall the Amherst School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to seventy five thousand dollars (**\$75,000**) to be added to the Technology Expendable Trust Fund previously established in March 2024? This sum to come from the June 30, 2026 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2026. 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 tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand.

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

YES

NO

Article 26. Capital Facilities-Donations Expendable Trust Fund: Accept Donated Gifts, Legacies, Devises

Shall the Amherst School District adopt the provisions of RSA 198:20-c, VI to authorize the acceptance of privately donated gifts, legacies, and devises, provided that such gifts, legacies or devises shall be invested and accounted for separately from, and not commingled with, amounts appropriated from taxation and further, any such privately donated gifts, legacies, and devises, shall be subject to the custody and investment provisions applicable to trust funds accepted under RSA 31:31, and further, shall the District establish a Capital Facilities-Donations Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 198:20-c, for the purpose of repairing, maintaining, and improving capital facilities in the Amherst School District, and to authorize the deposit of any privately donated gifts, legacies and devices into this fund, along with the use and expenditure of said funds, for this purpose, and further, to name the Amherst School Board as agents to expend from said fund? **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Amherst School Board (5-0)

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

YES

NO

YOU HAVE NOW COMPLETED VOTING THIS BALLOT

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT THIRTY-NINE

Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan Cooperative School Districts

MICHAEL BERRY
Superintendent of Schools

ROBERT JOZOKOS
Assistant Superintendent

AMY FACEY
Business Administrator

DR. HEATHER JENNINGS
Director of Student Services



Open Enrollment - Amherst School District Frequently Asked Questions

What is open enrollment?

Under New Hampshire law (RSA 194-D), open enrollment is a state-approved school choice option that permits students to transfer to schools outside their home districts. When a student transfers, their home district must pay 80% of its own per-pupil-cost to the student's new district as tuition.

The state Supreme Court ruled last October that unless a school district's voters approve an open enrollment policy, that district may not limit the number of its students who transfer to another school district, regardless of the total cost to the home district.

Also, districts without open enrollment policies cannot accept transfers from other districts or collect tuition for them.

What does the open enrollment warrant article propose?

Article 14 establishes an open enrollment policy designating the Clark Wilkins and Amherst Middle School as open enrollment schools, and sets the number of students who may use tax dollars to transfer to other communities' schools at zero (0). The number of students permitted to transfer from outside school districts would be limited to one (1).

Why have these warrant articles been proposed?

Without open-enrollment policies and designations in place, the school district would be at risk of having to use local taxpayer dollars to fund tuition for students who transfer out of the district. This will increase financial pressures on the community, create budgeting and enrollment-projection challenges, and jeopardize staffing levels and program continuity.

As the State Legislature continues to discuss changes to open enrollment, this warrant article attempts to ensure that decisions about enrollment remain under the control of Amherst voters.

What does your vote mean?

A YES vote means:

- The Amherst School District (Clark-Wilkins Elementary School & Amherst Middle School) may accept up to 1 student, if all eligibility criteria are met.
- Students cannot use school budget funds to pay tuition at another town's public school through the open enrollment process.
- District funding, planning, staffing, and course offerings are protected.

A NO vote means:

- An unlimited number of students may leave to attend other open enrollment schools, and District taxpayers would have to pay their tuition.
- The school district will lose 80% of the per-pupil funding for each student who leaves, even if the student's destination district has a lower cost per pupil.
- Clark-Wilkins Elementary School & Amherst Middle School will not have the option to admit non-SAU 39 students and receive tuition for them.

What is the current per-pupil cost in the Amherst School District?

Recently, the annual per-pupil cost has been about \$23,900 in Amherst. Transferring from the district would take 80% of that funding with them to their new district. The approximate amount of taxpayer funding per student leaving Clark-Wilkins Elementary School or Amherst Middle School would be \$19,100.

Can any non-resident student enroll at Clark-Wilkins Elementary School or Amherst Middle School?

No. Students will need to meet academic and other eligibility criteria established by the school through an application process yet to be determined.

How will special education costs be handled?

Students' home districts will remain financially responsible for special education services.

Will class sizes increase?

Students will be accepted only if space is available and services are not affected.

Why does the warrant article set the number of students who may transfer into the District at up to one student?

Despite concerns about space for additional students, allowing up to one student to transfer into the District appears to currently best satisfy the state statute, and keep the open enrollment decision locally.

Does this mean no one can transfer out of Clark-Wilkins Elementary School or Amherst Middle School?

No. Traditional options still exist.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT THIRTY-NINE

Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan Cooperative School Districts

MICHAEL BERRY
Superintendent of Schools

ROBERT JOZOKOS
Assistant Superintendent

AMY FACEY
Business Administrator

DR. HEATHER JENNINGS
Director of Student Services



Amherst School District/Amherst Education Association Agreed Upon Collective Bargaining Agreement with Amherst Education Association To appear on the March 10, 2026 warrant

Frequently Asked Questions

- *What positions are covered under this agreement with Amherst Education Association (AEA)?*
For the purpose of this contract, the term teacher includes classroom teachers, library media specialists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, school psychologists, school counselors, Board Certified Behavior Analysts, and nurses. This agreement covers 148 teachers.
- *What is the status of the current contract?*
The teachers are in the final year of a three-year agreement.
- *What is the length of the proposed contract?*
One year
- *Why is the contract for only one year?*
The school board and AEA's negotiating teams worked hard to come to a multi-year agreement. The parties were not able to agree on the terms of a multi-year agreement. A one-year bridge contract was agreed on as the best path forward from this negotiation session. Both teams look forward to a fresh start in the spring.
- *What are the key financial aspects of the agreement?*
 - A 3% increase to the salary schedule.
 - Elimination of the \$30,000 medical trust
 - Increases in longevity stipends as follows:
 - For teachers with 12-15 years of experience: \$900 - \$1,150
 - For teachers with 16 or more years of experience: \$1,800 - \$2,325
- *What are the educational gains in this contract?*
The key gain is the conversion of a professional development (PD) day to an additional instructional day. This added teaching day supports the educational goals articulated in the SAU-adopted *Framework for Success*.
- *What is the cost of the agreement to appear on the warrant?*
The total cost is \$655,017, which translates to an estimated tax increase of \$0.27 cents per \$1,000 of property valuation.

- *What changes are there to health insurance?*

The **employee share** of the deductible amount increases for the following plans:

	Plan	Single	Two-Person	Family
1	Site of Service Plan (most popular plan)	Increase of \$500	Increase of \$1,000	Increase of \$1,500
2	High-Deductible Plan	Increase of \$250	Increase of \$500	Increase of \$500

This increase supports the board's goal of taking a consumer-based approach to health insurance.

- *What other changes are in the contract?*

Three minor changes were made to agreement language: the recognition clause will be edited, the agency fee article will be eliminated, and the notification process has been revised following a change in vendor.

- *What happens if this contract does not pass?*

If this contract does not pass, the current contract remains in effect. About 30 teachers will fall two steps behind on the salary schedule, and another 85 will fall one pay step behind on the salary schedule. The instructional time and health care gains will not take effect. The ability to attract and retain high-quality faculty will be in jeopardy.

- *Summary*

This one-year contract is important. Teachers receive a compensation increase and make progress on the salary schedule. The changes in instructional time and health insurance deductibles are good for students and taxpayers. The School Board and AEA remain committed partners in improving our children's educational experience.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT THIRTY-NINE

Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan Cooperative School Districts



MICHAEL BERRY
Superintendent of Schools

ROBERT JOZOKOS
Assistant Superintendent

AMY FACEY
Business Administrator

DR. HEATHER JENNINGS
Director of Student Services

Amherst School District/Amherst Support Staff Association

Agreed Upon Collective Bargaining Agreement with Amherst Support Staff Association
To appear on the March 10, 2026, warrant

Frequently Asked Questions

- *What positions are covered under this agreement?*
Office managers, administrative assistants, information specialists, office assistants, specialized paraprofessionals, student support paraprofessionals, cooks, health assistants, library assistants, and school nutrition service workers. This agreement covers 84 staff members.
- *What is the status of the current contract?*
Support Staff are currently in the final year of a three-year contract.
- *What is the length of the proposed contract?*
Four years
- *What are the key financial aspects of the agreement?*
The agreement makes the following changes to the salary schedule:
 - Year 1: 3.25%, plus a one-step increase
 - Year 2: 3.50%, plus a one-step increase
 - Year 3: 3.25%, plus a one-step increase
 - Year 4: 3.25%, plus a one-step increase
- *What is the cost in each year of the agreement?*
 - Year 1: \$167,298, with a tax impact of 7 cents per \$1,000 property valuation
 - Year 2: \$160,342, with a tax impact of .07/\$1,000
 - Year 3: \$159,111, with a tax impact of .07/\$1,000
 - Year 4: \$166,294, with a tax impact of .07/\$1,000
- *What other financial impacts will the contract have?*
 - Food-service pay is realigned. The lowest-paid level is eliminated, and cooks – the most difficult positions to fill – move to a higher position on the salary scale.
 - The employer match of the payroll-deducted, tax-sheltered annuity increases from \$450 to \$500.
 - Employees who have served the Amherst School for 30 years or more receive a one-time honorarium of \$2,000.
- *What other changes are in the contract?*
 - An increase in available bereavement days for immediate family members from three to five.
 - Paid two-week child-rearing leave for parents and guardians of newborns or newly adopted children.
 - An assurance that the cost of each year of the proposed contract is placed on the warrant.
 - A requirement that the warrant include an article seeking authorization for a special meeting, at the school board's discretion.

- A new notice requirement to ASSA leadership about new hires.
- A provision for office staff to work off-site on non-school instruction days with the principal's approval.
- Addition of a dedicated timeline for notifying employees of their assignments.
- A change in the required date for employees to notify the school board of their retirement, from January 1 to December 1, will help in the budget development process.
- *What changes are there to health insurance?*
 - The employee/employer share of each plan is now separately stated in the agreement. The driver is eliminated.
 - The employer's share of the AB5 plan's cost increases by 3%, but no additional new or current employees may enroll in the plan, which is the most expensive. This change is in the community's long-term financial interest.
- *What happens if this contract does not pass?*

If the contract does not pass, the current contract remains in effect. Support Staff members will not receive an increase, and attracting and retaining employees in this category will pose a significant challenge for the district.
- *Summary*

This proposed contract will make the district more competitive in hiring.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT THIRTY-NINE

Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan Cooperative School Districts

MICHAEL BERRY
Superintendent of Schools

ROBERT JOZOKOS
Assistant Superintendent

AMY FACEY
Business Administrator

DR. HEATHER JENNINGS
Director of Student Services



Amherst School Board Tuition Agreement with the Mont Vernon School Board **Frequently Asked Questions**

What is the length of the proposed agreement?

This agreement is for four years. It contains language allowing the school board to withdraw from the agreement within that time. The current contract expires June 30, 2026.

Who does the agreement cover?

The agreement affects 60 to 65 Mont Vernon 7th- and 8th-graders.

What considerations guided the Amherst School Board in negotiating this agreement?

The Board believes that including Mont Vernon 7th- and 8th-grade students is in the best interests – educationally and financially – of all middle school students and the Amherst community. The Board was keenly aware of the Mont Vernon community's efforts to explore keeping 7th- and 8th-grade students at the Village School, which would mean the end of the tuition agreement and its resulting revenue.

What are the key financial aspects of the agreement?

- Under the formula in this agreement, tuition is based on the sum of 60% of the Amherst Middle School cost per student and 40% of the Mont Vernon Village School cost per student for the fiscal year 2 years prior to the current fiscal year. This sum is multiplied by the current school year enrollment.
- A \$400 per-pupil facility “rental” charge is included in the overall tuition cost.
- The Mont Vernon tuition increase is capped at not more than 4% of the prior year calculated tuition rate.

What would be the revenue impact if this tuition formula was currently in place?

About \$158,700 less.

What budget reductions would be necessary if Mont Vernon students no longer attend the middle school?

One or two sections of 7th and 8th grade and one or two sections of unified arts would be eliminated. The budget reductions would not offset the total in lost revenue.

What else is in the agreement?

Mont Vernon students may participate in any athletic, curricular, or co-curricular activities offered at Amherst Middle School.

What happens if the voters do not ratify this agreement?

Mont Vernon would be free to explore agreements to place its students with other districts. Amherst could lose approximately \$1.4-\$1.5 million in revenue, which would necessitate budget reductions.

Summary

This agreement secures a significant revenue source for the Amherst community for four years. The unique design of the tuition formula may be the key to a continued long-term partnership with the Mont Vernon community.

SAU 39 Director of Student Services Report

Student services encompasses special education, 504 accommodation supports and services, specialized equipment, specialized transportation, and English for Speakers of Other Languages supports and services. Amherst School District serves 240 students with an Individualized Education Program. The District's budget is driven by the following priorities: highly specialized literacy and math instruction through targeted professional development, data practices, evidenced based strategies for specially designed instruction, and supporting a continuum of services and educational environments to meet all students' needs. Highlights from the Amherst Student Services Department this year include the enhanced focus on vertical and horizontal alignment from grade to grade and special education services to Core curriculum, enhanced literacy training of special educators, and the implementation of service logging and data practices through the platform of Branching Minds. We continue to examine how to systematically intensify specially designed instruction, better capture progress data to clearly communicate with families, and increase opportunities for special education and regular education collaboration. The student services department assesses effectiveness through various state monitored indicators with specific focus on growth on state and local assessment as compared to non-identified peers and percent of participation in the regular education environment.

Dr. Heather Jennings, Director of Student Services

Amherst School District

Actual Expenditures for Special Education Programs and Services

FY 2023-2024 and FY 2024-2025 per RSA 32:11a

	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025
REVENUES		
Special Education Aid	\$214,664	\$196,060
IDEA Grant	\$186,805	\$278,238
Medicaid	\$88,142	\$117,817
Total Revenues	\$489,611	\$592,115
EXPENDITURES		
Salaries	\$5,181,443	\$5,370,917
Employee Benefits	\$3,135,548	\$3,517,986
Purchased Services	\$1,236,861	\$1,150,818
Supplies	\$50,816	\$69,026
Equipment	\$0	\$11,011
Other	\$5,104	\$440
Total Expenditures	\$9,609,773	\$10,120,199
Net Cost of Special Education	\$9,120,162	\$9,528,084

**Amherst School District
Annual Report of the Treasurer
as of 6/30/2025**

	Starting Balance	Deposits	AP-PR Expenses	Ending Balance	Interest Earned
July-2024	\$1,375,904.28	\$3,130,770.44	(\$1,906,106.87)	\$2,600,567.85	\$8,923.70
August-2024	\$2,600,567.85	\$2,456,534.40	(\$4,551,681.00)	\$505,421.25	\$8,665.76
September-2024	\$505,421.25	\$3,896,976.20	(\$3,702,626.65)	\$699,770.80	\$7,563.67
October-2024	\$699,770.80	\$2,700,556.97	(\$2,873,613.33)	\$526,714.44	\$5,096.57
November-2024	\$526,714.44	\$3,258,322.66	(\$2,717,688.58)	\$1,067,348.52	\$5,393.07
December-2024	\$1,067,348.52	\$2,842,088.59	(\$3,237,155.83)	\$672,281.28	\$4,625.25
January-2025	\$672,281.28	\$5,184,134.87	(\$2,789,758.10)	\$3,066,658.05	\$6,043.98
February-2025	\$3,066,658.05	\$2,239,004.01	(\$2,732,577.47)	\$2,573,084.59	\$7,510.68
March-2025	\$2,573,084.59	\$2,650,504.34	(\$2,624,580.82)	\$2,599,008.11	\$7,304.84
April-2025	\$2,599,008.11	\$3,215,798.83	(\$2,572,745.36)	\$3,242,061.58	\$8,436.47
May-2025	\$3,242,061.58	\$2,316,867.34	(\$2,436,992.42)	\$3,121,936.50	\$8,437.24
June-2025	\$3,121,936.50	\$2,626,741.80	(\$4,210,751.28)	\$1,537,927.02	\$5,303.98
Total	\$1,375,904.28	\$36,518,300.45	(\$36,356,277.71)	\$1,537,927.02	\$83,305.21

Bank Accounts	M&T	M&T	M&T	TD Bank	Outstanding	Total
	Cash Management	Checking	Savings	General Fund	Checks/Debits	
7/1/2024	\$-00	\$9,795.82	\$189.90	\$1,577,070.09	\$(211,151.53)	\$1,375,904.28
6/30/2025	\$-00	\$-00	\$-00	\$2,401,619.82	\$(863,692.80)	\$1,537,927.02

In Memory of Sally Long

A Pillar of the Amherst School District Community

For generations of Amherst families, Sally Long, or “Ms. Sally” as she was affectionately known, was a familiar and cherished presence. As a longtime crossing guard, she greeted every student as if they were her own. Generations of students, families, and neighbors came to know her not just as a crossing guard, but as a daily source of kindness, steadiness, and genuine care.

Ms. Sally approached her work with a sense of purpose that elevated it far beyond a job. She learned children’s names, celebrated their milestones, and offered encouragement. Parents trusted her. Students adored her. All admired her unwavering dedication. In every season and every kind of weather, Ms. Sally showed up. Present, patient, and watching over each crosswalk with a steadfast commitment to the safety of Amherst’s children.

Her presence at the crosswalk was a reminder of what binds a community together: consistent acts of service performed with great love. Amherst is a better, safer, and kinder place because of her.

As we present this Amherst School District voter guide, we pause to honor Sally’s memory and the legacy she leaves behind. May we carry forward her spirit of generosity, connection, and care for one another.

With gratitude, we remember Sally Long.