

1 Amherst School Board

2 Wednesday, September 18, 2013

3 ATTENDANCE

4 Amherst School Board

5 Peg. Bennett, Lucienne Foulks, Amy Facey, James Manning, and Paul Prescott

6 Administrative Team

7 Peter Warburton, Gerry St. Amand, Porter Dodge

8 Minute Taker

9 Renea Sparks

10 CALL TO ORDER

11 Ms. Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:36 pm.

12 ANNOUNCEMENTS

13 Principals' Report

14 The principals went over their principals' reports. There was a question about the work AMS is  
15 doing relative to homework consistency.

16 Correspondence

17 No correspondence.

18 Public Time

19 Paula-Marie Passen a parent and the PTA president spoke to the board. She has concerns about  
20 being able to send things home such as fundraising items and the PTA play announcement.

21 Mr. Warburton said that the agreement was that the PTA items are allowed to be sent home 5  
22 times per year.

23 Ms. Passen stated that the PTA thought they needed the final word from Mr. Warburton in  
24 September, but they are on track for their 5 allowed items.

25 Claudine Hessmer Husainy is the vice president of the PTA.

26 Paula-Marie Passen asked a second question as a parent. She is wondering how to make families  
27 more aware of Common Core. She was at the meeting last night at Saint Anselm and saw Mr.  
28 Warburton there. She wondered how to get the information out to parents relative to the pros  
29 and cons of Common Core. She specifically would like answers to the public concerns that have  
30 been raised. She wants questions answered such as "How do teachers feel about it?" and "How  
31 is it being implemented in Amherst schools?"

32 Mr. Manning asked if Paula-Marie Passen was suggesting that the board and schools communicate  
33 more in the community about what is going on in the media relative to the Common Core.

34 Paula-Marie Passen wants information presented to the community.

35 Claudine Hessmer Husainy said that they have made a point of not getting into the conversation  
36 because of their PTA officer status. There are questions before the school board.

37 Muzi Husainy stated that what he heard at Saint Anselm really alarmed him as a parent. He  
38 wondered how Amherst is adopting the Common Core. Common Core sets a minimum  
39 standard. This is not his expectation of a town such as Amherst. He asked how are we going to  
40 implement Common Core for advance placement students. He asked how would the district  
41 manage its pedagogy. The information needs to flow out.

42 Mr. Warburton said there are a few nights, the first one in October, which will discuss the  
43 Common Core.

44 Claudine Hessmer Husainy said that the Common Core is not a high standard and it is diluted.  
45 She asked if Common Core is a watered down curriculum except Math in Focus.

46 Mr. Warburton said he was at Saint Anselm last night as well as Nicole, he believes that there  
47 were some misconceptions on both sides. They need to look at the notes they took to digest and  
48 review the information.

49 Mr. Manning asked if the public was looking for more transparency as to how the schools will be  
50 implementing curriculum.

51 Paula-Marie Passen said that Common Core is here.

52 Ms. Facey reminded people about the Math in Focus Program currently in year two of  
53 implementation. Our current math program strives to have students reach international math  
54 standards well beyond the Common Core.

55 Claudine Hessmer Husainy said that implementing Math in Focus is a step in the right direction,  
56 but she has concerns about language arts.

57 Mr. Manning asked if she is asking for better communication or standards beyond Common  
58 Core.

59 The public wants two things: Parents to be engaged before something is implemented into the  
60 curriculum and once a decision is made they want parents to be informed.

## 61 **CONSENT AGENDA**

62 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to accept the consent agenda containing the Minutes from**  
63 **August 27, 2013, Unanticipated Revenue from a Donation to Student Activities - Target-**  
64 **\$625.50, Donation to AMS Student Activities - \$280.68 from Target- Take Charge of**  
65 **Education, and a Donation to Clark School Student Activities - \$279.18 from Target- Take**  
66 **Charge of Education. Ms. Facey seconded the agenda and the vote was unanimous.**

## 67 **PRESENTATIONS**

68 Board Commitments

69 Ms. Bennett explained the Amherst School Board Commitments. She explained that SAU 39  
70 contains three districts, which operate independently and the boards meet monthly. As a SAU  
71 board, they work on the commonalities of the three districts as a 17 member SAU board.

72 Ms. Bennett went over the four SAU goals established for the time period of 2011-2013.

73 The Amherst School Board held two summer workshop days in order to address board meeting  
74 management, principal's reports, and commitments.

75 The board commitments are:

76 Elementary and Middle School Excellence

77 Ms. Foulks defined the commitment to excellence, how will the SAU will know when they are  
78 there, and they will develop a SMART goal. The goal will be specific, measurable, attainable,  
79 relevant and time bound. From that meeting, they will develop what the action steps will be to  
80 attain this goal.

81 Diligent Fiscal Oversight

82 Ms. Bennett explained that they are reviewing the timeline for building budgets and had begun to  
83 analyze the cost per pupil relative to surrounding towns. Diligent will be defined and  
84 performance indicators will be identified. She will report out to the board on a monthly basis.

85 Inspirational and Effective Teaching

86 Ms. Facey stated that they will be meeting monthly and will report out. The team met and discussed  
87 how they will continue working on defining inspirational and effective teaching and developing  
88 scope of the work. Two initiatives that are currently under way are the Teacher/Leader  
89 Effectiveness and Evaluation Committee and implementation of Common Core State Standards.  
90 She would like to invite Nicole Heimarck who will provide and update on this committee. The  
91 Teacher Leader Effectiveness Program (SAU wide program review committee) is developing an  
92 evaluation and supervision plan for teachers and leaders in SAU 39. This work began last year  
93 and continued into the summer.

94 Ms. Facey explained that Common Core, although it is not on the agenda, a team of K-12 educators  
95 have explored the anchor standards in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in the Common  
96 Core. There will be more information on this process next month.

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98 Innovative Technology Integration

99 Mr. Prescott explained that they met twice as a team with interim discussions. They will be  
100 meeting twice a month. They have defined "innovative technology" and looked at a model to  
101 evaluate where teachers are for technology innovation and they will provide monthly updates.

102 SAU 39 Strategic Planning

103 Mr. Warburton and Mr. Manning discussed that Joe Miller is the facilitator of the SAU strategic  
104 planning process. This process brings all three boards together. They are committed to planning  
105 for the next 5 years and will be asking for community involvement. They will need to get  
106 creative as to how to involve people given people's time. They want to address a number of  
107 things. The pace of change in the world is dramatic and in Amherst. Not just what the change  
108 is, but how it is happening. The target date for the strategic plan is to roll it out at the beginning  
109 of 2014 - 2015 school year.

110 Mr. Warburton let the ASD staff know about these commitments today as well as sent a letter to  
111 them with the presentation attached. Mr. Warburton will go back on a continual basis to discuss  
112 the commitments with them.

113 Ms. Bennett explained that this is how they want to organize themselves this year and the  
114 meetings will reflect these commitments and be aligned to them. This will be a yearlong  
115 opportunity, with measurability and the charge to improve student learning.

116 Mr. Manning has found that the school system does not have great data. This has been  
117 frustrating for him. The reason that there are question marks is because sometimes the board just  
118 does not have the information. This will be a multiyear project and they will build out what  
119 these question marks mean. The district will either accomplish the goal or not.

120 Mr. Prescott stated that all of the items would be tied to these commitments to make sure they  
121 are on track to meet the commitments along the way. This doesn't mean progress isn't made  
122 along the way, but it is more than a yearlong project. The point is to raise the risks and be  
123 transparent so the public knows the board is working on these commitments at all times and the  
124 agendas will be built around them.

125 Mr. Manning stated that he gets questions about the high school.

126 Muzi Husainy stated that the board makes great points and he applauds it. He likes to say that  
127 what you cannot measure, you cannot improve.

128 Mr. Prescott gave a presentation about how the school board would like the format and delivery  
129 of presentations to be. There is a hand out for this in the agenda packet. The reason for doing  
130 this is to create consistency and expectations and create a more positive experience for everyone.

131 **ACTION ITEMS**

132 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to accept Charlene Carper to be the Amherst representative for**  
133 **the SAU Advisory Finance Committee. Mr. Manning seconded the motion and the vote was**  
134 **unanimous.**

135 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to go into Non public Session at ??pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (a)(b)(c).**  
136 **The motion was seconded by Ms. Facey and the roll call vote was all yes.**

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