

Amherst School Board
June 19, 2014

ATTENDANCE

Amherst School Board

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

Administrative Team

Peter Warburton, Gerry St. Amand, Porter Dodge, Nicole Heimarck, and Christine Landwehrle

Minute Taker

Beth Penney

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Foulks called the meeting to order at 6:27pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Principals' reports

Mr. Dodge gave copies of the activities and sports that AMS will be running next school year. A few more activities have been added since the board met. He explained who would be running each and what would happen for each club and interscholastic. The World Language Club is Spanish. The Electronics and Engineering Club may have parents support if there are no teachers interested.

Ms. Foulks asked about a parent who had offered help.

Mr. Dodge explained that Stephen Edemo works for Lockheed Martin and they will provide AMS with a grant for seed money and to embed STEM in the classroom. Stephen, who is an engineer, would like to get involved. This is a great opportunity to get the community businesses together with the school. Mr. Dodge will not do anything until he look at the program and meets with Stephen.

The Board agreed this is an opportunity.

The Board and Mr. Dodge discussed the sports, size of teams, and that the B-teams the students will have equal playing time. They discussed communicating out to the students and parents that these sports are going to be offered so students can practice this summer and get excited. A-team and B-team tri-outs will be held at the same time. A-teams are mostly 7th and 8th graders. B-teams are 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Mr. Dodge is not sure how many kids will come out for the sports. For Class I the levels are called A-teams and B-teams. B-teams have no championship games. They discussed how the high school teams are labeled and what other schools traditionally call middle school teams.

39 The Board watched the 6th grade Acapella group perform. This group of students worked
40 during the Core and More blocks.

41 Ms. Foulks stated that the Board is very excited to see all of the clubs and sports
42 happening.

43 Ms. Bennett asked if Linda and Corey would be working on the STEM Academy over the
44 summer.

45 Mr. Dodge stated that the STEM Academy preparation is already underway and they
46 used Jr. Women's Club grant money to buy materials and tools. Linda and Corey will do
47 work over the summer.

48 Mr. St. Amand passed the Clark/Wilkins extra curricular list out to the Board. He
49 discussed the Creative Writing Camp happening over the summer. This is for 3rd and 4th
50 graders. There has already been a response of 8 students. The school will send another
51 email tomorrow. Some students asked if this camp could be online. The school may
52 look at that being a possibility in the future. Mr. St. Amand went through the list of
53 extra-curricular activities and discussed who would be teaching each. He discussed Lego
54 League, which has a defined time frame and some expense. There is no World Language
55 yet because there is no solid commitment, but it can still be added. There maybe
56 additional interest once school is over.

57 The Board and Administration discussed Summer Success at AMS. They also discussed
58 the Extended School Year at Clark is for pre-k-4th graders and 4-8th graders will be at
59 AMS. This is still 4 weeks long starting in July. There are still a few positions open for
60 support positions.

61 Mr. St. Amand stated that in the future the schools need to look at the online programs.
62 He will pursue some one to lead the World Language Club.

63 Mr. Manning asked Mr. Dodge about scheduling.

64 Mr. Dodge handed out information about the EAGLE Block and scheduling. He gave
65 background about how this extra block was formed and the names it had been called. The
66 purpose of this block was to have a time in the day in order to not pull kids out of classes
67 or miss specials. Last year this time was called Core and More. At the start of this block
68 the school did not do a good job. Core and More is no more and now the block will be
69 called the EAGLE block (Everyone Achieving Greatness Learning and Enjoying).

70 Mr. Dodge discussed the many good things being done in the old Core and More blocks.
71 The school trying to do all Core and More is too difficult. The name has been changed
72 and the school reestablished a committee to put things together for the block. The school
73 will take this year to add more enrichment to all students and will explore options for kids
74 to go across teams. The block will run in 7-week rotations. The school will increase the
75 accountability of the program. Mr. Dodge will provide quarterly updates to the Board.
76 Core and More will be a thing of the past. He will give the Board a list of programs that
77 are going to be running, will endure fidelity, will be doing more walk-throughs during

78 that time, and lessons will be submitted to the administration for that time block. The
79 school will also survey parents and students to better understand how this new block is
80 working. AMS is a spotlight school for the tier 2 and tier 3 interventions and RTI, so this
81 EAGLE block is significant to keep this program running. The RTI program is
82 significantly helping students.

83 Mr. Prescott asked to hear the about the challenges of the EAGLE block and not just the
84 good things happening. He stated that there are still kids pulled out of class and asked
85 about those students.

86 Mr. Dodge stated that this happens only when parents asks teams to pull students out of
87 class.

88 Mr. Warbruton stated that this is block of time is a work in progress and this has been an
89 honest process. For the principal to say this has not worked and to fix it is great. Equity
90 for all kids during this block is the goal. This is just the beginning. This will be a two-
91 year process to provide the best experience kids can have and provide the time to plan
92 and work on it.

93 Mr. Manning stated that this is great. It is a good idea to rebrand the name of the block.
94 The challenge is execution and how will this be communicated to the community. He
95 suggested a press release at the end of the summer and that this idea will be well received
96 by the community.

97 Mr. Dodge stated it is also the 40th year for AMS and it is time to reinvent the image of
98 the school with a program like the EAGLE block.

99 Ms. Facey stated that she likes the points of how to ensure the fidelity. She is very
100 excited.

101 Mr. Prescott stated that he likes the format of the proposal and the EAGLE block should
102 be communicated the same way in the paper.

103 Mr. Dodge stated that he could write letter to the editor. He discussed the significance of
104 the 40th birthday.

105 Mr. Manning discussed the idea of ripping up the pavement along the windows and add
106 some green space to the front of the school.

107 Ms. Bennett stated that the 8th grade gift was a play structure.

108 The Board discussed how to get the work done for creating more green space in front of
109 the school and publicizing the 40th birthday. They discussed the Garden Club and getting
110 their input.

111 Mr. St. Amand discussed Sean Hollister, and how she has been a wonderful long-term
112 substitute for years and should be recognized for what she contributes to the district. He
113 would like to hire her full time when there is an opening.

114 Mr. St. Amand discussed a different busing plan for drop off of all bus students at
115 Wilkins School and then Clark School students will go to Clark School of a few busses
116 This will work in the opposite direction when the students go home. This will eliminate
117 the issues with traffic at Clark School. The schools have had a committee working on this
118 and will meet to finalize the details. This will go out to parents when they are ready with
119 the details.

120 Mr. St. Amand stated that the schools will try this for a period of time and it will not
121 delay instruction. It could work and other schools are doing this including Milford. They
122 will not continue this plan if it impacts instruction.

123 Mr. St. Amand stated that all pick ups and drop offs for Clark School will be on Davis
124 Lane. This will help connect the schools and help them to be one school with two
125 buildings.

126 Mr. St. Amand discussed the two memorials for Martha and Joshua and the Buddy
127 Bench. The memorial for Martha at Clark has been finished also. The surplus from the
128 fundraiser for Joshua will be transferred to the scholarship fund in Josh's name.

129 The Board discussed the 4th grade hike and thanked David. The fall might be a better time
130 to offer the hike because of weather and timing.

131 Ms. Facey asked what the next steps are for the academic awards.

132 Mr. Dodge will discuss the next steps at the Parent Partnership. There will be academic
133 awards but it will be grassroots. One potential idea is to have a Junior National Honors
134 Society, which has criteria, beyond the student's GPA. Mr. Dodge is looking for
135 feedback and wants to still recognize the students.

136 The Board discussed the issue of the old awards system and how this will be good going
137 forward. When the academic awards are changed the new criteria needs to be publicized.
138 The Board discussed single news bulletins to the community.

139 Mr. Warburton discussed using social media and Facebook. Having a Facebook presence
140 at the schools would be good and release information quickly. It is good timing with the
141 removal of the portables and the 40th anniversary of AMS.

142 The Board discussed who could work on social media in each building. Maybe students
143 could run the social media for AMS. They discussed an electronic newsletter, which
144 people could register to receive weekly. They discussed how to think about how all this
145 works, the timing, and what to include. The Board discussed the captive audience at
146 registration day. They discussed forming a communication plan or strategy for the year
147 and having a communication packet at registration.

148 Mr. Warburton discussed finding the right way and right thing to communicate. He
149 discussed asking people around town. The administration will meet this summer to
150 discuss communication.

151 High School Math update

152 Ms. Heimarck discussed a programing change at SHS for incoming freshman. SHS will
153 have a math course called Pre-Core. Some students will not be ready to enter the Core 1
154 class. This is a class for students who need a pre-core class. This is a similar thought
155 pattern to pre-algebra. There are less than 20 students who have been recommended to
156 this program. The official letters go out tomorrow and 8th grade math teachers have
157 called each family to discuss the reasons why their students have been recommended to
158 this course. This is an opportunity to help students catch up and move along.

159 The Board discussed why this is good and how it will help students stay confident and
160 have more success. The Board thanked the administration for continuing to make
161 improvements to the Math program.

162 Ms. Heimarck discussed the in-service day happening Friday to make up for Jan. 3rd.
163 There are 25 different sessions running with an emphasis on literacy. PreK-6 will be
164 working on revisions to lessons they worked on with David Pooke. Prek-6 will look at
165 text about paradigm shift in teaching literacy and the new standards. David Pooke has
166 been working with the literacy coaches and the literacy coaches have been working with
167 grade level teams to develop plans. Those plans were submitted to David Pooke. David
168 will be back next year to work on writing. Tomorrow afternoon will be training for 7-12
169 in the new math resource. She will send the board the agenda for the in-service day.

170 Ms. Heimarck discussed the Summer Literacy Institute on June 23rd-26th. There are 46
171 faculty participating, which adds up to 139 summer days for those faculty together.
172 Teachers had to work as pair or more. Ms. Heimarck explained RAP, Read Aloud Project
173 for grades K-3, which looks at authentic literature that is text depended. BAP, Basal
174 Alignment Project, grades 3-6, which uses Basal readers before Common Core and is a
175 bridge between Basal and Common Core. This will help to bring kids to a higher level of
176 complexity. The Anthology Alignment Project is for grades 6-12 and uses excerpts, short
177 stories, and authentic texts. Ms. Heimarck discussed work done by a team on the RAP
178 and a submitted unit that is returned with feedback. There is a three step vetting process
179 before lesson plans are posted on Edmodo. There will be three coaches coming from the
180 Student Achievement Partners to support the Literacy Institute with the use of
181 redistribution money. This money is from grants from the state using federal money that
182 is not used by other districts. This is the only school district in the state doing RAP, BAP
183 and AAP. Ms. Heimarck stated that she does not know how this work will translate to
184 the test scores. Student Achievement Partners includes some of the authors of the
185 Common Core. This is good work, rigorous work and will best prepare the students in
186 the long run.

187 Mr. Manning stated that if teachers are working to align the curriculum to the Common
188 Core than students should do well on SBAC because the test is aligned with the Common
189 Core.

190 Ms. Heimarck discussed the SBAC as an indicator to measure the success of aligning the

191 curriculum. She discussed how other indicators would help the schools determine how
192 the transition to the Common Core is going.

193 2014-15 Teacher/Grade Level Assignments

194 Mr. St. Amand discussed the changes of grade levels for the faculty. The teachers are
195 happy with the moves. He discussed the placement of teachers in 1st grade and K to help
196 with looking at the move to full day K.

197 Mr. Dodge discussed changes in grade levels for the faculty. He is excited about the
198 people that the school is asking the Board to accept hiring tonight.

199 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

200 Dwayne Purvis, congratulated the SAU for a great year. The schools have had great
201 support from the Boards, Finance Committee and have done a great job. He asked the
202 Board to resist the temptation to cut teachers for the sake of cutting. The 4th grade hike is
203 a great thing. The schools could use the hike as a team building activity in the fall. He
204 discussed all the activities happening at the schools that made for a great year. SHS has
205 graduated 100% of the class. SHS is the continuation of what is done at Clark/Wilkins
206 and AMS. The teacher of the year should be given to more than one teacher because there
207 are a lot in this district and SAU. It was great to have a finalist. The Invention
208 Convention and many other clubs would feed into the NH Young Inventors program. It
209 would be nice to have recognition at the State level. As the schools move forward they
210 need to individualize learning for the advanced students. He thanked the Board for a great
211 year.

212 The Board thanked Dwayne for coming to the meetings.

213 **CONSENT AGENDA**

214 Mr. Dodge discussed a few budget transfers. He passed them out to the board including
215 moving money from the workbook and standardized tests in the amount of \$1500 to
216 purchase 3 half tables for the cafeteria. AMS is going from 4 lunches to 3 lunches. The
217 second transfer is to carpet the office. This is necessary because the tile allows everyone
218 to hear everyone else talking. There is no sound barrier. He is asking for up to \$5000.00.
219 Mr. Dodge stated that they couldn't use the cafeteria surplus because the rules do not
220 allow for table and chairs.

221 **Ms. Facey made a motion to accept the budget transfers as presented by Mr. Dodge.**
222 **Mr. Prescott seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

223 Ms. Facey asked to pull the May minutes.

224 Ms. Facey asked to remove lines 249 and 250 from the minutes.

225 Ms. Bennett asked to change line 163 from why to how.

226 **Mr. Prescott made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda containing the amended**
227 **Minutes from May 15, 2014, Treasurer’s report from May 2014, and the Budget**
228 **transfers. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

229 **PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS**

230 Secondary Level Mathematics Program Recommendation

231 Ms. Heimarck discussed Secondary Level Math Program Recommendation. Some of the
232 community is misunderstanding the adoption of this resource for the high school math
233 program and actually think it is replacing Math In Focus.

234 Ms. Landwehrle thanked everyone involved in the pilot work and the book review. She
235 discussed how the Math coaches were involved.

236 Ms. Heimarck reviewed the process of this work. This is Phase 3 of Implementation.
237 When the SAU adopted the K-8 resources there were very few resources for grades 9-12.
238 The resource is not the curriculum it supports the local curriculum. She discussed the
239 mission of adopting a resource including aligning with the curriculum, looking at best
240 practices, having on-going professional learning, and having continuity across the three
241 school districts. She discussed the program selection process including curriculum,
242 instruction, and assessment.

243 Ms. Landwehrle discussed collecting data from the pilot teachers. These teachers taught
244 the last half of the 8th grade Compacted Core and Core 1 and collected data from the
245 students on the four resources. A book review team confirmed the resource that stood out.
246 During the book review the team looked at the transition from the K-8 resource and the 9-
247 12 program. The new resource is called College Preparatory Math (CPM). She
248 discussed the benefits of CPM, including 7 professional days, rigor, and the importance
249 of collaboration in the book. This resource is consistent with the program review vision.
250 The only wonders from the Book Review team were about next steps and
251 implementation.

252 Ms. Heimarck stated that the leading US author of Math in Focus had recommended
253 CPM. She discussed that the Math Program Review committee made the final decision.
254 She discussed the reasons for adopting CPM.

255 Ms. Landwehrle stated that CPM would be used in the Compacted Common Core class.
256 She discussed CPM is from a non-profit publishing company and explained their mission.
257 These textbooks are problem based. The program is standards and research based. With
258 the adoption of the program the schools get 6 years of an e-book with the purchase of the
259 paper textbooks. There is a parent handbook and online extra help for students. The
260 textbook is a soft cover. The textbook has a lot of words and does not look like
261 traditional Math textbooks. There is a lot of rigor and the teachers will work with literacy
262 coaches to make the book accessible to all students.

263 The Board discussed how the title is great. People do not get the integrated approach to
264 math. They discussed the integrated programs and how they will align with the Common

265 Core. The schools need to publicize the name of the book and the college preparation
266 part of it.

267 Ms. Bennett discussed Jan Eckelson and how it was great that she was involved in the
268 book review process.

269 **ACTION ITEMS**

270 Secondary Level Math Book Adoption

271 **Mr. Manning made a motion to accept the Secondary Level Math Book. Ms. Facey**
272 **seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

273 Professional Nominations

274 Mr. Warburton stated that he couldn't wait for the Board to meet these nominations. The
275 Pre-K teacher is outstanding. He read the list of nominations.

276 Ms. Facey discussed Pam McGrath and how she is exceptional.

277 Mr. Prescott asked about bringing up technology during the interview process.

278 Mr. Warburton stated that he was very impressed with all of the hires and what they can
279 do with technology.

280 Mr. Warburton recommended that the Board hire all of the nominations.

281 **Ms. Bennett made a motion to accept the nominations as recommended by the**
282 **superintendent. Mr. Prescott seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

283 Mr. St. Amand stated that the preschool coordinator position is open and they have
284 extended the application acceptance time for that position.

285 **INFORMATIONAL**

286 Ms. Foulks stated that this discussion is in regard to the budget savings for next year and
287 the last meeting where the Board discussed putting in a one-year position for a STEM
288 coordinator.

289 Mr. Warburton thanked the Board for the support. He discussed the work happening
290 three years ago and the progress the districts have made. After the STEM discussion,
291 there were a lot of questions. He stated that the administration definitely wants some
292 valuable STEM programs in the schools. They have some questions about the discussion
293 last meeting and need more time to look at this in a thorough way. It would be good to
294 have a small committee this summer to better understand how to proceed.

295 Ms. Foulks stated that the sheet of questions was developed by Mr. St. Amand, Mr.
296 Dodge, Ms. Landwehrle, and Ms. Heimark after meeting many times. Many good
297 questions were generated about what a STEM program would look like and how it would

298 role out. These questions are addressing having an official STEM curriculum.

299 Ms. Bennett stated that it would be best to delay the start of a program based on the
300 questions and concerns. The schools do not have the luxury of a roll out with a 3-year
301 review. A STEM program needs to have a expedited. The schools need to do something
302 thoroughly and quickly.

303 Ms. Facey stated that she struggles with the idea of moving forward with a STEM
304 program in just Amherst when Mont Vernon kids come in 7th grade. She stated that she
305 does not want to see Amherst and Mont Vernon have a different experience. If other
306 schools in the country say they are doing STEM, then what does that mean?

307 Ms. Bennett stated that she feels good about looking at K-8 and having after school
308 programs to address STEM before having something official.

309 Mr. Manning discussed West High School and their STEM curriculum. He stated that he
310 understands from an academic point of view there should be a seamless curriculum K-12.
311 There is a certain time when there needs to be innovation. If we do not do something,
312 then shame on us. We have to do something here and cannot wait 4 or 5 years. Let all the
313 other schools follow Amherst.

314 The Board discussed strategic planning and being thoughtful so that everyone can
315 benefit. Amherst can be the initiators and can spend some time to make a plan. Strategic
316 Planning is working on STEM.

317 Mr. Manning suggested having an innovation lab at AMS and to look at specials. He
318 discussed wood and metal shop. He asked about repurposing that room as an innovation
319 lab. He wondered if this could be a special and if there was a person that could be a
320 source to feed information to the curriculum office.

321 Ms. Foulks discussed what is involved in developing curriculum and that it is a big thing
322 to take on in a short period of time.

323 Mr. Prescott stated that the Board should see what could be put in place to feed the rest of
324 the curriculum. The Board needs to think about to what is achievable for next year.

325 Ms. Foulks stated that this could be a step-by-step process to build into a curriculum. She
326 wondered what are some interesting innovative things that could happen to help to
327 develop the curriculum.

328 Mr. Warbruton stated that they have begun the process with the after school program and
329 Next Generation Science standards are a start. The schools do not have jump because
330 others jumped. He wondered about two years from now what will be happening at West
331 High School. An innovation lab at AMS is a great idea. He would like to have an
332 Advanced Committee looking at STEM and STEAM for strategic planning. They could
333 come up with something really good and look at this as a sub-committee this summer.

334 Ms. Facey stated that the Board should educate themselves on what STEM and STEAM

335 really are and the integration built into them.

336 Ms. Heimarck stated that there are some assumptions. The schools are aligned with many
337 STEM principals. Math resources are evidence of STEM but the schools are doing it
338 authentically. The schools need to do a better job of communication. SAU 39 is further
339 along than other districts. The text choices in literacy are aligned in science because the
340 schools have rolled out the Next Generation Science standards. Caution to make
341 assumptions. All of the new standards are about problem solving. These were rolled out
342 in math first and rolled out in literacy in an integrated fashion. The focus is on problem
343 solving, being critical readers, critiquing arguments, and the value of arguments. NH is
344 just beginning to peel the STEM onion and has summer summit. The state is focused on
345 districts like Manchester and this is free for them, but not free for us. Manchester had an
346 infusion of resources that most districts do not see. Boston Museum of Science Stem
347 coordinator is on the agenda at the summer summit and a few board members should go.
348 No one is an expert in STEM.

349 Ms. Foulks stated that STEM programming and STEM curriculum are two different
350 things.

351 Mr. Manning stated that school is not all about academics. This is a place to transfer
352 some of the student's energy away from the constant rigor of academics. Discovery is as
353 important as problem solving. Creativity, innovation, and discovery are important and
354 need to be fostered in AMS.

355 Mr. Dodge stated that the schools maybe able to do both. AMS has discussed engineering
356 and electronics before. The Board is building a budget in the fall and can look at
357 changes. He met with the high school engineering teachers and they need the students to
358 have more hands on experiences. There are things that the schools can do that are more
359 STEM and STEAM focused.

360 Ms. Foulks stated that the Board took too big a step last month. The Board and
361 administration should start taking steps to explore innovative ideas. There are
362 opportunities to offer outside the four walls of the schools. They do not have to create
363 things, there are things out there, and the district can find them. At the September
364 meeting, the committee will report out their work, so the Board can look at things that
365 can be done.

366 Ms. Heimarck discussed the Integrated Arts cycle at AMS. She will look to see if there is
367 a consulting model to pursue with a STEM and STEAM background to modernize the
368 experiences there.

369 Ms. Foulks stated that not everyone is going in the STEM and STEAM direction and
370 there are ways to modernize specials for kids.

371 Ms. Heimarck discussed possible resources. She stated that a contracted service provider
372 route is better. She said the committee should look at what these courses look like in the
373 21st century.

374 Mr. Prescott asked that the sub-committee look at what is possible now and what can be
375 done in the longer term.

376 Ms. Foulks stated that the Board would table this discussion till September; with the
377 expectation there is something that could begin very immediately and focus on strategies
378 for building a plan with steps.

379 Mr. Dodge stated that he is will to look at ideas because the specials programs need to be
380 modernized. AMS has three trimesters and a lot of offerings.

381 Ms. Foulks stated that they would take the summer to explore all kinds of ideas.

382 **Mr. Manning made a motion to go into NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A:3 II. (a)**
383 **(b) (c) at 9:34pm. Ms. Facey seconded the motion and the role call was all yes.**

384

385