

1 **Amherst School Board**
2 **Thursday, May 17, 2012**

3
4 **ATTENDANCE**

5
6 Amherst School Board

7 Peg Bennett, Lucienne Foulks (arrived at 6:34 p.m.), Amy Facey, Jim Manning and Paul
8 Prescott

9
10 Administrative Team

11 Peter Warburton, Porter Dodge, Gerry St. Amand, Nicole Heimarck, Renea Sparks, and
12 Betty Shankel.

13
14 Minute Taker

15 Lyn Jennings

16
17 **CALL TO ORDER**

18 Ms. Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

19 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

20 **Principals Reports** – Board members received a copy of Clark-Wilkins Principals
21 Report dated May 14, 2012, in their board packet. Also provided was a copy of the
22 Amherst Middle School Principal’s Report dated May 17, 2012.

23 Mr. St. Amand told the board they took a look at the Mont Vernon Village School
24 Trimester Report Card. Mr. St. Amand said in April they were supposed to meet with
25 Sue Blair, Principal of MVVS to review their Trimester Report card however, they had to
26 reschedule their visit. Mr. St. Amand said he brought a copy of the Trimester Report
27 Card to the meeting this evening and planned on sharing it with the staff tomorrow. Mr.
28 St. Amand said he would like to look at the report card in greater detail but plans on
29 transitioning to a Trimester Report Card.

30 Mr. St. Amand said he would like to set up a committee and their goal would be to have
31 something to pilot at some grade level next year. Mr. St. Amand said by setting up a
32 committee the staff would be able to provide input. Mr. St. Amand said Manchester,
33 Londonderry, and Milford have Trimester Report Cards so he doesn’t think they need to
34 reinvent the wheel. Mr. St. Amand suggested they include MVVS in their review of the
35 Trimester Report Card.

36 Peg Bennett thought it was a good idea to include MVVS in the committee, thus having
37 consistency between the districts.

38 Amy Facey asked if the Middle School could be included in the committee, in order to
39 encourage consistency among districts; get rid of even though they are already on
40 trimesters.

41
42 The board agreed they would like to move forward with trimesters and if Mont Vernon
43 and AMS are interested in participating they welcome their input.

44 Mr. St. Amand said in fairness to MVVS they haven't provided them with any of their
45 feedback but he thinks Sue would be receptive to their input. Mr. St. Amand said they
46 looked at this as a blank document.

47 Peg Bennett said someone from the board would want to participate on the committee.
48 Mr. St. Amand said they would also have staff members, and community members
49 serving on the committee, and there is definitely an interest.

50 Porter Dodge spoke about a longtime friend of his as well as of the school's, Dan Duval
51 who recently passed away. Porter said he overcame obstacles, was a coach and passed
52 away at the age of 54. Porter said Dan was a great friend to their district and children and
53 they will miss him.

54 **PUBLIC TIME**

55 No public present.

56 **CONSENT AGENDA**

57 **A motion was made by Paul Prescott to accept the consent agenda containing the**
58 **minutes from April 19, 2012, Unanticipated Revenue- \$130.15 – Restitution**
59 **Payment from VALIC, Wilkins Student Activity Fund - \$1,355.70 from Box Tops**
60 **for Education, Clark Student Activity Fund - \$12.14 from Box Tops for Education**
61 **and Wilkins Student Activity Fund - \$25.0 from Westat. Amy Facey seconded the**
62 **motion. Three board members voted in favor of the motion with one abstention,**
63 **Jim Manning. (3-0-1)**

64 **PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS**

65 Costa Rica Trip – Sue Wilson and Amy Birck – Students and staff who went on the Costa
66 Rica Trip came before the board to discuss their trip.

67 The staff responsible for pulling this trip together introduced themselves – Sue Wilson,
68 7th grade Social Studies Teacher, Amy Burke, Learning Specialist at AMS.

69 Sue Wilson told the board the trip was a huge success and they brought pictures and
70 journals students were willing to share to pass around.

71 Sue said they took students to Costa Rica during their April vacation. Sue said it was an
72 incredible experience and she thanked the students who made the trip an absolute
73 pleasure.

74 Sue said they would email the movie they created while on their trip to members of the
75 school board.

76 Students who went on the Costa Rica trip were given the opportunity to speak to the
77 board about their experience.

78 Peg Bennett thanked Sue Wilson and Amy Burke for giving the kids such a great
79 experience.

80 Mr. Cohen, a parent of one of the students who attended the Costa Rica trip thanked Sue
81 and Amy for all the hard work they did prior to the trip, during the trip and post trip.

82 Mr. Cohen said his daughter had the opportunity to blossom on her own in a new
83 environment on this trip. Mr. Cohen said she has come home as a much more mature
84 child. He said he believes due to the preparation pre and post trip, the trip was a well-
85 rounded experience for each student that went on the trip.

86 READ 180

87 Virginia Day, Reading Specialist at AMS thanked everyone for inviting her to speak at
88 the board meeting.

89 Virginia spoke about what Read 180 is – Intensive reading intervention designed for
90 students reading 2+ years below grade level. Utilizes adaptive technology to instruction.
91 Provides ongoing data and assessment to help differentiate instruction.

92 Virginia presented a graph detailing the 90 minute Instructional Model.

93 Virginia explained what a Lexile is – Measures both reader ability and text difficulty on
94 the same scale. Predictor of comprehension skills. www.lexile.com. Virginia said when
95 students come to them, they take an individualized assessment to find out a student's
96 exact Lexile.

97 Virginia explained when Read 180 began – March 2010 with a small cohort of 7th grade
98 students performing significantly below grade level. 2010-2011 first year of Read 180
99 implementation in grade levels 6-8. 2011-2012 marks our second school year of full
100 implementation.

101 Virginia provided the Criteria for Entry into the Program – Scholastic Reading Inventory
102 (SRI), Scholastic Phonics Inventory (SPI), and Response to Intervention (RTI).

103 Virginia provided the Criteria for Exit – Consistent lexile growth into the proficient range
104 (SRI), Independent use of skill sets (R-skills/diagnostic reading reports), and Accuracy,
105 automaticity and fluency with reading.

106 Virginia told board members 69 students in grades 5-8 access Read 180 and or System
107 44. Virginia said System 44 is a component of Read 180 with a concentrated focus on
108 the basics of reading with phonics.

109 Virginia said to date, 7 students have matriculated back into the Core Language Arts
110 programs. Virginia said they are estimating 6 more students will be ready to exit by the

111 end of the school year. Virginia said once a student goes back to the Core Language Arts
112 programs, the goal is to have the student maintain their success, they are still being
113 monitored when they leave Read 180.

114 Virginia presented several charts detailing Growth Comparison in Grades 6, 7, and 8.

115 Jim Manning asked what AMS did prior to Read 180. Virginia said they always had an
116 extra reading class however, Read 180 allows them to service more students.

117 Renea Sparks told the board at risk students don't have to be a student in Special Needs
118 to use Read 180.

119 Pupil Safety and Violence Survey

120 Renea Sparks told board members RSA 193F got implemented last year. Renea said each
121 year they must train their faculty, have an annual forum and provide an appropriate
122 curriculum.

123 Renea said they have an SAU39 Committee which is made up of members of all the
124 schools.

125 Renea said they survey the students to get a baseline as to what the students are dealing
126 with in all the schools. The survey for grades 5-12 was shared with the board this
127 evening.

128 Renea told members of the board there was a Parent Forum on Tuesday, May 15, 2012.
129 John Smith and Mike Knox did an excellent job with the presentation.

130 Renea said the Wilton Town Theater was hosting a free screening of the Bullying movie
131 at 4:30 on this day, Thursday, May 17, 2012. Renea said she understands the time may
132 not have been the best choice for people however; this was the only time they had as the
133 movie needed to be returned. Renea said she stopped by the Wilton Town Theatre and
134 there were about 20 people who were watching the movie.

135 Gerry St. Amand and Porter Dodge were given the opportunity to speak about what they
136 are doing with regards to student/staff.

137 Gerry St. Amand told the board at Clark/Wilkins they provided formal training at their
138 May 8, 2012, Late Start.

139 Gerry said at their May 8th Late Start, staff were given the opportunity to look through the
140 Policy and bring forth any questions they had. Gerry said they had a very good discussion
141 with regards to the policy. Gerry told board members they have 8 people left to train.

142 Gerry St. Amand spoke about the curriculum and explained students receive guidance at
143 every grade level and learn about expected and unexpected behaviors. Gerry said they
144 will survey the students about bullying and he is working with Barbara Belak at MVVS
145 to develop a survey for elementary students. Gerry said for students in grades K-2 they

146 may need to read the survey to them.

147 Porter Dodge said they have had fewer incidents than last year that they've had to
148 investigate. He believes they have done a better job of making the staff aware of
149 suspected bullying vs. not.

150 Porter said with regards to training they have one area left to train and that is with the
151 coaches.

152 Porter emphasized the fact that children need to be nice to each other. Porter said Middle
153 School is a very tough age for kids however, in 5th grade they talk differently than they
154 do to the 8th graders.

155 Peter Warburton told the board Officer Smith and Knox were involved in a workshop
156 with regards to bullying by exclusion. Peter said the staff needs to pay attention to this
157 issue and parents need to at home as well.

158 Peter thanked Renea for all the work she has done on this topic.

159 Peter said all staff will have seen the bullying video before the end of the year.

160 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

161 Policies

162 1. IMGA – Animal Services for Students, Employees and Guests – Peg explained
163 they did due diligence on this policy at the SAU39 meeting on May 1st.

164 **A motion was made by Lucienne Foulks to adopt Policy IMGA as written. Amy**
165 **Facey second the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the**
166 **motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)**

167 Superintendent Evaluation Committee- Peg Bennett told the board she had asked Jim
168 to serve on the Superintendent Evaluation Committee as he has done a lot of
169 evaluation work in his job.

170 Peter Warburton thanked Gerry St. Amand for agreeing to serve as Chairman of the
171 Evaluation Committee.

172 Instructional Time for 2012-2013 – Peg Bennett told board members she didn't
173 really have a structure on how this discussion should go.

174 Peg said she wanted to have a discussion because everyone wants to be able to have
175 more instruction time in the day.

176 Peg said it will not happen for next year however, she thinks the conversation is an
177 important one to have.

178 Peg said the goal of the district is to have the appropriate amount of instructional
179 time for math at all grade levels.

180 Porter Dodge said Professor Sharma says it's necessary for kids to have one hour of
181 mathematics.

182 Porter said for grades 5 & 6 they have the one hour of math instruction however for
183 grades 7 & 8 they are having difficulty getting the hour of instruction.

184 Porter said he will be discussing the issue with regards to the 7th and 8th graders
185 receiving one hour of instruction with Professor Sharma next week.

186 Porter recognized the fact they need more math time however he said he struggles
187 with the time because for the core subjects they would need four hours of
188 instruction just for them.

189 Lucienne said she was interested in finding out how their school day became the
190 length it is since they are now talking about extending it. Lucienne questioned how
191 it came to be they have such a short day. She said maybe if she understands this, she
192 can move forward.

193 Lucienne said they are putting a lot of stress on the teachers to put 60 minutes
194 worth of work into 45 minutes.

195 The board agreed if they can't get the extra time they need as Professor Sharma
196 suggests, they must make the most out of the time they have. The board spoke about
197 "Responsive Classroom."

198 Nicole Heimarck told the board they did a site visit to Dover, NH where they are
199 using Math in Focus and they only have 45 minutes for math instruction.

200 Nicole said they use "responsive classroom." Nicole said it is a social curriculum
201 which is observed in all K-8 classrooms. They are efficient and effective in how they
202 deliver their curriculum and there is no unused instructional time.

203 Amy said if they do not have the one hour of instruction implemented in 7th and 8th
204 grade next year, they should look to implement Responsive Classroom.

205 Amy said she is hoping they can continue to work hard at scheduling all Amherst
206 students 60 minutes of math instruction but she doesn't know how it can be done.

207 The board and administration discussed the importance of Core & More. More
208 students may need support in math even though they don't qualify for help, they can
209 use Core & More for math support.

210 Nicole Heimarck said they are targeting a larger number of students to receive math
211 support because of the change in expectations.

212 Porter said one of their issues is staffing.

213 Jim Manning asked what the tradeoffs were, what do the students lose if they get
214 them an hour of math instruction.

215 Porter said they have 4 cores which means they need 40 more minutes some place
216 in the schedule, which if done, it would probably cost them a special. Porter said
217 specials are valuable as they are part of the Middle School experience, as it makes
218 the children who they are.

219 Peter Warburton said what they need is more time in the school day! Peter said
220 they will be talking about this at future SAU39 meetings. Peter said this is a critical
221 issue as they need more instruction time for math however they need to continue
222 the specials.

223 Gerry St. Amand told board members an hour of math instruction has been at
224 Clark/Wilkins for a few years now.

225 Paul Prescott said this is a problem that he believes is not going to go away any time
226 soon so he would like to hear back from the administration in the coming months on
227 what the team has come up with for ideas.

228 Peter said this topic will be on the June agenda as well.

229 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION** – A motion was made by Jim Manning to enter into Non-
230 Public session per RSA 91-A:3 II. (a), c), (d) and (e). Paul Prescott seconded the
231 motion. By roll call vote, Foulks-yes, Facey-yes, Manning-yes, Prescott-yes, and
232 Bennett-yes. The board unanimously voted to go into non-public session at
233 8:51 p.m.

234 **Discussion:** The board discussed professional nominations.
235

236 **MOTION TO EXIT NON PUBLIC SESSION:**
237 At 9:20 hrs Jim Manning made a motion to exit non-public session. Motion
238 seconded by Lucienne Foulks. Unanimously accepted by roll call vote: Bennett: yes,
239 Foulks: yes, Manning: yes, Prescott: yes, Facey: yes.
240

241 **NOMINATIONS**

242 Jim Manning made a motion to accept the nomination of Crista Burrell for the
243 position of Math Coach at the Amherst Middle School as presented by Nicole
244 Heimarck and Peter Warburton. Paul Prescott seconded the motion. The motion
245 passed unanimously.
246

247 Jim Manning made a motion to accept the nomination of Traci Ceccherini for the
248 position of School Psychologist at the Amherst Middle School as presented by

249 Nicole Heimarck and Peter Warburton. Paul Prescott seconded the motion. The
250 motion passed unanimously.

251

252 **MOTION TO ADJORN:**

253 At 9:30 **hrs** Jim Manning made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Lucienne

254 Foulks and was unanimously passed.

255