

1 Amherst School Board
2 Thursday, November 19, 2015
3 Meeting Minutes
4

5 Attendees:

6 Administrative Team: Peter Warburton- Superintendent, Betty Shankel – Business
7 Administrator, Gerry St. Amand- Principal Clark/Wilkins School, Porter Dodge-Principal AMS,
8 Christine Landwehrle- Director of Curriculum & Professional Development, Meg Beauchamp-
9 Director of Student Services AMS, Brad Freeman- Teacher AMS, Jen Eccleston- CW
10 Curriculum Coordinator (Math/Science)

11 Amherst School Board: Lucienne Foulks- Chair, Peg Bennett – Secretary, Jim Manning, and
12 Paul Prescott (arrived at 6:41pm)

13 Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

14 Public: Mr. Larry Ballard- Teacher AMS (Chorus and General Music), Laura Milliken-
15 Director, Spark NH and Jackie Cowell- Executive Director, Early Learning NH, Dr. Phil Streifer
16 and Dr. Barry Sheckley (by conference call) – Edvisualize, LLC. Community Members.

17 I. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Lucienne Foulks

18
19 **Ms. Lucienne Foulks called the meeting to order at 6:02pm**

20
21 III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

22
23 A. Principals' reports

24
25 Ms. Lucienne Foulks asked the Board if they had any questions for Mr. Dodge.

26
27 Ms. Peg Bennett asked a question to Mr. Porter Dodge about Tier Two.

28
29 Mr. Dodge stated that SHS is already at Tier One.

30
31 He also discussed that the Student Leadership Committee petitioned for a change in the
32 procedure, allowing interested students to “join” the Committee and it has generated a great deal
33 of interest.

34
35 Ms. Peg Bennett remarked that it is great that it has gone so well.

36
37 Ms. Lucienne Foulks stated that the District is receiving real-estate and the address is 11
38 Baboosic Lake Road. She discussed that it is a gift from unresolved legal issues and the best way
39 to resolve it is to gift the property to the District. She discussed that the Board is excited to let
40 Mr. Craig Fraley know about the acquisition and that hopefully they can use this property for

41 recreational purposes. She stated that she is excited about it, and it is a nice conclusion to a long
42 process. She stated that the Board had been working on it for 12 years.

43
44 B. Committee reports

45
46 IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

47
48 Mr. Larry Ballard introduced himself to the Board and stated that this is his 20th year as a Music
49 Teacher in the ASD.

50
51 He discussed that he is impressed with the quality of the professionals employed by the ASD and
52 is concerned about the negative presentations in the past. He discussed that he wants to resolve
53 the fictitious claims and further believes that the data in those presentations are invalid.

54
55 He discussed that as a teacher he believes that the NECAP scores should not be used as the
56 sole measure of a good education.

57
58 He then discussed that the Board Members should be not making goals, objectives and metrics.

59
60 He thanked the Board for their time.

61
62 V. CONSENT AGENDA

63
64 A. Minutes

65 1. October 15, 2015

66 B. Treasurer's reports

67 1. September 2015

68 C. Unanticipated General Fund Revenue

69 1. \$2746.80 AMS surplus equipment

70 2. \$36.00 Clark surplus equipment

71 D. Unanticipated Activity Fund Revenue

72 1. \$1,000 Destination Imagination

73 E. Retirement request

74 F. Leave of absence request

75
76 **Mr. Jim Manning made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda items A. Minutes from**
77 **October 15th 2015, B. September 2015 Treasurers Reports, C. Unanticipated General Fund**
78 **Revenue in the amount of \$2746.80- AMS Surplus Equipment, 2. \$36.00- Clark Surplus**
79 **Equipment, D. Unanticipated Activity Fund Revenue in the amount of \$1,000 from**
80 **Destination Imagination, E. Retirement Request and F. Leave of Absence Request, Ms. Peg**
81 **Bennett seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

82
83 VI. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

84
85 A. SPARK – NH

86

87 Ms. Lucienne Foulks stated that there will be a presentation tonight about the importance of early
88 childhood education.
89
90 Ms. Jackie Cowell and Ms. Laura Milliken introduced themselves to the Board and the Public.
91
92 Ms. Cowell stated that they would like to discuss about early childhood education and that every
93 child has the opportunity to do well in school.
94
95 Ms. Jackie Cowell then discussed that our Future depends on today's children.
96
97 She then began a short video on The Brain's Architecture- Experiences Build the Brain's
98 Architecture.
99
100 Ms. Cowell then discussed that the very early experiences in infants are shaping the Brain's
101 Architecture.
102
103 She added that healthy, loving relationships are the key to forming strong Brain Architecture
104
105 Ms. Laura Milliken then discussed that Toxic Stress derails healthy development.
106
107 She noted that learning how to cope with moderate, short lived stress can build a healthy stress
108 response system.
109
110 She remarked that children with developmental delays with are usually affected by a number of
111 risk factors.
112
113 She then discussed the possible correlation of adult heart disease developing after 7-8 adverse
114 childhood experiences. She stated that this is based on research from Kaiser Permanente.
115
116 Ms. Milliken then discussed that the solution is innovation in the early years of child
117 development.
118
119 She stated that the earlier we start the greater the return.
120
121 Ms. Jackie Cowell then discussed the Spark NH four actions that NH learners can take, 1. Spread
122 the word, 2. Connect to Sparknh.org 3. Take a stand and. 4. Support and spur innovation.
123
124 The Board thanked Ms. Milliken and Ms. Cowell for their presentation.
125
126 B. FY' 17 Budget
127
128 Ms. Betty Shankel discussed the FY' 17 Budget Draft 1.
129
130 She began with the discussion of the Budget Process, Building and District Goals set, Budget
131 Assumptions reviewed and accepted, the 1st Draft built by the Administration, and the Warrant
132 Articles that are being considered.

133
134 She then discussed the 3 Warrant Articles including the Operating Budget Article, AEA
135 Collective Bargaining Agreement Article, and the Addition to Special Education Expendable
136 Trust. She noted that the Board was adamant to pursue implementation of Full-day Kindergarten
137 despite facility needs.

138
139 Ms. Shankel then discussed the key Budget Driver which is the SAU Strategic Plan of
140 implementing Full-day Kindergarten, maintaining a high level of academic achievement and
141 meeting the needs of all learners, continue to focus on multi-tiered instruction and interventions,
142 honor Contracts and Agreements, sustain Curriculum and Technology Initiatives, and attract and
143 retain quality Educators and Staff.

144
145 She discussed that there is a Budget Decrease of 0.86% (for Draft 1).

146
147 She then discussed the FY' 17 Budget Challenges being the 5.0% increase for health Insurance
148 plus no premium holiday for FY' 17, ASSA CBA New Wages and the AEA CBA New Wages
149 (no settlement to date).

150
151 She then discussed the Enrollment Projections: Amherst School District Oct 1 Enrollment
152 Comparisons (FY' 16 Actual-1248 to FY' 17 Projected 1228)

153
154 Ms. Shankel then discussed the Salary and Benefits that are included, no increase for AEA
155 (currently negotiating agreement), ASSA 1.5% COLA increase (2nd year of a 2 year agreement),
156 Non-Union Support Staff (same increase as ASSA agreement), and no increase for
157 Administrators in 1st Draft of Budget.

158
159 She then concluded with the on-going initiatives of support, including support of the SAU 39
160 Strategic Plan to align with the new academic standards, support of continuing implementation
161 of Teacher-Leader Effectiveness/Evaluation Program, support of Response to Instruction/Multi-
162 Tiered System of Support (RTI/MTSS), and support of Full-Day Kindergarten Evaluation and
163 implementation. She mentioned that they would love to have teachers help with Strategic
164 Planning.

165
166 The Board thanked Ms. Shankel.

167
168 1. Budget presentation

169
170 Mr. Gerry St. Armand discussed the Clark Wilkins Budget for FY' 17.

171
172 Mr. St. Armand thanked Mr. Larry Ballard for his input and added that he did a wonderful job.
173 He remarked that teachers are the foundation of our children.

174
175 He then discussed the Enrollment Projections for Clark-Wilkins Oct 1st Enrollment Comparisons
176 (2016 Actual-624 and the 2017 Projected- 637).

177

178 He then discussed the staffing changes (FY'16 Budget vs. FY'17 Budget). He added that you
179 have to look at Clark/Wilkins and AMS together to get the full picture. He then discussed in the
180 Professional Staff changes.

181
182 He then discussed the staffing changes (FY 16 Budget vs. FY 17 Budget) for Support Staff.

183
184 Mr. St. Armand then discussed the Professional Staffing Comparisons.

185
186 He then discussed the Non-Certified Staffing Comparisons.

187
188 He then discussed the Facility Upgrades for the Clark School- \$49,100 including to renovate the
189 Front Restroom and reconfigure Upper Section old Restrooms, replace Exterior Classroom Exit
190 Doors, replace Partitions in Boys and Girls Main Restrooms, Install ADA compliant Automatic
191 Door Opener, replace Rear Classroom Exit Step Structures, install ADA Ramp Addition, and
192 repair MPR Siding.

193
194 He concluded with the Facility Upgrades for the Wilkins School- \$76, 700 including to renovate
195 the 4th grade Girls and Boys Restrooms, Install ADA compliant Automatic Door Opener, overlay
196 all Hallway Vinyl Tile (Asbestos Mastic), refurbish Storage Shed and replace Vinyl Siding and
197 Skirting on Portables.

198
199 Mr. Porter Dodge stated that he would like to discuss the AMS FY' 17 Budget and thanked Ms.
200 Betty Shankel for her great work with the Budget.

201
202 He discussed the Enrollment Projections AMS Oct 1st Enrollment Comparisons (2016 Actual-
203 624 and 2017 Projected- 591)

204
205 He then discussed the Staffing Changes (FY' 16 Budget vs. FY'17 Budget) for Professional Staff
206 and Support Staff.

207
208 He then discussed the Professional Staffing Comparison for FY'13- FY' 17.

209
210 Mr. Dodge then discussed the Non-Certified Staffing Comparison for FY' 13- FY'17.

211
212 He then discussed the Facility Upgrades at Amherst Middle School -\$101,135 including the
213 Front Grounds Design and Installation, Front Entry, Gym, and Parking Lot Walkways
214 replacement, Unit Ventilator Replacement Program (18 @ 2 per year), Library Door
215 replacements, Front Drive Catch Basin installation, Catch Basin Replacement Program (4 @1
216 per year) and Window and Screen replacements.

217
218 He then finished with the Staffing Changes Summary for Professional and Non-Certified staff
219 changes.

220
221 Mr. Paul Prescott asked a question about the reduction in interventionalists and
222 paraprofessionals.

223

224 Mr. St. Armand replied that they have one instructional coach and math coach and they have two
225 literacy coaches. He added that Full-day Kindergarten is an intervention in and of itself, and they
226 are committed to having a Paraprofessional in every full day Kindergarten class.

227
228 He then discussed the reduction in the Health Educator position and added that it will not impact
229 Health Services. He remarked that they have tried to figure out the ways and changes and they
230 are confident that instituting Full-day Kindergarten is essential. He mentioned that they have
231 tried to be sensitive to costs and the impact on the Community.

232
233 Mr. Porter Dodge commented that early intervention is important.

234
235 Mr. Paul Prescott thanked Mr. St. Armand and Mr. Dodge for their non-linear thinking and
236 thanked them for the slides that show projections. He further noted that the Enrollment
237 Projection slides are really important.

238
239 Ms. Betty Shankel then explained the next steps in the FY' Budget Process, meeting of the
240 Ways and Means Committee/ the Amherst School Board Budget Review, on December 17th
241 (Draft 2 of the Budget and the Ways and Means Report), January 13th (Public Hearing), February
242 2nd (Deliberative Session), and March 8th (District Voting).

243
244 Ms. Shankel then discussed the ASD Warrant Articles.

245
246 She discussed that Article 11 is about the Board Members, Article 12 about the Operating
247 Budget, Article 13 relating to the CBA between the ASD and the AEA, Article 14 relating to
248 authorizing a special meeting, and Article 15 for a Special Education fund. She mentioned that
249 they would like to build the fund to \$200,000.

250
251 The Board thanked Ms. Shankel.

252
253 2. Comments from Ways & Means Committee

254
255 Ms. Lucienne Foulks asked the Ways and Means Committee if they had any questions.

256
257 The Ways and Means Committee will meet on Tuesday, November 24, 2015.

258
259 C. Math Program Evaluation

260
261 Ms. Christine Landwehrle then discussed that they had a Math Program Evaluation of the SAU
262 School District done by EDvisualize, LLC (specialized services for NEWA users).

263
264 She then introduced Dr. Phil Streifer and Dr. Barry Sheckley (by conference call) to the Board.

265
266 Dr. Streifer discussed the key question guiding the study, NEWA Assessments, Teachers'
267 Survey, Good Learner Survey, Math Anxiety and Scope and Sequence.

268

269 He then discussed their findings in Math Achievement- As measured by NWEA assessments,
270 math achievement improved markedly for the bottom, middle and top quintile groups included in
271 the analysis. However, there was little closing of the gaps between groups.

272
273 Second, he discussed the Curriculum as the positive responses from teachers indicated that the
274 math program was being implemented well, the program was effective, the program was
275 enhancing teaching, and the Professional Development offered was helping to implement the
276 program.

277
278 Third, he discussed the Good Learner question as most students described being a “good learner”
279 in these terms: : “My role is to come to class, not to misbehave, pay attention, complete
280 assignments as directed”.

281
282 He then discussed that responses from students demonstrated a low level of math anxiety.

283
284 He then discussed that the total days teachers spent on math instruction were reasonably close to
285 the total number of days included in the Scope and Sequence plan.

286
287 He then gave his Summary Recommendations as to use the Edvisualize NWEA DesCartes
288 system to review next highest level of proximal learning to move instruction and learning to
289 higher levels so as to close the achievement gap between quintile groups.

290
291 He then discussed Question 1, (According to NWEA Math Assessment, to what extent have
292 math scores improved) Cohorts Analyzed.

293
294 He then reviewed Cohort Fall #1 (fall 2012 grade 2 to fall 2014 grade 4).

295
296 He then discussed the Summary of Average Growth for all Cohorts as effect size, and discussed
297 that all three groups moved with the norms.

298
299 He then discussed the Average RIT Score Growth per Year by Cohort (to see at what point are
300 the kids keeping pace with the norms).

301
302 Question 2 is a survey of the math teachers involved.

303
304 Dr. Streifer, indicated that overall the mostly positive responses from teachers show that the
305 math program is being implemented well, the program is enhancing teaching, and the PD
306 provides necessary preparation to efficiently implement the program.

307
308 He then discussed question three, how do students describe being a “good learner” in math. And
309 discussed that students may be responding to their reading of the classroom environment as one
310 that requires them to listen to their teacher, follow directions, work hard and study well.

311
312 He then discussed Question 4, what level of math anxiety do students experience.

313

314 He discussed that overall the responses from students in the AMS demonstrate a low level of
315 math anxiety.
316
317 He then discussed question 5, to what extent did teachers follow the scope and sequence plan.
318
319 He discussed that overall the responses from teachers suggested that they used the scope and
320 sequence plan as a guide for their instruction.
321
322 Discussion ensued.
323
324 Dr. Stryker discussed that the NWEA is not as reliable in the later grades.
325
326 Ms. Peg Bennett asked a question about the amount of teachers responding to this survey (39).
327
328 Ms. Eccleston replied, yes, all 39 teachers responded.
329
330 Discussion ensued.
331
332 Ms. Foulks wanted to discuss the Teacher Survey.
333
334 Discussion ensued.
335
336 Ms. Jen Eccleston asked Dr. Striefer and Dr. Sheckley what is their experience with grades 1-4,
337 with the Good Learner Survey.
338
339 Dr. Barry replied that this is the first school district that went down to K-4.
340
341 Discussion ensued about what to do to turn a good student into a good learner.
342
343 Mr. Manning asked Dr. Barry to give him an example of in what instance the Good Learner
344 Survey overall average is in the 3 to 4 range.
345
346 Ms. Foulks discussed that younger children do not possess the vocabulary and they want to
347 please their teachers and parents.
348
349 Dr. Stryker discussed that this research is a guide and all of this research is high level and is
350 respectful of kids.
351
352 Mr. Jim Manning discussed making changes in the Culture.
353
354 Ms. Lucienne Foulks asked a question about Math Anxiety. She discussed are we able to create a
355 Culture where a student is comfortable taking risks. She added that a Culture where taking risks
356 is a good thing.
357
358 Discussion ensued.
359

360 VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

361

362 A. Full Day Kindergarten Forum

363

364 Mr. Gerry St. Armand discussed creating a publication with some Frequently Asked Questions
365 about implementing Full- Day Kindergarten for the Public.

366

367 Mr. Paul Prescott discussed some of the questions that the taxpayers might have about
368 implementing Full- day Kindergarten.

369

370 Mr. St. Armand discussed that the cost is less than proposed last year.

371

372 Ms. Christine Landwehrle discussed that on Monday December 7th, 2015 3:30-4:30pm, there will
373 be a Full-day Kindergarten Information Session at the Amherst Public Library (Johnson Meeting
374 Room). www.amherstlibrary.org.

375

376 Ms. Peg Bennett asked Mr. St Armand if he was planning on having a panel of teachers present.

377

378 Mr. St Armand replied, yes, he is excited about it and that people have recognized that the
379 District and the Administration are committed to implementing Full-day Kindergarten.

380

381 IX. ACTION ITEM

382

383 A. Policy DGA – Authorized signatures

384

385 Ms. Betty Shankel discussed the DGA policy.

386

387 She discussed that they used to have pre-numbered checks and that it was a good internal
388 control, however, they have purchased the micro printers and are using the new check stock. She
389 discussed that is not pre-numbered, and it is even better because it does not have all the
390 important information on it.

391

392 **Ms. Peg Bennett made a motion to adopt the revised DGA Policy (11/19/15), Mr. Paul**
393 **Prescott seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

394

395 X. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A: 3 II. (a) (b) (c)

396

397 **Mr. Jim Manning made a motion to go to Non-Public Session RSA 91-A: 3 II a, b and c, at**
398 **8:48pm. Mr. Paul Prescott seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

399

400 The Board discussed these items:

401

1. A personnel matter

402

403 Ms. Bennett called a Roll Call- Manning-Yes, Prescott-Yes, and Bennett- Yes