

1 Amherst School Board
 2 Thursday, December 17, 2015
 3 Meeting Minutes
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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, Larry Ballard- Music Teacher
 10 AMS, Amanda Rogers- Teacher AMS, Michelle Emmond-Teacher AMS.

11 Amherst School Board: Lucienne Foulks- Chair, Amy Facey- Vice President, Peg Bennett –
 12 Secretary, Jim Manning, and Paul Prescott

13 Ways and Means Committee: Ms. Stephanie Grund

14 Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

15 Public: John Mastergeorge-Eagle Project, 6th and 7th Grade Students, Mr. Craig Fraley- Amherst
 16 Recreational Department, Ms. Sarah Skinner, Mr. Peter DeBruynkops, Ms. Maggie McCabe,
 17 Community Members

18 I. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Lucienne Foulks

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 20 **Ms. Lucienne Foulks called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM**

21
 22 II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

23
 24 A. Principals' reports

25
 26 Ms. Lucienne Foulks asked the Board if they had any questions about the Principals' Reports.

27
 28 Mr. Jim Manning asked Mr. Porter Dodge for an update on the Junior National Honor Society.

29
 30 Mr. Porter Dodge discussed that it is not something that students can apply for and that they
 31 have moved to a system inducting 7th and 8th graders but then it will be just 7th graders. He added
 32 that 8th graders will be eligible. He noted that you have to be considered for it.

33
 34 Ms. Amy Facey thanked Mr. Porter Dodge for getting the online grading going, Mr. Paul
 35 Prescott thanked him as well.

36
 37 Mr. Jim Manning asked Mr. St. Amand for an update on the recent full-day Kindergarten forum
 38 at the Amherst Town Library. Mr. St. Armand discussed that they wanted to address costs and
 39 benefits to the students and noted that they have a few changes including reducing the staff a bit.

40 He added that there was not a huge amount of questions from the Public but in the few that were
41 asked, they were satisfied with the answers.

42
43 He mentioned that there were about 20 people in attendance.

44
45 Mr. Paul Prescott thanked Mr. St Amand for offering the after school enrichment classes, which
46 included an “hour of coding”, led by Ms. Godin and Ms. Polio.

47
48 Ms. Peg Bennett mentioned that she visited the 2nd and 4th Grade classrooms and saw some really
49 great things.

50
51 • Acapella

52
53 Mr. Porter Dodge noted that the AMS Acapella group is here to perform for the Board. He added
54 that he is very excited that they are here since they were not here last month.

55
56 Mr. Larry Ballard was in attendance with the 8 AMS students.

57
58 The Board thanked the students and mentioned that they are very impressed.

59
60 • Eagle Block

61
62 Mr. Porter Dodge thanked the Board for allowing the Eagle Block to be here and mentioned how
63 valuable and useful it is for students.

64
65 Ms. Michelle Emmond discussed what Eagle Block is and noted that it is a period of time for
66 enrichment that occurs every day and in every grade. She added that each grade works
67 differently. She noted that there are themes such as math reinforcements, science rotations (two),
68 an international film festival topic, world cultures topic, travel tour guide topic , nation building
69 topic , and a readers and writers group (students need to apply for) among other things.

70
71 She added that a key piece is accountability, it is hands on, and the students change rotations
72 about every 7 weeks.

73
74 Two students discussed their Eagle Block presentation about a Travel Itinerary.

75
76 Mr. Paul Prescott asked a question to the two students.

77
78 Another student talked about her presentation in learning about the Ukraine. She mentioned that
79 she is in the Reading and Writing Block.

80
81 Another student discussed building a car using different objects.

82
83 Another student discussed a different Eagle Block about building bridges and presented her
84 design.

85

86 Mr. Porter mentioned that those were the 7th graders.

87

88 Ms. Amanda Rogers, AMS Teacher and the 6th graders discussed the different rotations, and
89 challenges. Ms. Rogers added that she does metric linear measurements with the students.

90

91 A student discussed the creation of a book.

92

93 Another student discussed Math Art. This is made using a compass and making different designs
94 using concentric circles, equilateral triangles, hexagons and lot of symmetry.

95

96 Another student discussed creating a ship.

97

98 Ms. Rodgers added that the projects were made using recycled materials.

99

100 The Board thanked the students and the AMS Teachers and noted that they were very impressed.

101

- Eagle Scout Project

103

104 Student Steven Mason discussed that he wanted to create a Score Board that the teams can use.
105 He discussed that it is completed. He noted that he followed step by step instructions on its
106 creation.

107

108 Ms. Foulks asked what the Eagle Scout Project is and are there any requirements.

109

110 Mr. Mason discussed that it's a way for them to give back to the Community.

111

112 Mr. Porter Dodge and the Board thanked Mr. Mason.

113

114 Mr. John Mastergeorge discussed his Eagle Project.

115

116 He discussed that he has been involved with Amherst Fields for over 12 years as a player,
117 spectator, umpire and coach. He discussed that he has noticed that some fields have had
118 improvements while others haven't. He included that some of the dugouts have roofs while
119 others are lacking. He added that he plans to bring these dug outs up to par by installing roofs.

120

121 He began to explain his Proposal.

122

123 He discussed that his plan is to start with these four dug outs and depending on time and
124 financial means he will continue on to other fields in town.

125

126 He noted that funds will be raised by donation or through fundraising to be completed as part of
127 his Eagle Project.

128

129 He added that construction will be modeling the dug outs at the Bean Fields and once he gets all
130 the approvals he will start building the roofs at his house. He mentioned that he will start
131 installing once the snow melts and that he plans to be finished by the time April break is over.

132

133

134 Mr. Paul Prescott thanked Mr. Mastergeorge and added that it is a big job and requires planning,
135 funding, etc. He asked him if he could use this as a Senior Project.

136

137 Mr. Mastergeorge replied, no and discussed the reasons why not.

138

139 The Board thanked Mr. Mastergeorge.

140

141 **Mr. Paul Prescott made a Motion to support John Mastergeorge's Eagle Project as**
142 **presented, Mr. Jim Manning seconded the Motion, the vote was unanimous Motion passed.**

143

144

145 Mr. Peter Warburton discussed that they have been talking about introducing a Maker Space at
146 AMS, the beginning of January and thanked everyone for their help.

147

148 Mr. Dodge then went into detail and discussed that the Maker Space movement is growing and
149 that they are moving towards STEM initiatives talking about it well over a year ago. He noted
150 that The Amherst Recreational Department will be getting involved, offering classes on welding
151 etc.

152

153 He mentioned that it will be a win win for both parties, with shared revenues, and they are
154 excited.

155

156 He noted that Mr. Brad Freeman is behind it and kids can benefit as they can use it after school
157 and during school. He mentioned that at the end of January and they will be working with the
158 Rec Department and that they will handle the Insurance and the hiring of people to teach those
159 classes.

160

161 III. CONSENT AGENDA

162

163 A. Minutes

164 1. November 19, 2015

165 B. Treasurer's reports

166 1. October 2015

167 2. November 2015

168 C. Unanticipated General Fund Revenue

169 1. \$50 - AMS students' restitution for breaking chain

170 2. \$ 2,000.60 - Hockmeyer for equipment for Innovation and Design Lab

171 D. Budget transfer

172 E. Auditor's report

173

174 **Mr. Jim Manning made a Motion to accept the Consent Agenda items A. Minutes from**
175 **November 19th, 2015, B. Treasurer's Reports from October and November 2015, C.**
176 **Unanticipated General Fund Revenue in the amount of 1. \$50.00- AMS Students'**

177 **Restitution for Breaking Chain, 2. \$2,000.60- Hockmeyer for Equipment for Innovation**
178 **and Design Lab, D. Budget Transfer and E. Auditor's Report. Ms. Peg Bennett seconded**
179 **the Motion, the vote was unanimous, Motion passed. Ms. Amy Facey abstained**

180

181 IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

182

183 A. Kindergarten presentation

184

185 Ms. Betty Shankel discussed that she attended a Ways and Means Committee meeting and that
186 they discussed full-day Kindergarten.

187

188 She discussed that it was on a Warrant Article last year and this year it isn't. She added that last
189 year the Administration brought to the Board a plan to put full day kindergarten in place but as
190 an add on. She noted that it was voted down due to cost.

191

192 She added that the Board took the lead and directed the Administration that they were serious
193 and they wanted to see full-day kindergarten in place. Additionally the Board wanted to change
194 the Curriculum and reprioritize to make it happen, without an increase in budget and staffing.
195 She discussed that the Administration has done as the Board has directed and did not increase
196 Staff and/or the Budget.

197

198 Mr. Gerry St. Amand thanked the Public for being here and wanted to discuss the full day
199 kindergarten. He noted that it is included in the regular Budget, and wanted to confirm what Ms.
200 Shankel had spoken about. He added that they can make it happen without added costs.

201

202 He began by discussing that Kindergartners today are facing more focus on rigorous academic
203 skills, less focus on music art, and creative activities, and have higher academic and behavioral
204 expectations when they enter kindergarten.

205

206 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the academic learning expectations for Kindergarten. She added
207 that Common Core was written for a full-day kindergarten program.

208

209 Mr. Gerry St. Amand then discussed Social and Emotional Learning.

210

211 He then discussed the Districts in NH that are currently offering full-day programming. He noted
212 that approximately 94 NH Districts offer a full day Kindergarten option.

213

214 He then discussed that this Sample Schedule as presented is not something new.

215

216 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that they used Grant Funding to have a week long training to help
217 create the sample schedule. She noted that teachers got to plan this and that is what programming
218 might look like.

219

220 She then compared the current half day schedule vs. the full day schedule.

221

222 Ms. Shankel noted that they did that Curriculum workshop this past summer and it was funded
223 by Federal Grant money.

224
225 Mr. St. Amand then noted that the day is structured differently in the beginning of the year, and
226 added that the last nine weeks are more of like a first grade classroom.

227
228 He then discussed the costs for moving from half-day to full-day kindergarten. He noted that
229 each classroom will have a full time paraprofessional, a .5 food service worker, instructional
230 materials, they will have the same level of technology, and extra furniture.

231
232 He noted that the cost is down from the amount that they have proposed last year and it is down
233 even lower from before Thanksgiving due to shifting.

234
235 He noted that there are changes in professional staffing starting first with Clark-Wilkins and then
236 the AMS. He added that there is a zero increase in both areas.

237
238 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed Evaluating the Effectiveness of full day kindergarten. She
239 discussed that she got feedback from teachers and collected data to assess the relationship
240 between half day vs. full day kindergarten on, Student Achievement, Social/Emotional Learning
241 and Academic Support. She noted that one tool that they use is the NWEA MAP for primary
242 grades (math and reading) and that it is student friendly at the lower levels.

243
244 Mr. Gerry St. Amand discussed that students need more time in the following areas, to practice
245 and internalize social and academic skills, for social interaction with peers, and for opportunities
246 in the creative arts.

247
248 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the benefits of full-day kindergarten. She mentioned that
249 children in a full-day kindergarten program receive more instruction than enrolled in half-day K
250 programs. She noted that more instructional time in full-day K allows for increased learning
251 activities and strategies such as cooperative learning, exploratory learning and child-initiated
252 activities.

253
254 Mr. Gerry St. Amand thanked Ms. Landwehrle for all of her help.

255
256 Mr. St. Amand then included two more dates for full-day K information sessions.

257
258 Mr. Jim Manning asked a question to confirm the total cost of \$576,596. He then asked if there
259 were any new hires.

260
261 Mr. St. Amand noted that \$576,596 is an estimate.

262
263 Mr. St. Amand noted that there will not be many new hires due to shifting. He noted that the
264 Special Education teacher (.5) would be a new hire that will support the kids that have been
265 identified/will be identified that need help.

266
267 Ms. Landwehrle added that we are using all existing staffing.

268
269 Mr. Jim Manning asked Mr. St. Armand if there was any new spending.
270
271 Both Mr. St. Amand and Ms. Landwehrle replied, no.
272
273 Mr. Jim Manning asked what is the class size that we are aiming towards.
274
275 Mr. St. Amand noted that the size is 16-18 and right now we are above that, with the largest is
276 being 21.
277
278 He noted that as class size of 18 will look good, with a paraprofessional.
279
280 Mr. Jim Manning asked if there will be any changes between now and the next couple of forums.
281
282 Mr. St. Amand replied that there might be but nothing big.
283
284 Mr. Manning asked what we have to give up to make this happen.
285
286 Mr. Sr. Amand noted that we are reducing and/or shifting personnel, and AMS has helped.
287
288 Mr. Peter Warburton discussed that they used the present level of staffing as a guide.
289
290 Mr. St. Armand discussed that it would be a challenge not to have this Budget pass. He noted
291 that they are lean with expenditures already.
292
293 Mr. Manning remarked that a Default Budget might be challenging.
294
295 Mr. St Armand confirmed they have committed to implementing full -day kindergarten and
296 noted that they have the support of the Board and that it was a priority.
297
298 Ms. Amy Facey noted that it was a priority of the SAU Board.
299
300 Discussion ensued.
301
302 Mr. Manning commented that we are committed to implementing full-day kindergarten. He then
303 asked if it went to a Default Budget then what will happen. He mentioned that it is a lean budget
304 already and if it didn't pass there would be a significant amount of consequences.
305
306 Mr. Paul Prescott noted that the Board is fully committed to implementing full- day kindergarten
307 and thanked all those involved.
308
309 Discussion ensued.
310
311 The Board thanked Mr. St Amand and Ms. Landwehrle.
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313 B. FY'17 Budget

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1. Budget changes

Ms. Betty Shankel then discussed the FY'17 Budget Changes. She discussed that they have done more work on the Budget.

She noted that they have changes with the Property and Liability Insurance, the District Assessment, Special Education Support Services (updated information on new student needs) instructional materials (incorrectly calculated), Middle School site improvement (leaving only design money in the Budget), Repairs to Building (ADA compliant doors will be installed in FY'16), Repairs to Building (Library doors- delay replacement until FY'18), Classroom Assistants (reduce by .3 FTE), Curriculum Coordinators (reduced), Audit Service (increased by \$25), and change in the Investment Match (left off Draft 1 inadvertently). Ms. Shankel also mentioned several other changes as well.

She stated that the Total General Fund is down by almost 6% (-0.59 %) and then the Total of all Funds is down by 0.61%

2. Revenue Estimate

Ms. Shankel then discussed the ASD FY'17 Revenue Estimate.

She explained that at the top is the Expenditures and the remainder is about the revenue which they use to fund it. She noted that any revenues that they bring in are used to offset tax raises.

She then explained the ASD Tax Impact for FY'14- FY' 16.

Ms. Shankel then reviewed the Estimated Revenue Changes FY'16 vs. FY'17.

She noted that on the top line of the Expenditure Budget was reduced by \$150,905 (with a tax impact of -.10). She added that the Tuition is up (greater amount of students, + .02), food service (up by .01), other local revenues up by (.05 cents), Adequacy Aid (up .03), and the State Property Tax (up .01).

She concluded that the Total Tax Impact will be plus .27 cents.

She then discussed the Warrant Articles 11, 12, 13, 14.

She remarked that Warrant Article #15 is to get to the goal of \$200,000 for unexpected costs for educating students with disabilities.

Mr. Peter Warburton thanked Ms. Betty Shankel for the extra pages, and info. Mr. Paul Prescott thanked her as well and stated that the information was very helpful.

3. Subcommittee Reports-

360 Ms. Stephanie Grund thanked the other Members of the Ways and Means Committee and
361 mentioned that they are looking forward to the next meeting.

362
363 C. SBAC

364
365 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that the Smarter Balanced is a statewide summative assessment for
366 grades 3-8 and Grade 11. Its focus is on English/Language Arts and Math.

367
368 She added that it is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and designed to determine
369 whether students are on track for college and career readiness.

370
371 She noted that each subject area test includes two main sections, the Computer Adaptive Test
372 (CAT) that is described as short answer, multiple choice questions and interactive assessment
373 items with questions that adjust to each student's ability. The second is a Performance Task piece
374 that have longer multi step questions, including essays and students solve real-world problems.

375
376 She then discussed the Smarter Balanced Overview –ELA/Literacy for Grade 3-8 with the
377 percent meeting standard or above NH and the percent meeting Standard or above Amherst.

378
379 She then discussed the Achievement Level Descriptors ELA/Literacy grades 3-5 and 6-8.

380
381 She then discussed the ELA/Literacy-Overview for grades 3-8. She discussed new interventions
382 added.

383
384 Ms. Lucienne Foulks stated that she wanted to discuss 4th grade.

385
386 Ms. Landwehrle noted that one difference is that they are in the portables and is there might be
387 an isolating factor. She added that they made big changes with literacy and that the Literacy
388 Institutes this summer have helped. She remarked that these are baseline scores.

389
390 She then discussed the ELA/Literacy- Grade 3 and then the ELA/Literacy-Grade 3 Claims. She
391 noted that there are three levels, below standard, at or near standard and then above standard.

392
393 She then reviewed the ELA/Literacy-Grade 4 and mentioned that they are still above the State
394 standard.

395
396 She then discussed the ELA/Literacy-Grade 4 Claims and that maybe kids were at different
397 reading levels.

398
399 She then discussed the ELA/Literacy for Grade 5 and then the Claims.

400
401 She then discussed the ELA/Literacy for Grade 6 and then the Claims.

402
403 She then discussed the ELA/Literacy for Grade 7 and then the Claims

404

405 She then discussed the ELA/Literacy Grade 8 and then the Claims. She noted that the writing
406 and reading areas is strong.
407

408 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the Comparative Data- ELA/Literacy with the added Town of
409 Hopkinton.
410

411 Mr. Jim Manning asked a question about what the other towns are doing differently.
412

413 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the State Comparative Data/Literacy between NH, CT, VT, DE,
414 and ME.
415

416 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the Smarter Balanced Overview for Math, with the Percent
417 Meeting Standard or Above NH and then the Percent Meeting Standard or Above Amherst. She
418 noted that they are looking at Grade 5.
419

420 Ms. Amy Facey asked Ms. Landwehrle a question about Geometry.
421

422 Discussion ensued.
423

424 Mr. Porter Dodge discussed the timing of the test and noted that there are things that will not be
425 covered.
426

427 Mr. Jim Manning asked a question about the timing of the test.
428

429 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the Achievement Level Descriptors for Grades 3-5 and 6-8.
430

431 She then discussed the Mathematics -Overview Grades 3-8 (Percent in Each Achievement Level)
432

433 She then discussed the Mathematics- Grade 3 and the Claims.
434

435 She then discussed the Mathematics-Grade 4 and then the Claims.
436

437 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the Math in Focus.
438

439 She then discussed Mathematics- Grade 5 and then the Claims.
440

441 She then discussed the Mathematics- Grade 6 and then the Claims.
442

443 She then discussed the Mathematics- Grade 7 and then the Claims.
444

445 She concluded by discussing Mathematics- Grade 8 and then the Claims.
446

447 Ms. Landwehrle then reviewed The Comparative data –Mathematics (Grades 3-8 Average
448 Percent at Level 3 and above for different towns, including Hopkinton)
449

450 She then discussed the State Comparative Data- Mathematics for NH, VT, DE, CT and ME. She
451 noted that NH is the highest at 48%.

452
453 Mr. Jim Manning asked a question about curriculum.

454
455 Discussion ensued.

456
457 The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle for a great presentation.

458
459 VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

460
461 Chair Lucienne Foulks noted that Public Comment is limited to three minutes per person due to
462 time restraints.

463
464 Ms. Sarah Skinner stated that she would like to respond to the Working for Great Schools Group
465 and believes that their report is very commercial related to cutting costs. She added that she is in
466 support of the teachers of the School and wants them to be paid well. She added that they love
467 the kids, and that what is missing from the Report is the most important thing, the kids and the
468 teachers. She discussed that the starting salary in Milford is larger than that of Amherst. The
469 focus should be on the children than that of a corporation and people should not to be referred to
470 as *it's*. She discussed all the great teachers that have helped her daughter and described them as
471 family. Her closing remark was to please take care of our teachers so they can take care of our
472 children.

473
474 Mr. Peter DeBruynkops stated that he wants to discuss the full-day kindergarten in that it was a
475 question that was put before the voters last March as a Warrant Article and that now it is
476 included in the FY' 17 Budget . He gave an analogy and noted that there are some similarities.
477 He discussed that the Board does not know the average representative voter.

478
479 Ms. Maggie McCabe stated that although she is in support of full-day kindergarten she would
480 like to see it as a Warrant Article. She then added that she wants to know if there are any other
481 costs in the future. She then discussed Unfunded Liabilities and wants Capital Reserves for
482 Unfunded Liabilities.

483
484 Mr. Larry Ballard stated that he has a comment about full-day kindergarten and discussed that
485 the voters will want to know what has changed from last year's proposal to the current proposal.

486
487 Mr. Peter Warburton mentioned that the Public Comment was moved to the bottom and that it
488 was due to three big presentations.

489
490 VIII. ACTION ITEM

491
492 B. Policy BCA – School Board Member Ethics

493 Mr. Peter Warburton noted that is a first reading. He discussed that the Policy Committee wants
494 to remove the word “systematic” from #4.

495 Ms. Lucienne Foulks asked the Board if they had questions or comments.

496 The Board thanked Ms. Amy Facey.

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

498

499 **Mr. Paul Prescott made a Motion to enter into Non-Public Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (a) (b)**
500 **and (c) at 9:03 pm, Ms. Amy Facey seconded the Motion, the vote was unanimous.**

501

502 Ms. Foulks called a Roll Call: Prescott-Yes, Bennett-Yes, Foulks-Yes, Manning-Yes, and Facey-
503 Yes

504

505 The board discussed administrator raises and a professional nomination.

506

507 Amy Facey made a motion to come out of non-public at 9:17 p.m. Paul Prescott seconded the
508 motion.

509

510 Ms. Foulks called a Roll Call: Prescott-Yes, Bennett-Yes, Foulks-Yes, Manning-Yes, and Facey-
511 Yes

512

513 Jim Manning made a motion to accept the professional nomination of Jilliam Provencher as math
514 interventionist at Amherst Middle School for the remainder of this school year. Paul Prescott
515 seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous.

516

517 **Mr. Paul Prescott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 p.m. Mr. Jim Manning**
518 **seconded the motion, the vote passed unanimously.**