

1 Amherst School Board

2 Thursday, November 17, 2016

3 Meeting Minutes

4 Attendees:

5 Administrative Team: Peter Warburton- Superintendent, Adam Steel- Business Administrator,
6 Gerry St. Amand- Principal Clark/Wilkins School, Porter Dodge-Principal AMS, Bethany
7 Bernasconi- Vice-Principal AMS, Christine Landwehrle- Director of Curriculum & Professional
8 Development, Meg Beauchamp- Director of Student Services, Debbie Hinrichs- Social Studies
9 Curriculum Coordinator AMS, and Justin Platt-Head Coach Cross Country Team AMS.

10 Amherst School Board: Amy Facey- Chair, Jim Manning- Vice Chair, Galen Tremblay and
11 Elizabeth Kuzsma.

12 Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

13 Public: Frank Brown- Chair Streamline Committee, Amherst NH, and John Glover- Amherst NH

14 I. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Amy Facey

15 **Chair Amy Facey called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.**

16 II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

17 A. Principals' reports

18 Chair Amy Facey then introduced Principal Dodge.

19 Principal Dodge then introduced Coach Platt, Head Coach of the Cross Country Team, AMS and
20 several 7th grade students from the AMS Cross Country Team.

21 Coach Platt then introduced the students and discussed their recent championship. He noted that
22 he is very proud of them.

23 Ms. Facey asked about the distances that they run and locations.

24 Superintendent Warburton asked the students about their training regimen.

25 The students discussed their training schedules.

26 The Board thanked the students and congratulated them on their championship.

27 Mr. Dodge remarked about the new format of the Principal's Reports. He then introduced Ms.
28 Debbie Hinrichs, Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator, AMS. He added that she will be
29 discussing a proposal for a 7th Grade field trip.

30 Ms. Hinrichs then discussed the 7th Grade field trip to Battleship Cove located in Fall River MA,
31 for spring 2018.

32 She then discussed how the field trip relates to the current curriculum. She added that the
33 students are studying WWI, WWII and the Cold War among other world events.

34 She noted that she recently visited Battleship Cove and took a two hour tour. She added that
35 there are amazing things to see.

36 She then discussed that there would be veteran speakers, dinner on the ship, sleep over on one of
37 the ships, and a boxed lunch. She noted that the cost would be \$100-\$125 per student.

38 Mr. Prescott thanked Ms. Hinrichs for her proposal and asked about the cost.

39 Ms. Hinrichs then noted that the Fenway field trip was \$30 and with this trip being more
40 expensive parents could spread the cost out if need be.

41 Mr. Dodge then noted that they would not stop a student from going for financial reasons. He
42 then added that he has visited there 3 times and it was a great experience.

43 Mr. Prescott then noted that his concern was students being left behind even if they wanted to go.

44 Mr. Manning then asked about the amount of students going.

45 Chair Amy Facey remarked that it sounds like a great trip.

46 Ms. Hinrichs added that they can tell the parents early to make the cost easier to handle.

47 Ms. Kuzsma then asked about students with food allergies.

48 Ms. Hinrichs replied, that they always travel with a nurse and there are other food options for
49 kids with allergies.

50 Mr. Dodge noted that it is a federal property and is well chaperoned.

51 Ms. Facey then asked about the transportation cost.

52 Ms. Hinrichs replied, \$6,500 and then \$4,500 for the teacher stipend. She noted that she has
53 looked at the most economical way possible for transportation.

54 Ms. Facey noted that Ms. Hinrichs will be back for a later date for approval.

55 Principal Dodge then highlighted the enrollment of 613, and added that they had budgeted for
56 591.

57 He then remarked about STEM and that they have people coming to look at the new
58 Makerspace.

59 He then discussed AMS Veteran's Walkathon and raising \$2909. He then remarked that \$1000
60 in gasoline cards and \$1900 in Market Basket Gift Cards were presented by him to the
61 Manchester Veteran's Administration on Veteran's Day. He added that he was fortunate to meet
62 with VA administrators that heard of their efforts over the last few years to raise several
63 thousand dollars. He added that the VA director plans on visiting AMS in February to thank the
64 staff and student body, and that they plan on inviting local veterans.

65 Principal Dodge noted that there was a lot of content in his report and the recently changed
66 format.

67 The Board thanked Principal Dodge.

68 Principal St. Amand then discussed his November Principal's Report.

69 He then discussed the Clark/Wilkins Veteran's Day events and current enrollment.

70 Mr. St. Amand noted that 635 was the number they used for projections.

71 Mr. Manning then commented on looking at the enrollment for the last 10 years, and to see Pre-
72 K and K enrollment.

73 He then added that it gives them a better sense of class size.

74 He then asked if Kindergarten classes were over capacity.

75 Discussion ensued.

76 Mr. Manning asked Ms. Landwehrle about the amount of Kindergarten students and if it was too
77 much.

78 Ms. Landwehrle noted that they do have a paraprofessionals in each K class and she will be
79 meeting with Kindergarten teachers tomorrow.

80 Principal St. Amand noted that he has visited the Kindergarten classrooms and that the kids have
81 a lot of energy even at the end of the day.

82 Mr. Manning then asked about the NWEA as it relates to Kindergarten.

83 Ms. Landwehrle replied that they can look at growth in full day vs. half day. She added the
84 importance of social and emotional learning and using an assessment called Bimas. She noted
85 that they do a fall and winter assessment.

86 Mr. Manning then asked about the growth in the Kindergarten students and what they want to
87 achieve.

88 Ms. Landwehrle then replied that it is difficult to look at one year's worth of data.

89 Discussion ensued over the goals.

90 She then noted that they had budgeted for more assessment reporting and can look into it.

91 Ms. Kuzsma then asked about comparing Amherst students to other local districts. She added
92 that it would be nice to do comparisons locally.

93 Ms. Landwehrle noted that she would have to ask if other districts use the NWEA and if they
94 would share their scores.

95 The Board thanked Principal St. Amand and Ms. Landwehrle.

96 B. Committee reports

97 1. ASB and Amherst Ways & Means Committee Assignments

98 Ms. Facey noted that they are reviewing the Strategic Plan and what they are reviewing. She
99 added that they are looking at growth, and key performance indicators among other things.

100 She commented that Mr. Prescott is now Chair of the Connect Committee and congratulated him.

101 Mr. Prescott discussed that they are getting reenergized and what is happening with the Connect
102 group. He added that he had met with Superintendent Warburton and that he had done a SWOT
103 analysis.

104 Invest- Ms. Tremblay noted that she will meet with Ms. Carrie James, Director of Human
105 Resources and Chair of the Invest group.

106 Streamline- Ms. Facey noted that they will set up dates for the public forums.

107 Mr. Warburton discussed that they will hold forums for the public on district consolidation. He
108 added that there will be lots of questions. He remarked that there will be one in December and
109 two dates in January (TBA).

110 Unite- Ms. Kuzsma discussed that they are recharging their group and that they are meeting
111 Monday (11/21/16).

112 Advance- Mr. Manning then discussed Kindergarten outcomes and STEM. He noted that he is
113 looking for outcome goals.

114 Ms. Facey then noted that the Board will be signing up for the Ways and Means Committees.

115 III. PUBLIC COMMENT

116 Mr. Frank Brown then noted that he had two comments. He noted that the Board should be
117 setting test assessment expectations and his belief of town to town comparisons.

118 Mr. Manning then commented on the importance of key performance indicators.

119 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed several assessments, growth and benchmarks.

120 The Board thanked Mr. Brown.

121 IV. CONSENT AGENDA

122 A. Minutes

123 1. October 20, 2016

124 B. Unanticipated General Fund Revenue

125 \$50.00 – Fidelity Charitable Grant

126 \$2437.30 - O'Connor Portraiture Inc.

127 C. Budget Transfers

128 **Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma made a Motion to accept the Consent Agenda items A. 1. Minutes**
 129 **October 20th 2016, B. Unanticipated General Fund Revenue \$50.00- Fidelity Charitable**
 130 **Grant, \$2437.30- O'Connor Portraiture Inc. and C. Budget Transfers. Ms. Galen**
 131 **Tremblay seconded the Motion. 4 in favor, Motion passed. Mr. Paul Prescott abstained.**

132 V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

133 A. FY'17 1st Quarter Report

134 Mr. Steel noted that they are in good financial shape for the year at this time.

135 He then discussed that a surplus is projected for the Amherst School District as of September 30,
 136 2016 (\$118,800 ASD Quarterly Report FY' 17 Agenda Packet 11 17 16 pg. 28).

137 He then discussed that a projected deficit in Transportation is offset by projected savings in
 138 Regular Education Programs. He added that the deficit balance in Special Education Programs
 139 has been corrected and was due to misclassified paraprofessionals.

140 He then continued by added that factors that could impact projections as the year continues
 141 include the following:

- 142 Staff changes
- 143 Health and dental insurance qualifying events
- 144 Changes in Special Education enrollment or need
- 145 Winter snow conditions (plowing/snow days)

146

147 B. FY'18 ASD Budget – Draft 1

148 Mr. Steel noted that the FY' 18 ASD Budget is up 4.33%. He added that a lot of the increase is
 149 made up of fixed costs. He then discussed the Non-Discretionary items and the Discretionary
 150 items.

151 He then discussed the subcategories of Non-Discretionary items of Miscellaneous, Debt,
 152 Utilities, Food Service, Transportation, SAU, Professional Services, Tuition, NHRS, and Health
 153 Insurance. He added that this amount totals \$891, 154.

154 He then discussed the subcategories of Discretionary items of Building and Grounds, OT/ BCBA
 155 Change, Equipment, Supplies, AMS Nursing Position, Science Textbooks, a New Coaching
 156 Position, and other increases and decreases.

157 Ms. Bethany Bernasconi and Ms. Landwehrle then discussed their concern for the coaching
 158 program.

159 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the challenges of the coaches. She then discussed that they are
 160 really Curriculum Specialists, and would need three for next year. She added the importance of
 161 their key role and want to create the most optimal conditions for them to help students.

162 She then discussed the reasons for the added new coaching position in the FY' 18 Budget. She
163 added that she is happy to come back to the Board for greater discussion.

164 Ms. Tremblay asked about the instructional coaches this year.

165 Ms. Bernasconi then discussed the importance for the new coaching position.

166 Mr. Steel then discussed the enrollment.

167 He then discussed what is not included in the FY'18 Budget including: world language, raises for
168 teachers and non-union salary increases.

169 He added that this will now go through the ASB Ways and Means Committee for further review.

170 The Board thanked Mr. Steel.

171 Mr. Prescott commented on the fixed costs and added that he is concerned.

172 Mr. Steel then discussed what they could do to reduce the Budget.

173 Discussion ensued.

174 Mr. Steel then discussed reducing the amount of teachers, reducing the amount of busses, and
175 reducing athletics.

176 Ms. Kuzsma then suggested consolidating bus stops.

177 Mr. Manning then asked about the health care rate increase.

178 Mr. Steel then discussed the factors involving the health care increase.

179 Ms. Tremblay asked about the NHRS increase.

180 Mr. Steel then discussed the increase in tuition.

181 Mr. Manning then asked what is non-essential to the Budget.

182 Superintendent Warburton discussed that many of the districts across the State are having these
183 challenges. He added that they need to regroup and have greater discussion.

184 Mr. Prescott discussed that they have to decide what kind of district they want to be and added
185 that some tough decisions have to be made.

186 Mr. Steel then discussed setting aside funds and the legal issues involved.

187 Mr. Warburton noted that they have a lot of contemplating to do and collaboration with the ASD
188 Ways and Means Committee.

189 C. Math Curriculum

190 Ms. Christine Landwehrle then discussed the Summer Math Curriculum Development.

191 She then discussed the reasons for starting this work including, starting year 5 with Math in
192 Focus, ensuring a tighter alignment to CCSS, shifting focus to Enduring Understandings and

193 Essential Questions (rather than covering content) - Using researched based UbD Approach,
194 aligning performance assessments to our units, exploring grade band competencies and merging
195 our expertise to broaden our use of resources.

196 She then discussed the goals for the summer institute.

197 She then reviewed the agenda and the amount of work that needed to get done.

198 Ms. Landwehrle then reviewed the Math Curriculum Framework.

199 She then showed the Board what the framework looks like in One Note.

200 She then asked the Board if they have any questions.

201 Ms. Facey asked about the comfort level helping the new teachers understand Math in Focus.

202 Ms. Landwehrle noted the lack of alignment of Math in Focus and standards. She then gave the
203 Board an example of 3rd grade math.

204 She noted that this math curriculum is tightly aligned to standards. She added that it might need
205 some minor adjustments.

206 She added that she will be back next month for Board approval.

207 The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle.

208 VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

209 VII. INFORMATIONAL

210 A. Upper Wilkins Fence Update

211 Mr. Steel discussed that he had met with Mr. Craig Fraley, Director of Amherst Recreation
212 Department and others to discuss the need for an Upper Wilkins Fence. He then added that they
213 have decided that it would be a chain link fence, with boulders and shrubbery.

214 The Board thanked Mr. Steel.

215 B. ESSA and Data Dashboard Update

216 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the ESSA: Every Student Succeeds Act (the act that replaced the
217 No Child Left Behind act).

218 She then discussed the improvement of accountability systems and what ESSA requires. She
219 then discussed the 5 separate measures of: academic achievement using annual assessments in
220 ELA and math, four year graduation rate for high schools, additional academic measure for
221 elementary schools (can be a measure of student growth), progress for English language learners
222 and school quality or student success.

223 She then discussed the Levels of Reporting, Level 1- Level 3. She noted that some are State
224 required and State supported.

225 She then added that the State has decided on a Data Dashboard, but has yet to decide on the
226 content.

227 Mr. Manning asked about data driven schools.

228 Ms. Bernasconi noted that in her experience, ASD uses a great deal of data.

229 Discussion ensued.

230 The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle.

231 C. Quarterly Facilities Update

232 Mr. Steel then reviewed the Quarterly Update from Mr. John Robichaud, Director of Buildings
233 and Grounds. He noted that a lot of the public might not know what repairs have been made to
234 the buildings. He then noted what was repaired.

235 AMS

236 Repaired multiple HVAC Failures including unit ventilators and rooftops for gym

237 Converted parking lot lights from 1000W Metal halide bulbs to 125watt LED

238 Re-configured gym hallway picture display

239 Replaced shattered window in computer lab

240 Repaired parking lot drainage

241 Parking lot line striping

242 Maintenance, repairs and upgrades to maker space equipment

243 Repaired all c-3 cleaning carts

244 Completed facility survey

245 Clark

246 Repaired wheelchair lift

247 Refurbished 2 bathrooms

248 New partitions in student bathrooms

249 Added handicapped ramps in back of building

250 New sidewalk to parent drop off

251 Repaired storm drain in front of school

252 Repaired "sticking" exit doors at back of building"

253 Repaired roof drains

254 Plumbing drain issues

255 Wilkins

256 Repaired siding and skirting on portables

257 Refurbished 3rd and 4th grade bathrooms

258 Removed multiple trees on playground

259 Completed facility survey

260 VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

261 Mr. John Glover, Amherst NH, commented on ways to allow students to do more rigorous math
262 work

263 Ms. Landwehrle noted that teachers have the Math in Focus tools and can allow students to go
264 further if they so choose.

265 She then discussed the importance of Performance Tasks. She then noted that they prioritized
266 content areas.

267 Mr. Frank Brown then commented that there is no Science on the NH State Data Dashboard. He
268 then suggested Ms. Landwehrle contact the State for an inquiry.

269 The Board thanked Mr. Glover and Mr. Brown for their comments.

270 IX. ACTION ITEM

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

272 **Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma made a Motion to enter into Non-Public Session RSA 91-A: 3 II. (a)**
273 **(b) and (c) at 8:36pm to discuss personnel and student matters. Mr. Jim Manning seconded**
274 **the Motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

275 Chair Amy Facey called a Roll Call:

276 Tremblay- Yes, Kuzsma-Yes, Facey-Yes, Manning-Yes, and Prescott-Yes

277 **At 9:18 p.m. Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma made a Motion to exit Non-Public Session. Mr. Jim**
278 **Manning seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

279 Chair Amy Facey called a Roll Call:

280 Tremblay- Yes, Kuzsma-Yes, Facey-Yes, Manning-Yes, and Prescott-Yes

281 XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

282 Chair Amy Facey noted the following future agenda items:

- 283 • NWEA Presentation
- 284 • Extension/Intervention

- 285 • 10 Year Enrollment Data
286 • Draft #2 of FY' 18 Budget

287 XII. REVIEW OF MEETING/ADJOURN

288 **At 9:20 p.m. Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma made a Motion to adjourn. Mr. Jim Manning**
289 **seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**