

1 Amherst School District

2 Thursday, May 18, 2017

3 Meeting Minutes

4 Attendees:

5 Administrative Team: Peter Warburton- Superintendent, Adam Steel- Business Administrator,
6 Gerry St. Amand- Principal Clark/Wilkins, Porter Dodge-Principal AMS, Christine Landwehrle-
7 Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, and Mary Ireland- First Grade Teacher
8 Wilkins School.

9 Amherst School Board: - Galen Tremblay- Chair, Elizabeth Kuzsma- Vice Chair, John Glover-
10 Secretary (arrived at 6:30pm) Paul Prescott and Teri Behm (arrived at 6:30pm)

11 Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

12 Public: AMS Theater Group, Jennifer Fischera- Director, Lion King Jr., Kim Whitehouse- Music
13 Director, Lion King Jr., Sharon April- Producer-Lion King Jr., Maggie McCabe- Amherst, NH,
14 Maribel Gibson- Amherst NH, and community members.

15 I. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Galen Tremblay

16 **Chair Ms. Galen Tremblay called the Meeting to order at 6:06 PM.**

17 II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

18 A. AMS Theater Club performance from The Lion King, Jr.

19 She then noted that the Amherst Middle School Theater Group is here to perform a scene from
20 Lion King Jr.

21 Superintendent Warburton welcomed the AMS Group and public and added that this is being
22 Livestreamed.

23 The students then did several outstanding scenes from the AMS play The Lion King Jr.

24 Principal Dodge noted that the students did a wonderful job and it was unbelievable.

25 The Board thanked the students and added that they did an excellent job.

26 Mr. Prescott asked how many of the students were in the 8th grade. He then asked if they would
27 be doing Theater when they attend Souhegan HS.

28 Many of the students replied, yes.

29 Superintendent Warburton added that the students were very impressive.

30 B. Principals' reports

31 Principal Dodge discussed that the annual seventh and eighth grade choral concert was held on
32 May 10th at 7PM in the cafeteria to a packed house.

33 He then added that the Graduation is Monday, June 12th. He then discussed seating for the
34 graduation.

35 Principal St. Amand noted that ninety-three children are currently registered for Kindergarten for
36 the upcoming school year. He anticipates approximately 106 students in total.

37 Mr. Dodge then thanked the PTA for their generous donation of \$5,000 to use for purchasing
38 swings, and cutting out and creating the volleyball court area in the front of the school.

39 The Board thanked Principal Dodge and Principal St. Amand.

40 III. PUBLIC COMMENT

41 Ms. Maggie McCabe asked if PACE was criterion reference.

42 Ms. Maribel Gibson, Amherst NH, discussed that she was a teacher for 29 years and is a
43 substitute at the Wilkins School. She asked if the Board would entertain the possibility of raising
44 money for Heifer International, a worldwide program that trains people how to farm. She added
45 that it has been in existence for over 40 years and is not religion based. She noted that she is
46 targeting the middle school and the teachers would not be impacted. She then further discussed
47 how the program works.

48 The Board thanked Ms. McCabe and Ms. Gibson for their comments.

49 IV. CONSENT AGENDA

50 A. Minutes

51 1. April 20, 2017

52 B. Treasurer's Report

53 2. March 2017

54 C. Budget Transfer

55 1. TSFR 2017 008

56 2. TSFR 2017 009

57 3. TSFR 2017 010

58 4. TSFR 2017 011

59 D. Unanticipated Revenue

60 1. \$837.20 from Box Tops for Education. (Wilkins' Student Activity Fund)

61 2. \$352.83 from Uno Restaurant LLC to support the AMS Lacrosse Team.
62 (Student Activity Fund)

63 E. Title I Reallocation Grants

64 F. Retirement Letters

65 **Mr. Paul Prescott made a Motion to accept the Consent Agenda items A. Minutes 1. April**
 66 **20, 2017, Treasurer's Report 2. March 2017, C. Budget Transfer 1. TSFR 2017 008, 2.**
 67 **TSFR 2017 009, 3. TSFR 2017 010, 4. TSFR 2017 011, D. Unanticipated Revenue 1. \$837.20**
 68 **from Box Tops for Education. (Wilkins' Student Activity Fund) 2. \$352.83 from Uno**
 69 **Restaurant LLC to support the AMS Lacrosse Team. (Student Activity Fund), E. Title I**
 70 **Reallocation Grants and F. Retirement Letters. Mr. John Glover seconded the Motion. The**
 71 **vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

72 V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

73 A. Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE)

74 Ms. Christine Landwehrle, Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, then
 75 discussed Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE).

76 She noted that she would be looking for approval at the next Board Meeting to become a Tier 1
 77 district.

78 Mr. Glover asked if PACE applied to the elementary school.

79 Ms. Landwehrle replied, that next year they would be implementing PACE.

80 She noted that she wanted to start with the big picture of PACE. She added that it was more at
 81 the application level and really understanding the knowledge and not just memorizing facts.
 82 Students are learning to think critically and looking at 21st century skills. She emphasized that
 83 students need to be ready.

84 Ms. Landwehrle added that PACE is the first-in-the-nation alternative accountability system. She
 85 noted that there is a reduced level of standardized testing along with locally developed common
 86 performance assessments such as Smarter Balanced/SAT given once in elementary school, once
 87 in middle school and once in high school (three grades instead of seven).

88 She added that in all other years, administration of common (State wide) and local performance
 89 assessments developed by the districts (collaboratively) were validated at the state level.

90 Mr. Glover asked why the State looks at these assessments.

91 Ms. Landwehrle replied, the State reviews the tests and give feedback. It depends on the year and
 92 this year they have looked at every one of the tests.

93 Mr. Glover asked who has ultimate control.

94 Ms. Landwehrle replied, ultimately the District has control. She then noted that she will show the
 95 Board how they create the assessment maps.

96 Ms. Landwehrle noted that the NH DOE will not remove a District unless there are significant
 97 concerns. She added that she believes that they do have more control being a PACE district.

98 She then reviewed what PACE replaces in English Language Arts, Math and Science. She added
99 that the students K-2 results does not get submitted and is all local so that they get used to taking
100 the assessments. She then went over each grade 3-12 and what assessment they will be doing.

101 Mr. Glover commented that a lot of people in Amherst are data driven.

102 Mr. Glover then asked about the quality of data.

103 Ms. Landwehrle noted that they are assessing students at a deeper level and it is one score at the
104 end of the year.

105 Mr. Glover asked about the long term retention for the students.

106 Ms. Landwehrle replied that students learn throughout the assessment and remember the
107 learning. She then gave the Board an example of a project noting the theories students have
108 learned. She added that it is deeper learning that students can build on, not remembering facts but
109 building on the important pieces. She added that there are different types of writing as well.

110 She then reviewed the Tier 1 PACE districts and the implementing Districts.

111 2014-2015-Epping, Rochester, Sanborn Regional and Souhegan

112 2015-2016-Epping, Rochester, Sanborn Regional, Souhegan, Concord, Monroe, Pittsfield and
113 Seacoast Charter.

114 2016-2017- Epping, Rochester, Sanborn Regional, Souhegan, Concord, Monroe, Pittsfield,
115 Seacoast Charter, VLACs, and the White Mountains School Districts.

116 Ms. Landwehrle reviewed the reasons why the move to PACE including integration of
117 assessments into students' day-to-day work, emphasis on meaningful content/ deep student
118 engagement, involvement of educators in designing and implementing the accountability system,
119 supports approaches to instruction, learning, and assessment that are competency based and
120 professional development and support from the NH DOE for local districts involved in this
121 initiative.

122 CI free Professional development at Tier 1.

123 Ms. Behm then reviewed the benefits and noted that it is fiscally responsible.

124 Mr. Prescott also added his approval for PACE.

125 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed Performance Assessment as a central component of NH PACE.
126 She discussed that it is local and common (across multiple districts) performance assessments
127 tied to grade and course competencies. She added that local assessments are used to determine
128 student competency (annual determination). Also, it is common (across multiple districts).
129 Assessments are developed collaboratively and used to ensure comparability.

130 She then reviewed Smarter Balanced/SAT in select grades.

131 Ms. Landwehrle then showed the Grade 6 Draft Science Assessment Map. She added that
132 assessment maps show the alignment of local assessments to each competency and standard.
133 Student scores from assessments on each map become the district level competency scores. The
134 PACE annual determination score is reported just as SBAC is reported and is comparable. And,
135 in addition to the local assessments students take, students will also be taking NWEA at least two
136 times a year.

137 She then discussed how the quality of assessments is assured in PACE, including professional
138 learning and collaboration, Content Area Leads, The Center for Assessment Technical Review
139 (for common tasks), and the New Hampshire DOE Review.

140 She also discussed the PACE Districts ELA, percent proficient by grade. She added that the
141 grade 3 is in line with grade 4.

142 Mr. Glover asked about the date of the data.

143 Ms. Landwehrle the reviewed PACE Districts Math, percent proficient by grade.

144 She noted that Ms. Carla Evans is doing some doctoral work and has done research on the
145 positive effects of PACE on 8th grade math achievement starting in year 2. She added some
146 significant points, 1. Low performance in the first year, although PACE was not approved until
147 March 2015 and 2. There were positive effects of the PACE pilot in the second year.

148 Mr. Glover asked about the asterisk.

149 Ms. Landwehrle replied that it was showing their first year in PACE.

150 She also reviewed the positive effect for students with disabilities.

151 Mr. Prescott commented on the positive effects of PACE on students with disabilities.

152 Superintendent Warburton also added his support.

153 Ms. Behm added that it also gives the student much needed confidence.

154 Ms. Landwehrle commented that it is closing the gap between IEP students and non-IEP
155 students.

156 Principal St. Amand asked about the total student population size for this study.

157 Ms. Landwehrle replied, she is unsure but will get that information for him.

158 Mr. St. Amand added that there could be accommodations for those that needed it.

159 Ms. Landwehrle closed with conclusions.

160 Ms. Behm asked if she was surveying teachers for comments.

161 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that they had a teacher panel and teacher centered classroom to a
162 student centered classroom.

163 Ms. Behm asked if a teacher could come and briefly talk about it. She added that it is her request.

- 164 Mr. Glover asked about pre-K and if there will be some PACE influence there.
- 165 Ms. Landwehrle noted that Ms. Kim Ballantyne has done some work and would more than likely
166 be happy to answer any questions that the Board has.
- 167 Mr. Glover then asked about the funding for PACE.
- 168 Ms. Landwehrle replied that it is charitable foundations that have donated funds.
- 169 Mr. Glover asked about the performance charts.
- 170 Ms. Landwehrle noted that there are different cohorts and that they do not have enough data.
- 171 Mr. Glover asked if there was a plan to shape the percent of students that are reaching
172 proficiency.
- 173 He then commented on expanding rubrics and asked about individualized learning.
- 174 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the fluidity of meeting standards and there is a school in
175 Manchester, NH that does not adhere to grade levels K-2.
- 176 Mr. Glover commented on the public comparing districts, and that it would be interesting to see
177 how we are performing in comparing to other PACE districts.
- 178 He also noted that besides STEM there is STEAM, and it should always be included.
- 179 The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle.
- 180 Ms. McCabe commented on NWEA that it is on a bell curve. She noted that she has a problem
181 with SBAC/ PACE being criterion based. She then noted that they need more data points. She
182 added that there is nothing new in performance based assessments and it is easier now with new
183 technology. She then reviewed her belief in the educational pendulum. She noted that she is
184 unconvinced.
- 185 Ms. Mary Ireland, 1st grade teacher at Wilkins School, added that the first graders are building
186 personal narratives. She noted that teachers are thrilled and invited the Board to come see the
187 good work the first graders are doing.
- 188 Principal St. Amand noted that the Writing Festival at Wilkins is open next Wednesday and
189 Thursday (5/ 24 and 5/25) from 8 to 8.
- 190 VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS
191
- 192 VII. INFORMATIONAL
- 193 A. ASD FY'17 April Projection
- 194 Mr. Adam Steel, Business Administrator, commented that a net surplus of approximately
195 \$18,000 is projected for the Amherst School District as of April 30, 2017.

196 He then discussed the Functional areas showing a deficit include: Local Revenue due to lower
197 than anticipated tuition and services provided to Mont Vernon School District, Special Education
198 Programs due to personnel costs, School Board relating to legal and actuarial services, and
199 Special Education Transportation expenses for the remainder of the year are unclear and
200 purchase orders have been unencumbered at this time.

201 Functional areas showing a surplus include: State Revenue due to higher than anticipated
202 Catastrophic Aid, Regular Education Programs due to changes in staffing and benefit elections
203 since budget development, School Administrative Services due to changes in staffing and benefit
204 elections since budget development and savings from copier replacement, and Support Services-
205 Technology due to changes in benefit elections since budget development.

206 The Board thanked Mr. Steel.

207 B. Clark-Wilkins Guidance Program Pilot

208 Principal St. Amand then gave the Board an update on a social/emotional learning program
209 called Second Step at Clark/Wilkins.

210 He then discussed that Ms. Jane Lindsey, guidance counselor at Clark School has been utilizing
211 the Second Step program with preschool, Kindergarten, and, at one time, first grade classes for at
212 least four years.

213 He added that one Second Step kit for each of the four grade levels at Wilkins School arrived in
214 April and the counselors have been reviewing the kits amongst themselves and with several
215 teachers since that time.

216 A committee comprised of administrators, counselors and special education staff from CW,
217 AMS, MV and the SAU has met several times over the year to discuss the need for a “social-
218 emotional” curriculum at the elementary and middle school levels.

219 Discussion ensued.

220 Ms. Kuzsma asked if the program teaches students how to handle if others are not nice to them.

221 Principal St. Amand replied, yes, there is a piece to it.

222 Ms. Behm asked if the parents will know about it.

223 Principal St. Amand replied, yes, they can do something with the PTA.

224 The Board thanked Principal St. Amand.

225 C. Preliminary Indoor Air Quality Test Results (Clark, Wilkins, AMS)

226 Mr. Steel added that the information that is included in agenda packet.

227 He added that the HVAC is old and antiquated and that it poses a liability in the future. It is
228 something that needs to be addressed. He added that he visited Plymouth SD and that they track
229 sick days combined with air quality and that is where they need to be headed.

- 230 Mr. Glover asked if they have received any complaints.
- 231 Mr. Steel replied that he is unsure but believes there are issues.
- 232 Mr. Glover commented that he believes that the findings are not clear. He then noted that it is
233 hard to find the facts that relate to the District.
- 234 Mr. Steel noted that indoor air quality is highly volatile and that there are no standards for indoor
235 air quality. He then further discussed the differences and that there are no firm standards.
- 236 He added that it all have to be taken into context.
- 237 Ms. Behm commented at the larger look at indoor air quality.
- 238 Mr. Steel commented on HVAC systems.
- 239 Mr. Glover asked about the amount of cost for each building.
- 240 Mr. Steel replied that he would get back to him.
- 241 The Board thanked Mr. Steel.
- 242 VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT
- 243 *Moved to the end of V. Presentations and Reports*
- 244 X. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A: 3 II. (a) (b) (c)
- 245 A. Personnel
- 246 **Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma made a Motion to enter into Non-Public Session RSA 91-A: 3 II. (a)**
247 **(b) (c) at 8:50 pm. Mr. Paul Prescott seconded the Motion.**
- 248 **Chair Galen Tremblay called a Roll Call: Prescott-Yes, Behm-Yes, Kuzsma-Yes,**
249 **Tremblay-Yes, and Glover-Yes.**
- 250 **Entered nonpublic session at 8:55 pm.**
- 251 Minute Taker: John Glover
- 252 **Other persons present during nonpublic session:** Peter Warburton, Superintendent, Porter
253 Dodge, AMS Principal, and Gerry St. Amand, Clark-Wilkins Principal
- 254 **Discussion:** Personnel matters
- 255 **A motion was made to exit nonpublic session by Paul Prescott, seconded by Beth Kuzsma.**
- 256 **Chair Galen Tremblay called a Roll Call: Prescott-Yes, Behm-Yes, Kuzsma-Yes,**
257 **Tremblay-Yes, and Glover-Yes.**
- 258 **At 9:56 pm the Board resumed public session.**
- 259 **Motions made in public session:**

260 **Paul Prescott moved to accept the nomination of Christopher Whitney, Clark-Wilkins**
261 **Grade 3 Teacher and Alejandra Costas Armada, Amherst Middle School World Language**
262 **Teacher. Beth Kuzsma seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

263 **Beth Kuzsma moved to accept the extended leave of absence for a middle school teacher.**
264 **Paul Prescott seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

265 **Paul Prescott moved and Beth Kuzsma seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed**
266 **unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:57 pm.**

267 XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

268 Chair Ms. Galen Tremblay noted the following future agenda items:

- 269 • Board Approval of PACE
270 • Heifer International
271 • NWEA Results
272 • PACE Video