

1 Amherst School Board

2 Thursday, June 15, 2017

3 Meeting Minutes

4 Attendees:

5 Administrative Team: Peter Warburton- Superintendent, Gerry St. Amand- Principal Clark/Wilkins,  
6 Christine Landwehrle- Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, Bethany Bernasconi- Dean  
7 of Instruction AMS, Lisa Femia-Hou- Dean of Students AMS, Grant Dustin- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science/Math  
8 Teacher AMS, Lauren DiGennaro- Special Education Teacher AMS, Deb Henricks- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social  
9 Studies Teacher AMS, and Vicky Leknes- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Teacher AMS.

10 Amherst School Board: - Galen Tremblay- Chair, Elizabeth Kuzsma- Vice Chair, John Glover- Secretary,  
11 Paul Prescott and Terri Behm (arrived 6:20pm)

12 Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

13 Public: Nikki Fraley- Associate Principal (New hire), Kathleen Murphy-Associate Assistant Principal  
14 (New hire), Maggie McCabe, Amherst NH and community members.

15 **PUBLIC HEARING**

16 I. CALL TO ORDER- Chair Galen Tremblay

17 **Chair Ms. Galen Tremblay opened the Public Hearing at 6:10 PM.**

18 She then noted that it is to accept a donation from the Amherst PTA in the amount of \$5,000 for  
19 playground enhancements at AMS.

20 She then asked the public for comments.

21 The public had no comments.

22 II. TO ACCEPT DONATION FROM THE AMHERST PTA IN THE AMOUNT OF  
23 \$5,000 FOR PLAYGROUND ENHANCEMENTS AT THE AMHERST MIDDLE  
24 SCHOOL. (RSA 198:20-b)

25 **Mr. Paul Prescott motioned to accept the Donation from the Amherst PTA in the amount of \$5,000**  
26 **for playground enhancements at the Amherst Middle School. Mr. John Glover seconded the**  
27 **Motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

28 Ms. Bethany Bernasconi, Dean of Instruction, thanked the Amherst PTA for their generous donation and  
29 added that it will promote physical activity and beautify the playground.

30 **III. CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING**

31 **Ms. Galen Tremblay closed the Public Hearing at 6:11 PM.**

32 **REGULAR MEETING**

33 I. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Galen Tremblay

34 **Chair Ms. Galen Tremblay called the Meeting to order at 6:11 PM.**

35 II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

36 Superintendent Warburton welcomed all attendees and then introduced Ms. Bethany Bernasconi, Dean of  
37 Instruction at AMS and Ms. Lisa Femia- Hou, as Dean of Students at AMS.

38 He then added that with Principal St. Amand and Assistant Principal Ms. Janet Davis retiring at the end of  
39 FY 18, they have hired Ms. Nikki Fraley as Associate Principal and Ms. Kathleen Murphy as Associate  
40 Assistant Principal. He then noted that they had a really good in depth process for hiring and highlighted  
41 sustainable leadership.

42 He welcomed them on board and added that they are really happy to have them.

43 Ms. Fraley and Ms. Murphy thanked the Board and Superintendent Warburton.

44 A. Principals' reports

45 1. Clark-Wilkins- 1st grade AIMS web results

46 Principal St. Amand discussed enrollment for Kindergarten.

47 He added as part of our Kindergarten screening process, approximately twenty of the incoming  
48 Kindergarten students have been invited to join us for the "early start" program that will be housed at  
49 Clark School over the summer, during the same time frame as Extended School Year programming. The  
50 early start program for incoming Kindergarten students will be funded through our Title One Grant. There  
51 will be two, three-week sessions, with Ms. Donna Niland teaching one of the sessions and Ms. Brittney  
52 Doyle teaching the other session.

53 He then noted that he would like to discuss the Aims web assessment and the literacy interventionists for  
54 the students that finished first grade. He noted that they were concerned at the beginning of the year with  
55 the first grade's reading scores. He added that they screened every single first grader. It is a valuable  
56 screening tool for the younger grades and these results are attributed to instruction.

57 He added that they will be reassessed in the beginning of second grade.

58 Ms. Christine Landwehrle, Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, added that the  
59 interventionists really like aims web. The group was carefully monitored and the students made  
60 significant growth this year.

61 She added that they will keep the Board informed with that group.

62 Mr. Glover asked about the amount of assessments and if it was draining resources.

63 Ms. Landwehrle replied that they really looked at what tools to use and it is the second year using the  
64 NWEA. She added that added that they don't want to over test. The Aims web assessment is a quick  
65 screening tool, 3-5 min, depending on which screenings they give.

66 Ms. Kuzsma asked if there is a Math version of Aims Web.

67 Ms. Landwehrle replied, yes.

68 She added that they need to do more analysis to find the best assessment.

69 Ms. Kuzsma asked if they can look at student information and project their results on the NWEA.

70 Ms. Femia-Hou then discussed how AIMS web might work better with other students.

71 Mr. Glover asked if MV is assessed the same way.

72 Ms. Landwehrle replied that is the goal, however, they need to dig deeply and decide what the best plan  
73 is.

74 Mr. Prescott commented that the schools have been highly active and how much he enjoyed all the  
75 talented students in the AMS Chorus. He noted that Mr. Larry Ballard, (AMS Chorus Teacher), should be  
76 commended. He added that he was impressed by the students.

77 Superintendent Warburton added that it was nice to see and he is very proud of all the students.

78 Ms. Bethany Bernasconi, Dean of Instruction at AMS, added that there has been some great work  
79 recently, such as the Grading and Reporting Committee, hiring of new positions, new renovations, and  
80 other repairs.

81 She then discussed the Life Skills program, will begin on June 19 and run through the summer.

82 The Board thanked Principal St. Amand, Ms. Landwehrle, and Ms. Bernasconi.

### 83 III. PUBLIC COMMENT

84 No Public Comment

### 85 IV. CONSENT AGENDA

#### 86 A. Minutes

87 1. May 18, 2017

#### 88 B. Treasurer's Report

89 1. April 2017

#### 90 C. Budget Transfer

91 1. TSFR 2017 012

#### 92 D. Unanticipated Revenue

93 1. \$5,000.00 donation from the Amherst PTA to the Amherst Middle School for  
94 playground enhancements. (Student Activity Fund)

95 2. \$1,810.00 donation from the Amherst Junior Women's Club. (AMS Student Activity  
96 Fund)

97 3. \$1,000.00 donation from The Merck Foundation to support the AMS Lacrosse Team.  
98 (Student Activity Fund)

99 4. \$1,205.83 donation from the Amherst Junior Women's Club. (Clark School Student  
100 Activity Fund)

101 5. \$3,250.00 donation from the Amherst Junior Women's Club. (Wilkins School Student  
102 Activity Fund)

103 6. \$3,185.21 donation from the Amherst Junior Women's Club. (Wilkins School Student  
104 Activity Fund)

105 **Mr. Paul Prescott motioned to accept the Consent Agenda Items A. Minutes 1. May 18, 2017, B.**  
 106 **Treasurer's Report 1. April 2017, and C. Budget Transfer 1. TSFR 2017 012. Ms. Terri Behm**  
 107 **seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

108 Mr. Glover asked about the Budget Transfer.

109 Ms. Tremblay noted that it is on page 25 of the Agenda Packet.

110 **Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma motioned to accept the Consent Agenda items D. Unanticipated Revenue, 1.**  
 111 **\$5,000.00 donation from the Amherst PTA to the Amherst Middle School for playground**  
 112 **enhancements. (Student Activity Fund), 2. \$1,810.00 donation from the Amherst Junior Women's**  
 113 **Club. (AMS Student Activity Fund), 3. \$1,000.00 donation from The Merck Foundation to support**  
 114 **the AMS Lacrosse Team. (Student Activity Fund) 4. \$1,205.83 donation from the Amherst Junior**  
 115 **Women's Club. (Clark School Student Activity Fund), 5. \$3,250.00 donation from the Amherst**  
 116 **Junior Women's Club. (Wilkins School Student Activity Fund), and 6. \$3,185.21 donation from the**  
 117 **Amherst Junior Women's Club. (Wilkins School Student Activity Fund). Mr. John Glover**  
 118 **seconded the Motion. The vote passed unanimously.**

119 Chair Galen Tremblay then read each donation aloud.

120 She then thanked the generous donors.

## 121 V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

### 122 A. Middle School (6-8) Science Textbook

123 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that she and Ms. Bernasconi, have worked hard working on a Pilot process.

124 She then discussed how they developed and implemented science curriculum aligned to standards and  
 125 screened all possible resources – fall 2016

126 She noted that they had narrowed down to two resources to pilot: Pearson Interactive Science and HMH  
 127 Science Dimensions.

128 Ms. Landwehrle discussed the strengths of the HMH Resource as: Competency and standards alignment  
 129 to assessments, Performance tasks, Questions at a DOK (Depth of Knowledge) 3 or 4, Balance of content  
 130 and tasks, Alignment NGSS and SAU 39 curriculum, Meaningful and high quality visuals (content), Math  
 131 connections, Communication-written and verbal, Interactive, Science notebook, Connections-real  
 132 word/other content areas, Integrated labs, 3 hole punched pages and includes a Spanish glossary.

133 She noted the teachers came up with the strengths and that every question is labeled as alignment to the  
 134 standards.

135 She remarked that this resource is built with the assessment work that they are already doing. That was a  
 136 huge piece and wonderful for the teachers.

137 Ms. Behm asked about the questions.

138 Ms. Bernasconi replied that, it is asking kids to apply information with real world connections in a real  
 139 setting.

140 Ms. Landwehrle added that it is in tight alignment to the standards and curriculum. They are consumable  
 141 books and the students can write in them.

- 142 Ms. Behm asked about the book and if it is customizable.
- 143 Ms. Landwehrle discussed the units and that the book has perforated pages.
- 144 Ms. Bernasconi commented that you really need a resource that aligns with the standards and it was great  
145 to do that. It allows the students to actively process the information in important ways that will benefit  
146 their education.
- 147 Ms. Landwehrle also added that the glossy pages are pretty but hard to write in. The quality of the  
148 graphics are there in the HMH resource. She then noted that the book encourages open ended discussion  
149 and students are engaging with the text. She added that there is a lot of real world connections.
- 150 Ms. Bernasconi discussed the books.
- 151 Ms. Landwehrle added that students can use them for a few months then get a new book. The teachers  
152 were also excited about HMH field trips powered by Google Expeditions.
- 153 (<http://www.hmhco.com/classroom/classroomsolutions/digital-and-mobile-learning/ed>)
- 154 She discussed that it is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards, includes activity-led learning,  
155 adds Engineering and STEM as an essential part of the curriculum, uses Performance-Based assessment,  
156 has tight alignment of assessments to competencies and standards, has professional learning built into the  
157 resources and offers a digital learning experience.
- 158 She then noted that funding was already placed in the Budget.
- 159 Mr. Glover asked if there were weaknesses to the HMH book.
- 160 Ms. Bernasconi discussed that they wanted to see more supports and it was not on the website yet.
- 161 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that they did have graph paper in the book but have removed it. She added that  
162 it might be a challenge for students with a visual impairment.
- 163 Mr. Prescott suggested an audio component.
- 164 Ms. Bernasconi replied, yes, they do have a text to speech option.
- 165 Mr. Prescott commented that it will be great for students with a learning disability.
- 166 Discussion ensued.
- 167 Ms. Bernasconi commented that it was a lot of work with the pilot program but it was well worth it.
- 168 Ms. Tremblay asked if there will be updates.
- 169 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that if there are any changes that are made they will get new books the next  
170 year. If there is an error, they will fix the online component immediately and get notified.
- 171 Mr. Glover asked about the virtual field trip.
- 172 Ms. Landwehrle noted that they will be able to come and give the Board a presentation on the virtual field  
173 trip.
- 174 Superintendent Warburton commented that it is a great resource for the students.

175 Mr. Prescott mentioned that it does not need approval but support. He added that the teachers and  
176 administrators have done a wonderful job.

177 Ms. Behm and Mr. Glover also noted their support.

178 Superintendent Warburton added that the MV Board also added their support as well.

179 B. Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE) - AMS Staff Sharing

180 Ms. Bernasconi introduced Mr. Grant Dustin- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science/Math Teacher AMS, Ms. Lauren  
181 DiGennaro- Special Education Teacher AMS, Ms. Deb Henricks- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Teacher AMS,  
182 and Ms. Vicky Leknes- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Teacher AMS.

183 She then thanked the teachers so much for coming to talk about what is happening in the classrooms.

184 Mr. Warburton asked the teachers if they are familiar with the Board Members.

185 Ms. Bernasconi noted that some of the teachers are on different committees.

186 Mr. Dustin noted that the administration is bringing great things to AMS. He added that he has learned a  
187 lot about PACE and all of the great things that it can do for the students. He added that Ms. Bernasconi  
188 and Ms. Landwehrle have been integral with the changes. He added with PACE it is a more authentic  
189 assessment and has added opportunities. He noted that the students are engaged in the projects and are in  
190 line with the assessments.

191 Ms. Henricks discussed a unit based on culture. She also discussed the different units and how interesting  
192 they are. She added that there is so much more to the PACE work.

193 Ms. DiGennaro discussed that she works with a wide range of learners. She discussed excitement in the  
194 students with performance tasks. She noted that there is a flexibility to the learning.

195 Ms. Leknes discussed that with PACE work the students were able to use science and apply math  
196 concepts. It was not just a test, but can help make conclusions with science topics.

197 Ms. Henricks then discussed that there are ways to teach and remediate and what part of the standards the  
198 student missed.

199 Ms. DiGennaro commented that students are embracing the rubrics.

200 Ms. Leknes added that sometimes the students have so much fun that they forget that they are taking tests.

201 Ms. DiGennaro added that there is continual reflection.

202 Ms. Bernasconi commented that, yes, it is deep work that requires a lot of time. She added that it is what  
203 learning should be without rote memorization.

204 Ms. Henricks remarked that Ms. Landwehrle has been great to work with.

205 Ms. Tremblay discussed that it is nice to hear the teacher's voice.

206 Mr. Dustin replied, that the kids do take it seriously because they are engaged.

207 Ms. Henricks discussed rubrics and that the students are getting a lot more specific feedback. It is more  
208 information for them in the end.

209 Ms. Kuzsma asked if there is something in there that will help students take tests.

210 Mr. Dustin replied, that there are more traditional tests. He then discussed DOK (Depth of Knowledge)  
211 tests.

212 Ms. Leknes discussed the SBAC.

213 Mr. Dustin added that as long as the community supports it then he believes that PACE will last.

214 Superintendent Warburton added his support for PACE. He commented that PACE is a part of  
215 everything.

216 Mr. Prescott commented on the advantages of PACE and is curious on how to handle a student that does  
217 not perform well on a test.

218 Ms. Leknes commented that it is important that the students know beforehand what they have to do to  
219 achieve a certain rubric.

220 Ms. Henricks discussed an example of a special time for remediation and how the students were then  
221 successful.

222 C. One-to-One computer use at AMS- Staff Sharing

223 Ms. Leknes discussed the remediation of the students now that they have the 1:1 computing. She then  
224 discussed how Khan Academy and an app called Clever can help students. She added that it opens a  
225 broader world in math as well. She added that there are so many great benefits with it.

226 Mr. Prescott asked how you keep students focused on a computer with internet access, noting that people  
227 are easily distracted.

228 Ms. Henricks commented that they have to be aware of student behavior at all times and they recognize  
229 where the problem areas can be.

230 Ms. Leknes added that it is also a teaching style too. She then discussed how students sometimes need  
231 help with the basics.

232 Ms. Bernasconi remarked that she is in the classroom daily and notices how the computer is being used.  
233 She added that when students are engaged there is less distraction.

234 Ms. Landwehrle noted that there is a video for Board members that she will send out.

235 Mr. Prescott commented on the Budget and that there were a large amount of non-discretionary increases.  
236 He suggested that the administration should put together a plan for the 7<sup>th</sup> graders. He added that he is  
237 looking for more information.

238 Ms. Bernasconi commented that she would like to hear feedback from Souhegan teachers on their 1:1  
239 computing roll out.

240 Discussion ensued.

241 Ms. Leknes added that computers are the way of the future.

242 The Board thanked the teachers.

243 *At 8:16 PM Superintendent Warburton recognized a non-meeting.*

244 VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

245 VII. INFORMATIONAL

246 A. ASD FY17 May Projection

247 *Chair Galen Tremblay noted that the Board returned from the non-meeting at 8:44pm.*

248 **Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma motioned to ratify the tentative agreement reached on June 13<sup>th</sup> 2017**  
 249 **between the Board and the ASSA for a contract for the dates 2018-2023. Mr. Paul Prescott**  
 250 **seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

251 Ms. Galen Tremblay noted that the ASD FY17 May Projection is on page 33 of the Agenda Packet.

252 Superintendent Warburton commented that it is not final, but a snapshot.

253 B. Smarter Balanced Update

254 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that they can do more in the fall and that these are just preliminary results,  
 255 rosters still need to be finalized. She added that they are not final but fairly close and above the State  
 256 standards.

257 She noted that she has results for 2015, 2016, and 2017. She added that they were concerned with 5<sup>th</sup>  
 258 grade and this year they were in the more typical range for math. In looking at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade this year it  
 259 was not a dramatic drop, and they are refining the 5<sup>th</sup> grade math curriculum. They do have move in and  
 260 outs and it can fluctuate.

261 She noted that they need to dig more deeply in to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. She added that they need to consult with  
 262 the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers.

263 Mr. Glover asked Ms. Landwehrle if she liked the Smarter Balanced assessment.

264 Ms. Landwehrle replied that it is one data point and not curriculum embedded. She added that it is not a  
 265 bad standardized test.

266 Principal St. Amand added that the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are taking the SBAC for the very first time and they have  
 267 to recognize the students are relatively new to the technology.

268 Ms. Landwehrle discussed that several students have cried during assessments, and that it is not what  
 269 educators want to see.

270 She added that they can come back in the fall for further discussion.

271 The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle.

272 VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

273 Ms. Maggie McCabe, Amherst NH, noted that she would like to talk about the bell curve and criterion  
 274 based testing. She noted that she supports criterion reference testing.

275 She added that she is concerned with the mapping and jumping to a Tier 1 school. She then asked the  
 276 Board to consider taking more time.

277 The Board thanked Ms. McCabe.

278 IX. ACTION ITEMS

279 A. Professional Nominations



280 B. August meeting- date change (Tues., Aug. 22)

281 Ms. Tremblay commented about a change in meeting times.

282 The Board discussed possible dates.

283 Ms. Tremblay noted that she will get back to the Board with more meeting times.

284 C. PACE – entry into Tier I for AMS

285 Ms. Behm noted her concern with how many things are changing at one time. She suggested waiting a  
286 year, to become a Tier 1 PACE District, and is wondering if they are entirely there yet. She then added  
287 that they possibly need more data.

288 Ms. Landwehrle discussed the grade levels and content areas, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA and Math and 8<sup>th</sup>  
289 grade science scores. She then discussed PD summer days noting that they have one day of literacy and  
290 three for math. She added the possibility of a new statewide assessment next year.

291 Ms. Behm commented that she is glad for the summer PD days.

292 Ms. Bernasconi discussed how she spent time discussing assessments with teachers. She added that there  
293 is a group of teachers that are becoming a Validation Team. She noted that they are planning on using late  
294 starts for different teacher PD sessions next year.

295 She then added that her door is always open for the teachers. She discussed that the Board is invited to  
296 attend any PD meeting and wants the school to be transparent.

297 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed the different layers of support for the teachers.

298 Ms. Tremblay asked the Board if they had any other questions.

299 Mr. Glover asked about NECAP Science for 8th grade and SBAC for 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades.

300 Ms. Kuzsma commented on the Special Education students and how their scores had increased  
301 dramatically. She added that it gives them hope.

302 Ms. Landwehrle then discussed “cut-scores” for proficiency.

303 **Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma made a Motion for AMS to become a Tier 1 PACE District. Mr. John**  
304 **Glover seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

305 D. Naming of the park at 11 Baboosic Lake Road

306 Superintendent Warburton commented that more information is on page 37 of the Agenda Packet.

307 **Mr. Paul Prescott motioned to name the 11 Baboosic Lake Road Park, Birch Park. Ms. Terri Behm**  
308 **seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

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

310 A. Personnel

311 **Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma motioned to enter into Non-Public Session RSA 91-A: 3 II. (a) (b) (c) at 9:45**  
312 **pm. Mr. Paul Prescott seconded the Motion.**

313 **Ms. Tremblay called a Roll Call: Tremblay- Yes, Kuzsma- Yes, Prescott-Yes, Behm-Yes and**  
314 **Glover-Yes**

315 Entered non-public session at 9:50 pm.

316 Other persons present: Bethany Bernasconi, AMS Dean of Instruction, Lisa Femia-Hou, AMS Dean of  
317 Students, Gerry St. Amand, CW Principal, Superintendent Peter Warburton.

318 Discussed personnel matter.

319 **Mr. Paul Prescott motioned to exit Non-Public Session. Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma seconded the**  
320 **Motion.**

321 **Ms. Tremblay called a Roll Call: Tremblay- Yes, Kuzsma- Yes, Prescott-Yes, Behm-Yes and**  
322 **Glover-Yes**

323 At 10:13 pm the Board resumed public session.

324 Non-public minutes recorded by John Glover

325 **In public session, Mr. Paul Prescott moved to accept the professional nominations as presented by**  
326 **Superintendent Peter Warburton. Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma seconded the Motion. The vote was**  
327 **unanimous, Motion passed.**

328 **At 10:15 pm, Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma moved and Mr. Paul Prescott seconded the Motion to adjourn.**  
329 **The vote was unanimous, Motion passed.**

330 XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

331 Chair Ms. Galen Tremblay noted the following Future Agenda Items:

- 332       • Default Budget Calculation  
333       • Heifer International