

## SAU #39 Board

Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Meeting Minutes- Approved 11 19 2020

Attendees via Zoom:

Administrative Team: Adam Steel- Superintendent, Christine Landwehrle- Assistant Superintendent, Meg Beauchamp- Director of Student Services, Michele Croteau- SAU #39 Business Administrator, Anna Parrill- Principal CW, Dr. Kim Sarfte - Principal MVVS, Dr. Bethany Bernasconi – Principal AMS, Mike Berry- Principal SHS, and Roger Preston- Director of Facilities.

Amherst School Board: Chair- Elizabeth Kuzsma, Vice Chair- Tom Gauthier, Secretary- Ellen Gruzdien, Terri Behm and Josh Conklin.

Mont Vernon Village School Board: Chair- Sarah Lawrence, Vice Chair- Peter Eckhoff, Scott St. Denis and Stephen O’Keefe.

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Chair- Pim Grondstra, Vice Chair- Amy Facey, Secretary- Stephanie Grund, Steve Coughlan, George Torres, Laura Taylor and John Glover.

Board Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

Public: Lance Whitehead- Lavallee Brensinger Professional Architects, Manchester NH, Victoria Parisi, 3 Church Street, Seth Smiley, 20 Holly Hill Drive, Amherst NH, and Shannon Gascoyne, 5 Parker Farm Lane, Amherst NH

I. Call to Order

**Chair of the SAU 39 Board, Mr. Stephen O’Keefe, called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.**

Today, we will be conducting a school board meeting of the SAU #39 Board.

Before we get started, I’ll read through a checklist to ensure that the meeting that we are holding is in compliance with the Right-to-Know Law.

As chairperson of the SAU #39 Board, I find that due to the state of emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and in accordance with the Governor’s Emergency Order Number #12, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 and its extensions, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting which was authorized pursuant to the Governor’s Emergency Order.

In accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that:

1. We are providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possible by video and other electronic means. We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the committee and selected legislative staff have the ability to

39 communicate contemporaneously in this meeting through this platform. And the public  
 40 has access to contemporaneously watch and or listen to the meeting on Zoom and via  
 41 phone by following the directions and links provided on our website: [www.sau39.org](http://www.sau39.org).  
 42

- 43 2. We have provided public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting.  
 44  
 45 3. We are providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting  
 46 if there are problems with access. If anyone has a problem, please email  
 47 [awallace@sau39.org](mailto:awallace@sau39.org).  
 48  
 49 4. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting will be adjourned and  
 50 rescheduled.  
 51  
 52 5. Please note that all votes taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.  
 53  
 54 6. Finally, let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states  
 55 their presence please also state where they are and if anyone else is in the room with you  
 56 during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know Law.  
 57

58 Mr. O'Keefe called a Roll Call: Kuzsma- home and alone, Gauthier- home and alone, Behm-  
 59 home and alone, Conklin- home and alone, Grondstra- Home and alone, Facey- home and alone,  
 60 Coughlan- home and alone, Taylor- home and alone, Torres- home and alone, Grund- home and  
 61 alone, Glover- home and alone, Lawrence- home and alone, Eckhoff- home and alone, St. Denis-  
 62 home and alone, O'Keefe- home and alone.  
 63

## 64 II. Public Comment I of II

65  
 66 No Public Comment  
 67

## 68 III. Superintendent's Report

- 69
- 70 • Student Information System-Update  
 71

72 Superintendent, Mr. Adam Steel, noted that he has a few items to note for tonight's meeting.  
 73

74 They have switched over to PowerSchool and the transition has gone really well. A big thank  
 75 you to Mr. Alex Stone, who recently passed and Ms. Galen Tremblay. The parents have access to  
 76 it and are able to do a number of things throughout the system.  
 77

- 78 • School Year Calendar FY 2021-2022  
 79

80 Next, he is bringing forward a school year calendar for the 2021-2022 school year. This is the  
 81 time of year when they normally do this. School will start after Labor Day, Sept 7<sup>th</sup>, and the  
 82 Conference Day is November 12<sup>th</sup>. Holiday break will begin on Dec 24<sup>th</sup> and they will return on  
 83 January 3<sup>rd</sup> of 2022. If board members have questions, please reach out to him via email and

84 they will wrap that into a future calendar for November. He discussed building in flexibility if  
85 they will have to take into consideration Covid- 19 for next year.

86

87 • School Start Times

88

89 Mr. Steel commented that they have spent a lot of time over the past few years discussing the  
90 start time. They have had committees, public forums and a lot of board discussions. He  
91 suggested that they make a decision and recommended starting the next school year at 8:00 AM  
92 for the elementary schools and 8:45 AM for Middle and High School. There are details that will  
93 need to be worked out and making the decision in November will allow time. Right now, they  
94 are not asking for a schedule change just the start and end time. Any schedule change would  
95 happen through the CC process.

96

97 • SAU #39 Math Review

98

99 They have had conversations about Math scores, and they have tracked them very carefully.  
100 Tonight, they need to talk about what they need to do as a school system and community and  
101 make some improvements when it comes to math. They have highly skilled teachers, motivated  
102 and supported students, a well- resourced school system and yet, have inconsistent results in  
103 Math. More than likely it is some systemic challenge, something about the design of how they  
104 teach math is not leading to consistently strong results for all of their students.

105

106 First, they have highly successful students in math. He displayed the NWEA scores noting that  
107 the issue is not that they are doing poorly but not well enough. This year they have had the  
108 highest SAT scores on record. He displayed a Proficiency chart with Math in Grade 11 prepared  
109 by Mr. Steve Frades. Although things have improved, it is not where they want to be.  
110 Second, he showed comparative proficiency from 2013 to Bedford, Exeter, Hanover,  
111 Hollis/Brookline, Oyster River and Windham.

112

113 They plan on a completing a three-step process starting with research. Examining past results,  
114 investigation of options that exist for them, identifying key metrics, and then what questions  
115 need to be answered. Implementing is acquiring resources and then training their teachers. Third,  
116 they need to review metrics, gather feedback and then adjust.

117

118 They have identified key questions to answer and everything needs to be on the table and open  
119 for discussion.

120

121 Superintendent Steel noted the 4 desired outcomes:

122

- 123 1. In five years, be close to the top in comparison to their competitive districts in numbers  
124 of students who score proficient and highly proficient.
- 125 2. Execute a community- wide process to improve their system.
- 126 3. Consistent achievement and growth throughout the system.
- 127 4. Continue to produce high growth in low achieving students.

128

129 In FY'21, they will complete an administrative-level investigation and research with establishing  
130 a steering committee. In FY' 22, they will provide targeted instructional Professional  
131 Development for faculty (Summer 2021), community wide committee with stakeholder sub-  
132 committees (Q1-Q2), budget for resources and professional development (Q2), pilot resources  
133 (Q3-Q4) and determine plan for execution and final resources (Q4). In FY'23 they will purchase  
134 the resources, provide extensive professional development to faculty (summer 2022) and  
135 implement changes.

136

137 That concludes his Superintendent's Report and he will be happy to answer any questions.

138

139 Ms. Kuzsma gave her support and questioned the timeline of two years out and what are they  
140 going to do between now and then.

141

142 Mr. Steel replied that they have struggled with that decision. If they went faster, they would be  
143 budgeting for the items and professional development now. Additionally, they would need to  
144 pilot those resources. During the rest of the school year, the steering committee will be looking  
145 much wider than the typical scope. They will be looking at data and depth. They are trying to  
146 find the right balance and solve the problem well.

147

148 Ms. Gruzdien inquired how do they not become a district that teaches to the test.

149

150 Mr. Steel responded that they do not want to be a test factory. Recently, the SAT has been  
151 aligned to the standards. If they have the right math program, students will do really well.

152

153 Ms. Grund commented about the educational time with AP students. She would like to have  
154 more discussion around the school start time.

155 Mr. Torres inquired about increasing math proficiency and tracking costs.

156 Mr. Steel replied that the Curriculum 5 Year Review Schedule will be coming up later on in  
157 tonight's agenda. They have aligned Math so that it is in that plan.

158 Ms. Taylor commented that as an Engineer, 5 years appears to be a long time to wait to evaluate  
159 the effectiveness of changes in the Math instruction.

160 Mr. Torres asked if there was any budgetary impact with delaying the start time.

161 Mr. Steel responded none that he can think of, perhaps, one more hour of daylight means they do  
162 not have to heat the buildings as early in the morning.

163 Mr. Gauthier added that they would have less heat because they would not be there in longer  
164 periods in the winter. He inquired about the survey regarding holiday travel.

165 Mr. Steel replied that they have heard back from their teachers the numbers that have responded  
166 so far are lower than the earlier survey. They are still watching that. The number of active Covid  
167 cases are much lower than they had projected, it is difficult to portend that they would close  
168 during that time. They are looking at staffing availability in Nov. and Dec. The Re-Opening task  
169 force has reconvened and will meet again soon.

170 Mr. Grondstra inquired about the size of the Steering Committee at this point.

171 Mr. Steel replied that it will include himself, Assistant Superintendent Landwehrle, Principal  
172 Berry, Ms. Natalie Berger, Dr. Kim Sarfde, Dr. Bethany Bernasconi, Ms. Kathleen Murphy and  
173 Ms. Heather Jennings.

174 Mr. Grondstra questioned adding in Math Specialists to the Committee.

175 Mr. Steel replied, yes, they will add in other people and have a lot to consider. They will be  
176 looking for other input at a later date.

177 Mr. Eckhoff inquired about the growth scores from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

178 Mr. Steel replied that perhaps there is an issue in the system there. He emphasized that when  
179 they see consistent challenges at particular grade levels is a systemic issue not a teacher issue.  
180 The NWEA is an International normed test.

181 Mr. Eckhoff commented that he is in support of the teachers and did not mean anything negative  
182 by his question.

183 Ms. Taylor inquired if they are using the NWEA.

184 Mr. Steel replied, yes, they start in kindergarten through grade 10.

185 Ms. Taylor noted that a lot kindergarteners cannot read.

186 Mr. Steel replied that there is audio, and it is adaptable.

187 Ms. Taylor questioned how will they look at effectiveness.

188 Mr. Steel replied that they will look at the statewide testing, NWEA and other metrics.

189 Mr. O’Keefe mentioned that he is in great support of the math initiatives.

190       • Souhegan Coop. New Board Member

191 Chair of the Souhegan Cooperative School Board Member, Mr. Pim Grondstra, commented that  
192 SCSB member, Mr. David Chen, has relocated out of state. There were 6 applicants with a  
193 unanimous decision to nominate and then motion to approve, previous ASB Member, Mr. John  
194 Glover.

195 Mr. O’Keefe welcomed Mr. Glover. He thanked Mr. Chen for all of his work and dedication to  
196 the students.

197 The Board thanked Superintendent Steel

198 IV. Principals Reports

199 Mr. Conklin questioned about the space they have in the building.

200 CW Principal, Ms. Anna Parrill, replied yes. She thanked Superintendent Steel for allowing them  
201 to have Halloween festivities.

- 202 Mr. O’Keefe asked the Board if they have questions for Dr. Bethany Bernasconi, Principal of the  
203 Amherst Middle School.
- 204 Mr. Conklin inquired about homeschool students.
- 205 Dr. Bernasconi replied that some have reached out to them and submitted letters for the short  
206 term.
- 207 Mr. Gauthier asked for clarification on homeschool it is not remote learning.
- 208 Principal Bernasconi replied, yes.
- 209 Ms. Kuzsma questioned if they are looking at the reasons for the shift.
- 210 Principal Bernasconi replied that they are working hard to provide the best experience and  
211 support families in the choices that they are making.
- 212 Mr. Conklin thanked Ms. Landwehrle for all of her work providing materials.
- 213 Mr. Glover asked about feedback from the high school.
- 214 Mr. O’Keefe noted that they will go back to that question shortly.
- 215 Mr. O’Keefe inquired about the outside space and the tents.
- 216 Principal Bernasconi added that they have 6 tents, not enclosed open air, and they are scheduled  
217 to stay up until the Friday before Thanksgiving.
- 218 Mr. O’Keefe noted that he is guessing that the students are dressing appropriately.
- 219 Principal Bernasconi replied that yes, kids know to dress for the weather.
- 220 Mr. O’Keefe inquired about feedback about Eagle Block and Launch Pad.
- 221 Principal Bernasconi replied that the general consensus is that Eagle Block and Launch Pad is  
222 very helpful. It is that common place to start and that anchoring activity. They are building in  
223 Eagle extensions.
- 224 Mr. O’Keefe asked for any more questions for Dr. Bernasconi.
- 225 Principal of SHS Mr. Michael Berry, replied that families have chosen what is best for their  
226 families. He does not have the information in front of him at the moment.
- 227 Ms. Grund inquired about the amount of homeschool students and if it was a mismatch.
- 228 Principal Berry replied it could be a mismatch he took the information from PowerSchool
- 229 Ms. Grund questioned how the teachers are doing, struggles and challenges.
- 230 Principal Berry replied that concerns administrators as well. The faculty senate sent out a survey  
231 and looked at what they can work on. It is a difficult situation and the teachers are teaching most  
232 in two modalities. He praised them and they are doing the best they can under the circumstances.

- 233 They are holding up well and doing a tremendous job. It is a good question and something that  
234 they grapple on a daily basis. It is a moving target.
- 235 Ms. Grund noted that they are supporting them 100%.
- 236 Ms. Facey asked if there are technology needs that they should be aware of.
- 237 Principal Berry replied that they are aware of what people need and have purchased some  
238 devices. They are trying to be responsive and fortunate for the support.
- 239 Ms. Taylor questioned how are they crediting the teachers that are going above and beyond.
- 240 Principal Berry replied it is an all hands-on deck in a dual modality piece. This is temporary and  
241 they want to make it as good as an experience that it can be.
- 242 Ms. Taylor asked about an update on books about race relations.
- 243 Principal Berry replied; he will discuss that when it is the right time per administration.
- 244 Ms. Taylor asked him what has he learned from his time at SHS.
- 245 Principal Berry responded that SHS is full of well-intentioned teachers. They are overly  
246 passionate, looking for career growth and be best teachers they can be.
- 247 Mr. O’Keefe asked for questions from Dr. Sarfde.
- 248 He asked Principal Sarfde about outside time and if they are equipped.
- 249 Principal Sarfde replied that they have kids that are adequately spaced, and they are going  
250 through the process of getting the tents in compliance. The kids are having a great time.
- 251 Mr. O’Keefe asked about PE
- 252 Principal Sarfde replied that MVVS PE Teacher, Ms. Knickle, has made space for the students  
253 with painters’ tape. They are doing yoga and other fun activities and staying within their box.
- 254 Mr. O’Keefe asked if the formals vs the informal could be added to the Principal’s Report.
- 255 Principal Sarfde commented that she will go and observe 4 classrooms every day. They just  
256 started the formal observations and just got access to the system.
- 257 Mr. Glover inquired about the program for teachers that do remote work.
- 258 Principal Sarfde replied that for the teachers that are remote, they keep the same zoom link. She  
259 will just pop in and observe.
- 260 The Board thanked the Principals for doing the work and making it efficient.
- 261 V. Consent Agenda
- 262 Mr. O’Keefe pulled 1. Sept. 14th, 2020 Draft Minutes.

263 Mr. Coughlan noted the change in *Line 469: “Mr. Coughlan added that he went to some NHSBA*  
 264 *meetings early in his time as a board member”.*

265 Change to line 528.

266 *Line 528+: “Ms. Kuzsma motioned to approve policy IMGAA Therapy Dogs and stated that the*  
 267 *boards can approve it but ask for it not to be introduced this year as guidance to the*  
 268 *administration. Mr. Coughlan seconded the motion.”*

269 **Mr. Coughlan motioned to accept the changes to the 09 14 2020 Draft Minutes. Ms.**  
 270 **Kuzsma seconded the motion.**

271 **Mr. O’Keefe called a Roll Call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Gruzdien-Yes,**  
 272 **Conklin- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Facey- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor-Yes, Torres- Yes,**  
 273 **Grund- Yes, Glover- Abstain, Lawrence- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, St. Denis- Yes (15 in favor, 1**  
 274 **abstention, 1 not present)**

275 Ms. Taylor read her following changes into the 09 14 2020 Draft Minutes.

276 *Line 87. Mr. Chen inquired about the cost being 75 million dollars and what the next cost*  
 277 *estimate will be.*

278 *Line 115 Ms. Taylor inquired about the additional data. Since AP metrics are used in high*  
 279 *school rankings, can we add % students taking AP classes, % student taking AP tests, and %*  
 280 *students scoring a 3 or higher on an AP test to the assessment plan?*

281 *Line 118 add a line Ms. Grund asked if NWEA and other assessments for remote learners added*  
 282 *costs? Ms. Landwehrle replied remote NWEA does not change the cost.*

283 *Line 126 ...submitting to the state.*

284 *Line 129 add a line Mrs. Taylor asked if he could provide how many part time students are*  
 285 *attending the high school. Mr. Steel said he did not have how many students were part time with*  
 286 *him.*

287 *Line 223 add a line Ms. Taylor thanked the principal for the helpful report. She expressed her*  
 288 *gratitude for having a full-time principal at the school. She said your report speaks of student*  
 289 *implementing Individualized Plans in a year. Can you describe them? What are you*  
 290 *accomplishing with them? Mr. Berry wants to personalize the pathways to graduation. He would*  
 291 *like Souhegan to offer varying opportunities to succeed.*

292 *Add a line 228 Ms. Taylor wanted clarification that the students will only be graded by teachers*  
 293 *working with them? Mr. Berry replied yes.*

294 *Line 436 change GCBE to GCEB. Add a line Mr. Chen noted that the superintendent is hired by*  
 295 *the SAU. GCEB allows individual boards to be involved in the selection of their principals.*

296 *Line 479 add a line. Mrs. Taylor said we owe detailed policy discussions to our community and*  
 297 *students. Should we be passing important policy on grading in a state of emergency? Grading*  
 298 *also falls under Community Council and this policy might conflict.*



299 *Line 488 add two lines Mr. Coughlan said he did not like editing policies with a group of 17. Mr.*  
 300 *O'Keefe stated this shouldn't be a working session.*

301 *Line 489. Mr. O'Keefe call a roll call to move Policy IKA, Grading and Reporting, down the*  
 302 *other Boards:*

303 *Line 494 add a line. Ms. Taylor asked if the Board should be put in a position of passing policies*  
 304 *that don't align with NH state law.*

305 *Line 497 add two lines. Ms. Kuzsma said the RSA said, "medically capable." Mr. Steel said*  
 306 *"medically capable" is being mentally able.*

307 *Line 498 add a line Ms. Taylor said the RSA did not support mental health.*

308 *Line 499 add a line Mr. O'Keefe I am comfortable with this policy coming from NHSBA.*

309 *Line 512 add a line Ms. Grund said the interview process should include the board. All of that*  
 310 *was taken out of the new proposed GCEB. The new proposed GCEB takes out community*  
 311 *involvement and everyone but the Superintendent.*

312 *Line 516 add a line Mr. Chen said the Board was not part of the selection or job description of*  
 313 *the new principal. The Souhegan Board needs the power to control their policies. The principal*  
 314 *selection process should not be casual.*

315 *Line 520 correction Ms. Grund asked do the Board Members not want board and community*  
 316 *involvement.*

317 *Line 520 add a line Ms. Taylor supported Stephanie's statements. She added, the reason we have*  
 318 *a policy is to keep the Board involved in the process of selecting a principal, the important*  
 319 *leader of a school.*

320 *Line 538 add a line the requests submitted to the Superintendent are approved or disapproved by*  
 321 *the Superintendent.*

322 She added that she reviewed the video very closely.

323 **Ms. Taylor motioned to accept these changes to the 09 14 2020 Draft Minutes. Ms. Grund**  
 324 **seconded the motion.**

325 Ms. Kuzsma mentioned that they received these changes an hour and a half before this meeting.  
 326 She did not have ample time to watch the meeting. Typically, the meeting minutes are not typed  
 327 verbatim. She is not comfortable approving those changes.

328 Ms. Lawrence added that she did not have time to watch the meeting and she cannot say if that is  
 329 accurate or not. It is different from the way that are taken in the past.

330 Mr. O'Keefe referenced the NH Municipal Association. He is personally opposed to these  
 331 modifications.

332 Ms. Taylor inquired if the board members have read the minutes. You either remember it or you  
333 don't.

334 Ms. Lawrence added that she feels that the minutes accurately reflected what happened in the  
335 meeting.

336 Ms. Kuzsma mentioned that the changes that Ms. Taylor is requesting are so similar. It is not  
337 verbatim, and the meetings are recorded.

338 Ms. Taylor noted that the discussions are very important. The point of board meetings is for  
339 discussion especially when presented with 40 proposed policies at once. Even Mr. O'Keefe  
340 stating that it should not be a working session, that is an important thing that should be recorded.  
341 The point of their meetings is for discussion.

342 She asked if they can be attached.

343 Mr. O'Keefe replied, that is why he asked her to read them into the record.

344 **Mr. O'Keefe called a Roll Call: Kuzsma- No, Gauthier- No, Behm- No, Gruzdien- No,**  
345 **Conklin- No, Grondstra- No, Facey- No, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- No, Grund-**  
346 **Yes, Glover- Abstain, Lawrence- No, Eckhoff- No, St. Denis- Abstain and O'Keefe- No (2**  
347 **abstentions, 3 in favor, 1 not present, 11 not in favor) Motion does not pass.**

348 Mr. O'Keefe asked for other Board questions for #1.

349 He asked for questions for #2 2020-21 Summer Withdrawal Data.

350 Ms. Kuzsma noted her concern with possible learning gaps and questioned what the  
351 administration is planning on doing. She asked if they were going to use NWEA and if they can  
352 test in the spring.

353 Mr. Steel replied that they are going to do some NWEA testing. They will evaluate and fill in the  
354 gaps. They are just starting on figuring out what that means. They are going to see what happens  
355 and have funds set aside. They may give parents an additional option, but it is too early to tell.

356 Ms. Kuzsma inquired about retention with one subject.

357 Mr. Steel responded there are other things to evaluate such as social and emotional growth. They  
358 should be creative and think outside the box.

359 Mr. Glover asked for the totals on the charts. He would like to see a 5-year history. It is nice  
360 metric to see.

361 Ms. Gruzdien mentioned it is difficult to find out about the home school students.

362 Mr. O'Keefe added that they had that issue at the MVVS and due to privacy issues were told not  
363 to have that conversation.

364 Mr. Steel mentioned that there are significant restrictions around what the public-school system  
365 can look into homeschool.

366 Ms. Gruzdien suggested that they not look at it as a hurdle and she will be happy to help.

367 Ms. Grund inquired about the enrollment in the high school.

368 Mr. O'Keefe moved on to #4 Facilities Update.

369 Ms. Grund questioned the when the truck was purchased and if it was under Souhegan. She has  
370 not seen it on the Manifest.

371 Mr. Steel replied that it is under Souhegan and was ordered 6 or 9 months ago. It was not  
372 delivered until after July 1<sup>st</sup>.

373 Ms. Taylor inquired about the full time vs. part time students. She asked at the last meeting.

374 Mr. Steel asked Principal Berry if he can provide that data for Ms. Taylor.

375 Mr. Conklin thanked SAU Facilities Director, Mr. Roger Preston, for his helpful report.

376 Ms. Taylor questioned the security upgrades.

377 Mr. Steel replied that he will be happy to discuss those in Non-Public Session.

378 Ms. Behm thanked Mr. Preston as well. He has hit the ground running. She requested to have a  
379 facilities update on a more regular basis, and it is in the packet with the minutes and the  
380 community can read it.

381 Mr. Steel replied, yes, it will be monthly.

382 **Ms. Kuzsma motioned to accept the Consent Agenda items 2. 2020-21 Summer**  
383 **Withdrawal Data Withdrawal Summary, 3. 2020-21 Enrollment Data Enrollment**  
384 **Summary, 4. SAU #39 Facilities Update, 5. Aug 2020 Treasurer's Report. Ms. Grund**  
385 **seconded the motion.**

386 **Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Grudzien- Yes, Grondstra- Yes,**  
387 **Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes, Glover- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes,**  
388 **Lawrence- Yes, St. Denis- Yes, O'Keefe- Yes. (16 in favor, 1 absence) Motion passed.**

389 Mr. Glover inquired about item #3. This data does not match with the Principal's data. Some  
390 numbers do match, but some do not.

391 VI. Joint Facilities Advisory Committee

392 Chair of the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee, Ms. Amy Facey, discussed that the JFAC has  
393 been meeting for many, months and tonight's recommendation represents a culmination of that  
394 work. She thanked all the volunteers for their time, including JFAC Vice-Chair, Ms. Shannon  
395 Gascoyne, Ms. Victoria Parisi and Mr. Brian Coogan.

396 At their last meeting they have voted unanimously to approve the recommendation that they are  
397 hearing tonight. They will be attending the individual board meetings for further discussion. She  
398 encouraged anyone with questions to reach out to her.

399 Ms. Shannon Gascoyne mentioned that the JFAC, is composed of a number of community  
 400 volunteers, SAU Administration, and a member of the Amherst Board of Selectmen. As a  
 401 reminder, the SAU JFAC has been tasked with conducting an analysis of the state of public  
 402 education facilities in Amherst.

403 Encompassed in the charge are the following facilities:

- 404 • Clark Wilkins
- 405 • Amherst Middle School
- 406 • Souhegan High School

407 She reviewed the timeline: In 2017, Capital Needs Assessment were created, March 2018- voters  
 408 support warrant article to fund Souhegan 2.0 design phase, Fall 2018- SAU establishes JFC,  
 409 March 2019- voters reject warrant article to fund A & E fees for ASD Design Phase, Fall- 2019-  
 410 Facilities Summit held to discuss SAU wide facilities, Jan 2020- JFAC reconvened, March 2020-  
 411 Voters support school budgets and all associated articles related to capital maintenance in ASD  
 412 and SCSD and Summer 2020- Lavallee Brensinger Professional Architects, Manchester NH,  
 413 begins ASD study.

414 She displayed the process and the chart of School Building Conditions.

415 Ms. Gascoyne showed pictures of a teacher on a cart, explaining that there is a loss in  
 416 instructional time. Additional photos include a bathroom in the portables, triangle shaped  
 417 classrooms at AMS with movable walls, cramped office space at AMS and the poor conditions  
 418 with the roof when it leaks into the building.

419 Mr. Lance Whitehead, Lavallee Brensinger Professional Architects, Manchester NH, noted that  
 420 all mechanical systems at Wilkins and Clark are at the end of life. All plumbing systems there  
 421 are also at the end of life and should be replaced with code complaint systems. Electrical systems  
 422 are inadequate for a modern technology rich school environment and should be replaced.  
 423 Emergency electrical systems are inadequate as there is no generator. Lighting is end of life and  
 424 energy efficient lighting should be added.

425 Additionally, Through- wall unit ventilators at AMS are inefficient and nearing end of life 5-7  
 426 years max and should be replaced with modern ducted air systems. New systems to be healthy,  
 427 changes air per hour, UV light filtered and dehumidified for comfort. Boilers at AMS are 10  
 428 years old and can be re- used for another 15 years. Fire Protection, sprinklers, at AMS are  
 429 inadequate.

430 The water system at AMS is adequate. All electrical systems, emergency systems and are end of  
 431 life and should be replaced. Lighting is end of life and should be replaced.

432 Ms. Gascoyne reviewed the ASD class size rankings and targets. The targets were determined  
 433 with the Board and Administration using the Tennessee Star Study. Students in small classes  
 434 outperform students in larger classes by substantial margins on standardized tests. Students in  
 435 small classes have higher performance than larger classes in all locations and at every grade  
 436 level. There is solid experimental evidence of a “class size” effect, its longevity, its academic and

437 non-academic benefits, and the continuing growth of students who start schooling in small  
438 classes (15 or 18:1) in K or grade one.

439 She noted the ASD Enrollment Projections for FY 20- FY 24.

440 They have completed a survey and she noted the staff responses. The community survey top  
441 three are 1. Aging and inefficient facilities, 2. Increasing enrollment and large class sizes and  
442 growing teacher/ student ratio, and 3. Safety and security.

443 Ms. Gascoyne read a community response “These buildings are old, dated, in need of repair and  
444 too crowded in many grades. I went to Clark-Wilkins 30 years ago and the facilities my kids go  
445 to are essentially the same. (Just older and more crowded). Band aids like portables at Wilkins  
446 have to go if for no other reason than they are unsafe for many reasons. As currently situated,  
447 these buildings are not adequate to meet the needs of today's students. Failure to do something  
448 soon is going to impact the quality of education, the well-being of our kids and at some point,  
449 everyone's property values.”

450 She explained that the committee landed on 3 options, they will start with Amherst Middle  
451 School.

452 Mr. Whitehead reviewed the different options: 1. Kick the Can- \$30,600,000 2. Renovate and  
453 Refurbish- \$31,680,000 and 3. Build a New Middle School \$59, 000,000.

454 He explained Renovate and Refurbish:

- 455 • Addresses all items in the
- 456 “Kick the Can” Scenario
- 457 • Renovates the Triangle Classrooms to usable adequately sized classrooms
- 458 • Creates Great Education Space
- 459 • Creates “Like New” facility
- 460 • Creates Missing Special Educ. Areas
- 461 • Creates Missing Collaboration Areas
- 462 • Creates Secure Entrance
- 463 • Relocates 5th Grade to Elementary School
- 464 • Can be Phased with Elementary School project

465 Ms. Gascoyne added that the JFAC Committee recommends the Renovate and Refurbish option.

466 Mr. Whitehead went over the layout of the Middle School. He explained a side by side  
467 comparison, existing and proposed. He noted some other proposed items:

- 468 • Add Common Area in Center of Building
- 469 • Integrated Special Education Case Manager spaces into each Team (one per team)

- 470 • Integrated Small Group Learning Areas (Breakout Spaces) into each Team (one per team)
- 471 • Re-locate Main Office to create secure entrance sequence (new main entrance)
- 472 • Replace end-of-life HVAC systems with healthier, more efficient systems
- 473 • Replace end-of-life Electrical and Technology Systems to match modern needs
- 474 • Re-pave all parking/roads on site (end of life)
- 475 • Replace all end-of-life windows
- 476 • Replaced end-of-life Roof

477 He further explained the reasoning for renovation and refurbish at AMS.

- 478 • Clark Wilkins

479 Ms. Gascoyne went to Clark Wilkins.

480 Mr. Whitehead reviewed the options of Kick the Can- \$23,500, 000, Renovate and Refurbish-  
481 \$64,500,000 and Build New- \$66, 038,000.

482 He explained the options, below is the New Construction option.

- 483 • Creates State of the Art Ideal Space
- 484 • Allows for Consolidation to 1 Elementary School Site  
485 (lowers operating expenses)
- 486 • Costs are similar to Renovation / Addition Option
- 487 • Potential for the Most Energy Efficient Facility
- 488 • Simplest Construction Phasing

489 Ms. Gascoyne added that their recommendation was to build a new elementary school.

490 Mr. Whitehead completed a side by side comparison of the elementary. He noted the existing  
491 and the proposed.

492 They discussed the location of the building and they would build it on the back field and keep  
493 Wilkins up and running.

494 Ms. Gascoyne noted that the Clark school long term decisions will need to be determined.

- 495 • Souhegan 2.0

496 Ms. Parisi covered the costs at SHS. A complete renovate and refurbish at SHS is \$35,000,000  
497 and a partial renovate and refurbish is \$2,500,000.

498 The JFAC is suggesting a \$2,500,000 partial renovate and refurbish.

499 The subcommittee identified 4 priorities, including the HVAC System, Science Labs in Annex,  
500 Secure Main Entrance and Locker Rooms.

501 She explained the layout of the Science Labs in the Annex.

502 The other areas of renovation include the science labs, locker rooms and a secured main  
503 entrance.

504 They have discussed different funding mechanisms but that is for the SCSB to decide on.

505 Mr. Brian Coogan, discussed that the bond payments do not operate like a traditional mortgage.  
506 He explained how municipal bonds operate. As the bond payments decrease, the valuation  
507 typically increases. Planning will provide the taxpayers with a consistent tax rate.

508 They are in a period of time where the interest rates are some of the lowest in history. If they did  
509 this 5 years ago it would have been \$10m less, if they do it ten years from now it would be \$20m  
510 more.

511 He reviewed some financial statistics and comparable construction costs.

512 Ms. Gascoyne asked Mr. Whitehead if they got it approved by the voters in March 2021.

513 Mr. Whitehead reviewed the timeline.

514 Ms. Facey covered the extended timeline that Ms. Gascoyne had displayed earlier. At this time,  
515 they are turning the decision over the individual boards. As a reminder, this presentation and  
516 with supporting documents are located in the Trello.

517 Mr. O'Keefe asked for board questions.

518 Ms. Taylor asked what are the challenges with Wilkins being in the Historic District.

519 Mr. Torres inquired about the wetlands in the area and if there are environmental issues.

520 Ms. Whitehead replied that they did go out and take a look. They are staying clear of the wetlands.  
521 They will be working with a Civil Engineer and Wetland Scientist in the future.

522 Ms. Taylor inquired about the challenges with Wilkins.

523 Mr. Whitehead explained that the location makes the scale smaller, they are pushed back into  
524 their site.

525 Ms. Gruzdien questioned the number of classrooms for K-3.

526 Mr. Whitehead responded that they took the class sizes and projected enrollment.

527 Ms. Gruzdien added that the ASB should review the numbers again.

528 Mr. O'Keefe thanked the Committee and Mr. Whitehead and wished them the best of luck.

529 VII. Policy DID

530 Mr. Coughlan explained that this is a new and improved Policy DID and they want to get it to the  
531 individual boards. It was reviewed by the Policy Committee and SAU #39 Director of Finance,  
532 Ms. Katie Hannan.

533 **Ms. Kuzsma motioned to move Policy DID to the individual Boards. Mr. Coughlan**  
534 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed**

535 **Mr. O’Keefe called a roll call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Conklin- Yes,**  
536 **Grudzien- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes,**  
537 **Glover- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, St. Denis- Yes, O’Keefe- Yes. (16 in favor, 1**  
538 **absence) Motion passed.**

539 VIII. SAU #39 Budget

540 Superintendent Steel mentioned that he has provided a memo to the Board ahead of time.

541 The proposed FY22 SAU operating budget is \$2,725,521. This is an increase of \$174,064, or  
542 6.8%. Although an overall FTE reduction of 0.2 is the net of all changes in the budget, a second  
543 assistant superintendent position is included after a consolidation of two previously budgeted  
544 positions. Also, because of turnover, the overall salary lines account for the majority of the  
545 budgetary increase.

546 Our top priority is in the area of recruiting and retaining skilled talent to ensure high levels of  
547 support to the schools and to move the SAU-wide vision forward. Items that will have a  
548 significant impact on the budget include:

- 549 1. Inclusion of the 2nd Assistant Superintendent position for hire 1/1/21
- 550 2. NHRS rate increases of 2-3%;
- 551 3. Medical Insurance Rate increase of 6.3%;
- 552 4. Preventative maintenance budget in facilities being established, and
- 553 5. Proposal for the purchase of a generator for the Brick Building – SAU Office.

554 Mr. Steel added that the Budget Reconciliation and Staffing Levels are included. You will see  
555 that there is a decrease in FY’22 Staffing.

556 The apportionment formula is included as well as the change year over year. Additionally, there  
557 are increases and decreases due to enrollment shifts.

558 This Board, after the budget Committee reviews this, will be requested to adopt this at the next  
559 SAU meeting.

560 He encouraged the Board to reach out to him for questions.

561 Ms. Grund asked how the Data Coordinator role come about.

562 Mr. Steel replied that he will get back to her.

563 Ms. Grund inquired about the roles in the SAU.

564 Mr. Steel added that this new position will focus on the middle and high school and that  
565 connection

566 Mr. Steel explained that they still have the same number.



567 Ms. Gruzdien added that to create that bridge from the middle school to the high school that they  
568 have been looking seeking for years.

569 Mr. Gauthier inquired consolidating staff and if they will be asking for more staff in the next  
570 coming years.

571 Mr. Steel replied that he has no plans to do that.

572 Ms. Taylor mentioned that some members of the public inquired how many employees the SAU  
573 had 10 years ago and what was the budget.

574 Mr. Steel responded that he will get her that information.

575 Ms. Taylor inquired about the 3 ASD Facilities Staff.

576 Mr. Steel replied that there are three of those people that are under the ASD and they get  
577 reimbursed for their time. Mont Vernon did not want to be a part of that prorated share.

578 Ms. Taylor inquired about the savings and if they are currently working in Wilkins.

579 Mr. Steel replied yes, throughout the ASD and at Souhegan.

580 Ms. Behm added that this speaks to one of the goals. She reminded the Board that they have  
581 committed to working as if they were one district. This speaks to one of the goals that they have  
582 and committed to. They have had higher quality projects completed with the 3 Facilities Staff  
583 and have saved money. They have helped on the facilities To Do list and been going through it at  
584 a phenomenal rate.

585 The SAU Budget committee will be meeting with Ms. Croteau soon to dive deeper in the line  
586 items. He suggested that they get vetted at the committee level.

587 IX. 5- Year Curriculum Presentation

588 Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Christine Landwehrle, explained the Program Review Process. It  
589 begins with Phase One Study- Evaluate Program Effectiveness and Review Current Best  
590 Research & Standards, Phase Two- Develop Program Improvement Plan- Create Program Based  
591 on Research and Data, Phase Three Implement- Implement New Program, Curriculum, and  
592 Materials, and Phase Four Review and evaluation- Collect Data on Program Effectiveness.

593 In looking, it is deep work, they are looking at spacing out their purchases from 2020 to 2025.  
594 There is more detailed information by grade level in the document.

595 She is happy to answer questions.

596 Mr. Conklin thanked Ms. Landwehrle and inquired about the Fine Arts and Languages.

597 Ms. Landwehrle replied that they did a deeper review of the Arts a few years ago. Math was a  
598 big need and Social Studies hasn't been completed in 10 years. They have good work with their  
599 Grading and Reporting. It is not up for deep review, but something she wants to review.

600 Ms. Grund asked about the overarching story and foreign languages.

601 Ms. Landwehrle replied that the when ever they make changes to the curriculum they get sent to  
602 the board for approval. They have made adjustments, but the comprehensive ones get sent to the  
603 Board.

604 Ms. Taylor added that the link was not working.

605 Ms. Landwehrle replied that she will fix it and add it to the Trello.

606 Mr. Coughlan asked about the 7<sup>th</sup> curriculum area.

607 Ms. Landwehrle added that she can dig into old files to figure it out. She thinks it might be PE.  
608 She will look more deeply so that it is more detailed.

609 Ms. Taylor inquired if the Math Curriculum Review is included.

610 Ms. Landwehrle replied, yes, that it is included here.

611 The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle.

612 X. Public Comment II of II

613 Ms. Victoria Parisi, 3 Church Street, Amherst NH noted that she has attended numerous school  
614 start time meetings. She commended the Superintendent in suggesting the should decide soon.

615 Mr. Seth Smiley, 20 Holly Hill Drive, Amherst NH mentioned that his wife, Julie Smiley has  
616 been trying to get the start times changed for three years. He gave his support in making that  
617 happen.

618 Ms. Shannon Gascoyne, 5 Parker Farm Lane, Amherst NH, supported Superintendent Steel in  
619 suggesting that the Board decide soon.

620 The Board thanked Ms. Parisi, Mr. Smiley and Ms. Gascoyne.

621 XI. Board Goals

622 The Board went into their Breakout Rooms to discuss Board Goals at 9:27PM. They resumed  
623 Public Session at 9:38PM.

624 Ms. Lawrence mentioned that Communication was the real focus. **To continue with consistent**  
625 **timely updates and communication in the form of a weekly or biweekly board update. With**  
626 **a secondary request, more time with the Superintendent's Report.** She asked if that could be  
627 with the agenda packet or a few days before a meeting so that the Board can have more time to  
628 review that prior to a meeting.

629 Ms. Kuzsma noted that they had Communication with the public. **Maintain the existing level of**  
630 **messaging you have with the community and expand the electronic messaging platforms.**  
631 Right now, it is Nixle and Facebook. She suggested to create a Superintendent page on the SAU  
632 Website.

633 Ms. Grund noted that they had Educational Leadership. They added that Every student achieves  
634 a year of growth and how do they measure it and streamline to process of measuring it. They

635 have different modalities and budgeting for summer work. She inquired if they can use the State  
636 Covid dollars.

637 Mr. O'Keefe asked Ms. Grund to put it in a sentence for the record.

638 **How to streamline the process and the funding to measure for every student's year of**  
639 **growth for this pandemic year.**

640 Mr. Glover added that it is to ensure that they get a year of growth and how do they measure it.  
641 Maybe there are alternative ways for a student to get back on track such as using the Governor's  
642 dollars for Education. They could not work all the details in 10 minutes. How do you measure it  
643 and how do you remediate the problems that you find to ensure a year of growth.

644 Ms. Facey asked for clarification on the goal statement.

645 Ms. Grund replied that the goal is that there is a process put in place. If they were to shrink it into  
646 a sentence it would be that **Superintendent Steel to come up with a process to ensure that**  
647 **every student receives a year of growth.**

648 Mr. Conklin they were looking at the facilities. **Work with the Board to manage,**  
649 **communicate, and implement our identified facilities needs, specifically performing**  
650 **community outreach on the large scale and long-term plans set forth by JFAC**  
651 **recommendations.**

652 Mr. O'Keefe asked for questions

653 He added that they had the Strategic Vision. To show marked progress towards accomplishing  
654 our district's ranking within the top 5 *US News and World Report* or the Dept. of Education  
655 prior to the end of the school year.

656 Ms. Facey asked why did he choose the US News and World Report.

657 Mr. O'Keefe inquired if she wanted to switch it.

658 Ms. Facey replied that she would want to look at multiple data points. She suggested making it  
659 more vague and perhaps there is a rubric. It is just a thought.

660 Ms. Grund added that she knows where she is coming from. She inquired what is he able to  
661 change by June. Have they given him something that he cannot achieve.

662 Mr. O'Keefe replied that they want to hear about progress.

663 Ms. Gruzdien commented that she would love to see a rubric that goes out to parents and  
664 teachers and that our district is measured internally.

665 Mr. Glover discussed that the pieces and elements are there. It will be a combination of items  
666 that will help their test

667 Mr. O'Keefe revised his goal statement. To show their progress in becoming a top ranked school  
668 in NH and be a little more generic. **To have Superintendent Steel report back to them by the**

669 **end of the year on his progress on how they are moving towards becoming one of the top**  
 670 **ranked public-school systems in the State of NH.**

671 Ms. Taylor commented that the *US News and World Report* looks at how ready the students are  
 672 for college.

673 Ms. Kuzsma remarked that the *US News and World Report* looks at more than that.

674 Mr. Grondstra mentioned that they need to be SMART goals, specific, measurable, attainable  
 675 relevant and time- based.

676 Mr. Steel commented that he believes that they have solved the last one as a Board already. They  
 677 use the SAT score, Statewide testing, and NWEA growth. And, SAT and NH SAS can measure  
 678 compared to their peers.

679 He added that he can formulate and work on it. He appreciates the work from the Board.

680 **Ms. Kuzsma motioned to approve the 5 Board Goals as stated. Mr. Gauthier seconded the**  
 681 **motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

682 **Mr. O’Keefe called a roll call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Conklin- Yes,**  
 683 **Grudzien- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes,**  
 684 **Glover- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, and O’Keefe- Yes. (15 in favor, 2 absences)**  
 685 **Motion passed.**

686 XII. Non- Public Session

687 **Ms. Kuzsma motion to enter Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) at 10:00PM. Ms. Facey**  
 688 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

689 **Mr. O’Keefe called a roll call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Conklin- Yes,**  
 690 **Grudzien- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes,**  
 691 **Glover- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, and O’Keefe- Yes. (15 in favor, 2 absences)**  
 692 **Motion passed.**

693 Members Present: Stephen O’Keefe, Sarah Lawrence, Peter Eckhoff, Jessica Hinckley – Not  
 694 present, Scott St. Denis – No present, Pim Grondstra, Steve Coughlan, Amy Facey, John Glover,  
 695 Stephanie Grund, Laura Taylor, George Torres, Elizabeth Kuzsma, Terri Behm, Joshua Conklin,  
 696 Tom Gauthier, and Ellen Grudzien

697 Other persons present during nonpublic session: Adam Steel, Superintendent

698 Description of matters discussed, and final decisions made: Superintendent Evaluation

699 XIII. Public Session

700 **Mr. Coughlan motioned to leave Non-Public Session and return to public session at 10:40**  
 701 **PM. Mr. Glover seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

702 **Mr. O’Keefe called a roll call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Conklin- Yes,**  
 703 **Grudzien- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes,**  
 704 **Glover- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, and O’Keefe- Yes. (15 in favor, 2 absences)**  
 705 **Motion passed.**

706 **Ms. Kuzsma motioned to seal the minutes. Mr. Eckhoff seconded the motion. The vote was**  
 707 **unanimous motion passed.**

708

709 Motion made because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would...

710  **X** Affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board

711  Render a proposed action ineffective

712  Pertains to preparation or carrying out of actions regarding terrorism

713 **Mr. O’Keefe called a roll call: Kuzsma- Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Behm- Yes, Conklin- Yes,**  
 714 **Grudzien- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Torres- Yes, Grund- Yes,**  
 715 **Glover- Yes, Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, and O’Keefe- Yes. (15 in favor, 2 absences)**  
 716 **Motion passed.**

717

718

719

720

721

722

723

724

725

726