

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AMESBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL
MARCH 3, 2009**

Present at 7:00 p.m. were Thatcher Kezer, Chair, Stanley Schwartz, Debra Bibeau, Paula Blair, Bonnie Schultz, Gale Hanshaw, Tom McGee, Charles Chaurette, Superintendent of Schools and Mike Bruno, SAC Representative.

The Chair called the meeting to order. Ms. Hanshaw led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PRESENTATIONS

1. Cashman Elementary Principal – Mary Louise Charette
Dr. Chaurette introduced Lou Charette and there was a question and answer period between Lou and school committee members.
2. Academy of Strategic Learning Progress Report – Donna Georges
Ms. Georges gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the goals reached by the Academy relative to their accountability requirements. Ms. Georges was congratulated by the Mayor and members of the school committee on the work the students at the Academy are doing.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to take business item #2 out of order for a vote. Unanimous, Yes, Student Rep., Yes.

Motion by Debra Bibeau seconded by Paula Blair to approve the charter amendment put forth by the Board of Trustees of the Academy. Unanimous, Yes, Student Rep., Yes.

3. COMMENTS BY VISITORS, DELEGATIONS

None.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. Curriculum Director's Report

1. Title I Summer Program
Telena Imel told the committee that last year's Title I Summer Program for students in grade 1 was successful and the elementary teachers would like to open the program to grades 1 and 2. The program would take place the last week of July. Letters will be going out to parents the first week of April.

B. Assistant Superintendent's Report**1. Choice Report**

David Jack shared a report with the committee regarding the recent history of the Amesbury Public Schools with regard to School Choice. For the third consecutive year, Amesbury remains on the positive side of School Choice both in the decrease in the numbers of students leaving the district to attend other public schools and in the reimbursement monies we receive for educating students who live outside of the district.

Ms. Bibeau stated that the community at large is also part of the success of School Choice.

C. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Chaurette told the committee that he does not foresee any further staff reductions in FY09. The Mayor credited Dr. Chaurette and David Jack for taking aggressive action early in FY09 to freeze the budget.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION**A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to approve the regular minutes dated February 3, 2009. 6 Yes, 1 Abstain (Bibeau), Student Rep., Yes.

B. BUSINESS**1. Reappointment of Whittier Board Representative**

Tony LeSage, one of the current Whittier Board Representatives for Amesbury, is up for reappointment. Mr. LeSage told the Mayor that he would be interested in serving another term in this position.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Tom McGee to approve the reappointment of Mr. LeSage to the Whittier Board. Unanimous, Yes, Student Rep., Yes.

2. Memorandum of Understanding Teaching American History Grant

Telena Imel explained the scope of this Memorandum. Eight school districts will be partnering the UMASS on a three-year Teaching American History project. This Memorandum must be signed by each of the eight districts participating in the project. Billerica will be the grantee due to their statistics.

Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Debra Bibeau to approve the Memorandum of Understanding Teaching American History Grant. Unanimous, Yes, Student Rep., Yes.

3. Quarterly Report

The committee has had the report for several weeks and needed to approve it.

Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Paula Blair to approve the Quarterly Report. Unanimous, Yes.

4. 1st Reading Policy IJNDB Technology and Email Elimination of Policy IJNDB-A Email

Ms. Hanshaw explained to the full committee that the policy subcommittee has been working with Anne Verret-Speck to create a comprehensive policy regarding the use of school electronics.

5. National School Board Conference Discussion

The committee discussed the importance of sending a member to this conference from April 4-7 in San Diego. Committee members will contact the chair if they are interested in being the attendee.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Bonnie Schultz to authorize the chair to give one school committee member authorization to go to the conference. Unanimous, Yes.

- At this point, Ms. Bibeau requested that the April 7, 2009 school committee meeting be moved to Wednesday, April 8, 2009. Since the budget vote will take place during that first meeting in April and Ms. Bibeau will be at the national conference at that time, she requested this change in the date. If the committee approves this change, Mr. Horan will have to be contacted as that is the night of the Spring concert, the Master Calendar will need to be updated, principals should include this change in their upcoming newsletters and a message should go out to all families using the ConnectEd service via the telephone.

Motion by Stanley Schwartz, seconded by Bonnie Schultz to reschedule the Tuesday, April 7, 2009 school committee meeting to Wednesday, April 8, 2009. Unanimous, Yes.

C. WARRANT

Motion by Tom McGee, seconded by Bonnie Schultz, to approve the warrant dated 2/26/09 in the amount of \$464,159.55. Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Stanley Schwartz, seconded by Gale Hanshaw to approve the warrant dated 3/12/09 in the amount of \$97,818.21. Unanimous, Yes.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Budget/Finance Subcommittee

This subcommittee met prior to the school committee meeting. Ms. Bibeau reported that the subcommittee voted unanimously to approve transfers of \$150,000 and give that money back to the town per the Mayor's request.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Paula Blair to approve the transfers as proposed. Unanimous, Yes.

- Ms. Bibeau also stated that the March 9th budget meeting will be held in the library classroom at the high school.
- The subcommittee also spoke about the financial deficit with the lunch program due to lack of commodities from the federal government. A ConnectEd message will be going out encouraging families to apply to participate in the free and reduced lunch program.

2. Policy Subcommittee

This subcommittee met prior to the school committee meeting. Ms. Hanshaw reported out that they met with Mrs. Georges regarding the Academy's request for approval of an Amendment in the Charter that would eliminated grades 7 and 8. If this amendment is approved, the Academy will be grades 9-12 only.

They also discussed early release days and agreed on a meeting between all of the school councils to discuss this idea during the week of March 23rd.

3. Personnel Subcommittee

Will meet prior to the full meeting on March 17th.

4. Student Advisory Council

Mike Bruno stated that the council was pleased with the level of participation of freshmen and sophomores to the Equinox-appaloosa. They have several events coming up that include a hypnotist, Beetlejuice and the talent show.

5. High School Building Committee

Mr. McGee was not at the last meeting so Dr. Chaurette reported that the high school is continuing to have some HVAC issues. Ms. Bibeau asked about the bus route at the high school.

COMMUNICATIONS

- The possible benefits of the stimulus package were discussed.
- On March 28th Division 1 of MASC is sponsoring a meeting to discuss cost saving measures. The meeting will be held in Lowell.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Ms. Bibeau asked if she could speak with Mr. Connors directly about having a celebration for the AHS football champs. The consensus of the committee was positive.

- Mr. Schwartz stated that it was the consensus of the committee to move their meetings from the middle school to the high school library. He asked the Chair and the Superintendent to make it happen.
 - Ms. Bibeau requested that the committee's two representatives to Whittier, Charlie LaBella and Tony LeSage, be invited to a school committee meeting after Whittier's budget process is completed.
1. Proposal for Early Release Days
 2. Library Media Teachers Presentation
 3. FY'10 Budget
 4. Amesbury's Whittier School Board Representatives

At 9:25 p.m. the Chair stated that the committee would need to go into executive session to discuss the new superintendent's contract. The committee will adjourn from executive session.

Roll Call Vote: McGee, Yes; Hanshaw, Yes; Schultz, Blair, Yes; Bibeau, Yes; Schwartz, Yes; Kezer, Yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom McGee
Secretary