

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 7, 2010**

Present at 7:00 p.m. were Thatcher Kezer, Chair, Debra Bibeau, Stanley Schwartz, Gale Hanshaw, Tom McGee, Ann Connolly King, David Jack, Superintendent of Schools and Courtney Ouellet, SAC Representative.

The Chair called the meeting to order. Gale Hanshaw led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. PRESENTATIONS

1. New Schedule AMS – Mike Curry

Mr. Curry, Principal of Amesbury Middle School, gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the process used by the middle school to choose a new schedule that accomplished the goals the middle school wanted to achieve. He then went through the timeline on the execution of this new schedule, followed by the benefits that the new 4-day rotating schedule will bring to students, teachers, parents and administration.

The presentation was followed by a question and answer period with the school committee and Mr. Curry.

2. Reading in the Content Area Celebration of Learning – Mike Curry

Mr. Curry made a PowerPoint presentation regarding a “Learning Walk” that took place on June 1, 2010 at the middle school. Approximately 7 people participated in the walk. The goal is to have everyone in the school participate in one of these learning walks. The responses from the walk were all positive about the learning that is going on in the middle school classrooms. This presentation included slides of students engaged in learning and participating in activities. Mr. Curry has two learning walks planned for this school year. Ms. Connolly King thanked Mr. Curry for showing the committee the critical thinking that is going on at the middle school.

III. COMMENTS BY VISITORS, DELEGATIONS

None.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. Superintendent’s Report

1. Opening Day of School

Mr. Jack informed the committee that the reports from principals and the transportation company is that the first day went smoothly. There were delays around Amesbury due to construction projects, however, the new transportation company worked around the issues.

Mr. Jack encouraged the viewing public to be patient with the traffic but to call the superintendent's office or Salter Transportation if they have questions.

Some of the schools in the district held open house prior to the first day of school so that students would know what to do on the first day. A 3rd grade teacher was added at the Cashman School and a .5 Special Education teacher was added at the Amesbury Elementary School. The funding for these positions came from the Jobs Education Fund. This funding can be used over the next 2 years. September 7th student enrollment is 2,385. The end of the school year it was 2390.

The superintendent reported that the 3-day Induction Program for the five new teachers was well received. Each new teacher is assigned a mentor teacher who helps get the new employee acclimated to Amesbury. The mentors and mentees meet throughout the school year as well. The teaching staff opening day was on August 31st followed by two days of professional development. Emphasis was given to the new anti-bullying policies. There will be a lot of effort going into the culture around this issue, especially between the Amesbury Police Department and the schools. Other professional development topics were X2 and website training as well as John Collins Writing Across the Curriculum.

Mr. Jack spoke about the new law on sports-related head injuries. A Public Health Advisory was included in the school committee packet on this issue. Mr. Schwartz asked if this topic would become a school committee policy. The superintendent will put this item on the next policy subcommittee agenda.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Tom McGee, seconded by Gale Hanshaw to approve the school committee minutes dated August 17, 2010. 4 Yes, 1 Abstain (Kezer).

B. BUSINESS

- 1. 2nd Reading Policy AA School District Legal Status**
Ms. Hanshaw explained a minor change suggested by the policy subcommittee.

Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Ann Connolly King to approve Policy AA School District Legal Status. Unanimous, Yes.

2. **2nd Reading Policy ADDA Criminal Record Information**
Ms. Hanshaw explained a minor change that is recommended by the policy subcommittee.

Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Tom McGee to approve Policy ADDA Criminal Record Information Policy. Unanimous, Yes.

3. **1st Reading Policy ABC Student Involvement in Decision Making**
Ms. Hanshaw told the committee that his policy was sent to our MASC representative, Mike Gilbert, for clarification and that the policy has been updated per his suggestions. This policy will be on the next school committee agenda for a 2nd reading.
4. **1st Reading Policy JCA-R Assignment of Students to Schools**
Gale Hanshaw explained that this form has been used by the schools for years but has no adopted date.

Motion by Tom McGee, seconded by Deb Bibeau to waive the first reading of Policy Regulation JCA-R Assignment of Students to Schools. Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to approve Policy Regulation JCA-R Assignment of Students to Schools. Unanimous, Yes.

5. **1st Reading Policy BD School Committee Meetings**
Ms. Hanshaw spoke to the minor grammatical changes suggested by the policy subcommittee. This policy will be put on the next school committee agenda for a 2nd reading.
6. **1st Reading Policy BDDA Notice of School Committee Meetings**
Ms. Hanshaw noted the changes to the policy in keeping with the new Open Meeting Law. This policy will be put on the next school committee agenda for a 2nd reading.
7. **Student Request to Attend Another District MGL 76§12**
The superintendent and Mayor Kezer have been involved in an ongoing discussion about a Newburyport High School student who moved to Deer Island in Amesbury but the student wants to complete his 12th grade in Newburyport. The Mayor and Mr. Jack explained that under M.G.L. 76:12, a student may be placed in a school in another town if both school committees agree to this plan.

It was agreed that what would be best for the student would be for him to finish his academic career at Newburyport High School. Also, his family moved to Deer Island and the Hines Bridge will be closed in October so getting to Amesbury would be all the more difficult.

The Newburyport School Committee and Mayor proposed the option that since the student has been living in Amesbury for 1 ½ years, the Choice money would amount to \$7,500. The parents are

to pay \$5,000 and the Amesbury School Committee will pay \$2,500. Mayor Kezer suggested that Amesbury authorize a transfer “not to exceed \$2,500”.

Ms. Connolly King expressed concern that this action by the Amesbury School Committee could become precedent setting. Ms. Bibeau stated that Newburyport could waive their Choice policy for this one student who has spent his whole academic life in Newburyport. She also stated that she does not agree that Amesbury should pay anything for this student to attend Newburyport.

There were a number of members who stated that this issue is between Newburyport and the student’s family and Newburyport needs to take care of this.

The Mayor’s position is that in order to make the best of this situation, he would recommend that Amesbury pay the \$2,500 and the parents of the student pay \$5,000.

Ms. Bibeau and Ms. Connolly King both expressed their displeasure at this request coming so late. Newburyport has already started school so the student in question is already missing classes.

The committee consensus was to separate this request into two votes. The first vote would be their support for the student to attend Newburyport High School and the second vote would be regarding the costs.

Motion by Ms. Bibeau, seconded by Mr. Schwartz to authorize the student to attend Newburyport High School in accordance with M.G.L. 76:12. Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Ms. Bibeau, seconded by Mr. McGee to suspend the rules so that the school committee may continue to conduct business after 9:00 p.m. Unanimous, Yes.

Mr. McGee stated that in order for the student to get to school as quickly as possible, he would support the “not to exceed \$2,500” deal.

Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Ms. Hanshaw to authorize the payment of a dollar amount, not to exceed \$2,500, for the student to attend Newburyport High School for his senior year in accordance with MGL 76/12. 2 Yes, 4 No (Bibeau, Connolly King, Hanshaw, Schwartz).

The Mayor will tell Newburyport the results of these votes and that there are no further negotiations on this issue.

C. WARRANT

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Gale Hanshaw to approve the warrant dated August 26, 2010 in the amount of \$308,887.24. Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Stanley Schwartz, seconded by Tom McGee to approve the warrant dated September 9, 2010 in the amount of \$104,635.13. Unanimous, Yes.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Budget/Finance Subcommittee

Ms. Bibeau reported that the subcommittee had voted to approve the cafeteria contract giving the four workers a 2.9% raise.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Gale Hanshaw to accept the increase of hourly salaries by 2.9% for cafeteria workers. Unanimous, Yes.

The subcommittee reviewed the lease agreement with Amesbury Media Corp. renting the studio in Room 142 of the Amesbury High School.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Gale Hanshaw to accept the three-year lease at \$5,000 per year for the rental of room 142 to Amesbury Media Corp. Unanimous, Yes.

Mr. Bergeron introduced a new format for future budget pages that include an explanation of what the funds are used for by cost center. He will work on it further and test it out with individuals, such as school councils.

2. Policy Subcommittee

This subcommittee will meet on September 30, at 4:00 p.m. in the Superintendent's office.

3. Personnel Subcommittee

This subcommittee will meet prior to the next school committee meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Student Advisory Council

The Student Advisory Council has not met in the new year but will be meeting very soon.

- Ms. Bibeau reminded the committee that there is an Early Bird Special for registering for the MASC/MASS Joint Conference. She also stated that there will be a fundraiser hosted by Lena's Seafood in Salisbury that will benefit the Landry Stadium.
- It was suggested that the school committee send a letter of thanks to Kendra Amaral, the Mayor's aide, as her last day will be September 23rd.
- Ms. Hanshaw reminded everyone that the Relay for Life would be taking place this Saturday and Sunday at the Landry Stadium.
- Instead of doing a wine tasting event, AEFI is planning on doing something different on October 25th.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Report on Diversity in Students & Personnel
2. CACD/Tufts University Program at AMS
3. Whittier Supt. & Representatives – Bill DeRosa, C. LaBella, T. LeSage (9/21/10)
4. Adult Ed. Program – Maggie Furlong (9/21/10)

Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Debra Bibeau to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Unanimous, Yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom McGee, Secretary

Amesbury Public Schools Mission Statement

The Amesbury School District is unconditionally committed to every child, ensuring that all students experience success through the development of attitudes and skills necessary for lifelong learning by providing the highest quality staff, meaningful learning experiences, and a vitally involved community.