

AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 6, 2025

Present were Mayor Gove, Maryann Welch, Abigail Jurist Levy, Greg Noyes, Kurt Mansperger, Brock Omohundro, Kate Slater, and Superintendent McAndrews.

A recording of this meeting can be viewed here: <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1FEpH6148m/>

- I. Call to Order/Mission Statement/Pledge of Allegiance – Ms. Welch read the mission statement and led the committee in the pledge.
- II. Comments by Visitors & Delegations– No Comments
- III. Spotlight Award
 - Ms. Allison Stenson was recognized by the committee as the latest Spotlight recipient. Ms. Stenson was nominated for the recognition by a student and his family.
- IV. Communications & Reports (5:25)
 - A. Superintendent’s Report
 - Superintendent McAndrews detailed the search process used to hire an Interim Director of Teaching, Learning, and Equity. The process ended with the hiring of Mr. Christopher Heath. Mr. Heath introduced himself to the committee and answered questions from the members on his background and goals for the district. Superintendent McAndrews then shared an update on open positions, recent hires and departures.
 - The Superintendent then shared an update on the AMS roof project. The first phase of the project is almost complete and has gone very smoothly with very little disruption to the day-to-day operations of the school. Phase 2, the installation of the new HVAC units, will be completed at a later date once the units arrive. The committee then discussed the renovations to the performance center.
 - B. Student Advisory Council – Ms. Snow updated the committee on behalf of SAC including updates on the menstrual product drive, ongoing fundraising, and reaching out to the Amesbury Health Trust.
 - C. SEPAC Report – The co-chairs of the Amesbury SEPAC provided a report to the committee on the work of the SEPAC including upcoming workshops on anti-bullying and IEPs. The SEPAC will also be stating a morning coffee hour to complement their evening meetings. The committee then spoke about efforts to curb bullying in schools, including ongoing community efforts as well as potential policy changes.
 - D. Liaisons
 - Shay Memorial Building Project Update: Mayor Gove noted there had not been a recent meeting.
 - E. Subcommittees
 - Finance and Facilities: Ms. Welch shared that the subcommittee’s next meeting would be on January 27th.
 - Curriculum and Inclusion: Ms. Welch reported on the subcommittee’s most recent meeting including the approval of additional spotlight award winners, discussions on

guidance for upcoming presentations, planning for competency determinations based on the recent MCAS requirements, and continued UDL work.

- Policy and Personnel: Dr. Jurist Levy shared that the subcommittee worked on policies which are on the evenings agenda. She also highlighted the work of Mr. Omohundro in the creation of a member handbook. The subcommittee would look at the district civil rights policy in the future relating to bullying.
- Long Range Planning: Dr. Jurist Levy shared that a task force meeting had taken place in early December. The task force heard about planned budget meetings and discussed ideas for increasing revenue and decreasing costs. There will be another Task Force meeting January 29 followed by a meeting of the whole on February 4. Ms. Liporto shared an update on the early work of the FY26 budget development. The committee further discussed the next steps for determining future plans for AIHS.

F. Requests of Committee

- Mr. Noyes highlighted some school community documents from 1995 in order to bring attention to student enrollment at that time. He then asked about options for utilizing the legislative liaison (Mayor Gove) to speak with Amesbury's state delegation regarding unfunded mandates.
- Mayor Gove spoke briefly about the possibility of adding cameras on busses. Implementing this program would require the city to allow tickets to be mailed.

V. New Business (1:26:25)

1. Policies

- The first policy for consideration was BDDH-E: Guidelines for Participation at School Committee Meetings. Dr. Jurist Levy highlighted the proposed changes made to the existing policy. The proposed changes would allow for a response to public comment by the committee. The committee discussed the proposed changes.
- DIC: Financial Reporting was the next policy up for discussion. No changes were made to the language of the policy.
Dr. Slater moved to approve policy DIC as presented, seconded by Dr. Jurist Levy. Approved unanimously.
- DBJ: Budget Transfer Authority. Dr. Jurist Levy highlighted the changes proposed to the policy.
Dr. Slater moved to approve the policy as presented, seconded by Ms. Welch. Approved unanimously.

2. Approval of 3-year Bus Contract – Ms. Liporto summarized the process for securing a new bus contract and shared the proposed terms with the committee. The committee discussed the pricing tiers within the contract if the number of busses needed was changed.
Ms. Welch moved to suspend policy BDD, seconded by Mr. Omohundro. Approved unanimously.
Ms. Welch moved to approve the 3-year transportation contract with Salter Transportation with an option to renew for 2 additional years, seconded by My. Noyes. Approved unanimously.

3. Draft 2025-2026 School Year Calendar – Superintendent McAndrews summarized the two draft calendars that were before the committee including both a pre and post Labor Day

start. The committee discussed many aspects of the proposed calendars including whether to start school before or after Labor Day, which days to hold PRT days on, which days to have PD, as well as length of the school year and vacations.

4. 2025 Meeting Calendar – The committee considered a schedule of meeting dates for the upcoming year. The Mayor summarized the proposed dates to the committee.

Mr. Noyes moved to approve the calendar, seconded by Dr. Jurist Levy. Approved unanimously.

5. Appointment of Subcommittees and Chairs – Mayor Gove announced the following appointments to subcommittees:

- Finance and Facilities: Welch (Chair), Noyes, Mansperger.
- Policy and Personnel: Omohundro (Chair), Slater, Jurist Levy.
- Curriculum and Inclusion: Slater (Chair), Omohundro, Welch.
- Long Range Planning: Jurist Levy (Chair), Noyes, Mansperger.

Ms. Welch moved to approve the appointments, seconded by Mr. Noyes. Approved unanimously.

VI. Consent Agenda (2:16:00)

1. *Dr. Slater moved to approve the following minutes: Oct 21, Nov 4 & 18, Dec 2 & 16. The motion was seconded by Ms. Welch.*

Mr. Noyes stated his opposition to the formatting of the proposed minutes stating they lacked the appropriate amount of information.

Vote: 6 Yes, 1 No (Noyes). Passes.

Ms. Welch moved to approve the minutes from Oct 7 with revisions (Change “resign to adjourn” and “Omoundro” to Omohundro”. Seconded by Dr. Slater.

Mr. Noyes again noted his displeasure with the amount of information provided in the minutes.

Vote: 6 Yes, 1 No (Noyes). Passes.

2. *Mr. Noyes moved to approve the following warrants: Nov 15 \$647,264.52 | Nov 29 \$732,748.04 | Dec 12 \$545,805.91 | Dec 13 \$703,471.97 | Jan 1 \$1,578,018.45. Mr. Omohundro seconded the motion. Mr. Noyes asked a question about timing of approval and Ms. Liporto stated the committee was following standard operating procedures.*

Vote: 7 Yes. Passes.

Mr. Omohundro moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Welch. Approved unanimously.