

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
October 3, 2016**

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Present at 7:00 p.m. were Deb LaValley, Acting Chair; Tom McGee, Rob Chamberlain, Gretchen Marinopoulos, Nicholas Wheeler, Sydney Knowlton, SAC Representative and Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent of Schools.  
Absent were: Mayor Gray and Peter Hoyt

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. LaValley called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM and Mr. McGee led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Mission Statement.

**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.*

**II. COMMENTS BY VISITORS, DELGATIONS**

- Mrs. Ellen Cronin stated that after listening to Mr. Curry's presentation last meeting, she still has the following concerns regarding the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Disney trip. Dr. Reese's parent survey revealed the following
  - 50% of parents do not want to continue with the Disney trip
  - 3 out of 4 families would need financial aid, but 40% of families stated that they would not ask for help

Other points of interest that Mrs. Cronin pointed out:

- Fundraiser is selling wreaths, students only get \$5.00 for every wreath they sell
- Students are missing 5 days of academic learning (32 hours)
- AMS lags behind academically already (no foreign languages; no Algebra classes; and no life skill classes).
- No agent booking the trip, would feel better if there was an agent involved.
- Students need well, rounded, challenging education
- There are better programs out there then sending the students to Disney

**III. PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT AND STAFF**

**A. Report of the Superintendent –**

Dr. Reese spoke about the following:

- State Testing – Results came out on September 26<sup>th</sup>, all APS are Level 2 schools.
- International Students – Request for the district to accept international students for one year. Two types of visa's – F-1 = districts apply to accept international students. Fees are involved for approval with the process taking up to one year. J-1 = working with an agency who places the student for a one year stay. APS has a request from an agency to accept a

high school student under this visa. Recommendation to the committee that this request be reviewed by policy subcommittee and to review policy JFAB (Non Resident Students) and update as necessary.

- Superintendent's Goals Review – Minimum of one professional practice and one student learning goal needs to be established. These goals are aligned with the strategic priorities. Dr. Reese went over the action plan; supports/resources from school/district and its timeline/frequency. Mr. Chamberlain asked if the social, emotional outcomes could be articulated in a simple way. (what does this mean and some background information). Dr. Reese stated that Lyn Jacques will be at the October 31<sup>st</sup> meeting to do a presentation.
- MSBA Committee – Making Progress – Second Benchmark was sent out last week – Members on the committee are: Joan Liporto, Mayor Gray, Dr. Reese, Joe McMilleon, Nick Wheeler, Normand Fredette, and an architect (not identified yet). Mr. Wheeler asked what is next? MSBA will need an educational plan (narrative on the educational needs) and facility (what we do to maintain our buildings at present).
- Strategic Plan – Worked with the Administration Team, over the summer, to establish the Action Steps. (Vision, Mission, Theory of Action, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Initiatives). This is a work in progress. A draft of the plan is available for the review and input of school committee. Community members will be able to review also and solicit feedback. Mr. Chamberlain requested the Strategic Plan be put into a narrative format.
- Fireball Run – This past Saturday – great event promoting missing children. APS flash mob with Joanna Kimball choreographing the dance.
- Athletic Facilities Report – Mr. Gearin created a report of details on any issues with APS' athletic fields and potential remedies to those issues. Ms. LaValley questioned the line item of the Landry Stadium scoreboard that is fairly new.

***Motion by Mr. Chamberlain, seconded by Mr. McGee to send the acceptance of International Students to APS to the Policy Subcommittee for approval. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

***Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. McGee to send the acceptance of International Students to APS to the Finance Subcommittee for approval. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

#### **B. Report of the Director of Student Services**

Mary Houde spoke about the following:

- Met with Special Education teachers throughout the district. Will be having monthly meetings.
- Spent full day at each school – Very helpful – met with students and staff
- Not familiar with some of the out of district schools, will be visiting the ones not familiar with
- Looking through the IEP's of out of district students
- Interviews at four different schools – great way to get to know people
- Meeting weekly with facilitators – doing a draft policy on the facilitators

- Nursing department – stipend position for a nurse leader. October 18<sup>th</sup> will be having a Health and Wellness meeting
- SEPACK – set up meeting dates for the year – group will be having social activities – dates and information is on the web site
- Writing two Special Education Grants, with one more to write – Meeting with Joan on the grants.
- ELL – update manual – met with the 2 ELL teachers in the district
- McKinney Vento – working with Deb Smith (Pettingill House)
- Have been attending the district curriculum workshops
- Working together with families – very helpful

Mrs. Marinopoulos thanked Ms. Houde and acknowledged her 3 months of impressive work. She was glad to hear about the SEPACK meeting and stated that the parents were very enthusiastic.

Mr. Chamberlain asked regarding ELL, how many languages are used in Amesbury. Ms. Houde stated she thought it was 6.

Ms. LaValley asked about the grants.

#### IV. COMMUNICATIONS

##### A. **SAC Report – Sydney Knowlton**

Sydney stated that they had their first meeting this past Wednesday and spoke about their goals for the year. She also spoke about the Student Advisory Council's views on their 8<sup>th</sup> grade Disney trip.

- Amazing
- Life Skills
- Hands on Learning
- DC versus Disney – some students went to DC instead of Disney and felt that hands on experience would have been better – DC you have to want to do that.
- Wanted to know if all parents responded to his survey (surveyed AMS & AHS parents) had 460 responses.
- Regarding Algebra 1 – Sydney stated that she had never had 2 Math classes – It all worked out. She was wondering where Mrs. Cronin got that information.

Ms. LaValley asked about the goals – Sydney stated that it was only an introduction meeting. Ms. LaValley stated that School Committee will be inviting the members of SAC to the December meeting.

##### B. **Other**

Ms. LaValley stated that she attended the Fireball run and was impressed. Mr. Wheeler stated he too attended on Saturday and is looking forward to view the flash mob on YouTube. He also stated that he attended the PTO ice cream social and it was packed and had a good time. Dr. Reese and some city councilors were also in attendance.

**V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION**

**A. Field Trips Approval – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Spring Trip – Disney Youth Education Series**

Dr. Reese acknowledged Mr. Curry's Disney presentation last meeting. He stated that a form for overnight field trips was put in place. Mr. Curry has completed the form and Dr. Reese reviewed it.

Ms. LaValley stated that she has concerns with voting – as previously discussed, there are no alternative trips for students staying behind.

Mrs. Marinopoulos stated that the revised, field trip policy, solidly states academics. How much more academics does that trip have. Need to revisit this, beef up the academics before a vote is taken.

Sydney stated that she understands where Mrs. Marinopoulos is coming from, but there is a lot of learning going on: Traveling; life skills; overall beneficial life experience. She went to state that she remembers giving some of her own money to a peer that could not afford the trip. That is learning.

Mr. Chamberlain would like more concrete plan to make it more educational and better behavior guidelines.

Ms. LaValley would like to ask South Hampton students how their DC field trip went and what they got out of it academically.

Mr. Wheeler would be interested in knowing how much it would be to add a seminar to the program.

After much discussion, the members tabled the vote for the Disney trip to the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Any questions or concerns should be directed to Dr. Reese.

**B. Superintendent's Goals**

Dr. Reese stated that since these goals were given late, he asked for his goals to be tabled until the next meeting so that members will have time to review them.

Ms. LaValley tabled the Superintendent's Goals until the October 17<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting.

**C. Review of School Committee Goals – Educational Goal 1**

Mr. McGee read goal 1 under the Educational goal for discussion and review of the members. Mr. Chamberlain discussed target thinking increasing in enrollment. Males complete at a lower rate than females. Ms. LaValley stated that we still have to approve Strategic Plan before moving forward. She also mentioned that the MASS joint conference brochure is also looking and discussing Social, Emotional Learning. Mr. Chamberlain stated that a vote cannot be taken on Strategic Plan if we don't know where we are going.

Next meeting will be reviewing Educational Goal #2.

**D. First Reading of Policies:**

**a. JFF – Student Activity Accounts**

Mr. McGee stated that this policy was reviewed last meeting but is not fine tuned enough. Would like to table this policy to the October 31<sup>st</sup> meeting.

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Wheeler to table first reading of policy JFF – Student Activity Accounts to the October 31, 2016 School Committee meeting. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**b. JKAA – Physical Restraint of Students**

The policy was reviewed and revised last year. There were substantial revision done at that time. Second reading with a vote on this policy will be at the October 17 meeting.

**E. Meeting Minutes – September 19, 2016**

*Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to accept the minutes dated September 19, 2016. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**C. Warrant - \$433,953.89 (9/29/16)**

*Motion by Mr. Wheeler seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to accept the Warrant dated September 29, 2016 in the amount of \$433,953.89. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**A. Subcommittee Reports**

**1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee**

Mr. Chamberlains stated there was no update – Next meeting October 17<sup>th</sup>

**2. Policy Subcommittee**

Mr. McGee stated next meeting will be October 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 – To be discussed: Opioid law, school mascot and student activity accounts

**3. Personnel Subcommittee**

Mr. McGee stated they met prior to this meeting and discussed:

- Staffing report – open positions
- Administrative contracts
- Job description – central office – will be working with new supervisors to finalize descriptions
- Next meeting will be October 31st

**4. Joint Education Subcommittee**

Ms. LaValley stated will be meeting November 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 – agenda:

- Budget schedule
- MSBA process

**VII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS**

**A. MCAS Results Presentation (10/17)**

**C. Visit with State Senator and Representative (10/17)**

**D. South Hampton Visit (TBD)**

**E. Meeting with SAC (12/16)**

**F. Visit to Whittier Tech – Dr. Reese stated that he spoke with Maureen Lynch and has two dates for a visit (Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> or Nov. 1st) Email Heather with the date that best suits your schedule.**

**G. Joint Education Committee (11/15)**

**H. MASC/MASS Joint Conference (next meeting)**

- a. Appointment of delegate from the Amesbury Public Schools**
- b. Discussion of Resolutions – voting at the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting**

**VIII. PRESS CONFERENCE**

None

- IX. Executive Session: Pursuant to MGL c 30A, S21 (a) (2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparations for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. AFT Teachers, Paraprofessionals, MPFT.**

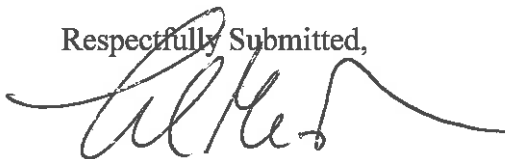
None

**X. Adjournment**

***Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM.***

***Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom McGee', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Tom McGee, Secretary