

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
October 5, 2015**

---

Present at 7:00 p.m. were Mayor Gray; Chair; Debra LaValley, Bonnie Schultz, Tom McGee, Rob Chamberlain, Katie Sully, SAC Representative and Dr. Gary Reese, Interim Superintendent of Schools.

Absent was Peter Hoyt

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 7:05 and Bonnie Schultz led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Mission Statement aloud.

**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 AND DELEGATIONS**

Three parents spoke regarding the resolution calling for a moratorium on high-stakes standardized testing for the students at APS. The state needs to step back and rethink how students are being taught. APS needs to take a lead and accept the moratorium.

- Ms. LaValley stated that Cindy Yetman, AFT President, had come to a previous meeting that they have taken the first step. School Committee has talked about the bill and looking into joining in the moratorium.
- Mayor Gray stated that they will be discussing the moratorium at the first November meeting and will be joined by members of the high school student advisor council.
- Mr. Scorzoni added that there are two different layers that is being discussed – 1. PARCC vs. MACS; 2. Moratorium on all high-stakes tests.
- Mr. Chamberlain stated that PARCC can not be used as a graduation tool - only 7 cities using this test.

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

**A. Report of the director of Special Education**

Kevin Pierce stated that Special Needs students are followed under APS from ages 3 till their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. He spoke about the following programs in the individual schools:

- **AES**
  - Intensive PreK/K
  - Integrated PreK
  - Intensive ASD Program
  - Student Support Program
  - Academic Support Programs

- CES
  - Intensive PreK/K
  - Integrated PreK
  - Student Support Program
  - Program for Positive Active Learning (PAL)
  - Academic Support Programs
- AMS
  - Co-taught Inclusion Classes
  - Partial Inclusion Program
  - Learning Center
  - Student Support
  - Substantially Separate
- AHS
  - Cohort Classes
  - Academic Support Program
  - Life Skills Program

## B. Report of the Assistant Superintendent

Deirdre Farrell spoke about the following:

- Fiscal Year End – In good shape – Fund balances – Mike Basque reviewed reports as of June 30<sup>th</sup> and all agree of the balances – no more sweeping.
- FY16 – as of July 1<sup>st</sup> using new program *Softright* – provided the Finance Committee with a new format of a report – Will be printing out a report every month for the committee.
- Full Day K Grant – budgeted monies and then received the Grant of \$68104.00 – recommendation to fund the following with this LEA monies:
  - Para-professional job at CES – 30 hours - \$27,000.
  - Roof repair at AES over the art room - \$7300.
  - Heat Exchange at AMS - \$10,500.
  - Security Cameras at AMS – get quote
  - Payroll Coordinator – Goal is to hire someone by Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> so that they will have time to cross-train with Patrice Pierce before her retirement in February.
- Enrollments – decline in enrollment in the district - will be looking at the October 1<sup>st</sup> report for accuracy and establish patterns.
- New Website – change in look and navigation – the new website went live on September 29<sup>th</sup>. John Dubuc presented the committee with a power point on the new look and its navigation. After the presentation, the committee had questions and comments:
  - Add the Innovation School & Whittier School
  - Add an easy way to get the high school sports calendar
  - Concern that City Council does not link with the school
  - Add snippets of videos of spotlights
  - Can the website do surveys and hit counters – *yes*
- Maintenance Request System – Web based (free) – no longer paying for School Dude. Secretaries were trained on using it – will submit ticket from individual schools either for the maintenance department or custodial. This system will also generate reports.

### **C. Report of the Superintendent**

Dr. Reese spoke about the following:

1. **Superintendent Annual Goals** – Educator Goals and Plan – New evaluation system – reviewed 3 goals with a progress report due in February on obtaining these goals.
  1. Student Learning Goal – Modeling, leading, planning and facilitation. Action steps - Looking at data analysis especially at the lower grades and into the middle school – measuring student growth - work with principals and community agencies to implement support – training with administrators on the use of the teacher evaluation system
  2. Professional Practice Goal – Involving multiple stakeholders in reviewing strengths and growth will develop multi-year strategic plan with annual goals/benchmarks Action steps – attendance in the NSIP and coach, regular meetings, entry plan, and facilitate a comprehensive plan to committee.
  3. District Improvement Goals – By June 2016, improve communication with parents, school community and community as a whole. Action steps – Twitter account – facebook page – communicating information to families – new district website up-to-date – budget communication with committee and community – two-way communication.

Mrs. Schultz asked if there is a deadline to report to DESE – *Dr. Reese stated the next couple of weeks in October.*

Will put on the next agenda for a vote. Mr. Chamberlain asked if it is a good indicator of the state index. *Dr. Reese stated that it is a snapshot and that the state does use it to measure our progress.*

2. **Municipal Council – 2015-048 An Order to Establish a Special Education Stabilization Fund – Councilor Bezanson and Councilor Lavoie sponsor** – This is an establishment of a stabilization fund for special education – The council can use at a later date and fund an unanticipated cost. Would require a 2/3 vote from the council to pass.
3. Deirdre and Dr. Reese visited the South Hampton School last week. They are thrilled to work with APS and the outcome of their students. Will come visit this committee in the near future.
4. **Upcoming Events/Activities – School Updates**
  - AEFI - Evening of Giving – October 19<sup>th</sup>
  - New Legislature Bill that is currently in the House – Bill 20/20 Screening for 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students for drug and alcohol abuse. Dr. Reese has a call into Senator Connor-Ives for more information and clarification.

## **IV. COMMUNICATION**

### **A. Student Advisory Council – Katie Veseley**

Katie spoke about the following:

- Thursday will be having the first open house of the year.
- Student Council will like to know when the upstairs water bottle filter will be

put in – *Dr. Reese will look into that.*

- Middle School has a bad reputation – the council discussed how to help change that – would like to see staying with the same advisor for the duration of attending the middle school – *Ms. LaValley stated they use to have the advisor program but was cut with the budget a few years ago – will explore that.*
- PARCC vs. MCAS – have been discussing and will be presenting at the meeting in November on their view.

**B. Other**

Ms. LaValley spoke about 2 upcoming events:

- October 15<sup>th</sup> Athletics Hall of Fame Induction
- October 20<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday – will be our next School Committee Meeting because October 19<sup>th</sup> is the AEFI Autumn Evening of Giving.

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

**A. September 21<sup>st</sup> Minutes**

*Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mrs. Schultz to accept the School Committee minutes dated September 21, 2015. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**B. Policy Updates- First Reading**

1. JKAA – Physical restraint of Students
2. ECAF – Security Cameras in Schools
3. EBC – Emergency Plans

Mrs. Schultz spoke regarding the 1<sup>st</sup> Readings of the above Policies.

**C. Warrant**

**\$445,320.45 (10/1/15)**

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to accept the Warrant dated October 1, 2015 in the amount of \$445,320.45. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**D. MASC/MASS Joint Conference**

1. **Appointment of delegate from the Amesbury School Committee** – need to appoint 1 School Committee member as a delegate. The committee will look at their calendars and vote at the next meeting to appoint a delegate.
2. **Presentation of Resolutions** - Ms. LaValley stated that there are new by-laws also. There are 7 resolutions that will be reviewed and discussed next meeting.

**VI INFORMATION ITEMS**

**A. W Subcommittee Reports**

**1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee**

Ms. LaValley stated the committee met prior to this meeting and did not finish discussing all items on the agenda – Those items were tabled and will be reviewed at the next meeting October 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:30.

A vote was taken to approve the items that Ms. Farrell discussed in her report and which were reviewed and voted on by the Finance Committee.

- Para-professional job at CES – 30 hours - \$27,000.
- Roof repair at AES over the art room - \$7300.
- Heat Exchange at AMS = \$10,500.
- Security Cameras at AMS – get quote
- Payroll Coordinator – Cross Training

***Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mrs. Schultz to approve Mr. Farrell's recommendations, stated above, for the work to be completed at the appropriate schools with the LEA funds from the Full Day Kindergarten Grant . Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

**2. Policy Subcommittee – Bonnie Schultz**

Mrs. Schultz stated they met last week regarding the 3 policy previously discussed and reviewed the Technology Policy, MASBO report. Will be meeting again on October 15<sup>th</sup> at 8AM.

**3. Personnel Subcommittee – Mr. McGee**

Mr. McGee stated that they met prior to the Finance meeting regarding new hires and also spoke regarding personal at Central Office.

**VII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS**

The Chair read the future meeting and agenda items aloud.

1. Visit with State Representative and State Senator
2. South Hampton Visit – (October 20 or November 2)
3. MCAS Report
4. Report from Amesbury Middle School Principal – Programs Update (Oct. 20)
5. SAC Presentation – Student Perceptions about PARCC (Nov. 2)
6. Discussion of MASC Resolutions and By Laws (Oct. 20)

**VIII. PRESS CONFERENCE**

None

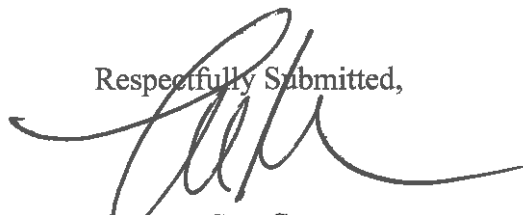
**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

***Motion by Mrs. Schultz, seconded by Ms. LaValley to adjourn the meeting at 8:40. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

Respectfully Submitted,



Tom McGee, Secretary