

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL
December 18, 2017**

Present at 7:00 PM were: Mayor Gray, Chair; Peter Hoyt, Rob Chamberlain, Gretchen Marinopoulos, Nick Wheeler, Amy Sherwood, Michael Gonthier, SAC Representative and Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent of Schools.
Absent was Deb LaValley.

I CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND Mission Statement

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM and Mrs. Marinopoulos led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the 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

None

III. PRESENTATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. Student Advisory Council Presentation

Michael Gonthier, SAC Rep., introduced members of Student Advisory Council that were in attendance. Their presentation was a review of the use of 'blizzard bags' in lieu of a 'no-school' day due to inclement weather cancellations. The following is the information that they presented to the committee:

- School cancellations can count as a day of school
- Structure learning, teacher involvement
- At present there are no laws in Massachusetts
- Used in Burlington High School only after 3 days off
- 3 districts in New Hampshire are currently using Blizzard Bags but 80% of students need to participate
- When Ms. McAndrews was asked about thoughts, she stated that she felt it was beneficial but had some concerns for the elementary level.
- Work would need to be completed after the day off
- Google survey – 75.5 % = yes; 28.8% = no; 3.1% undecided – this is out of 225 students.

Mr. Hoyt thanked the students for their presentation and stated that the students have spoken loud and clear. Mrs. Sherwood asked if the teachers were surveyed (no), and if not, moving forward, would like them to be. Mr. Chamberlain concerned about the impact of grades K-8. Michael agreed and suggested doing a pilot program at the high school. Mrs. Marinopoulos spoke about the south having a lot of the elementary grades participating and having as much educational value. Dr. Reese asked about the roles that the teachers play in, in other districts.

B. School Spotlight – Amesbury Middle School

Mr. Curry, AMS Principal, provided a presentation on developing student leadership, reviewing the following:

- Connection to Strategic Plan – Promote continuous development of high quality education leaders and meet the needs of the learners.
- Peer Mediation Program – recognized in North Shore – proud of our students
- Skills – 2 keys points: 1. good listeners; 2. provide solutions
- Conflict resolution week (Oct. 16-20) – 3 representatives from Amesbury attended
- Data Collection – 16 referrals this school year
- C.A.R.E. – Character, Attitude and Accountability, Respect and Responsibility, Empathy
- Program helps to instill SEL
- North Shore Center trains AMS students

Mr. Hoyt asked if administration is involved as a last resort. Mr. Curry stated that Mary Mitchell is the advisor and the Health Teacher, then it comes to the administration. Mrs. Sherwood asked how the students are selected and how long is the training. Mr. Curry stated that the students are recommended by teachers and they look for leaders and including a broad scope of kids. The training is done in 2 days with a refresher in December.

C. School Safety Training

Mr. Curry with Resource Officers, LeSage and Guilmette, presented an overview of new safety protocols that the school district will be instituting to prepare students and staff to respond in the unlikely event of an intruder or other safety risk, in the building. This is based on the ALICE program (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate). The following are the points made in the presentation:

- Ways to respond with different renditions
- The need to move forward as a district
- 3 natural responses: Fight; flight and freeze
- Things happen quickly – 60% end before police arrive
- Reviewed what took place at Sandy Hook Elementary, Virginia Tech and Columbine and the lessons learned
- Don't issue commands – information is key
- Not just one thing to do - depends on what is happening
- Alert, lockdown, inform, counter, evacuate – ALICE in not a linear, progressive response.
- Someone in each building is trained

Mrs. Marinopoulos stated that her school district has been trained. She went on to say that you can't prepare or even know how you will react if this situation happens. Mr. Curry agreed and went on to say that it is not one and done. This option is comforting to staff with more options but they have to make a decision. Very important to debrief after. Mr. Hoyt stated that times have changed and the need to be ready. He asked when the staff will have training. Mr. Curry stated that the staff will be receiving the same overview. Mrs. Sherwood was concerned with CES and how they would barricade and asked for the time frame on implementation. Dr. Reese stated that all staff will be trained during the February PRT Day; there will be live drills with police for staff and parents will have the overview on January 10th at 7PM.

D. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Reese spoke about the following:

- Week in Review is posted on line
- New Website – available December 26th – old website will no longer be active December 31st. Working on structure and compliance with ADA

E. Report of the Director of Teaching and Learning: State Mandated Test Results

Lyn Jacques spoke about the Next Generation MCAS versus Old Legacy MCAS testing.

For parents, she will be having deeper overview presentation of the results on January 23rd at 6:30PM AHS Library. Ms. Jacques went over the following:

- Grade 3-8 will be taking the Next Generation test in ELA and Math, computer based
- Scale is different then in the past, can not use measure only baseline data
- 1998 – 2006 = legacy standards varying for educators
- Score achievement letters that parents received in October – thought there would be more phone calls asking question – 50% of Massachusetts students met exceeding expectation – the test was harder so students scored lower – parents should not consider just the test – check with their child's teacher.
- Will be putting information on the website and sending letters to high school parents of what to expect.

Mrs. Sherwood asked if the state will be adjusting these tests again. Ms. Jacques stated that the state is always changing, but the New Generation Testing is the new, she did not think so.

IV. COMMUNICATION

A. SAC Report – Michael Gonthier – Michael stated there is nothing to report further this evening.

B. Other

- Mr. Hoyt spoke about the 350th Anniversary and the opportunity to purchase cookbooks, calendars and other items for Christmas. Also, January 9th Starlight Lounge - Amesbury 350th Anniversary Kick-off celebration.
- Mrs. Marinopoulos spoke about the presentation of Break Free from Depression tomorrow night for children and adults.
- Mr. Wheeler thanked the committee for putting up with his short tenure as this is his last night on the board as he moves onto City Council. He went on to state that the quality of students in Amesbury blows his mind. He is looking forward to what his successor will do. Mayor Gray thanked Mr. Wheeler for his service and presented him with a framed photo.

V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION

A. Approval of Minutes: 12/04/2017

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mrs. Sherwood, to approve the regular minutes dated December 4, 2017. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

B. Approval of Warrants: \$224,772.50 (12/07/2017)

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Marinopoulos, to accept the Warrant dated December 7, 2017 in the amount of \$224,772.50. Vote: 5, Yes; 1 excused (Hoyt).

C. Second Reading of Policy: GCG: Employment of Substitutes

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos, to accept Policy - GCG: Employment of Substitutes as presented. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

D. Continuation of the Amesbury Innovation High School

Dr. Reese spoke a little about the background of AIHS. When they made the shift from being a Charter School to an Innovation School, reporting requirements changed for the school. Annually, the school must provide a report to the DESE regarding its progress towards meeting goals and its operations. The report then needs to be presented to school committee for review and a vote of approval. Ms. Maguire will present that now.

Ms. Maguire thanked the committee for their support and added that there is a Project Day tomorrow, if any member would like to attend. She added that by the end of the day, there will be a product revealed. Ms. Maguire presented the report and reviewed the following:

- Went over the Mission and Vision of the school
- Went over Current School/District Practice; Proposed change in practice; Expected Impact on Student Achievement
- Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
- School Schedule and Calendar – flex time – work study/Internship
- Staffing
- Professional Development
- Policies and Procedures – same as district
- Measured Annual Goals – this is what is reported
- SEL – Pre and post survey

Mr. Hoyt stated that he has attended a Project Day and it was outstanding – leadership – students are totally committed. Mrs. Marinopoulos asked about bringing back students for a Spotlight time. Mayor Gray stated that this program is a success and has overcome hurdles. He thanked Ms. Maguire for her strong committee to the students.

Motion by Mrs. Marinopoulos, seconded by Mr. Hoyt, to continue the Amesbury Innovation High School. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

E. School Committee Goals

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Hoyt, to accept School Committee Goals as presented. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

F. Acceptance of Donation: Windrush Therapeutic Riding Program - \$2,000

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Hoyt, to accept \$2,000. donation for the Windrush Therapeutic Riding Program. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS**A. Subcommittee Reports****1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee – Rob Chamberlain**

Mr. Chamberlain stated the following from tonight's meeting:

- Budget – public meeting tomorrow night at 6PM
- Approval of a few transfers
- At risk – Choice Funds – some salaries paid out of that
- SPED costs – looking at those
- Fee schedule – looking at South Hampton tuition, PreK, usage fees
- Substitute pay – comparisons with other districts.

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mrs. Sherwood, to suspend the rules and continue School Committee Meeting after 9PM. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

2. Policy Subcommittee – Peter Hoyt

Mr. Hoyt stated there is nothing to report.

3. Personnel Subcommittee – Amy Sherwood

Mrs. Sherwood stated they met this evening discussing the following:

- New year for the budget
- Updates on retirements
- Annual benchmarks

4. Joint Education Subcommittee – Deb LaValley

Ms. LaValley stated they have not met.

5. Building and Grounds Subcommittee – Deb LaValley

Ms. LaValley stated they have not met.

6. AES School Building Committee – Nick Wheeler

Mayor Gray stated they are working on the Design selection. Joan Liporto stated the need to respond back to the MSBA by January 17th. Meetings with the MSBA will be the first and second week of February.

VII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS

A. William Scott, Dir. of Community & Economic Development – DIF Presentation (TBD)

B. Fees (transportation, athletics, building use, South Hampton, preschool, lunch) (1/8/18)

C. School Spotlight – Amesbury High School (1/8/18)

D. School Committee Organizational Meeting

E. Review of Technology Plan (1/22/18)

F. Superintendent Mid-Cycle Progress Review (1/22/18)

G. Budget Meetings (1/18/18, 1/25/18, 1/29/18, 2/1/18)

H. Update of Capital and Equipment Purchase and Replacement Plan (1/22/18)

Additions:

- January 8, 2018 vote to replace AES School Building Rep.
- Organizational Meeting with opening in Policy and Joint Ed.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to adjourn the meeting at 9:04PM. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gretchen Marinopoulos, Secretary