

Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee Meeting
Tuesday, August 22, 2017
Library, Amherst Regional High School

IN ATTENDANCE

Eric Nakajima, Chair
Ron Mannino
Phoebe Hazzard
Stephen Sullivan
Audra Goscenski
Emily Marriott

Michael Morris, Interim Superintendent
Sean Mangano, Finance Director
Faye Brady, Student Services Director
Dr. Albert Mussad, Collaborative for Educational Services
Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder

ABSENT

Anastasia Ordonez
Peter Demling
Vira Douangmany Cage

1. Call to Order and Approve Minutes 6:38 p.m.

Mr. Nakajima called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. Ms. Hazzard moved to approve the minutes of June 27, 2017 and August 15, 2017 as presented. Ms. Goscenski seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Announcements and Public Comment 6:40 p.m.

There were no public comments or announcements from the committee. Mr. Nakajima welcomed everyone to the new school year, and Dr. Morris formally welcomed Doreen Cunningham, Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity and Human Resources. Mr. Nakajima noted that the meeting is being recorded and live-broadcast by Amherst Media.

3. Superintendent's Update 6:42 p.m.

Dr. Morris provided updates on a number of topics including:

- Administration week training, which included training by Juna Pierre of the Boston Public Schools on conducting investigations for allegations of bias-based incidents, as well as a conference call with attorney Marc Terry regarding proactive planning for addressing any issues that may arise from the current national climate;
- All school committee members are invited to the all staff convocation at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 29 and to the First Day Celebration on the Amherst Common at 5:00 p.m. that day;
- The first day of school will be August 30 for students in grades 1-12, with a staggered start time for new and returning students at the middle and high schools, and pre-k and kindergarten students will begin school on September 5;
- Based on a suggestion by Ms. Douangmany Cage, a senior leadership page has been added to the district website;
- The high school will host a parent/guardian forum on September 21 to share information about the school's supplemental safety protocol ALICE, which the district hopes to expand to the middle school this year; and
- The name of the South East Campus school has been officially changed to Summit Academy.

Mr. Mannino asked if there is still hazing of ninth grade students in high school. Dr. Morris noted that there is not and explained efforts by the faculty and staff, as well as ARHS students, to prevent such hazing. Ms. Cunningham noted that Amherst Media has filmed interviews of Mr. Ryan and herself and will continue interviewing other new faculty and staff in the future. Dr. Morris noted that the next taping is tomorrow.

4. Chair's Report

6:53 p.m.

Mr. Nakajima noted that having a chair's report is an idea that came out of discussions at the retreat. He noted that he does not have a report tonight other than that he had an opportunity to meet with Dr. Morris and Ms. Westmoreland about the school committee calendar that was distributed tonight. Mr. Nakajima reminded the committee that an additional Regional School Committee meeting has been added for Wednesday, September 6th.

5. Subcommittee Updates

6:54 p.m.

Ms. Hazzard noted that the Superintendent Evaluation subcommittee has not had an opportunity to meet, but plans to do so in early September. Dr. Morris noted that Juna Pierre reviewed the district's bias-based policies and made some suggestions for consideration. He and Ms. Cunningham offered to attend a meeting of the Policy Subcommittee to review her suggestions.

6. New and Continuing Business

6:57 p.m.

A. Vote Contracts

● APEA Memorandums of Agreement

Dr. Morris explained that no record can be found of a signed agreement of the MOAs with the APEA from last year. An approved and signed agreement is needed to be in compliance. Mr. Mannino moved to approve the Memorandums of Agreement with the APEA as presented. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

● AFSCME 1 Year Successor Agreement and APAA 1 Year Successor Agreement

Dr. Morris noted that a successor agreement has been reached with the APAA, which includes the Assistant Principals, as well as with AFSCME, which represents the facilities and custodial staff. Ms. Goscenski moved to approve the one year successor agreement with AFSCME and with APAA as presented. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

● Approve removal of the Food Services Director Position from the APAA

Dr. Morris explained that there is broad agreement with the bargaining unit and the employee in the role of Food Services Director that the role is more in line with a committee action position than with the administrative positions in the APAA. Ms. Marriott moved to approve removal of the Food Services Director position from the APAA to become a committee-action position. Ms. Hazzard seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

● Approval of a five-year agreement with Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing Center

Dr. Morris explained that the proposed agreement will enable the district to become an admissions testing center for ARHS students, as well as students from other districts, for admission to Oxford University. He noted that the High School administration requested approval of this agreement based on student interest in applying to Oxford. Ms. Hazzard moved to approve the five-year agreement with Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing Center, allowing students to complete the application process for Oxford University. Mr. Mannino seconded and, after brief clarifying questions, the motion was unanimously approved.

B. Planning for Success Model

Mr. Nakajima explained that he and Ms. Goscenski had an opportunity to meet with Dr. Morris and Dr. Albert Mussad, of the Collaborative for Educational Services, regarding strategic planning for the district. Dr. Morris noted that Planning for Success is a strategic planning model specifically designed for pre-K to 12 school models. He introduced Dr. Mussad who provided information about his background, noting that he is currently the Leadership and Instruction Consultant at the Collaborative. Dr. Mussad then distributed and reviewed an outline of the strategic planning process in the Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools, including the initial planning process

from August 2017-June 2018. He also distributed and reviewed the proposed timeline for facilitation of the initial strategic planning processes for the Amherst Regional School District, noting that the School Committee and administration will be able to provide feedback and input on the timeline and processes. Dr. Mussad noted that there are some features of Planning for Success that will be tailored to the Amherst Regional Schools, including an extended timeline, focus on input from hard-to-reach individuals and groups, and completion of three initial planning processes for the permanent superintendent. Mr. Mannino noted that he would like to see examples of a strategic plan that has been completed. Dr. Mussad noted that the Planning for Success website has a number of samples, and Dr. Morris agreed to send samples to the committee tomorrow. Ms. Goscenski stated that she thinks the timeline, even though it is extended, will still be somewhat rushed. Ms. Cunningham noted that she appreciates that this plan allows for meeting with those who may not typically have a seat at the table. Dr. Morris said there are many things to think through on the front end with regard to effective communication and expressed appreciation for Dr. Mussad's intentionality in that regard. At Ms. Hazzard's request, Dr. Mussad explained the make-up of the Strategic Planning Team and the District Leadership Team. He noted that the preference may be to have only one group, which would include a preponderance of community members outside of the school, members of the School Committee and members of the district and secondary administration and faculty. Mr. Nakajima noted that any questions or comments about this topic should be sent directly to Dr. Morris, to be brought forward at the next School Committee meeting.

C. FY17 Fourth Quarter Budget Update

Mr. Mangano reviewed the highlights of the FY17 Fourth Quarter Budget Update, noting that the fiscal year closed .45% under budget overall. He then answered brief clarifying questions for the committee.

D. FY18 Budget Update

Dr. Morris noted that the Insurance Advisory Committee met a week after the new fiscal year began to review the Town of Amherst Health Trust. The IAC voted to increase insurance rates for all plans by 10% effective October 1, and the recommendation was supported by the Town Manager. The full financial impact will not be known until all hiring is complete and employee insurance choices are finalized, but the estimated impact on the FY18 is up to \$218,000. Dr. Morris noted that the district is being intentionally cautious in spending, and there has been staffing reorganization in the Central Offices to reduce costs. More information and a clearer picture should emerge in the next six weeks. Mr. Nakajima asked Mr. Mangano and Dr. Morris to present an update at the October 10 meeting if the information is finalized by that time. Dr. Morris suggested providing an update on October 10 and having a more in-depth discussion on October 24. Mr. Mangano noted that information should be available in October regarding salaries, insurance and enrollments, but tuition costs and potential utilities savings are not known until December.

E. Warrant Signing Process

Dr. Morris noted that Mr. Mannino and Ms. Ordonez met with him and Mr. Mangano to develop a process that allows committee members to ask questions and feel comfortable with the warrant signing process. Mr. Mangano briefly explained the three options considered, which include 1) develop a schedule for school committee members to stop by the Business Office to sign warrants on a recurring basis; 2) Utilize a warrant signing committee as is done in the summer; and 3) Seek a cost effective solution for online warrant review and approval. Mr. Mannino noted that he would like to know what the liability would be for a school committee member who signs a warrant that turns out to be problematic. It was agreed that Dr. Morris will pose that question to our legal counsel and share the information with the committee. Mr. Nakajima asked that this topic be put on an agenda in September.

F. Retreat Discussion and School Committee Planning

8:17 p.m.

Mr. Nakajima encouraged committee members to email him any topics they would like to see considered on a future agenda. He then gave a brief overview of the committee's discussion at the retreat. Ms. Marriott noted

that she is working on a draft of potential school committee protocols for consideration by the full committee, as was discussed at the retreat.

G. Accept Gifts

Ms. Goscenski moved to accept \$12,993.29 from Stop and Shop A+ for the High School at the principal's discretion; \$1,393.97 from Stop and Shop A+ for the Middle School at the principal's discretion; \$4,096.88 from Valley Gives Community Foundation/Hurricane Boosters for the Athletic program; \$500 from Valley Gives Community Foundation/Hurricane Boosters for the Athletic program; \$500 from Amherst Education Foundation for the district wide music department; \$108.66 from A.J. Hastings, Inc. for Amherst Together; \$500 from the Class of 2017 for a scholarship for the Class of 2018; \$750 from My School Bucks for the 2017 Growth Grant recipient for student participation in nutrition for gifts totaling \$20,842.10. Mr. Mannino seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. Adjourn

8:26 p.m.

Ms. Hazzard moved to adjourn at 8:26 p.m. Ms. Goscenski seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland

MEETING DOCUMENTS:

1. *Minutes of June 27, 2017 and August 15, 2017 Regional School Committee Meetings*
2. *Interim Superintendent's Update to the Regional School Committee dated August 22, 2017*
3. *Summit Academy brochure*
4. *Memo to the School Committee from Michael Morris, Interim Superintendent dated August 21, 2017*
5. *Memorandum of Agreement between the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committees and the Amherst-Pelham Education Association, Unit A dated August 2017*
6. *Memorandum of Agreement between the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committees and the Amherst-Pelham Education Association, Unit B dated August 2017*
7. *Memorandum of Agreement between AFSCME Council 93, Local 1725, AFL-CIO and Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committees dated June 28, 2017*
8. *Memorandum of Agreement between the Amherst-Pelham Administrators Association and the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committees dated June 28, 2017*
9. *Memorandum of Agreement between the Amherst-Pelham Administrators Association and the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committees dated June 30, 2017*
10. *Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing Centre Agreement*
11. *Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Fiscal Year 2017 Year End Budget Report*
12. *Memo to the School Committee Members from Ms. Ordonez, Mr. Mannino, Dr. Morris and Mr. Mangano regarding Warrant Review Working Group*
13. *Memo to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Jill Berry, Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Treasurer dated August 18, 2017 (gifts)*
14. *Calendar of 2017-2018 School Committee Meetings and Topics*
15. *Planning for Success in the Amherst-Pelham Schools by Albert E. Mussad, Ph.D, Leadership and Instruction Consultant (distributed by Dr. Mussad at the meeting)*
16. *Proposed Timeline: Side-by-Side View for Facilitation of Initial Strategic Planning Processes in the Amherst Regional Public Schools (Grades 7-12 District) (distributed by Dr. Mussad at the meeting)*