

Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee Meeting
Tuesday, November 29, 2016
Library, Amherst Regional High School

IN ATTENDANCE

Eric Nakajima, Chair
Phoebe Hazzard
Anastasia Ordonez
Stephen Sullivan
Vira Douangmany-Cage
Trevor Baptiste
Audra Goscenski
Emily Marriott

Mike Morris, Interim Superintendent
Sean Mangano, Finance Director
Faye Brady, Student Services Director
Kathryn Mazur, HR Director
Ron Bohonowicz, Facilities Director
Mark Jackson, ARHS Principal
Julie Federman, Amherst Department of Health
Amy Rusiecki, Amherst Department of Public Works
John Tobiason, UMass Professor
Jeff Stauder, ARHS Art Teacher
Nat Woodruff, ARHS Science Teacher
John Bechtold, Performing Arts Department Head
Todd Fruth, Choral Director
Ned Young, Computer Programming Teacher
Ericka Alschuler, ARHS Assistant Principal

ABSENT

Katherine Appy

1. Call to Order and Approve Minutes

6:04 p.m.

Mr. Nakajima called the Regional School Committee to order at 6:04 p.m. Ms. Goscenski moved to approve the minutes of November 8, 2016. Ms. Douangmany Cage seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Water Testing Update

6:07 p.m.

DOCUMENT: Water Update to the Regional School Committee, November 29, 2016 (Powerpoint slides)

Mr. Nakajima noted that there has been great interest in the testing that has been done in the schools regarding lead in the water and the steps that have been taken. Although there have been regular updates at School Committee meetings on actions as they occurred, this seemed like a timely opportunity to have a more formal update. Dr. Morris introduced Julie Federman from the Department of Public Health; Ron Bohonowicz, Facilities Director; Dr. John Tobiason, UMass Professor; and Amy Rusiecki, Assistant Director of the Department of Public Works and acknowledged each of their contributions and support throughout the initial testing process and the required follow-up. Each were in attendance to help with the presentation or to answer questions resulting from the presentation. Ms. Rusiecki spoke about the water sources in Amherst and the fact that the lead found through the testing did not come from the source water, but from the fixtures. Ms. Federman reported on the health factors of the lead found through the testing, noting that the prevalence of elevated blood lead levels for children under the age of six in Amherst is significantly lower than the state levels. Dr. Morris reported on the repairs that have been completed at each of the schools and the cost of the repairs to date, which includes \$20,000 for certified lead-free parts, \$5,200 for resampling, overtime for overtime/weekend work of district maintenance staff and Town and District staff time and resources. Ms. Goscenski asked if it would be possible to get the same charts that were provided for the elementary schools for the secondary schools, and it was confirmed that they were not complete in time for the Powerpoint presentation but are available now. Mr. Baptiste noted that this situation can be used to help students understand how the scientific method can be used to help allay fears. He asked if it is possible to know the rate at which the lead is released in order to allow students to estimate how long it will be before the fixtures will be releasing too much lead. Dr. Tobiason noted that it is so site-specific that it would be difficult to provide that information for students. Dr. Baptiste asked why South East Campus repairs have not yet been made. Mr. Bohonowicz reported that the only reason is that the focus has been on repairs where the younger students attend school, including two preschool sites in town. He noted that SEC has been provided with water coolers

to use for drinking water until repairs can be completed. Ms. Ordonez thanked everyone for their work on this issue and for providing the update. She asked Ms. Federman if information is available about the housing in areas around the schools to determine if children in those areas are being exposed to higher levels of lead both at home and at school. Ms. Federman explained that the state looks at lead levels in the mandatory blood testing that is done on all children, and they monitor for census tracts that show elevated levels. If such trends are found in Amherst they would contact her, and no such contact has occurred. Mr. Sullivan asked if any testing was done at the end of the day on bubblers that are seldom used. Ms. Rusiecki said that all testing was done at the beginning of the day and explained how the sequence was determined. Mr. Nakajima asked the total number of outlets tested. Dr. Tobiason noted that several hundred were tested. Mr. Nakajima noted that the flushing has proven to be effective, necessary repairs are being made and the important take-away is that the water is safe. Mr. Nakajima noted that it would be good to have another update after the first of the year as additional progress is made, and we should be finding ways to advocate with the State for ways to defray the costs to remediate the issues that were found through the testing. Ms. Ordonez noted that there are some resources available that she will share with Dr. Morris and the committee for consideration.

3. Announcements and Public Comment

7:00 p.m.

Ms. Douangmany Cage announced that the SETF is meeting next Wednesday, December 7 with the location to be announced when it is posted on the District website.

3. Interim Superintendent's Update

7:01 p.m.

DOCUMENT: *Interim Superintendent's Update to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee November 29, 2016*

Dr. Morris reported very briefly on a number of topics including:

- ALANA teachers from across the district are meeting on December 15 to discuss ways to expand their impact, based on strategies learned at the Diversity in Action workshop in Washington, DC.
- Last spring's SAT scores are in, and scores in both Math and Science are the highest they have been since 2010.
- ARMS Assistant Principal Alicia Lopez received the Ronald McDonald House Charities Local Hero Award at an all-school assembly.
- ARHS athletics has had great success over the past two weeks with both the Boys Soccer Team and the Girls Volleyball Team winning the Western MA championship. ARHS student Sophia Jacobs-Townsley won the Western MA cross country event and placed third in the state competition.
- The Massachusetts Department of Health has developed a universal verbal screening for secondary students known as SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment) designed to promote prevention and identify early risk for substance use in adolescents. SBIRT will be implemented at ARMS after January 1, and parents and students have the right to opt out.

4. New and Continuing Business

7:06 p.m.

A. New ARHS Courses

DOCUMENTS: *New Course Proposals for Advanced Placement--Computer Science Principles, Foundations of Art II, Advanced Studio Art I, II and III, and Music Production I*

Principal Jackson introduced Assistant Principal Alschuler, who puts together the Program of Studies and organizes student registration, and the teachers who will be presenting the proposed new courses. They include Nat Woodruff, Science teacher and Department Chair; Ned Young, Computer Programming teacher; John Bechtold, Music and Performing Arts Department Chair; Todd Fruth, Choral Director; and Jeff Stauder, Art Department Chair. Mr. Woodruff and Mr. Young gave an overview of the AP Computer Science Principles course that is being recommended. Ms. Douangmany Cage asked what the class size will be and if the cost of \$1,200 would be for the student or the school. Mr. Young noted that the class size would be up to 24 students and the cost of \$1,200 is a one-time startup cost for the district. Mr. Jackson noted that funds have been earmarked for

the costs. Ms. Ordonez asked if the 60/40 AP course exams will be accepted by colleges like the traditional AP exams are. Mr. Young explained that 86 out of 100 colleges have confirmed that they will offer credit for the course. Mr. Nakajima suggested having a presentation at a future meeting regarding computer programming and computer science opportunities in the schools. Mr. Bechtold and Mr. Fruth presented information about the Music Production I course, which will replace the Music of the Americas course offered in the past. Mr. Nakajima asked how many students the class can have. Mr. Fruth noted that there are 15 work stations so that would be the limit. Mr. Stauder discussed the proposed art classes, which include Foundations of Art II, Advanced Studio Art I, II and III. He noted that the Advanced Studio Art classes are a restructuring of the Advanced Drawing, Advanced Painting, and Advanced Printmaking courses to open the classes up for more students and expose those students to more media. Ms. Ordonez asked if there are any graphic design opportunities in these courses. Mr. Stauder said there is a graphic design course offered, as well as Photoshop and other digital work classes. Ms. Marriott moved to approve new ARHS courses AP Computer Science Principles, Foundations of Art II, Advanced Studio Art I, Advanced Studio Art II, Advanced Studio Art III and Music Production I beginning with the 2017-2018 school year. Ms. Hazzard seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

B. JQA: Food Service Collection Policy

DOCUMENTS: Policy JQA: Students--Food Services Collections

Mr. Morris noted that it was requested at the last Regional meeting that implementation of Policy JQA be suspended until it can be reconsidered by the committee. He noted that he and Mr. Mangano request that a decision be made regarding the policy within the next two months in order to inform budget planning. After discussion of the reasons for postponing implementation, Ms. Douangmany Cage moved to suspend Policy JQA: Food Services Collections until the Regional School Committee has reconsidered it based on a recommendation by the Policy Subcommittee. Ms. Ordonez seconded. Mr. Baptiste moved to amend the motion to read suspend Policy JQA: Food Services Collections until the Regional School Committee has reconsidered it based on a recommendation by the Policy Subcommittee informed by recommendations of the School Equity Task Force. Ms. Douangmany Cage seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

C. Surplus Materials Disposal

DOCUMENT: Memo to Michael Morris, Interim Superintendent and the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Sean Mangano, Finance Director, regarding Disposal of Surplus Equipment and Equipment List

Mr. Baptiste moved to declare the attached list of technology equipment surplus and to authorize the Director of Finance to auction off, donate or otherwise dispose of this in conjunction with provisions of MGL 30B. Ms. Douangmany Cage seconded. Ms. Goscinski made a motion to amend the wording of the original motion to read "attached list of REGIONALLY OWNED technology equipment..." Ms. Ordonez seconded and the motion to amend was unanimously approved. The original motion, as amended, was then unanimously approved.

D. Legal Counsel Discussion

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

E. Accept Gifts

DOCUMENT: Memo to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Jill Berry, Amherst-Pelham Regional District Treasurer, dated November 14, 2016

Mr. Baptiste moved to accept \$200 from anonymous for the ARHS Student activity golf gift; \$100 from the Rotary Club of Amherst and \$100 from Florence Bank for Marching Band equipment; \$1,000 from Ronald McDonald House Charities 2016 Local Hero Award for the ARMS Principal's Account; and \$3,300 from Ruthie Weinbaum and family to purchase two cellos and cases for ARMS. Ms. Ordonez seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. School Committee Planning

Tabled

6. Adjourn

8:26 p.m.

Ms. Goscinski moved to adjourn to Executive Session according to MGL30A, Section 21(2) to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel(Interim Superintendent) and Section 21(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the Chair so declares. Ms. Marriott seconded and by unanimous roll-call vote, the Regional School Committee voted to enter Executive Session at 8:26 p.m. with no intention to return to open session.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland