



Superintendent's Corner

Gary S. Reese, Ed.D.
Superintendent

April 7, 2017

School Committee Strategic Plan Subcommittee

At a recent school committee meeting, I presented a draft of the strategic plan for the school committee to consider for approval. At that time, the committee wanted to move the discussion to a subcommittee so they could spend more time delving into the plan and ensuring that it accurately and adequately addressed the needs for the district over the next five years.

Monday afternoon, the committee met for its first meeting. There was a lot of good discussion about the vision, mission and strategic objectives. Part of the discussion involved examining whether or not the strategic objectives were 'visionary' or whether they reflected really important work that needs to be done in the district. Our next meeting is in early May and we will continue the conversation.

School Committee Meeting

Monday evening, the regular school committee meeting was held. Some of the topics from the meeting included:

- **2017-2018 school year budget discussion and vote:** The committee voted to approve my recommended budget with one addition, a therapeutic staff member at the high school to staff a new and unique program to support needs of students experiencing difficulties and to support the transition back to school from any type of hospital setting. There was a lot of discussion about other areas that did not make the proposed budget, including full day kindergarten, a school adjustment counselor (AES), a behavior interventionist (CES), and after school bussing. While these requests did not make the budget process this year, they will be highly prioritized in next year's budget. The overall budget that was sent to the Mayor's office for review was \$30,647,294, which is \$977,667 more than this current year's approved budget of \$29,669,627.
- **Recognition of Winter Sports Accomplishments:** At this meeting we also recognized a couple of our sports teams for their accomplishments during the winter season. The Girls' Varsity Basketball team were Division III North Champions. The Girls' Varsity Indoor Track Team were CAL League Baker Division Champs. Congratulations to all of our winter sport athletes for a great season and for being excellent representatives of Amesbury Public Schools.
- **School Committee Policy Review – Policy DN: Disposal of Surplus Equipment:** This is a policy to provide the school district with the authority to dispose of surplus materials and equipment, when it deems the materials/equipment to be no longer needed in the district. The policy highlights when and how this information will be shared with and voted upon by the school committee. It was approved unanimously by the school committee.
- **School Choice:** Annually, the school committee must vote on the acceptance of students from other communities through school choice. The district receives school choice funds for students that

participate. Last year, the school committee voted to accept up to 10 students per grade in grades 6-10. This year, the school committee approved the following numbers for school choice:

- a. Grade 6 – up to 10 students
- b. Grade 7 - up to 10 students
- c. Grade 8 - up to 10 students
- d. Grade 9 - up to 10 students
- e. Grade 10 - up to 10 students
- f. Grade 11 - up to 5 students

- **Field Trip Approvals – Camp Bournedale (Fall 2017):** As required by school committee policy, overnight field trips need to be approved by the school committee. Camp Bournedale is a trip taken by our fifth grade students. Beyond the extensive connection to science, it provides our students with an opportunity to develop social and leadership skills. This trip was unanimously approved by the school committee.

School Visits: Amesbury High School

High School Teacher Adam Thibodeau invited me to visit his class to assist with grading and feedback for small business presentations. The students worked with a partner to create a product or service and then they had to develop a business and marketing plan for the business. The students did an incredible job with this project, with products such as: Head Hogs (Hats for cancer patients) and the iProjector (a projector that plugs into your phone).

I also got a lesson from Ms. Leary about how a math league event works. I had expected that teams would go head to head and compete to get the right answer to a question. Instead, students participate in particular topic areas where they take a timed 'quiz' and receive points for their team based on the number of correct responses. It was an interesting process. Congrats to the Amesbury Math team!

Upcoming Events

AEFI Hall of Honor Celebration

On behalf of the Amesbury Education Foundation Inc (AEFI), I would like to invite parents and community members to AEFI's Hall of Honor celebration on April 28th. At this event, AEFI recognizes three individuals for their contributions to the schools and community. This is a special year for AEFI, as it is celebrating 15 years of supporting the schools. I am pleased to announce that the AEFI board has selected three outstanding recipients for this banner year's celebration. Peter Hoyt (former educator, principal and current school committee member), Graham McKay (AHS Alumni and Executive Director of Lowell's Boat Shop) and Joan Miller (founding AEFI board member). I am pleased with these selections as each person embodies a true spirit of caring and each has made substantial contributions to the students of Amesbury.



Tickets can be purchased online for this event. To purchase ticket(s), [click here](#).

Be well and have a great weekend!
Gary

Stunning Waterford Crystal Footed Bowl

Generously donated by: Rosey & Jack Werner
in honor of Patty & Peter Hoyt to benefit AEFI

\$500 Value



Tickets are \$5.00 each or 3 for \$10.00

Tickets are available at Flatbread Fundraiser on March 7th. and from Central Office, Stone Ridge Property, or any AEFI Board Member.

Winner will be picked at AEFI's Hall of Honor Celebration on Friday, April 28, 2017.