

AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

November 4, 2024

Present were Mayor Gove, Chair, Maryann Welch, Kurt Mansperger, Abigail Jurist Levy, Greg Noyes, Brock Omohundro, Kate Slater, and Elizabeth McAndrews.

A recording of this meeting can be viewed here: <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1F2ry2Z3pU/>

- I. Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Mission Statement/Pledge of Allegiance (6:42)
- II. Comment by Visitors and Delegations (7:45)
 - Michelle Baker – 1 Amesbury Landing – Ms. Baker is a small business owner in Amesbury. She spoke about the possibility of utilizing a grant within APS to implement neurofeedback exercises in the district.
 - A letter from Leo Deschenes (4 Moncrief Street) was read into the record (attached).
- III. Communications & Reports (15:25)
 - A. Educational Leadership
 1. Director of Student Services – Special Education Update – Ms. Martha Robinson, Interim Director of Student Services, shared a special education update with the committee and was joined by Heather Eigen, Assistant Director of Student Services. Ms. Robinson began by summarizing the roles of the department, the number of students receiving services and breakdown of disabilities. Ms. Robinson's report also covered ongoing tiered focused monitoring, the new IEP 2.0, potential impacts of out-of-district placements, budget needs, and working with the SEPAC. The committee asked question of Ms. Robinson based on the topics she covered.
 2. Director of Finance - Q1 Budget Update – Ms. Liporto was absent but submitted a report to the committee outlining what would be discussed at a future meeting.
 3. Superintendent's Report – Superintendent McAndrews addressed staffing needs within the district, updated the committee on the AMS roof project, and addressed concerns relating to the Fall STEM Festival at CES and the communication surrounding it. The Superintendent also addressed future freshman options and cleared up misinformation surrounding access 8th grade students have to Whittier Tech. The committee asked questions of the superintendent and discussed her report.
Mr. Omohundro moved to suspend policy BDD, second by Dr. Slater. Approved unanimously.
 4. Student Advisory Council – Ms. Snow discussed ongoing projects of SAC. She noted bake sales were not allowed so SAC is looking at other alternatives for fundraising. Other topics covered included extended WIN block during finals, winter carnival, and Chromebook speed. The committee asked question of Ms. Snow and suggested the council look into ideas for addressing bullying concerns in the school.

5. Whittier Tech Report - Ms. Coppinger shared updates from recent happenings at Whittier. Ms. Coppinger addressed concerns over recruitment of APS students, shared highlights from the most recent newsletter, and announced the date to the next listening session concerning the potential building project.
6. Report from Amesbury SEPAC – Ms. Hillary Fraize is the new co-chair of the Amesbury SEPAC. Ms. Fraize shared upcoming events as well as goals of the new SEPAC leadership team.
7. Shay Memorial Building Project Update – Mayor Gove noted there had not been a meeting since the last report.
8. Subcommittees
 - Finance & Facilities – Ms. Welch shared that the subcommittee has recently approved its “definition” which will be posted on the website. Ms. Welch also shared updates concerning ESSER III spending, transportation costs, and budget concerns. The committee briefly discussed the subcommittee report with the Mayor asking if there was a projected savings from the budget freeze in place. The committee asked about projecting remaining costs for the year.
 - Policy & Personnel – Dr. Jurist Levy noted the subcommittee has several policies on the agenda for approval.
 - Curriculum & Inclusion – Ms. Welch shared updates on the most recent meeting of the subcommittee including ongoing UDL projects, subcommittee goals, and ongoing spotlight recognitions.
 - Long-Range Planning – Dr. Jurist Levy noted the next meeting of the subcommittee would be on Nov. 6th.
9. Requests of Committee – Ms. Welch noted that she and Dr. Jurist Levy would each like to pass the chairmanship of one of their subcommittees to other members. The Mayor noted the committee would be handling appointments in January. Mr. Noyes asked for a report on the AHS “Vision of the Graduate” project.

IV. New Business (2:48:13)

1. Policy BDDH-E – Dr. Jurist Levy summarized the policy relating to public participation in school committee meetings. The committee discussed possible changes to the policy and whether any changes were in fact needed. Members want an opportunity to respond to public comment, however there was a concern that a response may then be expected instead of optional.
2. Policies for Approval
 - ADB – Title I Parental Involvement – Dr. Jurist Levy noted no changes had been made but DESE requires periodic review by the committee.
Mr. Noyes moved to approve, second by Mr. Omohundro. Approved unanimously.

- IJNDB – Responsible Use Policy – Dr. Jurist Levy summarized the changes made to the policy. Many details were added concerning responsibilities of users. Superintendent McAndrews noted the Tech Committee spent a lot of time looking at policies from other districts. The committee discussed the proposed policy and potential further changes. The committee took no action.

V. Consent Agenda (3:09:10)

1. *Ms. Welch moved to approve the following minutes: Sept 9, Sept 23. Second by Dr. Slater. Approved unanimously.*
2. *Mr. Noyes moved to approve the following warrants: Oct 4 \$638,313.64|Oct 17 \$546,758.44| Oct 18 \$644,778.83|Oct 31 \$1,281,426.32 |Oct 31 \$2,286.40. Second by Mr. Omohundro. Approved unanimously.*
3. *Dr. Slater moved to accept the following gifts: Donations totaling \$2,610 from the following individuals to support the AMS Camp Bournedale Trip: Jay & Laurie Knapp, Ken Aspeslagh, Seth Locker, Sean Toomey, Cathy Toomey, BLB Design Build LLC, Mel Webster. Second by Mr. Omohundro. Mr. Noyes noted thank you letters should be sent. Approved unanimously.*

Ms. Welch moved to adjourn, second by Dr. Jurist Levy. Approved unanimously.