

**Joint Meeting of the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committees
Tuesday, December 3, 2013
Library, Amherst Regional High School**

In Attendance:

Kip Fonsh, Regional Chair
Katherine Appy, Amherst Chair/Region
Debbie Gould, Pelham Chair
Lawrence O'Brien, Amherst/Region
Kathleen Traphagen, Amherst/Region
Trevor Baptiste, Pelham/Region
Emily Marriott, Pelham
Rick Hood, Amherst/Region
Amilcar Shabazz, Amherst/Region
Dan Robb, Pelham
Michael DeChiara, Region

Maria Geryk, Superintendent
Kathryn Mazur, Human Resources Director
Faye Brady, Director of Student Services
Rachel Bowen, Assistant Human Resources Director
Mike Morris, Director of Evaluation & Assessment
Lisa Desjarlais, Pelham Principal
Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder
Public and Press

ABSENT

Darius Modestow, Pelham

1. Welcome and Agenda Review

7:03 PM

A. & B. Welcome and Agenda Review—Ms. Fonsh called the Regional School Committee to order, Ms. Appy called the Amherst School Committee to order and Ms. Gould called the Pelham School Committee to order at 7:03 p.m. Ms. Gould introduced Emily Marriott, the newest member of the Pelham School Committee. Ms. Marriott replaced AnneMarie Foley when she resigned her position. Mr. Fonsh welcomed the audience and noted the unexpected passing of Mark Gerstein, retired ARHS Social Studies teacher. He noted that Mr. Gerstein touched the lives of hundreds of students, noting that the remembrances from former students on the Daily Hampshire Gazette site are testament to that. Mr. Fonsh then reviewed the agenda, noting that the topic of PBIS will be on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. DeChiara requested that the committee have a discussion of the process for review of the nut policy on a future agenda. After discussion, Mr. DeChiara moved that the committee have on the agenda in the next two months a discussion of the process for reviewing of the nut policy as appropriate by the school committee. Mr. O'Brien seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

C. **Approve Minutes**—Ms. Gould moved to approve the minutes of November 12, 2013 as presented. Ms. Appy seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Announcements and Public Comments

7:15 p.m.

Allie Wicks-Lim, parent, read a prepared statement in support of the nut restrictions in the schools. She spoke specifically about the experiences of her child who has life-threatening nut allergies. Erin Baker, parent, made a statement in opposition to the nut restrictions, noting that the likelihood of a child dying from a food allergy is very small. She spoke about the need to implement policies that are supported by scientific research. Mary Lou Conca, parent, spoke regarding lunch detentions stating that it is wrong for any institution to use any punishment that impacts a person's food security. Crystal Romero, parent, spoke in support of the nut restriction, noting that she does not have a child who has food allergies. Jean Sherlock, parent, noted that OASIS, SEPAC and other groups have tried to set a meeting regarding PBIS and asked what the process is for setting a meeting. Ms. Geryk noted that she should simply contact her and one will be set up. Ms. Sherlock also asked about the Coordinated Program Review and the dates of the next School Committee and Policy Subcommittee meetings. June Me Lee, parent, spoke in support of the nut restriction. Karen Skofield, parent, distributed a petition and made a statement in support of the nut restriction. Ms. Geryk noted that, based on input from the PGOs, a survey is being developed to get feedback from families regarding whether they would find it helpful to receive an email notification of school delays or cancelations. Mr. DeChiara said that he would find an email very helpful.

3. Subcommittee Updates

7:43 p.m.

- **Budget Subcommittee**—Mr. Hood reported that the next meeting of the Budget Subcommittee is December 10 at 5:30 p.m.
- **Policy Subcommittee**—Mr. Fonsh reported that the next Policy Subcommittee meeting is December 18 at 5:00 p.m.
- **RSDPB**—Mr. Fonsh reported that the RSDPB is meeting December 5 at 7:00 p.m. at Amherst Town Hall. Ms. Appy noted that each town's Regional School District Planning Committee is meeting separately prior to the full board meeting.
- **The Collaborative Representative**—Mr. Fonsh noted that The Collaborative is in the process of interviewing a slate of candidates for the Director position.

A. Human Resources Report

DOCUMENT: Memo to Maria Geryk, Superintendent of Schools from Kathryn Mazur regarding Human Resources Annual Report, dated November 20, 2013

Ms. Mazur introduced Rachel Bowen, Human Resources Assistant Director, and noted that the Human Resources Department also includes Jennifer Ortiz, Benefits Specialist, and Damani Gordon, Administrative Assistant. She then briefly reviewed highlights of the data in the report that was provided to the School Committee in advance of the meeting. Ms. Bowen spoke briefly regarding her work on the Racial Imbalance Advisory Council and the Massachusetts Advocates for Diversity in Education Task Force, both of which are positions appointed by Mitchell Chester, Massachusetts Commissioner of Education. She also reported briefly on the paraeducator development plan the district is currently developing in partnership with the Five Colleges. Mr. DeChiara asked if there are other districts in the nation using a cultural competency rubric like the district will begin implementing as part of the hiring process. Ms. Mazur noted that other districts and many private businesses use such rubrics. Mr. DeChiara noted that it may be appropriate for the School Committee, as a body, to communicate with MASC regarding the licensure issue. Ms. Traphagen asked Ms. Mazur to speak to the longitudinal decline in the ratio of staff of color to students of color. Ms. Mazur explained that the district has lost staff of color due to retirements and turnover and agreed that the decline has been notable. Ms. Traphagen asked how staff of color retention compares to overall staff retention. Ms. Mazur noted that she does not have that data but it can be developed. Ms. Traphagen noted that she believes that staff satisfaction is very connected with this information and encouraged administration to conduct satisfaction surveys during employment, not just exit interviews when staff members leave. Mr. O'Brien asked what efforts are being made in regard to recruiting administrators of color. Ms. Mazur noted that the administrative unit, APAA, does not have a great deal of turnover. Anytime an administrative vacancy opens, she noted that applications are accepted through School Spring and there is aggressive follow-up with applicants of color to keep them in the pool. She noted that the applicant pool for administrative positions has shrunk significantly over the past several years. Ms. Appy noted that it is encouraging to hear that a recommendation is to collect and follow data on the enrollment of students of color in education programs in institutions of higher education. Mr. Baptiste noted that The Collaborative, especially with a new director coming in, may be a good source to help build the applicant pool of candidates of color. Mr. Shabazz noted that the most relevant information in the report is the increase from 31% to 40% students of color in the Region with a corresponding increase of only 14% to 15% in staff of color. He reported that Five Colleges, Inc. is planning to conduct a diversity marketing study and suggested that the district see if there is a way to piggy-back on those efforts. Mr. DeChiara moved to ask the administration to bring forward a recommendation to the School Committee regarding advocacy to MASC regarding licensure. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

B. Superintendent Evaluation Plan

DOCUMENT: Superintendent Evaluation Document

Mr. Fonsh moved that the Regional School Committee approve the Superintendent's Evaluation Plan. Mr. DeChiara seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Geryk noted that the only changes since the evaluation document was approved by the Amherst and Pelham School Committees are 1) plans to bring specific measurements for goals one and two for the committee's consideration in January, and 2) development of an evaluation plan to examine the efficacy of the new Family Center.

C. FY15 Fee Schedule Vote

DOCUMENT: FY2014 Fee Review and Proposed Changes for FY2015

Ms. Gould recused herself from the discussion of athletic fees since her husband is a coach in the district. Ms. Appy moved to accept the fee schedule changes in athletics participation proposed for FY15 which includes increases of \$7.00 for Full Fee 1, \$6.00 for Full Fee 2, \$10.00 for Full Fee 3 NEW: Alpine and Ice Hockey, \$17.00 for Individual Cap and \$35.00 for Family Cap. Mr. Hood seconded and, after brief discussion, the motion was approved 8-0 with Ms. Gould abstaining.

D. FY15 Budget Priorities

DOCUMENT: FY15 Budget Priorities

Mr. Fonsh noted that the FY15 Budget Priorities draft document is based on the information that Ms. Gould received from the individual school committee members, which were developed into a draft document by the three chairs and Superintendent Geryk. Ms. Gould briefly explained the process she used in collating the members' comments. On behalf of the Regional School Committee, Ms. Appy moved to approve the FY15 Budget Priorities. Mr. Hood seconded and, following brief discussion, the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Robb moved to approve the FY15 Budget Priorities for the Pelham School Committee. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. O'Brien the moved to accept the FY15 Budget Priorities for the Amherst School Committee. Mr. Hood seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

E. Approve Gifts

DOCUMENT: Memo to the Amherst School Committee from Mary Wallace, District Treasurer, dated 12/2/13; Memo to the Pelham School Committee from Mary Wallace, District Treasurer, dated 12/2/13; and Memo to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Mary Wallace, District Treasurer, dated December 2, 2013

For the Amherst School Committee, Mr. Hood moved to accept \$25 from Jeanne Cove and Joan Yatsko, Jr. and \$50 from Mary Austin-Bell and Phillip Bell for Fort River Science Education and \$500 from Sara Malsch for the Laurie Rabut String Scholarship Fund. Mr. O'Brien seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. For the Pelham School Committee, Mr. Robb moved to accept \$100 from an anonymous donor for the preschool tee shirts. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. For the Regional School Committee, Mr. O'Brien moved to accept \$10,000 from Barbara and Arthur Elkins for the Barbara R. and Arthur Elkins Scholarship Fund and an in-kind donation of a Horizon Elliptical Cardiac Exercise Machine for the High School from Ronald Tiersky. Ms. Gould seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. School Committee Planning

9:23 p.m.

Calendar and Items for Future Agendas—December 10 is a Regional meeting with PBIS on the agenda. Mr. Hood asked to keep in mind the idea of measurement graphs for future reports. Ms. Traphagen noted that she hopes that both PBIS and the question of lunch detentions will be addressed in the discipline report at the next meeting. Ms. Geryk noted that the report will include current data, the framework around it, and an action plan for moving forward.

6. Adjournment

10:15 p.m.

Mr. Hood moved to adjourn the Amherst School Committee at 10:15 p.m. Mr. O'Brien seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Baptiste moved to adjourn the Pelham School at 10:15 p.m. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Gould moved to adjourn the Regional School Committee at 10:15. Ms. Appy seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland

Approved January 14, 2014