

**Regional School Committees Meeting
September 11, 2012
Library, Amherst Regional High School**

In Attendance:

Kip Fonsh, Chair
Rick Hood
Katherine Appy
AnneMarie Foley
Trevor Baptiste
Amilcar Shabazz
Michael DeChiara
Lawrence O'Brien
Rob Spence

Maria Geryk, Superintendent
Rob Detweiler, Director of Finance & Operations
Jerry Champagne, Director of Information Systems
Press
Wendy Bloomenthal, Recorder

1. Call to Order and Business Agenda Review 7:01 p.m.

Mr. Fonsh announced that the Regional School Committee will enter Executive Session to conduct and discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining as authorized by MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(3), and that the committee will return to open session. Ms. Appy made the motion to enter Executive Session. By unanimous roll call vote, the committee entered Executive Session at 7:02 p.m. Mr. Fonsh called the meeting back to order in open session at 7:11 p.m.

2. Announcements and Public Comment 7:11 p.m.

Mr. Fonsh congratulated the ARHS FBLA Club and their faculty advisor, Missy Shea, for being chosen as recipients of the 2012 Outstanding Young Philanthropist/Fundraiser Volunteers of Hampshire County for their 'Canes for the Cure program benefiting Cooley-Dickinson Hospital. There were no public comments.

3. Superintendent's Update 7:14 p.m.

Superintendent Geryk also expressed congratulations to the ARHS FBLA Club. She then briefly reported on upcoming events and achievements including:

- The Zumba-Thon scheduled to raise funds for a local family's health care needs;
- Tim Brobowski, ARHS Senior, will serve as the Student Reporter for this year;
- The upcoming Hurricane Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony;
- Appreciation for the Leo Club students and advisors who painted "Welcome" in 24 different languages at the entrance of the Middle School; and
- Updates on community collaborations including UMASS Strings volunteers who are working within the Middle School and High School and expansion of the existing partnership with Amherst College in the elementary schools.

4. New Business 7:20 p.m.

A. International Exchange Student Proposal

DOCUMENT: GP Homestay International Student Recruitment Proposal

Lars Ojukwu and another representative from Green Planet Homestay presented their program for bringing exchange students to the United States, noting that their mission is to increase the international profile of American educational institutions. They are presenting the information since approval to accept exchange students must be granted by the School Committee, and they would like to place students at ARHS. By policy, no decision will be made at tonight's meeting. Mr. DeChiara asked about the vetting process and participation costs for interested students. Mr. Ojukwu explained that they charge fees to administer the program, and program coordinators work directly with students and the host school to recognize and establish matches. Mr. Baptiste asked how ARHS was chosen to be a potential host school. Mr. Ojukwu explained the close proximity to Boston headquarters and the anticipated appeal to potential recruits were factors considered. Ms. Appy asked how host families within the communities are chosen. It was noted that the program works best when it is embraced by the community, and families are chosen primarily for the experience, although a stipend is provided. Mr. O'Brien

asked what the typical cohort size is for exchange students. Mr. Ojukwu noted that five students is the minimum and GP Homestay is committed to providing twice as many applicants.

B. Summer Programs

DOCUMENTS: Summer 2012 Special Education Program Summary—9-10-12; Highlights of the ARMS/ARHS 2012 Summer Programs

Dr. Guevara, Director of Achievement and Equity, and Shari Abbot, Summer Program Director, reported on the expanded services that were offered through this year's general education summer programs. They noted that classes were offered for both credit retrieval and enrichment, including four classes that were piloted for the first time. Transportation was provided and many more students were served than in prior year. Dr. Guevara reported on the VELA summer program at the Middle School, which was directed by Joel Singley. She noted that a math intervention program was piloted as part of VELA this year. Mr. Hood expressed support for budgeting for these summer programs again in the FY14 budget. Dr. Brady then reported on the Special Education summer programs, noting that they are designed to augment the students' school year and to prevent regression of skills during the summer weeks. She explained that scheduling for special education summer programming is done on an individual basis and programs are both academic and social/emotional, focusing on the student's individual needs and strengths. Dr. Brady explained that the emphasis this year was to have our own district staff members work with students year round, which has a huge positive impact. Mr. Fonsh asked if the program had all of the resources necessary. Dr. Faye said that nothing critical was missing, although additional resources could always be used. She noted that the transportation/facilities employees were exceptional in their help with the program.

C. End of Year Budget Report for FY 12

DOCUMENT: Amherst-Pelham Regional School District FY2011-2012 End-of-Year Budget Report

Mr. Detweiler distributed and reviewed the final budget report for the FY12 fiscal year, noting that the year closed fairly close to the third quarter predictions. Mr. DeChiara asked about the percentage of charter school enrollments in the district. Mr. Detweiler noted that 72 of the 1200 Regional students attend charter schools. Mr. Fonsh asked what is being done in the Middle School to counsel students regarding vocational education. Ms. Geryk noted that we do offer alternatives, both Smith Vocational School and Franklin Tech, noting that she will ask Guidance Counselors to speak to this.

D. Finance and Operations Updates

DOCUMENT: Memo to Maria Geryk, Superintendent, and Regional School Committee from Rob Detweiler, Director of Finance and Operations, re: Closing Two Inactive Capital Project Funds; Memo to Maria Geryk, Superintendent, and Regional School Committee from Rob Detweiler, Director of Finance and Operations, re: FY2013 Assessments to Member Towns

Mr. Detweiler explained that Chapter 70 funding for FY13 came in at \$60,400 more than expected when the final award was received on July 9, 2012. He presented the options of what to do with said money, noting that he prepared a motion to amend the amount of the town assessments since there had been discussion at the Four Towns meeting of doing so if additional funds were realized. Mr. DeChiara then moved that the Regional School Committee approves amending the assessments to member towns for the FY2013 Amherst-Pelham Regional School District operating budget as follows:

Amherst	\$13,746,434
Pelham	\$1,205,893
Leverett	\$1,297,147
Shutesbury	<u>\$1,425,355</u>
	\$17,674,829

Ms. Appy seconded and, after brief discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Detweiler then distributed and reviewed a memo outlining the need to close out funds unexpended from the ARMS roof project, which have been carried on the books since the project was completed in 2007. Mr. Spence then made a motion to close Fund 3000, Middle School Roof Fund with \$33,792.38 remaining, and to close Fund 3010, Middle School Rehab Fund with \$48,538.84, and to transfer the remaining \$82,331.22 to the stabilization

Fund 8950 to be used for future capital projects. Mr. DeChiara seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Detweiler suggested that the committee appoint a Budget and Finance Subcommittee. It was noted that Ms. Gould, Mr. Hood, Mr. Fonsh and Mr. Shabazz expressed interest in serving on this committee when it was last discussed. Ms. Appy noted that she is also interested in serving. It was agreed that this will be the membership. Mr. Detweiler suggested meeting on Wednesday, October 19th and 4:00 p.m. and he will send a confirmation email.

Mr. Detweiler noted that this is the last year of the Whitson's Food Service contract with the district. He explained that a Food Service Subcommittee will be established to develop criteria and a rating schedule. School Committee participation will be needed, along with parents, teachers, students and community members. Mr. Detweiler explained that he anticipates putting out an RFP in January. Ms. Geryk added that Dr. Brady is facilitating the work of a new Wellness committee, which will be looking at wellness issues including anti-bullying, physical education, and health education. She noted that this work may share knowledge and collaborate with the Food Service Subcommittee. Mr. DeChiara advised playing close attention to changes in the state law regarding the quality and delivery of food service.

4. Subcommittee Reports

Mr. DeChiara provided an update on the work of the Regional School District Planning Board, noting that the RSDPB expects to apply for DESE grant funding this year. He reported that the board is on track for securing an educational consultant. Mr. Baptiste emphasized that funds have been appropriated to gather information around regionalization, but the decision has not yet been made. Ms. Appy further clarified that the final decision around regionalization does not reside with the School Committees or the RSDPB. These bodies will only make a recommendation.

5. School Committee Planning

A. Calendar—Ms. Geryk distributed and reviewed a revised calendar of School Committee meeting dates and proposed topics. She noted that the joint meeting scheduled for September 25 has been moved to September 24 out of respect for the Yom Kippur holiday. In addition, it was suggested that both the October 9 and October 23 meetings be joint due to the proposed topics. There was discussion of the proposed changes and expectations for the various reports, and Ms. Geryk made a note that the per pupil expense report should be presented at the October 16 Amherst School Committee meeting. Mr. Fonsh commented on the importance of committee members receiving packets earlier before meeting in order to give them adequate time to complete their homework. He requested that members receive them in time to read over the weekend, and suggested email as an option. Ms. Geryk will take this up with the Leadership Team and explore possibilities for getting information out earlier. Mr. Shabazz noted that the Regional School Committee is missing the involvement of a student representative, and Ms. Geryk said she will look into whether a student rep has been selected.

6. Adjournment

8:54 p.m.

Mr. Spence made a motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. Mr. O'Brien seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy Bloomenthal

Approved November 13, 2012