

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5 BOARD OF EDUCATION
MARCH 8, 2021 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
6:30 P.M., 100 Ohman Avenue, Orange, CT

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

John Belfonti, Christopher Browe, Shannan Carlson, Steven DeMaio, Carla Eichler, Robyn Berke (remote), Paul Davis (remote), George Howard (remote), Andrea Hubbard (remote), Sheila McCreven (remote), Patrick Reed (remote), Patricia Cardozo (departed 7:44 p.m.), Dr. Jennifer Turner (remote, arrived 6:35 p.m.)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Alison Bowler (remote), Caroline Chen (remote)

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Jennifer Byars, Theresa Lumas, Shaun DeRosa, Kathy Kovalik, Dr. Marie McPadden, Stephen Martoni, Anna Mahon (remote)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Belfonti called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairperson Belfonti called for a moment of silence to honor and remember Raymond Heenie, 8th grade student at Amity Middle School in Orange

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited by those present

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Regular Board of Education Meeting – February 8, 2021

MOTION by Shannan Carlson, SECOND by Patricia Cardozo, to approve minutes as submitted VOTES IN FAVOR, 12 (unanimous)

4. RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP FINALISTS

Presented by Anna Mahon

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5. STUDENT REPORT

- a. Monthly Report

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Personnel Report
- b. Superintendent Report
 - 1. Board of Education Appreciation Month Recognition

Presented by Dr. Byars

- c. COVID-19 and Instructional Models Updates

8. PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED 2021-2022 BUDGET

MOTION by Steven Demaio, SECOND by Patricia Cardozo, to approve the proposed budget for the fiscal year 2021-2022 in the gross amount of \$51,698,207 and the net amount of \$50,495,237

VOTES IN FAVOR, 13 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Shannan Carlson, SECOND by Steven DeMaio to authorize Amity Regional School District No. 5 to prepare an Explanatory Text for the Budget Referendum Question: BE IT RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Board of Education of Amity Regional School District No. 5 is authorized to prepare, print, and distribute a concise explanatory text of the budget referendum question which, by vote of the member towns, which text shall not advocate either the approval or disapproval of the question and shall otherwise be prepared in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 9-369b.

VOTES IN FAVOR, 13 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

9. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL IN AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

MOTION by Shannan Carlson, SECOND by Carla Eichler, to approve Educational Research Proposal in Amity Regional School District No. 5

VOTES IN FAVOR, 13 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

10. CORRESPONDENCE

11. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

a. Committee Reports

1. ACES
2. Ad Hoc School Safety
3. CABE
4. Curriculum

a. Discussion and Possible Action on Textbook Proposals

1. PSYCHOLOGY – LE - Grade 12: Thinking About Psychology, the Science of Mind and Behavior, High School Version, 4th Edition
2. ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY - LEVEL 1/2/3 - Grades 11, 12: Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology 12th Edition
3. ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY – LEVEL HONORS – Grades 11,12: Fundamentals of Anatomy and Physiology 11th Edition

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MOTION by Christopher Browe, SECOND by Shannan Carlson, to approve textbook proposals for: Thinking About Psychology, the Science of Mind and Behavior, High School Version, 4th Edition; Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology 12th Edition; and Fundamentals of Anatomy and Physiology 11th Edition

VOTES IN FAVOR, 13 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

5. District Health and Safety
6. District Technology
 - a. Monthly Report
7. Facilities
 - a. Monthly Report
8. Finance
 - a. Discussion and Possible Action of Awarding Contracts Over \$35,000 (from bond proceeds)
 1. HVAC Projects at Amity Regional High School

MOTION by Christopher Browe, SECOND by Patricia Cardozo, to award Sav-Mor Cooling and Heating Inc. of Southington, CT the contract for replacement of 3 air handlers, duct work and VAV modifications, baseboard heating installation, supply and installation of two cooling coils for existing roof top unit at Amity Regional High School including 3 alternates (return air fans and isolation valves) at the bid price, including the 3 alternates of \$1,219,600

VOTES IN FAVOR, 13 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

- b. Discussion of Monthly Financial Statements
- c. Director of Finance and Administration Approved Transfers Under \$3,000
- d. Discussion and Possible Action on Budget Transfers of \$3,000 or More

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MOTION by Christopher Browe, SECOND by Shannan Carlson, to vote on all budget transfers of \$3,000 or more at the same time

VOTES IN FAVOR, 13 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Shannan Carlson, SECOND by Patricia Cardozo to approve the following budget transfers:

from the transportation line to cover the fuel costs budgeted, monies previously transferred to cover COVID costs:

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT NAME	FROM	TO
05-14-2700-5510	Transportation	\$18,630	
05-14-2700-5627	Transportation Supplies		\$18,630

between special education accounts to cover costs for professional technical services and transportation in the special education department:

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT NAME	FROM	TO
04-12-6110-5560	Tuition - Private	\$ 25,500	
04-13-2190-5330	Professional Technical Services		\$ 25,500
04-12-6116-5510	Transportation - SPED Public	\$ 3,524	
04-13-2190-5590	Other Purchased Services		\$ 3,524

from Facilities Contingency account to cover snow removal through February:

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT NAME	FROM	TO
05-14-2600-5715	Contingency – Facilities	\$ 23,025	
01-14-2600-5420	Repair & Maintenance		\$ 5,425
02-14-2600-5420	Repair & Maintenance		\$ 2,100
03-14-2600-5420	Repair & Maintenance		\$15,500

VOTES IN FAVOR, 13 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

- 9. Policy
 - a. First Read
 - 1. Policy 5125 Student Records; Confidentiality
 - 2. Policy 4111 Recruitment and Selection
 - 3. Policy 4112.1 Contracts of Employment

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4. Policy 4112.2 Certification
5. Policy 4112.5 Security Check/Fingerprinting
- b. Second Read
 1. Policy 3324.1 Contracts
 2. Policy 3560 Capital Outlay
 3. Policy 5118 Non-Resident Attendance
 4. Policy 4000 Concepts and Roles in Personnel
 5. Policy 4212.42 Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers
 6. Policy 5131.6 Alcohol Use, Drugs, and Tobacco

MOTION by Sheila McCreven, SECOND by Christopher Browe, to vote on all 2nd Read policies at the same time except Policy 3560 Capital Outlay

VOTES IN FAVOR, 12 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Christopher Browe, SECOND by Sheila McCreven to accept Policy 3324.1 Contracts, Policy 5118 Non-Resident Attendance, Policy 4000 Concepts and Roles in Personnel, Policy 4212.42 Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers, and Policy 5131.6 Alcohol Use, Drugs, and Tobacco

VOTES IN FAVOR, 12 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Sheila McCreven, SECOND by Christopher Browe, to send Policy 3560 back to Policy Committee for further review

MOTION withdrawn by Sheila McCreven

10. Personnel

12. NEW BUSINESS

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13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA – Due to Chairperson by March 22, 2021

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Shannan Carlson, SECOND by Steven DeMaio, to adjourn meeting

VOTES IN FAVOR, 12 (unanimous)

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pero

Pamela Pero, Recording Secretary

From: [Heather Parady](#)
To: [Pamela Pero](#)
Subject: BOE - Public Comment - Concerned Amity Parent
Date: Monday, March 8, 2021 12:39:53 PM

This message has originated from an **External Source**. Please use proper judgment and caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding to this email.

As a parent of 3 Amity students – 2 daughters at ARHS and 1 daughter at AMSB - I am deeply concerned about the last 2 Spartan Seminars conducted at the High School. The entire student body was presented with these lessons – in one of the lessons is a Kanye West video that was shown with him stating that there should be no Black History Month. This was the one lesson that was presented at the school in Celebration of Black History Month in February.

The fact that lessons like these were allowed to be presented at Amity High School is a downright disgrace to our entire community and do not reflect a community that celebrates diversity and inclusion.

I urge the board to consider “Leading with Racial Equity” training for all teachers, staff and administration.

Sincerely,
Heather Parady
Amity Parent

Ian H. Glassman
Woodbridge, CT 06525
March 8, 2021

Board of Education
sent via Email

Dear Members of the Board,

I hope that this email finds you in good health.

My name is Ian Glassman, and I am a current senior here at Amity Regional High School. I am writing to you today to share some concerns I have regarding a recent video broadcasted to the school during Spartan Seminar, entitled, “Kanye West Says There Shouldn’t Be A Black History Month.”

This YouTube clip was presented in a workshop dedicated to Black History Month. Kanye West argues that the public should collectively move past Black History Month, because until Black History Month is forgotten, there will never be equality. For context, Kanye West claimed in 2018 that chattel slavery was a choice.

This prompted a meeting with the principal, an administrator, and a teacher.

This meeting entailed claims that we shouldn’t look at West’s past, and that his arguments are “provocative” and are “new perspectives.” We all know that ignoring context breeds ignorance, and we all know that justifying slavery is not a *new* perspective; it is an *age-old* perspective. Moreover, it is not provocative; it is historically inaccurate, and it is *appalling*.

In a later Spartan Seminar, a video of students and faculty explaining that the original video was only intended to “spark conversation” featured a student reiterating the notion that Black History Month needs to be “eradicated.”

This is a textbook display of institutional racism and an attempt to revise history. Students and faculty have been actively defending their presentation of the video. After the amount of push back students and parents have received, I am here as a concerned student bringing this to your attention.

Amity has been actively defending slavery justification on a massive scale. I implore that those involved are held accountable so that we can all grow from this. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me, and I will be happy to answer based on my personal experiences.

Kindly,
Ian H. Glassman
Woodbridge CT, 06525

Sage Paglia
Woodbridge, CT 06525
March 8, 2021

Hello Amity District,

My name is Sage Paglia, and I am a Junior. For those who are unaware, the school recently showed a video of Kanye West expressing his views on Black History Month during Spartan Seminar. In the video, Kanye described how there should not be a Black History Month. This was after many of us from the Black Student Union complained to the administration about the little being done to acknowledge and celebrate Black History Month. After many expressed their concerns regarding the video, in the following Spartan Seminar, a video of teachers and students was shown explaining the context behind the Kanye video and the purpose behind showing it. Instead of apologizing for the video played, they went on to explain how the point was to focus on the message of West's words, not his past. However, the message aligned with some of his past bigoted views; the message was, "Black History Month should be eradicated" because it puts Black people at a lower level. Not only is this statement incredibly offensive, but it also was inaccurate and spread a false narrative to the school.

Many students and parents, myself included, are rightfully upset. Not only was the video the sole lesson relating to Black History Month, but it was chosen by mostly white students, teachers, and administration, and played by white faculty at our predominantly white school. The Black Student Union and other black students were not consulted in any decisions around planning a Black History Month lesson. In other spaces, with more diversity, the video could provide an interesting conversation. With proper preliminary education, students would be able to have an insightful conversation. However, at Amity there is a lack of preliminary education on black figures and achievements, meaning these conversations are not possible. It is extremely demoralizing, as a black person, to see something like this being shown to so many students. Because Amity High provided no information on Black History Month in any classes, announcements, or programming, students are just left with the message expressed in the Kanye Video. This is especially harmful to underclassmen, particularly freshmen, because now most of them are being led to believe that black achievements should not be acknowledged or celebrated, and if so, that makes them a lesser human being. Amity schools need to find a solution to its lack of diversity because this problem will continue to affect students. This is not my first instance with racial problems at Amity, and it will not be the last. For example, just the other day the Black Student Union was told, by the administration, that Amity

High School cannot associate itself with Black Lives Matter because it is “too political.” Considering that messages advocating for basic human rights are “too political” but saying “Black History Month should be eradicated” is not means that our community and our school need to take a hard look at the passive, racist environment being fostered. As a young, black man, must I merely rely on my independent, educational endeavors to educate myself on Black History? I hope you all stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Sage Paglia

Research Goal:

The Internet is a great tool for kids to learn, play, and explore. However, keeping the kids safe while online presents a major challenge. The situation is growing more urgent as we experience a rapid growth in smartphone/tablet usage. Currently over 2 billion people in the world use a smartphone/tablet. In many homes a smartphone/tablet is shared by the entire family: children, teens, and adults. It is not convenient for adult users to switch to a child-mode setting every time they leave the phone/tablet unattended, in order to limit access to age appropriate locations on the web. To address this challenge, we propose to develop a background program to continuously monitor the user's touchscreen behavior and estimate his/her age based on the touchscreen usage pattern. Based on the estimated age, our program will block the inappropriate content.

The goal of this project is twofold: (1) finding the best machine learning approach for age estimation from touch behavior in smartphones/tablets and (2) creating an Android app based on the research findings. In our study, children and adults will interact with smartphones/tablets configured in a natural setting while touchscreen and other sensor data will be recorded. This raw data, representing touch and motion gestures, will be used to create features. Using these features, various machine learning techniques will be applied to estimate the age of the user. Our findings will be used to create a child safety application and thus will keep our children safe.

Data Collection Procedure:

When a participant will decide to volunteer, we will provide him/her with an Android phone/tablet which includes software to capture usage pattern. At first, the participant will be provided with a 10-page document. Each page will contain one picture and its label. The participant will be able to see one page at a time. He/she will look into the picture and swipe the finger horizontally across the screen to go to other pages. He/she will have to swipe horizontally in both ways, that is, (1) from left to right and (2) from right to left. Thus, there will be 10 right to left swipes and 10 left to right swipes. Second, the participant will be provided with a similar document, however, this time he/she will have to swipe the finger vertically to scroll through the document. Third, the participant will be provided with 5 images. He/she will open, zoom in, and zoom out the images one by one. Thus, 5 zoom in patterns and 5 zoom out patterns will be collected. Finally, software will display a rectangular box with 6 cells. He/she will have to tap each cell of the box. He/she will have to do it for 3 times. We will ask the participant to volunteer his/her time to 3 interactive sessions of 15-20 minutes each.

Risks and Inconveniences:

There are no risks to participants in this research. All collected data will be kept anonymous. At the time of signup, the participant will receive a randomly generated registration code. This registration code will be the only thing that will ever be stored with the data. No Personal Identifiable Information (PII) will ever be stored with the data profile. During data collection process, if the participant feels uncomfortable, he/she may take a break and continue later or choose to stop the process.

Benefits:

This study was not designed to benefit the participants directly, however, there is the possibility that the participant may learn about touch-based age estimation on smartphones through participation. In addition, developing a model that could estimate age would significantly benefit mobile users as well as their providers. Moreover, providing researchers with an anonymized dataset of behavioral usage would also be a significant contribution to those interested in this field of study.

Costs/Compensations:

These are no cost or compensation involved in participation.

Voluntary Participation:

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Anyone can refuse to participate in this research without any negative consequences. If one begins to participate in this research, he/she may at any time and for any reason, discontinue participation without any negative consequences.

Confidentiality:

Any and all information obtained from the participants will be confidential. Privacy of the participants will be protected at all times. No one will be identified individually in any way as a result of participation in this research.

Child Participants:

For child participants (age less than 18 years), the parents/guardians will have to sign an informed consent form and also the child participant will have to sign an assent form. For details, please see the “informed consent from a parent/guardian” and “child’s assent to participate in research” in the file “ConsentForms.pdf”.

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
Bethany Orange Woodbridge
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge Connecticut 06525



Theresa Lumas
Director of Finance and Administration
terry.lumas@amityregion5.org

Phone (203) 397-4813
Fax (203) 397-4864

To: Dr. Jennifer Byars, Superintendent of Schools

From: Theresa Lumas, Director of Finance and Administration

Re: Award of Contract over \$35,000

Date: March 3, 2021

Facilities:

1. Air Handlers (Facilities Bond Project) :

We issued a Request for Proposals for the replacement of 3 air handlers, duct work and VAV modifications, baseboard heating installation, supply and installation of two cooling coils for existing roof top unit at Amity Regional High School as the second and final phase of the 2019 air handler project. All of the air handler replacements recommended in the vanZelm Report are funded by the July 2020 bond. A non-mandatory pre-bid meeting was held on February 22, 2021 and 4 prospective bidders attended.

The bid opening was on March 3, 2021. One vendor submitted a bid. The budget for the project as outlined in the vanZelm Report is \$1,177,680 for this phase of the project. We asked for an Alternate 1 price for replacing the return air fan on air handler unit 2; Alternate 2 price for replacing the return air fan on air handler unit 4; and Alternate 3 for ¼ turn isolation valves all in need of replacement. This was not part of the original budget but is within the scope of the overall project. The bid came in at \$1,165,700. The alternates, which were not costed out when the project was bonded, are \$32,700 each for alternate 1 and alternate 2 and \$10,500 for alternate 3.

The engineers at vanZelm recommended the alternates. If not done, the new units would be connected to return air fans that are nearly 30 years old. The alternates can be funded from two bond accounts. The first will partially cover the cost using the balance remaining from cost of issuance \$39,155 and the remaining \$2,765 from the contingency line (based on negotiated pricing).

The bidder is Sav-Mor Cooling and Heating Inc. of Southington, CT. Their bid price, including the alternate prices, is \$1,241,600. Sav-Mor completed two large air handler replacement projects for us over the past two years, being the low bidder on all the projects. They also replaced the air handler in the custodial area at Amity Regional High School, as they were the low bidder on that bid. Their work has been very good and done on time. Steve Martoni negotiated with Sav-Mor Cooling and Heating of Southington, CT to reduce the total bid price down from \$1,241,600. Sav-Mor reduced the bid price by \$22,000 after working with suppliers.

Motions:

Amity Finance Committee:

Move to recommend the Amity Board of Education award–

Amity Board of Education:

Move to award –

.... Sav-Mor Cooling and Heating Inc. of Southington, CT the contract for replacement of 3 air handlers, duct work and VAV modifications, baseboard heating installation, supply and installation of two cooling coils for existing roof top unit at Amity Regional High School including 3 alternates (return air fans and isolation valves) at the bid price, including the 3 alternates of \$1,219,600.