

AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

August 18, 2025

Present were Mayor Gove, Maryann Welch, Abigail Jurist Levy, Greg Noyes, Brock Omohundro, and Superintendent McAndrews.

A recording of this meeting can be viewed here: <https://imd0mxanj2.execute-api.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/ssr/watch/68ac9bff6f793c0002f9bf7>

- I. Call to Order/Mission Statement/Pledge of Allegiance (0:12)
- II. Comments by Visitors & Delegations (2:00)
 - A Letter from Mel Webster was read into the record (attached)
 - Mary Testa shared her concerns regarding the proposed changes to the AHS GPA calculations
 - Evan Melanson thanked the Superintendent and search committee for their work that led to his appointment as AIHS Principal
- III. Communications & Reports (7:10)
 - A. Educational Leadership
 1. Q4 Facilities Update – Jim McCarthy, Director of Faculties, shared an update with the committee covering progress made in buildings over the summer including: replacement of the cafeteria floor & roof flashing at CES, typical summer maintenance at AHS, completion of the roof project at AMS, and repairs of the steps at Shay. The committee discussed ongoing projects including fields work and the performance center at AMS.
 2. Ms. Liporto shared a Q4 budget update with the committee including updates on fiscal year closeout, credits being received for unemployment claims during Covid, circuit breaker carryover, and continuing budget stressors such as substitutes and transportation. The committee discussed the report including whether excess money should be returned to the city or not and how future budget reports should be provided to the committee.
 3. Superintendent’s Report - The Superintendent shared a return to school schedule with the committee, recent resignations, and remaining open positions within the district. As of the meeting there will be 29 new teachers beginning the school year.
- IV. New Business (1:12:40)
 - A. Approval of Student Handbooks
 - Each building principal took turns highlighting proposed changes to their handbooks for the upcoming school year.
Mr. Montanari shared changes to his welcome letter, the personal property policy, and student dress. The committee shared feedback and asked for clarification on several items contained in the handbooks.

Dr. Jurist Levy moved to approve the Shay handbook as amended, second by Mr. Noyes. Vote: 4 Yes, 1 No (Gove). Passes.

Next, Dr. Mitchell shared updates to the CES handbook including language around academic integrity/plagiarism, student absence notification, and inclusion of language from the wellness policy. The committee discussed the language of the handbook including relating to student dress policy and ways to increase consistency among all handbooks.

Dr. Jurist Levy moved to approve the CES handbook with suggested revisions, second by Ms. Welch. Vote: 4 Yes, 1 No (Gove). Passes.

Ms. Welch moved to suspend policy BDD, second by Mr. Omohundro. Passes unanimously.

Middle School Principal Nebel then shared highlights from the AMS handbook including changes to clarify wording and ease of use for online viewers. The committee discussed policies relating to transportation and changes to the conduct and effort portions of report cards.

Dr. Jurist Levy moved to approve the AMS handbook as revised, second by Mr. Noyes. Vote: 3 Yes, 2 No (Omohundro, Gove). Passes.

Principal Melanson shared that no policy changes had been made to the handbook, however some scheduling and language had been updated to increase consistency. The committee suggested several updates to titles and roles within the handbook.

Dr. Jurist Levy moved to approve the AIHS handbook with revisions, second by Mr. Noyes. Vote: 4 Yes, 1 No (Gove). Passes.

Finally, Dr. Ricci shared updates with the committee on changes to the AHS handbook with the most significant change being to GPA calculations. Dr. Ricci shared a history of how GPAs have been calculated, how that is different than surrounding communities, and why the changes are being made. The committee shared concerns over proposed changes to the GPA calculations both as to the communication surrounding the change as well as why the change was being made. Mr. Omohundro shared that he believed a change such as this should be brought to the policy subcommittee. The committee discussed options for approving the handbook with or without the changes made, or waiting to approve the AHS handbook to a future meeting.

Dr. Jurist Levy moved to approve the handbook without the proposed GPA changes but with all other revision, second by Mr. Noyes.

Vote: 2 Yes (Noyes, Jurist Levy), 3 No. Fails.

Mr. Noyes moved to approve the AHS handbook with the old GPA scale included, second by Dr. Jurist Levy. Ms. Welch noted she did not feel the GPA changes were under the purview of the committee.

Vote: 1 Yes (Noyes), 4 No. Fails.

Ms. Welch moved to approve the AHS handbook with proposed amendments and no GPA scale, second by Dr. Jurist Levy. Dr. Jurist Levy stated this would provide for an accurate

handbook at the start of the year. Mr. Noyes stated he would like to have the school council involved in the GPA discussion.

Vote: 3 Yes, 2 No (Gove, Omohundro). Passes.

Mr. Noyes then moved that stakeholders be involved in the GPA conversions before a final decision is made, seconded by Dr. Jurist Levy. Dr. Jurist Levy then shared she felt it was the administrators job to make these decisions but they should be made in consultation with stakeholders. Ms. Welch then shared thoughts on how the process for gathering information on the proposed changes should be conducted.

Vote: 1 Yes (Noyes), 4 No. Fails.

The committee took a 2-minute break.

Mr. Omohundro moved that the HS study the GPA changes in a collaborative process involving all stakeholders, second by Dr. Jurist Levy.

Ms. Welch shared she did not feel a motion was appropriate or necessary.

Mr. Omohundro withdrew his motion.

V. Consent Agenda (2:57:42)

- a. Ms. Welch moved to approve the following minutes: March 17, March 24, April 14, May 5, May 19. Seconded by Mr. Omohundro. Approved unanimously.
- b. Mr. Noyes moved to approve the following warrants: May 30 \$688,534.26, June 13 \$695,414.46, July 10 \$185,083.03 July 17 \$101,340.65, July 24 \$302,690.16. Seconded by Mr. Omohundro. Approved unanimously.

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