

APPROVED MINUTES BY THE PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE
UNIT #51
PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD**

MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Meeting
June 15, 2023
Pittsfield Middle High School

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Adam Gauthier, Chairperson
Sandra Adams, Vice Chairperson
Molly Goggin
Adam Cote
Helen Schiff

Others Present: Bryan Lane, Superintendent
Derek Hamilton, PMHS Principal
Melissa Brown, PMHS Assistant Principal
Charlene Vary, Director of Student Services
Members of the Public

Chairperson Gauthier opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mr. Gauthier.

III. AGENDA REVIEW

The following items were added to the agenda:

NH Fair Funding Update (Mrs. Goggin)
Abutter Notice of Intent (Mr. Gauthier)
PES Special Education Teacher Nomination (Mr. Lane)
Paraeducator Salary Adjustment (Mr. Lane)
Non-Public: (Mr. Lane)

IV. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA

On a motion made by Mrs. Adams and seconded by Mr. Cote, Mr. Gauthier, yes, Mrs. Schiff, yes, 5-0, the Board unanimously approved the amended agenda.

V. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the May 18, 2023 meeting were considered and changes include:

Page 2, X, correct bullet point sequence; page 3, XI, D., correct meeting time to 7:00 a.m., XII, remove double 2023.

Mrs. Goggin made a motion to accept the changes, Mrs. Schiff seconded, 4-0.

The minutes from the June 1, 2023 meeting were tabled for review of meeting recording to include Mrs. Schiff's inquiry to Superintendent Lane regarding the definition of "alternative meals".

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

None

VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Hamilton notified the Board that the student council ended the year with their internal nominations for officer positions. Mr. Hamilton does not believe that they have any meetings scheduled for over the summer break.

VIII. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

- A. Extended School Year – Mrs. Vary provided the Board with a schedule for the ESY programs and services being held at the middle high school. There are currently 75 students enrolled to attend, with all services being provided at the middle high school due to the building renovations being done at the elementary school.

Mr. Cote inquired to Mrs. Vary as to the participation requirements for the ESY programs.

Mrs. Vary explained that the ESY programs are for students with IEPs, while there are additional "recovery programs" being held at the high school level.

Mr. Cote asked Mrs. Vary to explain what the recovery programs consist of.

Mrs. Vary discussed how there are different sections of competencies for different programs. If a student passes some of these competencies, but not all, they are able to "recover" that portion of the credit by taking the summer program.

- B. Staffing Update – Mrs. Vary provided the Board with an update on returned contracts and retention for the support staff. Mrs. Vary notified the Board that another staff member has completed their RBT Training and two more are in progress.

- C. Audits – Mrs. Vary explained the two audits that have been conducted in regards to special education. The first audit was for Indicator 13 and the second was for Medicaid. Mrs. Vary provided the Board with the findings of each and guidance provided for improvement.

Mrs. Vary notified the Board that there will be a training held by Boothby services in the Fall for our case managers.

IX. SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Staffing Update – Mr. Lane provided the Board with a staffing update as well as the cost difference for the budgeted position vs. the hired position.

Mr. Lane additionally stated that he believes we will be losing both first grade teachers, but has not yet received resignation letters from either.

Mr. Gauthier expressed his concerns regarding hiring with only one meeting scheduled in July, and the Board needing to approve candidates.

Mr. Cote inquired as to what this would entail and allow of Mr. Lane.

Mr. Lane stated that he would provide the Board with emailed copies of all resumes for candidates to be reviewed before his 48-hour response timeframe allowing for Board feedback.

Mrs. Goggin stated that this is normal protocol in the instance of gaps between meetings during the summer hiring process.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier to allow Mr. Lane hiring authority as needed until July 20th, and seconded by Mrs. Goggin, the motion passed 5-0, allowing Mr. Lane hiring authority until the next scheduled school board meeting.

- B. Concord Monitor Right to Know Request Inquiry – Mr. Lane stated that he had received a Right to know Request from the Concord Monitor inquiring as to how many Right to Know Requests have been made to the District since September 2022. Mr. Lane explained that due to the transparency of the Board, we have had no right to know requests during that time period to report.

- C. Class Sizes for 2023-2024 School Year – Mr. Lane audited the incident reports to identify patterns of behaviors with certain students due to classroom size concerns for next year. Mr. Lane continued to explain that there are approximately 9 students identified as needing additional help, support and communication from the District.

Mr. Lane explained that Mrs. White would be looking to reach out to these families to see what supports the District can implement to help these students with the behaviors.

Mrs. Goggin inquired as to the policy about class sizes by grade level, with the concern of incoming students pushing us past the allowed class size policy cap, as well as being able to separate those students between two classrooms. Mrs. Goggin spoke as an educator herself as to the concern of class sizes of that number and the ability to appropriately serve and manage their classrooms with that many different bodies and

personalities.

Mr. Lane provided the response plan for this scenario regarding our current teachers with certifications to teach additional classes as well as the cost savings with the hiring of new staff and the ability to hire another teacher as needed if the Board requests that a third class be added for any grade level.

Mr. Cote provided insight to the Board as given to him by his own child, whom was a fifth grade student at PES this past school year. Mr. Cote stated that his child recognized the difference in both student behavior and classroom management between the different teachers with different levels of teaching experience. Mr. Cote expressed his confidence in both Mrs. White as an experience administrator and the hiring of a seasoned teacher that will replace a first year teacher, to keep the classrooms at two as he believes the staff in place will be sufficient to handle the student body. Mr. Cote did express his concern with overloading the classes should we have incoming students in the 3rd and 5th grades.

Mrs. Adams inquired as to the classification of hourly or salary for the behavioral interventionist to be hired.

Mr. Lane explained that this would be an hourly position, reducing the budgeted amount for this position. Mr. Lane stated the position is \$25.00 per hour with no benefits, bringing the District a reduction of roughly \$15,000 for the position. This position also does not fall within the Bargaining Unit.

Mr. Lane inquires to the Board if it is the consensus of the Board to advertise for an additional fifth grade classroom position. The Board stated it is.

Mrs. Goggin requested an update on the middle school interventionist position.

Mr. Lane stated that there have been changes in assignments of current staff with dual special education and K-8 teaching certifications as well as teaching experience in 6-8 to take the interventionist position.

Mrs. Goggin asked for clarification on the plan to have current staff teach different math sections for the 2023-24 school year.

Mr. Lane confirms that there are two high school staff members who are certified to teach math that will teach the different course sections as appropriate. Each of these staff members have openings in their schedules for next year that made this possible.

- D. No Safe Experience – Mr. Lane let the Board know that the NH State Police launched a No Safe Experience initiative to educate children on the dangers of taking prescription medications that aren't prescribed to them. This initiative included wrist bands and literature to be dispersed by the Pittsfield Police Department.
- E. Enrollment Reports – Mr. Lane provided the end of the year enrollment report.
- F. Teacher Nomination – Mr. Lane nominated Ken Leonard, who has been employed by the District since last year as a paraeducator, holds a Bachelor's degree and a Special Education endorsement for Special Education Case Manager for the 2023-24 School Year, at a salary of \$36,025, Bachelors Step One.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier, and seconded by Mrs. Goggin, the Board voted unanimously to approve this hire.

- G. Paraeducator Salary Adjustment – Mr. Lane presented the Board with a list of six paraeducators who would be facing a pay inequity if new hires were to come in with the same level of education and experience. Mr. Lane requests the Board approve \$18,908 to adjust the pay rates for these specific paraeducators.

On a motion made by Mrs. Goggin and seconded by Mr. Gauthier, yes, Mr. Cote, yes, Mrs. Adams, yes, Mrs. Schiff, yes, 5-0, the Board unanimously approved the amended salaries.

Mr. Gauthier inquired as to if other support staff were audited for the same purpose as we have an administrative assistant who has been with us for over two decades. Mr. Lane confirmed that he would look into this to ensure that no one was missed.

X. SCHOOL BOARD

A. Policies – First Reading

- i. ILD, Non-Educational / Non-Academic Questionnaires, Surveys and Research
- ii. GCQ, Non-Renewal, Termination, and Dismissal of Certified Staff
- iii. GCQR, Non-School Employment of Professional Staff
- iv. DBJ, Over-Expending Funds

B. Policies – Second Reading

- i. IJL, Library Materials Selection and Adoption – tabled for further review and comparison to other districts.
- ii. GBEBD, Employee Electronic Communication Policy, on a motion made by Mr. Lane to accept the written policy presented with the following revisions: bullets 3, 4, 5 of the lower section are to be moved to the top section. In the following statement “the school district prohibits”, exchange prohibits to “strongly discourages”, eliminate the last sentence “Those relationships and communications should remain between adults and not with students in the district”, correct all formatting and grammatical errors. On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mrs. Goggin, the motioned passed 5-0.
- i. EFAA, Meal Charging, changes include page 4, paragraph four, change verbiage to “a letter requesting immediate payment shall be sent”, add page numbers, change Dean of Operations to Principal, correct formatting. On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mrs. Goggin, the motioned passed 4-0-1, with Mrs. Schiff abstaining.

Mrs. Schiff asked Mr. Lane for further clarification on the term “alternative meal” in regard to students with outstanding balances on their accounts.

Mr. Lane stated this is a term handed down by the Federal Government and is in no means subpar to what other students are being served. The alternative meal being served is still a hot lunch with a milk.

- iii. JICD-R, Memorandum of Understanding, change Dean of Operations to Principal document wide. On a motion made by Mrs. Adams and seconded by Mrs. Goggin, the motioned passed 5-0.
 - iv. AC, Non-Discrimination, accepted as written.
- C. NH Fair Funding – Mrs. Goggin provided the Board with an update on the NH Fair Funding presentation that she is working on having held for the District. Mrs. Goggin states that she hopes this will help the community better understand the deficient and process of school funding.
- On a motion made by Mrs. Goggin to have the NH Fair Funding Project make a presentation on September 21, 2023, and seconded by Mr. Cote, the motion passed 5-0.
- D. Abutters Notice of Intent – 16 Bow St. sent the District a Notice of Intent to remove an existing structure and erect a 2/3 bay garage in its place. The Board states that they do not object to this request and approved Mr. Lane response to the abutter’s request.

XI. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Budget Committee Representative – Mrs. Adams, no update
- B. Drake Field and Facilities – Mr. Gauthier, no update
- C. Negotiating Team –
- D. Foss Family Scholarship – Mrs. Adams stated we had lots of happy campers and provided an update to the Board that all applicants received some amount of funds. Mr. Cote and Mrs. Goggin praised the awards ceremony as well as the graduation ceremony that was held at PMHS.
- E. Public Relations – Mrs. Goggin stated that NH Fair Funding process is still being worked on.

XII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for July 20, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the Pittsfield Middle High School Media Center.

XIII. PUBLIC INPUT

Dan Schroth spoke to the Board regarding his concerns about the environmental impact made by the district. Mr. Schroth continued to express his concern for water consumption and air quality, as well as how the District could implement programs to improve on these. Mr. Schroth additionally conveyed his thoughts on using bitcoin and its effect on pollution.

XIV. NON-PUBLIC RSA 91-A

At 6:48 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Mrs. Adams to enter into a non-public session under the authority of RSA 91-A:3 to discuss personnel. The Board polled and voted unanimously to enter into a non-public session. (Mrs. Adams, yes; Mrs. Schiff, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Cote, yes).

Non-public to discuss personnel matters.

At 8:16 p.m. p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mr. Cote to exit the non-public session under the authority of RSA 91-A:3 to discuss personnel. The Board polled and voted unanimously to exit into a non-public session. (Mrs. Adams, yes; Mrs. Schiff, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Cote, yes).

XV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mrs. Adams to adjourn the meeting. The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Zinn

Recording Secretary