

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

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

**PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD
MINUTES**

Pittsfield School Board Meeting
July 20, 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
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. PES ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW

Superintendent Lane introduced Barbara Kelly as the PES Assistant Principal finalist to be interviewed.

Barbara Kelly introduced herself as a twenty-year educator with additional interventionist experience. Ms. Kelly went on to explain how her love of education led her to gain certifications for both a Special Education Administrator as well as a Principal Certification.

Mr. Gauthier introduced himself as Chair of the Board and the other board members.

Mrs. Adams asked Ms. Kelly what she believed the differences in roles between an assistant principal and a principal as well as why she wants this position and how she believes she could benefit the district.

Ms. Kelly went to explain how she supported her administration through different methods.

Mr. Cote inquired as to Ms. Kelly's resume and the lack of student discipline that is not outlined on her resume.

Ms. Kelly explained that as an assistant principal, student discipline is one of the main focuses of the position. Ms. Kelly explained the different programs that she has implemented such as MTSS. Ms. Kelly explains to the Board that an educators' job isn't just to teach about educational subjects, but also how to behave, conduct themselves and how actions have consequences. Ms. Kelly believes that there are proper levels of behavioral intervention based off of each individual student's incident level and learning disability if applicable.

Mr. Gauthier asks how Ms. Kelly views classroom management with a newer staff of teachers.

Ms. Kelly spoke on her belief that mentoring programs and frequent classroom presence would be beneficial.

Mrs. Goggin asked Mrs. Kelly how she believes she would support staff at all levels, such as para-educators and office staff.

Ms. Kelly doesn't believe that the job stops at supporting her Principal, but all staff within the building through an open door policy.

Mrs. Schiff asked what procedures she would implement to try and assist in the correction of the COVID set back in education.

Ms. Kelly believes that the deficits require more interventions and proper monitoring and testing of the students to properly deliver their education as needed.

Mrs. Adams inquires as to what Ms. Kelly's greatest achievement in her current position were.

Ms. Kelly stated that it is her ability to build working relationships with her staff. Ms. Kelly states that she works hard to ensure that there is trust and synergy within a team, as a team culture is able to work well together.

Mrs. Goggin asks Mrs. Kelly as to how she would communicate with the families of the students.

Ms. Kelly provided an example of a difficult situation she faced with a former student who was struggling. Ms. Kelly spoke on how she was able to communicate and work with the family. Ms. Kelly speaks to the success of her students due to building these relationships.

Mr. Gauthier inquires to Ms. Kelly as to how she would work on the community involvement relationship.

Ms. Kelly stated that transparency in showing the community what we do and what we need and how we do things, may help in bridging the gap between the school and the community.

Mr. Cote asked if Ms. Kelly's long-term career goals, aspiration in life and her vision with the District were to be a short, or long-term commitment to the District?

Ms. Kelly explained that years ago her response would have been different than it is today. Ms. Kelly stated that in her years of education she has taught, been an assistant principal, then took a

leap to assistant director position for a short while, before voluntarily stepping back into a dean position which led her to become a coordinator. Ms. Kelly stated that five years ago that would not have been her response, because she believed that she wanted those roles. Ms. Kelly realized that her passion was working more directly with the students and in the positions she'd previously held, she wasn't able to have that connection. Ms. Kelly would like to see herself long-term with as the driving force behind the building principal. Ms. Kelly believes that her roles as an assistant principal would allow her to be more involved in classrooms with the students and the school community overall. Ms. Kelly stated that she does not need to hold one of those positions to be happy, as she finds her happiness in working with the kids.

Mrs. Schiff asks Ms. Kelly what she knows of the Pittsfield schools and what her first area of improvement would be.

Ms. Kelly explains that she was made aware that the District has begun the launching of the MTSS program that she has a background in as well as trauma based learning. Ms. Kelly states that she has confidence in her knowledge and ability to implement these, but continues to say that not having been involved or in the school yet to see how those processes are currently being handled, would certainly impact the way that she would proceed with improving the current processes.

Mrs. Goggin asked Ms. Kelly to explain how she builds relationships with her students, given that she is the one that would handle the discipline and such.

Ms. Kelly passionately spoke about her time as a teacher and how "car duty" for pick up and drop offs was one of her favorite duties. Ms. Kelly stated she found so much value in being able to use this role to have daily contact with the community members, that she fought to keep herself involved in morning bus duty, even as she transitioned into an administrative role.

Ms. Kelly continues to state how she has found that certain incentives for students' behavior plans, such as having a one-on-one lunch with the principal, has assisted her in furthering the relationships with her students. Ms. Kelly states while this would seem odd, these little things transfer to positive interactions in public in her experience. Ms. Kelly states that she has had her students ask her to attend their various school functions and sporting events, because she took that time to build relationships with them.

Mr. Gauthier asked how Ms. Kelly would handle a declining school atmosphere and morale if she were to encounter that, and what she would do to correct it.

Ms. Kelly stated that communication is the most important thing to her. Ms. Kelly advised that she would have small group meetings in order to get to work as a team to find a solution. Mrs. Kelly spoke about her experience with administrators who didn't connect with their faculty when she was a teacher and the difficulties that ensued because they didn't communicate with their staff. Ms. Kelly states that she is not afraid to call out difficult situations that need to be discussed and solved through good communication.

Mrs. Adams inquired as to what Ms. Kelly feels her biggest challenge would be coming to the District as the Assistant Principal.

Ms. Kelly spoke on being so involved in the special education processes in her current position and how that background and skillset will continue to feed into her role as a principal. Ms. Kelly voiced her excitement to shift gears into the role of an assistant principal, while hoping to

improve on the special education processes as she progresses in her role with the district.

Mrs. Schiff asks Ms. Kelly how she would communicate a disciplinary issue with a parent.

Ms. Kelly stated that she will sometimes request a face-to-face meeting with a parent, but if they aren't able to come in, she will handle it over the phone. Ms. Kelly continued on how she always starts the conversation with the students' positives to lead into the reason for the phone call and the guidance the student has been given in regard to the incident. Ms. Kelly gives an example of the reflection sheets that she has used with students to process when dysregulated. Ms. Kelly uses this tool as a guide to communicate with the parents as to what choice the student made, what choices they could have made, and how to improve in the future so that the parents are involved in child's behavioral interventions. Ms. Kelly states that while she is not directly involved in student discipline in her current role, she has behavior management responsibility for special education students, and works to ensure that their consequences are appropriate for their disability.

Mrs. Adams inquired as to how Ms. Kelly would handle an angry parent.

Ms. Kelly believes that remaining calm and listening to the parents is the best method. Ms. Kelly states that generally when a parent is angry, they're feeling unheard, and opening the lines of communication to show them that their concerns are valid is the best practice in working with the parents to bridge the gap between home and school.

Mr. Gauthier states that that ends the questioning from the Board and inquires to Ms. Kelly as to if she has any questions for the Board.

Ms. Kelly inquires as to what the Board is looking for having two new administrators.

The Board individually spoke on the issues that they would like to see seen addressed first, the culture and morale that they would like to see with the staff, as well as the expectations of the position. Mr. Gauthier spoke on the unity and cohesiveness that is conducive to learning that he would like to see happen. Mrs. Goggin spoke on her excitement to implement MTSS as well as looking for cohesiveness, and support of all of the elementary school staff. Mr. Cote spoke on his concerns regarding discipline in regards with its effect on the students' ability to learn. Mrs. Adams expressed her feelings on the positive relationships she feels Ms. Kelly will be able to build. Mrs. Schiff made no statement.

Ms. Kelly inquired to the Board as to what the District's long-term goals are.

The Board individually responded with the different challenges and obstacles that they feel need to be addressed. Mr. Gauthier expressed his concern with getting students on grade level, and to have unity and a team that conducts themselves respectfully. Mr. Cote stated that an upward trajectory of grades, assessment and behaviors that we use as grading tools continue to improve in the long-term. Mr. Cote advises that the staff having a lack of trust in administration to be heard and for issues to be handled, needs to be fixed. Mrs. Goggin believes as a District that we are most interested in is getting the pride back in being a Pittsfield community, either as a student, parent or staff member. Mrs. Adams speaks on her desire to see the gap between the two buildings improved. Mrs. Schiff made no statement.

Mr. Gauthier thanked Ms. Kelly for her time. Ms. Kelly thanked the Board members individually for their time.

IV. AGENDA REVIEW

The following items were added to the agenda:

Building Inspection Reports (Mrs. Schiff)
Teacher Nominations (Mr. Lane)
Family Input on Class Selection (Mrs. Goggin)

V. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA

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

VI. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The meeting minutes from the June 1, 2023 were considered and changes include: page three, fix roman numeral sequence, XI, remove double 2023.

Mr. Gauthier made a motion to accept the changes, Mrs. Schiff seconded, 3-0-2, with Mrs. Goggin and Mrs. Adams abstaining, the motion passed.

The meeting minutes from the June 15, 2023 were considered and changes include: page four add the Board approval for the teacher nomination “On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier, and seconded by Mrs. Goggin, the Board voted unanimously to approve this hire”; page five, paragraph two, change amended agenda to amended salaries, X, A, iii, correct GCQR policy code; page 6, C, paragraph one, correct deficient to deficit, paragraph two correct to “seconded by Mrs. Schiff”, D, change to “The Board states they do not object”, XII, remove double 2023, XII, correct last sentence to “using bitcoin and its effect on pollution”, correct second to enter into non-public to Mrs. Adams, add time of 8:16 to exit from non-public, XV, Mr. Cote made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gauthier to adjourn the meeting at 8:17p.m..”

On a motion made by Mr. Cote and seconded by Mrs. Goggin, the changes were approved, 5-0.

VII. PUBLIC INPUT

None at this time

VIII. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

- A. Summer Programming – Two weeks of Summer Programming have been completed. Ms. Vary spoke on her observation of the efficiency of having the entire District in one building for the Summer Programs.
- B. Alternative Assessments – Mrs. Vary notified the Board that the Dynamic Learning testing has been received back.
- C. New Hires – Mrs. Vary explained how the transition with the new Out of District Coordinator has been doing as she has been working with Ms. Bradley to take over the role. Mrs. Vary spoke on the hiring needs for the next school year.

Mrs. Goggin stated that sharing the open positions in local social media groups for moms

could be successful in recruiting new staff.

Mrs. Zinn will provide Mrs. Goggin with a template to share on social media to direct the community to the employment page on the SAU website.

Mrs. Schiff inquired as to how the part-time case management will be successful.

Mrs. Vary explained that the case load will be shared between two part-time case managers.

IX. SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Hiring Update – Mr. Lane provided the Board with an update for the open positions for the 2023-24 school year. Mr. Lane stated that since his report was written, we have filled all but three positions within the District.
- B. Cost Differential for Hiring – Mr. Lane provided the Board with a report of the cost differential of the budgeted vs. hired positions.
- C. General Assurances – Mr. Lane explained to the Board that the NHDOE has changed the procedure of which the General Assurances must be included in the Board minutes. Mr. Lane states that he agrees to the general assurances as listed.

The General Assurances are a set of regulations that the District agrees to follow in regard to the acceptance of Federal Grant. This includes agreement to comply with:

- Comply with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975
- Drug Abuse Office Treatment Act of 1972
- Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse Act of 1912
- Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968
- Regulations covered in policies that handling of funds for Federal Grants
- The Hatch Act
- We will follow federal regulations in dealing with humans and animals involved in research
- Lead Based Paint Poison Prevention Act
- Pro-Children Act of 2001 prohibiting smoking in school buildings
- Stevens Amendment requiring reporting of spending for federal grants
- Making information available to parents
- Making information available to staff
- Complying with Audit Regulations
- Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988
- State and Federal Labor regulations
- Identification of Grants
- Maintain internal controls for finance
- Ensuring equal access to education opportunities
- RSA 193:13 II prohibiting students from possessing firearms
- Appropriate reporting to the New Hampshire Department of Education
- Lobbying statutes
- Section 9524 of the ESEA Act of 1965 no policy preventing constitutionally protected right to pray
- Title USC 7197 appropriate transfer of student disciplinary records

Mr. Lane goes on to explain that this is something that the Superintendent and Board Chair must sign. If these policies are not followed, and found to be true, the only penalty is the removal of credentials of the Superintendent.

- D. Adequacy Grant Funding – Mr. Lane provided the Board with the update on the expected amount of Adequacy Grant Funds that the District was supposed to receive. The NHDOE has recalculated these funds, resulting in an increase to funds to be dispersed to the District.

Mr. Lane explained the two options that the District has in regard to the use of these funds. 1. Hold a town meeting in September to put forward a proposal to the citizens of Pittsfield a plan to expend the funds. If the public voted to accept the proposal, there would be no increase to the tax rate in the expenditure of these funds. 2. The Board could choose to put all of the funds toward tax reduction which would decrease the tax rate by approximately \$1.25. For a property valued at \$200,000 there would be a reduction of \$250 annually. The only problem with this is that in the following year, the approximate \$400,000 would be in the District budget. If it were expended, there would be a property tax swing of a \$500 increase.

Mr. Cote inquires as to if these funds can be expected in the future.

Mr. Lane explains that these are only guaranteed for two years.

Ms. Goggin asks if these funds can be used for personnel, such as interventionist and specialist positions.

Mr. Lane confirms that they can be used for personnel.

Mrs. Schiff confirms that she was looking into the building inspection reports to ensure that there aren't any projects coming up that would need to be added to the budget.

Mr. Lane alerted the Board that he has requested the latest fire safety report as that is the only mandated inspection for the District to conduct, and that he has also reached out to the Town Administrator in regard to any building inspections that may be on file.

Mr. Gauthier inquires as to whether the projects in the building are being monitored.

Mr. Lane stated that he's conducting walkthroughs twice a week to inspect the work being done.

E. PARENT INPUT FOR CLASSROOM SELECTION

Mrs. Goggin inquires to Mr. Lane as to the improvement of the parent input on classroom selection. Mrs. Goggin states that as both a mother and an educator she understands that each child is different and may require a different style of instruction or structure in a classroom.

Mr. Lane provided the Board with a brief overview of how the process works, and that there is a form the District has previously used for the parent to send their input on classroom selection to the school.

F. TEACHER NOMINATIONS

Mr. Lane nominated Jennifer Tyrell for the position of MS Science Teacher, with a Bachelor's, Step 0 at a salary of \$36,025. On a motion made by Mrs. Goggin and seconded by Mr. Gauthier, the Board voted 5-0 to accept the nomination of Jennifer Tyrell.

Mr. Lane nominated Jessica Roselund for the position of Second Grade Teacher, with a Master's, Step 5, at a salary of \$43,414.00.

Mrs. Schiff inquires as to why the turnover seems to show teachers staying for an average of two years and what the District is doing to recruit great teachers.

Mr. Lane stated the District is doing everything they can to recruit the best candidates, and all positions are currently cross-posted on various employment pages, websites, and social media platforms. Mr. Lane continued by stating that restructuring the pay scale for paraeducators has proven better retention rates. The District has interviewed and declined unqualified candidates, as we want to ensure we're hiring the right people for the right positions.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier, and seconded by Mrs. Goggin, the motion to hire Ms. Roselund, the Board voted 5-0, to accept the nomination.

X. SCHOOL BOARD

- A. Resignations – Mr. Lane provided the Board with a list of resignations for the Board to accept: Jaclyn Rohr – Assistant Principal, Joanne Rautio – Title 1 Teacher, Anna Collins – PES Teacher & Nicole Calautti – PES Special Education Teacher.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier, and seconded by Mrs. Schiff, the motion passed to accept the resignations of the four staff listed, 5-0.

B. Policies – First Reading

- i. EBCF, Pandemic / Epidemic Emergencies
- ii. IGE, Parental Objections to Specific Course Materials
- iii. DK, Payment Procedures
- iv. DKA, Personnel Records

A. Policies – Second Reading

- i. IJL, Library Materials Selection and Adoption, tabled for further discussion on parent involvement and verbiage regarding the persons in which can challenge items, and to compare and merge the provided drafts.
- ii. ILD, Non-Educational / Non-Academic Questionnaires, Surveys, and Research, change Dean of Operations to Administration. On a motion made by Mr. Cote and seconded by Mrs. Adams, the motion passed 5-0.
- iii. GCQ, Non-Renewal, Termination, and Dismissal of Certified Staff, accepted as written,
- iv. GCQR, Non-School Employment of Professional Staff, accepted as written.
- v. DBJ, Over-Expending Funds, accepted as written.

XI. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Budget Committee Representative – Mrs. Adams no updates.
- B. Drake Field and Facilities – Mr. Gauthier no updates.
- C. Negotiating Team –
- D. Foss Family Scholarship – Mrs. Adams no updates.
- E. Public Relations – Mrs. Goggin is working with her contact regarding the NH Fair Funding Project to ensure that we're on track for the presentation scheduled for September.

XII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for August 3, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the Pittsfield Middle High School Media Center.

Unanticipated Revenue (Mr. Lane)

XIII. PUBLIC INPUT

None at this time.

XIV. NON-PUBLIC

At 7:26 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).

Personnel Matters Discussed

At 7:53 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Cote, seconded by Mrs. Goggin to exit the 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, Mrs. Goggin, yes; Mr. Cote, yes).

XV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Cote and seconded by Mrs. Goggin to adjourn the meeting. The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Zinn

Recording Secretary