

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD  
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE  
UNIT #51

PITTSFIELD SCHOOLBOARD  
MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Meeting July 18, 2024  
Pittsfield Middle High School

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandra Adams- Chair Person  
Molly Goggin- Vice Chair Person  
Adam Gauthier  
Tim Robinson  
Eric Nilsson

OTHERS PRESENT: Bryan Lane- Superintendent of Schools  
Derek Hamilton- Principal PMHS  
Kristen White- Principal PES  
Charlene Vary- Director of Student Support Services  
Melissa Brown- PMHS Assistant Principal  
Members of the Public

I. Mrs. Adams called the meeting into session at 5:30 and led the Pledge of Allegiance

II. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA

Mrs. Adams- Dates for Superintendent's annual and quarterly evaluations, using transcript software the Town uses, Mr. Leduc will be moved to a later date  
Mrs. Goggin- update of Open Enrollment issue  
Mrs. Vary- Letter from Mrs. Smith

Motion to accept the amended agenda made by Mr. Robinson  
Second by Mr. Gauthier

Vote 5-0

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of June 18, 2024

Mrs. Adams- Use past tense, Mr. Robinson made the motion to accept the amended agenda, modify sentence regarding Mr. Lane modifying his work days  
Mrs. Goggin- Mr. Robinson's name listed twice

Motion to accept the amended agenda by Mrs. Goggin  
Second by Mr. Gauthier

Vote 5-0

- IV. PUBLIC INPUT-None
- V. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE- Not Present
- VI. Director of Student Support Services- Charlene Vary

Read letter from Mrs. Smith, ESY Coordinator on the progress of the program, who has done a great job over seeing the program. We've invited a total of 82 students and there may be a few more than that who were invited. Our preschool students are invited for services. Students aren't learning any new information, but it's maintaining those skills.

Staffing- Two regular education teachers moving into Special Education positions. This leave us with one open position at the fifth grade.

A proposal was made by Mrs. Vary to use a contracted service for the fifth grade position due to the fact that we have no qualified candidates. Mr. Lane indicates that the cost is \$120,000 for the contracted service, approximately \$47,000 more than budgeted.

Mrs. Goggin made a motion to approve the plan for contracting with a service for case management.

Mr. Nilsson seconded the motion for discussion purposes.

The Board discussed the proposal at length. Mr. Nilsson had concerns regarding the cost above budget and inquired as to whether or not we could use current staff who are not certified. Mrs. Vary explained that there is no one certifiable at this point although there are two people working on their certification who should complete it in the spring. This would be a one-year fix for this scenario if those staff people do successfully complete their requirements. Mrs. Goggin spoke to the importance of filling all positions for Special Education. The 2023-24 school year saw Mrs. Vary having to fulfill case management duties which created a strain in services for special needs students. Mrs. Goggin has had a child that has had five case managers in four years. The lack of continuity creates difficulty for students. Mr. Nilsson supports filling the position but has a concern over the increased cost. Mrs. Vary added to the discussion that this person would also be responsible for 504 plans for students.

Mrs. Adams called for a vote on the motion.

Vote 4-1-0 (Mr. Nilsson voted no)

- VII. PITTSFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL- Kristen White

Mrs. Kelly and I attended the National Association of Elementary School principals. We just got back late last night. So I wanted to extend my gratitude to the school board for allowing us to go. We were in sessions with over 1500 Elementary principals. We spoke to others throughout the entire country and it's nice to have other people to talk to other people are dealing with so many situations, but also reinforcing the practices we have in place to help children.

The Staff went through an HMH training for the new reading program the two days after school ended. Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Vary, and I sat in on these trainings and we were right in there with them. We were creating classrooms. We're doing these because we want to make sure that we are supporting them as they implement the new program. So we're really excited about the first six weeks of school, where we have those set and then we're going to have a professional development date with them again, and they're going to come in and work with us.

The office staff is working to redesign the office for greater efficiency. We are also meeting as an office team to better affect the practices in the office daily.

Retirement celebrations for the three staff members leaving us were all successful and a great way to recognize their contributions to the District.

Summer programs for students are in full swing and our students are attending in large numbers. They are having fun while learning and making sure that they are enhancing their learning. Summer slide activities are available to all students to stay engaged.

The maintenance crew is doing a great job in getting the building ready for the students to return in a few weeks. Classrooms had accumulated furniture that did not meet fire code regulations and it is being discarded, most not purchased with District funds. Mr. Gauthier inquired if the public had been given an opportunity to have the furniture being discarded. Mrs. White indicated that the majority of it was old, worn and many had tears in them. Moving forward, anything would be offered to the public.

Mrs. White spoke to community events. Highlighted:

- Old Home Days with students from PES and PMHS
- Popsicles on the Playground
- Kindergarten Pool Day

VIII. PITTSFIELD MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL- Derek Hamilton

Update on the class of 2024:

- 14 of the 34 students graduated with honors.
- \$58,000 in scholarships were given out to graduating seniors
- Graduation rate was at 84%

The District has become eligible for a grant for a career counselor that would follow the rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade students for seven years. Mr. Robinson inquired as to whether it was isolated to the cohort of students? Mr. Hamilton indicated that was accurate.

Mr. Hamilton gave a slide show presentation of school improvement goals and the plan to reach those goals. There is going to be an emphasis on supporting instructional goals for students. This will help to develop consistency throughout the school which will give students a common language and practice to relate to. Second goal is student achievement. Action steps were described on how to help students meet their educational goals. Third goal is organizational effectiveness. The final part of the plan is to implement the vision of a learner plan that was developed during the NEASC visit.

Mrs. Adams requested to be on the information system so she can get the same information as parents so she can attend school functions.

IX. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS- Bryan Lane

The Superintendent reviewed the hiring chart for the District. Title I teacher Maura Burns may be moved to the open second grade position. The open positions are now a reading specialist, music teacher at PMHS and Title I teacher. The District still has a surplus in salaries and benefits

for the 2024-25 budget in the amount of \$71,136. \$23,600 of the funds for the contracted service case manager were moved into a grant.

A letter from Drummond and Woodsum, legal counsel, stated that the District had been part of a class action law suit regarding the Opioid addiction crisis. The law suit was won but all funds needed to be turned over the State of New Hampshire.

The State Board of Education had not gotten information regarding the Open Enrollment. Mrs. Goggin inquired as to whether or not the State Board had time obligations. Mr. Lane indicated that it did not appear so.

As part of the Fair Funding Project request, Mr. Lane created a budget that would only depend on funds that were provided by the State for an “adequate education”. The exercise was to show how the funds provided by the State do not cover the cost of an education in Pittsfield. Class sizes would be between 32 and 46 students and many services would not be offered.

The Superintendent put forward a nomination for Allyson Poulin to fill the open art position at PMHS. Bachelor’s step 2, a salary of \$37,300, total budget for the position would be \$49,412.

Mrs. Goggin made the motion to accept the nomination  
Second by Mr. Robinson  
Vote 5-0

Mr. Lane presented budget documents the Board had requested:

- Year to date expenditures with actuals for 2023-24
- Revenue report for 2023-24
- An accounting of all grant expenditures
- A cash flow map for the 2024-25 school year

The Board discussed the documents briefly since they did not have time to review them prior to the meeting. Some discrepancies were pointed out to the Superintendent.

Mrs. Vogt, School District Treasurer, and the Superintendent spoke to the email Mrs. Vogt sent to the Board on Monday concerning a possible deficit the District was facing due to the practice of paying teachers in the summer from funds in the current school year for services rendered in the previous school year. The amount could be approximately \$500,000. Mrs. Vogt distributed a document that described the financial situation. The discussion included the possibility of needing to do a deficit warrant article once all the information was reported on. The need for budget integrity was a focus of the conversation. Mr. Nilsson expressed the need to stop spending funds until there was a definitive answer to the questions being raised. Both Mr. Lane and Mrs. Vogt agree that the practice of paying from the wrong school year has been going on for many years. Mrs. Vogt is looking at manifests and other documents to determine the origin of the issue. Mr. Lane had a conversation with Dr. Freeman, a previous Superintendent. He recalls discussion about the issue but no specific recollection as to the content or timing of the discussion. Mrs. Vogt expressed that the practice is what has caused the cash flow issue the District has faced and continues to face. Mrs. Vogt asked permission to expand the parameters of the audit in order to find out more information. The worst case scenario is going to the

voters to ask for a warrant to be approved but more information is needed to tell the voters how this came to be. The Board consensus was to wait for the audit to be completed.

Mrs. Vogt asked for a motion to approve naming Paulette Wolfe as the Assistant School District Treasurer.

Motion made by Mr. Gauthier to approve the nomination of Paulette Wolfe as Assistant School District Treasurer.

Second by Mrs. Adams.

Vote 5-0

The Board packet has a series of policies for first reading in regard to non-discrimination, the reporting of harassment of students as well as staff and pregnant students. The policy review is in response to changes in the Title IX policies from the federal government that went into place on August 1, 2024.

The Business Office is making strong progress in resolving some issues discussed at the last Board meeting. Monthly reconciliations have been done through February and the remaining months should be reconciled within two weeks.

Free and Reduced meal paper work has been generated and will be distributed to all families on August 5.

The Leadership Team met with a representative from the state in working to implement a full multi-tiered system of support for student behavior. Updates will be brought to the board as progress is made.

X. SCHOOL BOARD

Policy First Reading

KCD- Public Gifts and Donations

KM- Teacher-Parent Communications Regarding Student Performance

KE- Public Complaints

IC- School Year

CBI- Evaluation of the Superintendent

POLICY SECOND READING

KI- Visitors to School- Amendment, "No person shall visit a school without first reporting to the office to advise of the purpose of the visit as well as follow all procedures and building protocol."

Motion to accept the amendments made for policy KI made by Mrs. Goggin

Second by Mr. Gauthier

KEE- Website Accessibility – change Dean of Operations to Technology Director

Motion to accept amendment to policy KEE made by Mrs. Goggin

Second by Mr. Gauthier

Vote 5-0

KH- Public Solicitations, discussed and tabled until the Superintendent can provide more information

KFA – Public Conduct on School Property, no changes.

XI. Committee Assignments

- a) Budget Committee- None
- b) Drake Field and Facilities- None
- c) Negotiation- Suggested Dates August 12, will communicate with EAP
- d) Legislation- Mrs. Adams
- e) Foss Family Foundation- None
- f) Public Relations- none

XII. PLAN FOR NEXT AGENDA

Policies for Title IX

Policy for Attendance

Policy for Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

Policy CBI- Evaluation of the Superintendent

Update on Open Enrollment issue

XIII. BOARD COMMENTS

XIV. PUBLIC INPUT

XV. NON-PUBLIC SESSION- Mr. Gauthier made the motion at 8:47 under RSA 91A:3 (a)

Second by Mrs. Adams

Roll call vote:

Mr. Nilsson- yes

Mr. Robinson- yes

Mrs. Goggin- yes

Mr. Gauthier- yes

Mrs. Adams- yes

Personnel issue discussed, no action taken

Motion to exit Non-Public session made by Mr. Gauthier at 9:12

Second by Mr. Robinson

Vote 5-0

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Mrs. Goggin to adjourn

Seconded by Mr. Robinson

Vote 5-0 to approve the motion at 9:15

SUBMITTED BY BRYAN LANE 8/12/24