

APPROVED BY THE PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

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

MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Meeting
January 18, 2018
Pittsfield Middle High School

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Michael Wolfe, Chairperson
Bea Douglas
Linda Freese
Ted Mitchell
Ralph Odell

Others Present: John Freeman, Superintendent of Schools
Melissa Brown, Director of College and Career Readiness
Tobi Chassie, Director of Student Services
Derek Hamilton, Dean of Operations
Danielle Harvey, Dean of Instruction
Kathy LeMay, Director of Intervention & Title I Manager
Ross Morse, Community Liaison
Member of the Faculty

Chairperson Wolfe called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

II. AGENDA REVIEW

The following items were added to the agenda:

- End of Semester Two (Ms. Harvey)

III. ACTION ON AGENDA

On a motion made by Ms. Freese and seconded by Ms. Douglas, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.

IV. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

On a motion made by Mr. Mitchell and seconded by Ms. Douglas, the Board unanimously approved the non-public minutes of the December 7, 2017, meeting as written.

On a motion made by Ms. Freese and seconded by Mr. Mitchell, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the December 21, 2017, meeting as written.

On a motion made by Mr. Mitchell and seconded by Ms. Douglas, the Board voted to unanimously approve the non-public minutes of the December 21, 2017, meeting as written.

V. PUBLIC INPUT – None

VI. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Colby Wolfe stated the Site Council is considering proposals relative to senior release and content block.

VII. DEAN OF INSTRUCTION

A. Upcoming Events

Ms. Harvey informed the Board of the Winter Showcase on January 31, 2018, at 12:54 p.m. and 1:27p.m.; PES concert, grades 1-4 on January 16, 2018; PES concert, grades 5-6 on January 23, 2018; and PMHS chorus and band concert on January 24, 2018.

B. Maternity Leaves

Two first-grade teachers will be going on childcare leave in April. A middle school teacher is also anticipating the birth of her child, but not until the end of the school year. Ms. Harvey is recruiting to fill these long-term substitute positions.

C. End of Quarter Two

Ms. Harvey explained the faculty is concerned about the days lost during the second quarter. Although it would be difficult to extend the semester, accommodations could be made to allow students an extra week to submit assignments. On a motion made by Ms. Douglas and seconded by Ms. Freese, the Board unanimously approved the change to the master calendar to allow for an additional week for students to complete first semester requirements.

VIII. DEAN OF OPERATIONS

A. Playworks

Mr. Hamilton informed the Board of a training being offered by Playworks to the PES staff. The training will help staff make the most of recess through on-site staffing, consultative support, professional development, and other resources. A core team will be established to participate in additional training and work with an on-site coach.

B. Responsive Classroom Site Visit

Mr. Hamilton explained the training that was provided by Responsive Classroom included a consultation, which will be conducted on January 22, 2018. She will be using a tool called Kaleidoscope to evaluate the school in areas of effective management, positive community, developmental response, and engaging academics. At the end of the consultation, she will share observations and feedback for faculty to determine next steps for successful implementation.

C. School District Budget

Mr. Hamilton provided the Board with information on proposed new furniture, replacement furniture, and technology purchases in the 2018-2019 district budget. He distributed a handout that detailed the proposed expenditures.

New furniture requests are for new tables and chairs for grade six and new picnic tables and classroom fans. Replacement furniture requests are for the PES conference table and chairs and carpeting for a section of the floor near the lobby and gym.

Requests for technology software include AESOP, an online leave and substitute management system, and a three-year Meraki agreement to maintain wireless access points.

Replacement technology equipment requests are for SMART Boards, network switches to improve connection speed, thirty-three laptops, printers, twenty-five desktop computers for PMHS, and fifty iPads for grade eleven.

New technology equipment requests included ten iPads for PES, one hundred iPads for fifth and ninth grade, and one new SMART Board for PMHS.

Ms. Freese asked if there was discussion ensuing regarding iPads, rather than another device. Mr. Hamilton stated there is research to be done to choose the most appropriate device.

Dr. Freeman, in response to a concern stated at a Budget Committee hearing about screen time, distributed an article published by the Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which included recommendations to limit screen time is specific to entertainment. Dr. Freeman suggested this issue being kept in mind as the school moves forward with the use of technology.

IX. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

A. PATCH

Ms. Chassie explained that she meets with resident doctors from Concord Hospital during their second year of training to discuss the interface between physicians and educators during the special education process.

B. Reading Intervention

Ms. Chassie and Ms. LeMay are working with middle school special educators to create reading interventions for students in grades 7 and 8 who are continuing to struggle with learning to read. This is a pilot and if successful will be continued into next year.

C. Special Education Aid

Ms. Chassie provided the Board with a list of all districts' allocations of Special Education Aid, formerly called Catastrophic Aid. Pittsfield spent \$517,497 and was entitled to \$200,052. After the FY2018 proration of 72.4%, Pittsfield actually received \$144,839.

D. Wilson Reading System

Ms. Chassie thanked a member of the community, Ms. Dianne Melim, for the assistance she has committed to provide a teacher within the district. She will be coaching Julie Britton, PES special education teacher, to become certified as a Wilson Reading System teacher. This would cost the district a significant amount of money if Ms. Melim had not volunteered to offer her services for free.

X. DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

A. Home Is Where the Heart Is

Ms. Brown described to the Board the annual Home is Where the Heart Is presentation conducted on January 9, 2018. This college and career discussion included a panel of PMHS alumni and was facilitated by Angela Castonguay, a college counselor from the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation. An alumni reception followed in the media center.

Dr. Freeman reported the experience of a student who explained his competencies in math and subsequent success in college classes. Other students also were able to report their positive perspective of the education they have received in Pittsfield.

B. Concord Regional Technical Center (CRTC)

Ms. Brown reported students in grade 9 and 10 will be attending a one-hour presentation about CRTC on January 23, 2018. CRTC Director Steve Rothenberg, instructors, and current PMHS students will explain the programs CRTC offers. "Program Shadow Days" will follow on February 6, 2018, for students who express interest in learning more about automotive technology, computer engineering, construction trades, cosmetology, criminal justice, culinary and pastry arts, fire science / emergency management technology, graphic design and creative media, health science, teacher preparation, and theater technology and design.

C. Senior Financial Aid Night

On December 19, 2017, Angela Castonguay from the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation presented an overview of financial aid information to several students and their families.

D. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The Every Student Succeeds Act was signed into law on December 10, 2015. The primary goal of this law is to improve educational equity for students from lower income families by providing federal funds to school districts serving students living in poverty. Ms. Brown explained the impact of this law for college and career readiness and the measurement of outcomes for the district.

XI. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

A. 2018-2019 School District Budget

Dr. Freeman made a minor correction to the adopted budget. Also, he distributed copies of the default budget for the Board to consider. On a motion made by Mr. Wolfe and seconded by Mr. Odell, the Board approved the Default Budget for a total of \$10,202,519.47. On a motion made by Ms. Douglas and seconded by Ms. Freese, the Board voted unanimously to approve the proposed operating budget for a total of \$10,623,224.

B. Policy Recommendations

Dr. Freeman presented the following policies for the Board's consideration. On a motion made by Ms. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Odell, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following policies: Policy DB, Annual Budget; Policy DBI, Budget Implementation; Policy DBJ, Over-Expending Funds; Policy DBA, Investment; Policy DGA, Authorized Signatures; Policy DGD, School District Credit Cards.

C. Deliberative Session

Dr. Freeman reported the Budget Committee went through each line of the budget and reduced the School Board's proposal by \$92,500. The Budget Committee did not approve their own number in their warrant article. The Department of Revenue Administration has disallowed such a position, so Budget Committee Chairman Bob Schiferle will be scheduling a meeting no later than Tuesday, January 23, 2018, to reconsider the Budget Committee recommendation.

Dr. Freeman distributed Healthtrust and School Care comparison proposals for health insurance.

Dr. Freeman distributed a handout which provided information about salaries for all employee categories proposed in the budget. It provided information about rate of inflation and examples of impact to randomly selected positions in the district.

Dr. Freeman, in response to a comment made by someone at the Budget Committee indicating he was the highest paid superintendent in the state, provided the Board with documentation available on the Department of Education website to refute the claim.

D. School District Retreat

The Board previously approved a teacher workshop day for the purpose of conducting a district retreat that would involve all employees. The Education Association of Pittsfield grieved this day because the collective bargaining agreement calls for 180 instructional days and the retreat would not be viewed as an instructional day. This was unexpected due to several reasons outlined by Dr. Freeman. Instead, the event will be completed in two half days, to which the Board agreed.

E. 2018-2019 School Calendar

Dr. Freeman explained the administrators are working on the master calendar. Under consideration are some changes to accommodate both the requirements of the proposed collective bargaining agreement and initiatives underway in other areas, such as family engagement. Board members were invited to submit calendar suggestions; the administrative team will be drafting a calendar for consideration in the weeks ahead.

XII. SCHOOL BOARD

A. Ms. Douglas

Ms. Douglas announced that due to some recently diagnosed health concerns, she may be missing a meeting or two. She is committed to staying connected to the business of the Board.

XIII. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

A. Budget Committee

Mr. Odell stated he has researched state average tuition rates of districts with high schools in the same athletic class as Pittsfield (small high schools) across the state and has determined Pittsfield to be near the bottom of the list.

B. Drake Field & Facilities - None

C. Negotiations – None

D. Foss Foundation – None

XIV. PUBLIC INPUT (Second Session)

Mr. Schiferle, Budget Committee Chairperson, asked about the school ratings that are publicized about schools. Dr. Freeman commented on the fact that these ratings are likely due to real estate ventures and really don't reflect accurate information about schools.

Adam Gauthier stated he has been attempting to use Facebook to better inform the public. He invited people to feel free to correct the information he shares, if they have information that conflicts.

Ross Morse stated his concern about the information published on social media may be misleading people. It often appears that the author is knowledgeable about the topic when in fact there are misunderstandings about the topics.

Ms. Chassie provided some basic information about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grant, which according to a member of the public, has not been used to reduce the district budget. She explained that there are strict limitations to how IDEA monies are expended by the district.

XV. PLAN AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

The next School Board meeting is scheduled for February 1, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. at the Pittsfield Middle High School.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Ms. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Wolfe the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tobi Gray Chassie
Recording Secretary