

APPROVED BY THE PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

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

MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Meeting
December 16, 2021
Pittsfield Middle High School

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Adam Gauthier, Chairperson
Justin Clough, Vice Chairperson
Sandra Adams
Molly Goggin
Diane Rider

Others Present: Bryan Lane, Interim Superintendent
Derek Hamilton, Principal, PMHS
Jess Bickford, Director of Student Services
Members of the Public

Chair Gauthier opened the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mr. Gauthier.

III. AGENDA REVIEW

The following items were added:

- Board Email Correspondence (Ms. Goggin)
- Policy Review (Ms. Goggin)
- Warrant Articles (Mr. Lane)

IV. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA

On a motion made by Mr. Clough and seconded by Ms. Goggin, the Board approved the amended agenda.

V. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The November 18, 2021 public minutes were considered by the Board. On a motion made by Mr. Clough and seconded by Ms. Goggin, the Board approved the minutes as written with Ms. Adams, Mr. Clough, Ms. Goggin, and Ms. Rider voting in the affirmative and Mr. Gauthier abstaining from the vote.

The November 18, 2021 Work Session minutes were considered. Changes include: on page one, omit “entered the meeting at 5:34 and on page two, change Coggin to Goggin. On a motion made by Ms. Rider and seconded by Ms. Adams, the minutes of the work session were approved as amended with Ms. Adams, Mr. Clough, Ms. Goggin, and Ms. Rider voting in the affirmative and Mr. Gauthier abstaining from the vote.

The December 2, 2021 minutes were considered by the Board. Changes include: on page one add “via Zoom” next to Ms. Goggin’s name and changing to “Mr. Gauthier opened the meeting...” On a motion made by Ms. Rider and seconded by Ms. Adams, the Board unanimously voted to approve the amended minutes.

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

Jaime Koladish stated her appreciation for the newly formed curriculum review committee. She stated that she, Lynn Nagle, and Clayton Wood are interested in participating.

Ms. Koladish asked about statistics guiding the wearing of masks. Mr. Lane provided information and stated he reviews the statistics daily.

VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

In the absence of Matthew Swenson, Mr. Hamilton reported that the Site Council has been working on the dress code policy.

VIII. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

A. Special Education Paraeducators

Ms. Bickford provided the Board with information on paraeducators including how paraprofessionals are decided upon and the three main different positions.

Mr. Clough asked for clarification about providing parents with information on advocacy in special education. Ms. Bickford said that information on how parents can access resources is shared at all special education meetings.

Mr. Clough stated that work should be done to help teachers better understand due process.

Ms. Rider asked Ms. Bickford about data collected on behavior incidents that require classroom evacuation or removal of the student to the Student Support Center. Ms. Bickford agreed to provide further information.

Mr. Gauthier asked for a percentage of students who have individual education plans. Ms. Bickford agreed to provide the requested statistics.

IX. PMHS PRINCIPAL

A. School Newsletter

Mr. Hamilton provided the Board with a copy of the newsletter for December, highlighting events from the month.

B. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) & Curriculum Review

Mr. Hamilton provided the Board with information regarding UDL and curriculum. He informed the Board that the website has a variety of resources available for review.

Mr. Hamilton reviewed the process that is used in the district to design and approve curriculum. He explained that the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) is a nonprofit education research and development organization that has created UDL. Mr. Hamilton explained that each unit written by a teacher is reviewed and validated by grade span teams, department teams, and cross-curricular teams using the *Validation Protocol*. Curriculum and assessment is in a constant state of review.

Currently, 90% of the curriculum has been written and reviewed or is written and pending review, in line with the NEASC Foundational Element 2.2 (written curriculum).

Ms. Rider thanked Mr. Hamilton for the hard work being done on curriculum. She stated her appreciation for the presentation Mr. Hamilton made at the last meeting, as well as the information provided in the Board packet for this meeting.

Ms. Goggin stated her appreciation for the work that has been done in order to have 90% of the curriculum in order. She also stated that she was proud to know that the district is using UDL as the foundation of the curriculum design work. Ms. Goggin commented on the advantages of using a student work protocol to validate curriculum.

Mr. Clough reiterated appreciation for the work that has been done to create transparency with the community on curriculum.

Ms. Goggin stated that she thought more can be done to help the parents when students are transitioning from one level to another. Although parents are not always able to attend, the information is very helpful for those who are able to attend.

X. INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

A. COVID-19 Statistics

Mr. Lane provided statistics supporting the wearing of masks. There has been a 15% absentee rate, 19% Pittsfield PCR testing, 68 new cases in 14 days, substantial transmission rate and the presence of in-school transmission.

B. Holidays

Mr. Lane stated that since Christmas and New Year's Day falls on a Saturday, the paid holiday for full year staff will recognize December 24 and December 31 as holidays; both buildings will be closed.

C. Harriman Team Design

Team Design has all of the information they require. Mr. Lane is awaiting a call from the company as they consider changes that would be necessary at PMHS to house elementary students.

D. Masks

Mr. Lane pointed out that parents who attend basketball games will need to wear masks as long as we are in the current status.

E. Budget Committee

Mr. Lane attended the Budget Committee meeting on December 15, 2021. He answered questions and took note of additional questions that will need to be answered. He updated the Board on figures that will result in a decrease in the tax rate. A written response to the Budget Committee was provided to the Board.

F. District Social Worker

Mr. Lane reported the resignation of Lisa Gauthier from the position of district social worker.

Mr. Lane reported the resignation of Laurilee Hurley, PMHS high school special education teacher.

G. Warrant Articles

Mr. Lane explained that the two warrant articles that are required include the total budget and the negotiated teacher contract budget. Mr. Lane reviewed capital reserve funds such as capital improvement and special education catastrophic costs. Discussion ensued regarding the reserve fund earmarked for dumpsters. He asked the Board to consider warrant articles for the next meeting.

XI. SCHOOL BOARD

A. Board Email Correspondence

Ms. Goggin reviewed past practice regarding board email correspondence. She reviewed the fact that when an email is sent to the Board, there has been advice that members should not “reply all”. Ms. Goggin stated that she is concerned about the content of emails to which it is not possible to reply all. She stated that those conversations should be brought to the Board for discussion or addressed with individuals. Ms. Goggin stated that the Board has been concerned about transparency and that email correspondence does not lend itself to such transparency.

B. Policies

Ms. Goggin asked the Board to consider a more formal policy review process. She stated that if policies are reviewed on a regular basis, it will give the Board an opportunity to better understand policies and will ensure the appropriate updating of Board policy. Ms. Goggin suggested consideration of a policy committee including community members. Mr. Lane stated that he would bring forward new policies that are required by legislation. He said he would, if the Board would like, to begin systematically reviewing policies.

C. Curriculum

Mr. Lane presented policies that relate to curriculum. The following policies were presented: Policy IGA, Curriculum Development; Policy IGD, Policy Adoption; Policy IHAH, World Language Program; Policy IJ, Instructional Materials; Policy IKJ, Supplemental Materials Selection; Policy ILBA, Assessment of Educational Programs; Policy IJL, Library Materials Selection and Adoption; Policy IL, and Analysis and Assessment of Instructional Resources.

Ms. Rider stated her opinion that a curriculum advisory committee should be put in place. She stated that curriculum should be considered according to three perspectives including 1) age appropriateness, 2) balance, and 3) tone. Mr. Lane explained that parents have access to curriculum and if they are in opposition to any materials, there is a policy in place providing alternatives. Ms. Adams suggested that forums to help parents gain awareness and understanding of the resources that are available on the website might be helpful. Mr. Clough stated

that information is readily available to members of the community. He also suggested giving Mr. Lane time to address some of the issues that need to be addressed, such as curriculum development. Discussion ensued regarding the appropriateness of creating a committee to oversee curriculum development.

Ms. Koladish was asked for her opinion. She explained that she had the experience of finding out about curriculum content after the fact. She desires knowing about the curriculum in advance of it being taught so she can help her children to prepare for the experience. Discussion continued to ensue regarding the appropriateness of community engagement in curriculum development.

D. Blackboard Connect

Mr. Gauthier requested that Ms. Rider and Ms. Adams be added to Blackboard Connect for announcements.

E. COVID-19 Testing

Mr. Hamilton explained that school nurses investigated whether home tests are valid. He explained that it has been determined to accept home testing results and parents have been informed of such. Mr. Hamilton stated that home tests will be supplied by the State and distributed by the school; on-site testing will be available in January and done under the supervision of the school nurse.

F. Tik Tok National Challenge

Mr. Gauthier asked if any precautions are in order due to the threats made on Tik Tok national challenges. It was agreed that these reports are not reputable.

XII. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Budget Committee Representative - Mr. Clough
- B. Drake Field and Facilities - Mr. Gauthier
- C. Negotiating Team - Ms. Goggin & Mr. Gauthier
- D. Foss Family Scholarship - Ms. Rider

XIII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, January 6, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the Pittsfield Middle High School Media Center.

XIV. PUBLIC INPUT

Ms. Koladish thanked the Board for their work. She said she feels heard and appreciates it.

XV. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

At 7:47 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mr. Clough to enter into a non-public session under the authority of RSA 91-A:3 (a) to discuss negotiations. The Board was polled and voted unanimously to enter into a non-public session (Ms. Adams, yes; Mr. Clough, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Ms. Goggin, yes; Ms. Rider, yes).

At ___ p.m. a motion was made by ___ and seconded by ___ to exit from a non-public session. The Board was polled and voted unanimously to exit the non-public session (Ms. Adams, yes; Mr. Clough, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Ms. Goggin, yes; Ms. Rider, yes).

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by ___ and seconded by ___ to adjourn the meeting. The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at ___ p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tobi Gray Chassie
Recording Secretary