

APPROVED BY THE PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

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

MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Meeting
November 3, 2022
Pittsfield Middle High School

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Adam Gauthier, Chairperson
Sandra Adams, Vice Chairperson
Adam Cote
Sarah Duval
Molly Goggin (arrived at 6:28 p.m.)

Others Present: Bryan Lane, Interim Superintendent
Derek Hamilton, PMHS Principal
Melissa Brown, PMHS Asst. Principal
Michael Wiley, PES Principal
Members of the Public

Chairperson 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 to the agenda:

- VLACS (Mr. Gauthier)
- Meals (Mr. Gauthier)
- Policy, GD Support Staff (Ms. Adams)
- Plow Bids (Ms. Adams)

IV. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA

On a motion made by Ms. Adams and seconded by Ms. Duval, the Board unanimously approved

the amended agenda.

V. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the October 6, 2022 meeting were considered.

Changes include: page 1, III, update Non-public for Superintendent Evaluation; page 2, VI, correct Jaime Koladish spelling; page 3, XI, B, ii, update to reflect the policy being tabled for third reading for language to institute a facilities use statement for the property; page 4, G, correct after school; page 5, third paragraph, correct de-transgender.

On a motion made by Ms. Adams and seconded by Mr. Cote, the Board approved the amended minutes.

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

Dan Schroth would like to address the Board again in regard to his request for \$50,000 towards climate change action/electric vehicle charging stations. He would like to see this number increased to \$100,000.

Katie Nikas asked the Board if the Policy JBAB was sent to students as was previously stated at the previous meetings.

Mr. Lane let Ms. Nikas know that due to parent approval, he was not able to send it out as he was hoping, but could further investigate the legal parameters in which to do so.

Ms. Nikas shared her disappointment in the wording of the survey for those who were concerned with the changes coming for the Policy JBAB. Ms. Nikas did not feel there was ample opportunity for feedback.

Mr. Gauthier apologized for her disappointment.

Diane Rider asked the Board to open the emailed survey to all community members.

Mr. Lane stated that any member of the community who wished to speak their opinions on the Policy JBAB, are able and welcome to attend any school board meeting to share these concerns. Mr. Lane stated that we cannot guarantee that feedback would be from community members only if it were sent out to non-district e-mail addresses and could lead to inaccurate feedback from non-community members.

Tracy Huyck spoke as a parent of a former student of the District. Ms. Huyck spoke about the negative experiences that her daughter had while she was a student at PMHS due to her sexual identity/orientation. Ms. Huyck shared with the Board that her 11-year-old granddaughter committed suicide due to questioning her own sexuality. Ms. Huyck stated that the District needs to encourage acceptance.

VII. SITE COUNCIL

- A. Riley stated that the Site Council is looking into expanding the participation to sixth grade students and recently held a meeting to discuss this.

VIII. PES PRINCIPAL

- A. Mr. Wiley summarized his report for the Board. The elementary school held a Harvest Parade that was attended and celebrated by both parents and PMHS students.
- B. The Lions Club held a vision screening on November 1, 2022.
- C. PES will be visited by the Community based Cavity Prevention Program on November 7-9th.
- D. The PTO will be hosting a book fair in the PES Learning Commons, to be held in the evenings of November 8th and 10th, as well as during the school days for students to enjoy and make purchases.
- E. Melissa O'Leary collaborated with the Pittsfield Public Library, to apply for and secure a Children's Literary Foundation grant. This grant will provide \$500 in books as well as two visits from authors to read at PES.
- F. PES Conferences are scheduled for November 7-10th, in correspondence with the PTO Book Fair.
- G. Mr. Wiley notified the Board that the fifth grade class will be holding a non-perishable food drive. The students will be visiting classrooms to collect food items to be distributed. During this time, the fifth grade students will be taught the importance of empathy and compassion through this act, as it ties back into social and emotional learning goals.
- H. Victoria Marcotte, the District's Family Support Coordinator, will be reading with the elementary students with books that focus on social-emotional skills.

IX. PMHS PRINCIPAL

- A. Mr. Hamilton advised the Board that the end of the first quarter is tomorrow, Friday, November 4, 2022. Fall conferences are scheduled to be held from November 7-18th. Reports are set to be distributed through ALMA, our Student Information System, on November 10, 2022.
- B. Mr. Hamilton summarized to the Board, the different areas of professional development and focus groups that the staff at PMHS has been participating in.
- C. Mr. Hamilton showcased the trip to the UNH Browne Center that our 9th grade students recently took part in. During the visit students were able to spend a full day at UNH doing low and high ropes courses that worked on skills such as team building, communication and trust.
- D. Mr. Hamilton presented the Board with the sixth edition of the PMHS Newsletter. The newsletter provides information on news and reminders to families as well as important upcoming dates to be mindful of.

X. SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Mr. Lane presented the Board with the Proposed Budget for the 2023-24 School Year.

Mr. Gauthier stated that he has researched the District's financial impact, if we were to provide free meals to the student body that is not currently eligible through the traditional application process. Mr. Gauthier stated that his contact at Fresh Picks stated that this would cost the District between \$75,000-\$100,000 annually.

Mr. Cote expressed his concerns for the impact that this would bring to the budget. Our community is already struggling with the increase in electric, heat and oil costs.

Ms. Adams agreed that while this would be ideal to provide, the District is not in a position to do so.

Mr. Gauthier made a motion to allot \$100,000 of the budget to cover meals for the entire student body. The motion was not seconded.

B. Mr. Lane advised the Board to adopt the proposed budget.

On a motion made by Ms. Goggin to accept the default budget, seconded by Mr. Gauthier, the motion passed 5-0

On a motion made by Ms. Adams and seconded by Mr. Cote, the Board motioned to remove the coding program from the proposed budget, the motion passed 5-0.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Adams, the Board accepted the proposed budget with a 2.11% increase. The motion passed 5-0

C. We received two bids for the snow plow services. Scott Aubertin Excavating submitted a bid of \$18,000. K&B submitted a bid of \$15,000. On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Adams, the Board accepted the bid of \$15,000 from K&B, 4-0-1, with Mr. Cote abstaining from the vote.

D. Mr. Lane summarized the meeting with the Advanced Leadership Team in regard to student academic achievement. Mr. Lane presented to the Board an option to change the state testing method for grades K-8 instead of the historically used NWEA.

Ms. Goggin inquired as to if the District is looking into Star testing. Mr. Lane confirmed that he is.

XI. SCHOOL BOARD

A. Mr. Gauthier inquired of Principal Hamilton as to how the VLACS courses were going for Science. Mr. Hamilton explained the various options that are currently available to the student body as well as the enrollment numbers for them.

B. Policies – First Reading

- i. JICH, Drug and Alcohol Use by Students
- ii. ADB, Drug-Free Workplace
- iii. IKFA, Early Graduation

C. Policies – Second Reading

- i. IMAH, Daily Physical Activity, accepted as written.
- ii. EHAB, Data Governance and Security, change language of Dean of Operations to Administration, on a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mr. Cote, the motion passed 5-0.
- iii. DN, Disposal of Material and Equipment, tabled for Mr. Lane to create a protocol for the disposal process at a following meeting.
- iv. IMBA, Distance Education, change language of Dean of Operations to Principal, paragraph 6, change the paragraph to read “The Administration will assign a staff member to monitor, on a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Goggin, the motion passed 5-0.
- v. GD, Support Staff, tabled for recommended revisions to be presented to the Board.

D. Policies – Third Reading

- i. Policy KDF, Drake Field Use, after the last paragraph add: Members of the public who wish to use the Drake Field Property will need to complete a facilities usage request and submit it to the Superintendent for approval. On a motion made by Ms. Adams and seconded by Mr. Gauthier, the motion passed 5-0.

E. Policies – Fifth Reading

- i. Policy JBAB, Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students, tabled for a sixth reading for language changes to be drafted and supplied to the Board by the Superintendent. This will allow the public to view the feedback on the website posted board packet prior to the next meeting scheduled for November 17, 2022.

XII. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Budget Committee Representative – Ms. Adams
- B. Drake Field and Facilities – Mr. Gauthier
- C. Negotiating Team –
- D. Foss Family Scholarship – Sarah Duval

XIII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the Pittsfield Middle High School Media Center.

XIV. PUBLIC INPUT

Ms. Nikas spoke concerning the feedback received from staff on Policy JBAB who replied that they do not wish to follow the policy in good conscience as it currently stands.

Mr. Lane stated that with the feedback being worded as “in good conscience” does not necessarily means that they are not upholding the policy. Staff cannot be disciplined for their beliefs, only their actions or lack of.

Eric Delnero spoke on Policy JBAB. Mr. Delnero stated they he believes the policy does need to be revised, but not abolished. Mr. Delnero stated that this policy does not necessarily protect gay

students, but that there are other district policies that do already. Mr. Delnero stated that he does not feel a child should be penalized for not being comfortable using the bathroom of their birth gender if another student that is transgender is using that restroom. Mr. Delnero continued to state the

Sabrina Smith inquired of the Board that she would like to know the status of the teacher who told a student that he was going to hell for being gay at a previous meeting.

Mr. Lane stated that this incident has not been brought to his attention and he's unaware of the situation, student or teacher involved.

Mr. Gauthier stated that Mr. Lane has contacted the parent she is referring to.

Cara Peterson is speaking as mother of students who attend PMHS. Ms. Peterson stated that she believes that JBAB is a great policy that protects students such as her daughter.

Amy Guimond addressed the Board as a teacher at PMHS. Ms. Guimond stated that she is indeed actually a Dr. and prefers to be referred to as such. Dr. Guimond spoke on the disrespect that she feels comes along with not addressing someone by their preferred name. Dr. Guimond provided the Board with statistics surrounding mental illness, homelessness and other instabilities with the LGBTQ+ community and how that ties back with those reported rates within our own community. Dr. Guimond stated that the "hill she will die on" is reporting of

Lorrie O'Neill spoke on the issue of "outing" students to their parents. Ms. O'Neill does not believe it's the school's duty to release that information when the school is supposed to be a safe place for students.

Ryan Rafferty stated that he felt the language in Policy JBAB is contradictory to itself in regard to staff having to refer to a student by their birth name and the student requesting that they be referred to by their chosen name.

Mr. Rafferty conveyed concern to the Board regarding the VLACS offering for science. Mr. Rafferty stated there are students struggling with the remote learning because of instruction and technology issues.

Mr. Schroth asked Mr. Gauthier to find \$100,000 for climate action to be instituted by the District.

Mr. Gauthier stated that he would be looking into solar energy once the Board completes the review on Policy JBAB.

Mr. Schroth spoke on his support of Mr. Gauthier's motion to pay for the student body to have lunch supplied for free.

Ms. Smith spoke to support Mr. Gauthier and Mr. Schroth's desire to fund the lunch program for the students. Ms. Smith would rather see the budget adjusted for the kids to have meals than for a foreign language teacher.

Diane Rider spoke on the revision of Policy JBAB and the changing of the language. She believes that the language is an "attitude" towards a teacher and their own beliefs and opinions when they do not wish to use a student's chosen pronouns and chosen names.

Ms. Huyck inquired of the Board about the kids that are bussed to Concord and why they are transported in full size busses and not vans or smaller buses.

Mr. Lane stated that he can look into the possibility of reducing costs for this.

XV. BUDGET DISCUSSION

- A. The Board discussed the coding program at the elementary school and possible grant funding to keep the program going.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Goggin and seconded by Ms. Adams to adjourn the meeting. The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Zinn
Recording Secretary