

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

MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Meeting
June 3, 2021
Pittsfield Middle High School

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Adam Gauthier, Chairperson
Justin Clough, Vice Chairperson
Jessica Drouin (via Zoom)
Molly Goggin
Diane Rider

Others Present: John Graziano, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Jessica Bickford, Director of Student Services
Melissa Brown, PMHS Assistant Principal
Derek Hamilton, PMHS Principal
Danielle Harvey, PES Principal (via Zoom)
Kathy LeMay, PES Assistant Principal
Members of the Public (some via Zoom)

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

II. NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION (NHSBA) TRAINING PRESENTATION

Mr. Gauthier introduced Barrett Christina from the NHSBA, who was present to provide a training presentation to the members of the Board. Training materials were disseminated to the Board. Mr. Christina reviewed the role and responsibilities of the School Board, goal setting and evaluation of the superintendent, participating in collective bargaining, communication strategies, and strategic planning.

III. TUITION STUDY PRESENTATION

Mr. Gauthier introduced Becky Berk, a representative of the Tuition Study Committee. Also present from the committee were Susan Bradley and James Cobern. The Board had been provided the executive summary from the committee's work. Ms. Berk explained the work of the five sub-committees that resulted in the executive summary.

Ms. Goggin thanked the committee for their hard work gathering information relative to the topic of tuitioning high school students out to another district.

Mr. Gauthier stated he had hoped to have more information relative to finances. Ms. Berk stated that the executive summary is a compilation of key highlights and that there are further documents that will provide the data he might be seeking. Ms. Rider stated that she was hoping to see statistics regarding other towns in the immediate area; Ms. Berk stated that those data are available for review. Mr. Clough suggested reaching out to a town that is now trying to pull out of a multi-district SAU in order to tuition their students into that district.

IV. AGENDA REVIEW

The following items were added to the agenda:

- IDEA and Pre-school Grant (Ms. Bickford)
- Council for Exceptional Children Teacher of the Year Awards (Ms. Bickford)
- Movie Request (Ms. LeMay)
- Pittsfield Post (Mr. Hamilton)
- Masks in Outdoor Settings (Mr. Hamilton)
- Budget Balance Considerations (Mr. Hamilton)

V. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA

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

VI. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Ms. Drouin and seconded by Mr. Clough to approve the public minutes for May 20, 2021. Ms. Drouin asked why some entries were in red. Ms. Chassie explained that the version in the packet was apparently not the final draft. On a motion made by Mr. Clough and seconded by Ms. Rider, the Board voted unanimously to table the approval of the minutes until the next meeting.

On a motion made by Ms. Goggin and seconded by Ms. Rider, the Board voted unanimously to table the approval of the minutes of the non-public session on May 20, 2021.

VII. PUBLIC INPUT

Kathy Corliss asked when the Board will be taking action on the Tuition Study Committee report. Mr. Gauthier said it would be either tonight or the next meeting.

VI. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Matthew Swenson, newly appointed representative from the Site Council, introduced himself. Mr. Swenson explained that at the last meeting, the Site Council used a text protocol to review the NEASC report.

VII. PES PRINCIPAL

A. Movie Request

Ms. Harvey reviewed a request for a movie, rated PG, to be used in the context of curriculum. On a motion made by Ms. Goggin and seconded by Ms. Drouin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the use of the movie.

B. Technology Usage

Due to the Board's interest, an update on the usage of technology at PES was provided. Kindergarten is not using technology at school, grades 1 and 2 are using technology less than one hour per day, grades 3 and 4 are using technology two to three hours per day, and grade five is using technology one to two hours per day.

C. Eddies

Ms. Harvey provided the Board with information about the New Hampshire Excellence in Education (Eddies) Awards. She has been selected to receive the 2020 Dennise Maslakowski Education Award. The Board extended their congratulations to Ms. Harvey.

D. PES End of Year Events

A summary of the end of year events scheduled at PES were shared with the Board.

VIII. PMHS PRINCIPAL

A. Drake Field

Mr. Hamilton stated that he has quotes for a batting cage and additional fencing based on the request of the Board. He suggested waiting until further quotes are available relative to other options being considered.

B. Exhibition

Mr. Hamilton stated that the Exhibition of Learning was held today, June 3, 2021. He stated that the work demonstrated by the students was some of the best seen

over the past few years. Mr. Hamilton reviewed several highlights of the day. According to Mr. Hamilton, the takeaway from the event was that this event is a significant endeavor that should continue in the future. Discussion ensued regarding the requirements the students must meet and how the topics are selected for exhibition.

C. Family Information Nights

Mr. Hamilton stated that family information nights were provided via Zoom for fifth graders going to sixth, sixth graders going to seventh, and eighth graders going to ninth. The events were recorded and then made available to other families unable to attend the event.

D. Spring Conference Report

Mr. Hamilton pointed out that this spring was the tenth year of student-led conferences. These conferences are indicative of the transformational strategies that have been implemented at PMHS during the past years. He provided the following participation rates: Sixth grade - 80%, Seventh grade - 78%, Eighth grade - 77%, Ninth grade - 70%, Tenth grade - 74%, Eleventh - 83%, and Twelfth grade - 90%.

E. Student Achievements

Over the next month, according to Mr. Hamilton, there will be celebrations of student achievements. One senior completed an advanced placement microeconomics and two juniors completed advanced placement courses in government and literature. Mr. Hamilton pointed this out to illustrate that although there are few electives available due to the number of faculty, there are great opportunities available to students who are interested.

F. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Team

Mr. Hamilton explained that the UDL team acts as the district's curriculum team. For two years, the faculty has worked on having all units in all classes aligned with the UDL framework. The curriculum will be updated, an assessment will be made relative to the meeting of the goal, and professional development will be planned accordingly. Mr. Clough stated his interest in becoming involved in the curriculum development process.

G. Pittsfield Post

Mr. Hamilton distributed a copy of the Pittsfield Post to the Board.

H. Masks in Outdoor Settings

Mr. Hamilton distributed information from the NH Division of Public Health Services. He stated that the team met and agreed that masks in outdoor settings are no longer necessary. On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Drouin, the Board voted unanimously to follow the NH Division of Public Health's recommendations regarding the wearing of masks in outdoor settings. Ms. Rider asked how this information will be communicated to the community; Mr. Hamilton explained the protocol that will be followed. This change is effective immediately, according to Mr. Hamilton.

I. Budget Balance Considerations

Mr. Hamilton recommended the Board approve the purchase of a portable batting cage as well as new radio equipment. The radio equipment will ensure communication between schools and with the fire department, police department, and emergency management services. In order for the radios to have direct connectivity with outside safety agencies, an antenna will be needed. Quotes were provided to the Board by Mr. Hamilton. Another consideration recommended by the administration team is an update to the software access system (key fobs) by Johnson Controls. A quote was provided by Mr. Hamilton. No action was taken; the topic will be further considered at the next meeting.

IX. PMHS ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

A. Class of 2021 Update

According to Ms. Brown, there are thirty-three students who are in the class of 2021. Three students are being closely monitored by the Guidance Department to ensure they meet the requirements by June. Eight students are pursuing obtaining their high school equivalency (HiSET) certificate.

B. Foss Family Pittsfield Town Scholarship

Ms. Brown stated that twenty-one students applied for a Foss Scholarship: thirteen graduates and eight current seniors. The Foss Scholarship Committee met to distribute \$45,000 to these applicants.

C. Local Scholarships

According to Ms. Brown, there are seventeen additional scholarships provided by organizations in Pittsfield. A team of faculty met to select recipients for local scholarships and senior awards.

D. Eighth Grade Letter

Ms. Brown provided the Board with a copy of the letter sent home to eighteen families, notifying them that their students were failing at least two or more core classes. Mr. Clough offered a suggestion relative to wording.

X. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

A. IDEA and Pre-School Grants

Ms. Bickford distributed a list of the grant awards to all districts in New Hampshire for students with disabilities. She stated that the amount listed for Pittsfield is an estimate and looked accurate in her opinion.

B. Council for Exceptional Children Teacher of the Year Award

Ms. Bickford explained that usually one teacher is selected as the Teacher of the Year Award by the Council for Exceptional Children. Due to circumstances surrounding the work of special educators during the pandemic, a different approach was taken. Ms. Bickford nominated her entire staff of special educators and they were all acknowledged for their hard work.

C. Medicaid to Schools Program

Ms. Bickford provided the Board with information regarding the recent change from the Department of Health and Human Services on the Medicaid to Schools program. There are 41.7% of students who have a medical diagnosis and 58.3% who have non-medical diagnoses. This will effect reimbursements.

D. Progress Monitoring for Special Education

Ms. Bickford explained that the NH Department of Education is changing the way in which special education is monitored. Instead of a dicenial review, districts will be reviewed on an annual basis. The first step was to submit a copy of the Special Education Procedures Manual, which Ms. Bickford has completed.

XI. INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

A. Tuition Study Committee

Dr. Graziano stated that the topic will be put on the next agenda, providing the Board with an opportunity to digest the executive summary.

B. Good to Great Team

Based on the Board's suggestion, Dr. Graziano is pursuing the addition of a student on the Good to Great Team.

C. End of Year Celebration

Dr. Graziano stated that the end-of-year celebration for staff retiring or moving on from the district will be on June 18, 2021 from 12:45 to 1:45.

D. School Board Training

According to Dr. Graziano, the training that started tonight for the Board will continue.

E. School Board Policy Review

Dr. Graziano has encumbered \$1,500 to have an audit conducted of the policy manual. He is convening a committee to work further on policy development.

F. Conval School Funding Lawsuit

Dr. Graziano confirmed that the Board has missed the deadline to join the Conval School Funding Lawsuit, but will ask for funds needed to join when the opportunity arises. The original Claremont Lawsuit has been resurrected and Dr. Graziano has been asked to speak on behalf of the district.

G. Pfizer Clinic

Dr. Graziano stated that the nurses conducted a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination clinic for students.

H. Resignations

Dr. Graziano recommended the Board accept the resignation of Bernadette Rowley with regret. On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mr. Clough, the Board voted unanimously to approve the resignation of Ms. Rowley with regret.

I. Hiring

Dr. Graziano nominated William Carr as the information technology management coordinator. On a motion made by Ms. Drouin and seconded by Ms. Goggin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the hiring of Mr. Carr.

Dr. Graziano nominated Michael Wiley as principal of PES. On a motion made by Ms. Clough and seconded by Ms. Goggin, the Board voted to approve the hiring of Mr. Wiley with Ms. Drouin, Ms. Goggin, Ms. Rider, and Mr. Clough voting in the affirmative and Mr. Gauthier opposing the motion.

Dr. Graziano nominated Debra Dustin as a special education teacher. On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Goggin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the hiring of Ms. Dustin.

Dr. Graziano nominated Dawn Lemieux to fill the position of financial manager. On a motion made by Ms. Drouin and seconded by Ms. Goggin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the hiring of Ms. Lemieux. Sally Blanchette has agreed to postpone her retirement until September so that she can work simultaneously with Ms. Lemieux during July and August.

XII. SCHOOL BOARD - No business.

XIII. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

A. Budget Committee Representative - Mr. Clough

B. Drake Field and Facilities - Mr. Gauthier

C. Negotiating Team - Mr. Clough and Ms. Goggin

D. Foss Family Scholarship - Ms. Drouin

XIV. PUBLIC INPUT - None

XV. NON-PUBLIC SESSION - Not required.

XVI. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. in the Pittsfield Middle High School Lecture Hall.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Ms. Drouin and seconded by Mr. Clough, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tobi Gray Chassie
Recording Secretary