

**New Hartford Public Schools
Special Board of Education Meeting Minutes**

August 18, 2020

6:00 pm/Virtual Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82916360315?pwd=dWNGUFlmaUE5UXFLVGxoV2xjVFRlZz09>

Meeting ID: 829 1636 0315

Passcode: nhps2020

Present: Chairman Tim Goff, Members: Tom Buzzi, Karl Hermonat, Tim Klepps, Penny Miller, Tony Persechino, Heather Tomala, Kelly O'Dell Longhi,

Others present: Supt. of Schools Brian Murphy, Barbara McLean, Amanda Shaw, Kelly Carroll, Heather Mathes

Absent: Tim Klepps

A. Chair to Open Meeting - Chairman Goff opened the meeting at 6:04 pm.

B. Pledge of Allegiance - The board joined together in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Chair to Select Order of Business - No changes to the Order of Business.

D. Superintendent's Report

- 1. District Food Service Provider** - Mr. Murphy stated that the District went out to bid for the Food Service Contract because Ed Advance had become cost prohibitive. Two bids were received. One from Ed Advance and one from Fresh Picks Café. Fresh Picks was very reasonable and was awarded the contract. There will be no changes to the delivery model. The four part time cafeteria workers will now be employed by Fresh Picks.

E. Public Comment - Chairman Goff stated that he had received five pieces of communication from Caitlin & Brian Gagnon, Alicia Boucher, Laura & Jeff Martin, Ed Mumm, and Aulay Carlson. These letters are attached to the minutes.

F. Consent Agenda

- 1. Approval of Minutes - June 16, 2020**
- 2. Expenditure Report**
- 3. Personnel/Retirements** - Betsey Conner announced her retirement. Brian has sent her a letter on behalf of the Board, thanking her for her service to NHPS. Diane Barrett will no longer be taking the minutes of the BOE meetings as she has family obligations. Brian will be posting for this position.

Motion by Penny Miller, 2nd by Heather Tomala to approve the Consent Agenda

Unanimous.

G. Reports

1. COVID-19 Policy Review – Kelly reviewed the COVID-19 Policy for the second reading. She noted small changes that the Policy Subcommittee made. Tom Buzzi asked if this Policy had an expiration date and if it had been vetted by the Board's attorney. Brian affirmed that the policy had been vetted by the Board attorney and that we could have this policy expire at the end of the 2020-2021 school year or the duration of the COVID-19 crisis.

Penny Miller made a motion to approve the COVID Policy for the 2020-2021 school year or the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2nd by Mary Stempien.

Discuss ensued regarding an expiration date of this policy.

Penny Miller amended her motion to approve Policy 3156, COVID-19 Policy, with the revision that the expiration date of this Policy is January 15, 2021 or sooner as necessary, 2nd by Tom Buzzi **Unanimous.**

H. New Business

1. Superintendent Evaluation (proposed for Executive Session)

Motion by Penny Miller to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's evaluation, 2nd by Tim Goff **Unanimous**

Motion by Tim Goff to come out of Executive Session at 7:20, 2nd by Tony Persechino **Unanimous**

Motion by Penny Miller to extend the contract of Superintendent Brian Murphy for one year, 2nd by Tony Persechino **Unanimous**

Motion by Karl Hermonat, to increase the salary of Superintendent Brian Murphy by 2% for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, 2nd by Mary Stempien **Unanimous**

I. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn at 7:25 by Penny Miller, 2nd by Tom Buzzi **Unanimous**

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Terenzi
Recording Secretary



From: Alicia Boucher [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2020 11:06 AM
To: gofft@newhtfd.org; Brian Murphy <murphyb@newhtfd.org>
Cc: Alicia Boucher [REDACTED]
Subject: Thank you!

Good morning!

I'd just want to take a minute to thank you both for addressing comments and questions during the Public Comment portion of last night's meeting. I know that Public Comment is typically just that, comments without any response from the Board, and I appreciate that you were willing to engage with the public last night. The meeting was helpful and informative and, while I'm still nervous and anxious to send my son back to school, I feel a little better about it and know that you have the best interest of everyone in mind.

Thank you for all of the hard work that you all continue to put into this monumental task!

Stay safe!

Best regards,
Alicia

From: Laura Martin [REDACTED]

Date: August 14, 2020 at 8:48:54 AM EDT

To: tomalah@newhtfd.org, goftt@newhtfd.org, millerp@newhtfd.org, buzzit@newhtfd.org, hermonatk@newhtfd.org, persechinoa@newhtfd.org, kleppst@newhtfd.org, Kelly O'Dell Longhi <kellyodell3@yahoo.com>, buzzi@newhtfd.org, stempienm@newhtfd.org

Subject: Thank you!

Hello NH BOE,

We wanted to express our thanks and excitement that the NH schools will be attending in person 5 days a week. We have two children at Region 7 and just assumed NH would follow suit with hybrid. Our son, Sawyer, will be a 6th grader at Antolini and the smile on his face when we told him he could actually go back to school with his friends was amazing!

I teach 4th grade in East Granby and we will be starting with a hybrid model. We will keep our fingers crossed that we can move to 5 days and that NH will be able to continue.

- Laura & Jeff Martin

8/18/2020

Dear Mr. Goff,

During the meeting last week, Mr. Murphy stated that pre-school students who are housed in the same building as K-2 in New Hartford Elementary School would not be required to wear a mask.

Does the Board have any concern with this arrangement given all of the precautions and monetary expenditures that are being put into keeping kids safe at school? I am just wondering why the school is not making an executive decision to ensure equal safety to all students across all schools by asking the preschool students to wear a mask, which is the same expectation as if a preschooler went into a grocery store with their parent.

Sincerely,
Ed Mumm
New Hartford

Aulay Carlson
455 West Hill Rd.
New Hartford, CT 06057

18 August 2020

To the Board of Education:

I wanted to congratulate you on how well you recite the "Pledge of Allegiance". Well done. Sadly, something you learned in Kindergarten is one of the few things this Board does well. Well some of you anyway.

A couple of things: First: I know there are a number of parents who worry about sending their children back to school in the middle of a pandemic. Sending your children to school might mean they bring the virus home and infect elder family members or they end up disabled for life. Actually, there is another reason you should worry. The teaching staff in New Hartford has been very consistent over the last ten years. Annually 40 to 50 percent of New Hartford students do not meet grade level in English and math on the state tests. In the tests for 2019 only 56.8% of the students were at grade level. Good Work! You would have to not teach anything to your children to do worse.

Second: Last meeting Mr. Murphy stated the average number of students in a class was 17. Since you have 33 teachers this means you have 561 students, ups, you don't, you have around 400. Third: Last week, Mr. Buzzi said if more students leave you might have to close a school. Clearly Mr. Buzzi falls in the hard of thinking group. The school system is only 35% occupied. Two schools should have been closed 10 years ago.

In this time of a world pandemic, businesses shutting down and raising unemployment, a time of not having enough money to pay your mortgage, or your bills there are some who try to help. The town employees will forgo raises this year. Why? No one knows how much real estate tax will be received this year. No one know how much support will come from the state. The state has no idea how much sales tax will be available. The state is projecting a 2.5-billion-dollar hole for the fiscal year that started July 1st and about 3 billion for next year.

The Board of Education (BOE) was asked to delay the raise of the teachers. Of course, they took action. No sorry that is not our BOE, they refused to ask. They were asked to reduce their budget. They made some small decreases but nothing meaningful. There was no help for those of you struggling to pay your bills. Sadly, the BOE is adding another expensive and unneeded person to the school staff.

Keep your children at home and home school. Give them what they won't get in the New Hartford system, a good education. You would have to struggle to do worse that the teaching staff in our school system.

Sincerely,



Aulay Carlson