

**GOVERNOR WENTWORTH REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
GWRSD SCHOOL BOARD – EFFINGHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
OCTOBER 2, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

The Governor Wentworth Regional School Board meeting was called to order by Vice Chair James Pittman at 6:00 pm.

Members Present: Brodie Deshaies, Stefanie King, James Pittman, Mary Schillereff, Charlene Seibel, Dana Streeter, Tom Bickford (6:10pm), Dr. James Manning (6:50pm)

Members Not Present: John Widmer

Also present: Superintendent Caroline Arakelian, Assistant Superintendent Heather Cummings, and Business Administrator Kathy O'Blenes

Motion: At 6:01 pm a motion was made to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II to discuss student matters. The group moved to the Art Room.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies - **Second:** Ms. Schillereff

Vote: Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes

Two student matters were discussed.

Motion: At 6:50 pm a motion was made to end the non-public session.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies - **Second:** Ms. Seibel

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes

Dr. James Manning, Kelly Tivnan, Elliott Giessler, and community members joined the meeting in the gymnasium.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

At 7:00pm the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

AGENDA REVIEW

KAC Event added as informational agenda item per Superintendent request.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve the minutes of the September 11, 2023 School Board meeting.

Moved: Mr. Pittman - **Second:** Dr. Manning

Discussion: Minor edits suggested.

Vote: Mr. Bickford, abstain; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, abstain; Mr. Pittman, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes

Motion: To approve the minutes of the September 21, 2023 Academic Affairs committee meeting.

Moved: Ms. Seibel - **Second:** Ms. Schillereff

Discussion: none

Vote: Mr. Deshaies, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes

Motion: To approve the accounts payable (\$3,591,044.53) and payroll (\$1,441,906.65) manifests totaling \$5,032,951.18 for August, 2023.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies - **Second:** Dr. Manning

Discussion: none

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes

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Motion: To approve the accounts payable (\$1,675,339.15) and payroll (\$893,617.64) manifests totaling \$2,568,956.79 for September, 2023.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies – **Second:** Dr. Manning

Discussion: none

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes

PUBLIC INPUT

Bobbi Boudman, Wolfeboro – Requested the addition of a baby changing table to the men's restroom at the Kingswood Arts Center.

Jerry Hess, Wolfeboro – Commended the School Board and District Administration for all of their hard work, encouraged the public to visit the schools to see the hard work being done, and expressed concerns regarding community criticism of the District.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Student Representative, Elliott Geissler, shared information on homecoming week, athletic games, the Music Department's mattress sale fundraiser, the upcoming concert and theater performance, and spirit week activities. He thanked Principal Famulari for a great first month of school.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent District Update

Superintendent Arakelian highlighted the successful opening of schools, enrollment numbers, the inclement weather procedures and district open houses as submitted in her written report to the Board.

Winter Weather

Superintendent Arakelian reviewed the winter weather information that was shared with families at the end of September.

Budget Timeline

Superintendent Arakelian reviewed the budget preparation timeline and answered questions.

Field Trips

Superintendent Arakelian presented two overnight and out of state field trips to the Board. The High School Music Department will be traveling to NYC in May and New Durham School's 6th Grade students will visit The Ecology School in Saco, Maine for three overnights in June.

Let Grow Surveys

Motion: To accept the Let Grow student surveys at New Durham School.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies – **Second:** Dr. Manning

Discussion: Discussion included the clarity of the parent letter and expectations of homework.

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes

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Wood Estate Application Presentation

Spanish Teacher Elissa Quinatoa presented information on the planned trip to Spain along with two students who shared a personal statement.

Motion: To move this action item to follow the Academic Affairs Committee report.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies – **Second:** Ms. Seibel

Discussion: Mr. Geissler and Ms. Seibel both spoke in support of the trip; what percentage of the fund balance is permitted to use each year?

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

NHSBA

Mr. Pittman shared that the delegate conference is coming up and is open to members to attend without voting rights and noted available seminars for member to attend as well.

Strategic Plan

Ms. Schillereff summarized the activities of the August 8th workshop, reviewed the team members, how the plan relates to Portrait of A Learner, summarized the meetings that have occurred thus far, and shared upcoming meeting dates. She explained that the next step in the process is to solicit community input. Upon request from a ~~Board member~~ Mr. Deshaies about the selection process of team members, Superintendent Arakelian referred to the September meeting where Mr. Widmer explained the selection process that was followed and described how members were identified to create the team, including an invitation to interested Board members.

Correspondence

Mr. Pittman shared that notes of congratulation and condolence were sent out to District staff.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Affairs Committee:

Ms. Seibel reviewed the Meeting and Policy Review Schedule for the 2023-2024 school year and discussion ensued regarding how suggested edits should be presented during 1st and 2nd reads and that voting on policy adoption/revision/withdrawal will happen during 2nd Read.

Ms. Seibel then presented policies ACN and FF as 1st Reads for Adoption, policies DAF, DDA, DDA-E, DFA, DFE, DH, DIA, DIAA, DIE, DJE, DKB, DM, DN, EG, EH-R, EHAB, and IIC as 1st Reads for Revision, and policies AEB, AEB-R, DFF, DFF-R, and JHBB as 1st Reads for Withdrawal. The Board discussed questions and suggested potential edits for the policies.

Wood Estate Application Presentation - Continuation

Ms. O'Blenes stated the Wood Estate fund balance of \$689,910.00, with \$20,687.30 of that being available for disbursement this year. Discussion included the traditional Camp Invention request and anticipated KRHS senior scholarships.

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Motion: To expend \$7,000.00 from the Wood Estate Trust Fund for the proposed Spanish trip.

Moved: Ms. King – **Second:** Mr. Deshaies

Discussion: Board members encouraged the Spanish program to continue with fundraising goals.

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Seibel, no; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes

Motion: To increase funding to \$8,000.00 for the trip.

Moved: Ms. Seibel – **Second:** none

Building & Maintenance Committee:

Mr. Pittman reported that the next meeting is on October 3rd at the SAU building at 4:00pm.

Finance Committee:

Mr. Pittman referred to the budget timeline as reviewed earlier in the meeting.

Human Resources Committee:

No report.

ADVANCED PLANNING

Upcoming events were read from the agenda.

PUBLIC INPUT

None

CLOSING COMMENTS

Gratitude was expressed to Principal Morrissey and Effingham Elementary School for hosting tonight's meeting, noting the excellent quality of the sound system, and recognition of the talent of the musical performance by the students tonight. ~~A personal statement regarding the event to be held at the KAC on Monday, October 9th was made.~~

Charlene Seibel stated: " I would like to express my personal opinion that I'm very much opposed to the decision to rent the Arts Center to a campaign whose candidate is well known for making violent comments, who has a long history that everyone knows about and it has been televised ad nauseam, of using hate speech, of targeting individuals for violence, of targeting individuals for ridicule, and, to me, using the example of other political candidates who have been able to rent our facility, comparing those political candidates and their campaigns to this particular political candidate and his campaign, I feel is a blatant false equivalency and I do not believe that, and there is a perception in the community that this was a Board decision. It was not a Board decision. It was not a decision that we ever had the opportunity to weigh in on, and I understand that decisions are based on legal counsel. However, I think that it's been clear from years and years of legal precedence that the 1st Amendment is not absolute. It does not allow for hate speech and I am very concerned that our multimillion dollar, beautiful building needs to be protected because we have seen the kinds of damage done to other buildings and I would certainly hope that there is a stronger way to recoup whatever monies we have to expend on any kind of damage repair. I also would like to publicly request that WCTV televise the entirety of this event. And I'm hoping that with WCTV there to televise it, that it will inspire appropriate behavior among the participants and I would also like to request that the school district make sure that we have additional security cameras installed

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outside and inside so that if there are folks, I have personally seen on social media, members of this community, who are actively advocating for the end of the GWRSD, who believe that we should not exist as an institution and my concern is that some of these folks could possibly be inspired to do things that would be detrimental to the District and I'm going to leave it at that."

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: At 9:47 pm a motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies – **Second:** Dr. Manning

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes; Ms. Seibel, Ms. Schillereff, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes

Respectfully submitted,



School Board Secretary

Approved by GWRSD School Board: **11/6/2023**