

**New Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education Regular Meeting (In-Person)
Ann Antolini Elementary School - Library
7:00PM on Tuesday, February 25, 2025**

PRESENT: Superintendent Jeffrey Sousa; Chairman Timothy Klepps; Vice Chairman Thomas Buzzi

Board Members: Meagan Albert; Penny Miller; Erik Perotti; Frank Rodenberg; Timothy Russell; Deirdre Tindall and Kristin Young

Additional Present: Kelly Carroll; Amy Kennedy; Heather Mathes and Lou Helt (Board of Finance)

Chairman Timothy Klepps called the regular meeting to order at 7:01PM.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Order of Business

C. Communications to the Board of Education/Public Comment

Please see the attachments.

D. Superintendent's Report

1. HVAC Inspection Update - The HVAC engineering reports have been completed, to fulfill the obligations under the Public Act, Mr. Sousa reported the indoor air quality is tested every year and the HVAC are tested every five year and that all have been completed, mentioned publicly and are posted on the website.

2. Superintendent's Budget Presentation 2025-2026

Superintendent Sousa gave a proposed budget presentation for the New Hartford Board of Education Board Members.

The draft proposed budget is available on the New Hartford Public Schools website:

(<https://www.newhtfd.org/board-of-education/boe-meetings-agendas-and-minutes/2024-meeting-dates-agenda-and-minutes-clone-clone>)

Large drivers in the budget are increased employee healthcare, transportations costs, a decrease in excess cost grants and increased costs for outplacements.

Superintendent Sousa has proposed an 8.86 % increase for the 2025-2026 budget year. The 2024-2025 total budget was 9,834,530.59 and the total proposed budget for 2025-2026 is 10,705,676.14.

The dollar variance proposed requested is increased by \$871,145.55.

The total budget increase in the first draft of the proposed budget for 2025-2026 is \$747,400, this figure includes: \$161,000 in salaries, \$153,333 in health insurance, \$75,000 in Purchased Security (armed security through Arrow Security), \$35,000 in Regular Education, \$23,000 in Improvement of Instruction

and lastly \$300,000 in Pupil Services (Outplacement Tuition). Pupil Transportation (Bus Contracts) is currently out for bid (RFP-Request for Proposal). Two grants that will not be received are the Connecticut Junior Republic and the amount under Improvement of Instruction that was previously funded by a grant. **The projected grants amount to \$434,225, a breakdown of individualized grant amounts can be found in the budget presentation.** The Right to Read grant has ended which was \$40,000. Special Education tuition has increased \$290,000. Many lines have been moved around to other lines or categories. Employee benefits increased by \$180,816.91 or 9.5%. Pupil transportation is out to bid, Mr. Sousa hopes to have hard numbers before the end of the budget process but does not have information currently.

The Capital Expenditure Requests equals \$75,675 (including: Mini Van, Indoor Air Quality and Technology). Capital has been proposed to the Board of Finance previously. Educational Cost Share estimates the Town of New Hartford will receive \$96,000 for 2025-2026.

Mr. Sousa shared some district highlights for example *“98.7% of parents feel comfortable talking about their child’s needs with teachers”* and **there is mental health support staff in every building, every day.**

In addition, there have been increased security upgrades to the schools and Student Representatives collaborating with the Board of Education. There are important dates to note, please see the budget timeline included in the budget presentation for specific dates and times.

E. Board of Education Chair’s Report

F. Routine Business

Approval of Minutes: February 4, 2025 (Regular Meeting)

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve meeting minutes from February 4, 2025. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

**UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes**

Expenditure Report

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve the expenditure report as presented. Second by Deirdre Tindall.

**UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes**

G. New Business

H. Old Business

- **Policy 9274 Bylaws of the Board - Board Member Code of Conduct - 2nd Read**

MOTION by Timothy Russell to approve Policy 9274 Bylaws of the Board - Board Member Code of Conduct. Second by Erik Perotti.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

- **Policy 9273 Bylaws of the Board - Conflict of Interest - 2nd Read**

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve Policy 9273 Bylaws of the Board - Conflict of Interest. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

- **Policy 6163.3 Instruction - Live Animals in the Classroom - 2nd Read**

MOTION by Deirdre Tindall to approve Policy 6163.3 Instruction - Live Animals in the Classroom. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

I. Public Comment - (For Agenda Items Only)

J. Adjournment

MOTION by Penny Miller to adjourn the meeting at 7:57PM. Second by Timothy Russell.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

Respectfully submitted by,
Elizabeth Domas, Recording Secretary

Recorded Regular and Special Board of Education meetings will be posted to:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX-ZlomWmiG81dc_QM3rfg

Attachments: (Filed with the Town Clerk and available upon request)

2025-2026 Superintendent's Proposed Budget (also available on the NHPS website)
NHPS 2025-2026 Budget Presentation
Samantha Wald Email
Melissa Wilzack Email