

**New Hartford Public Schools**  
**Board of Education Regular Meeting**  
**7:00PM on Tuesday, June 3, 2025**  
**Ann Antolini School - Library**

**Present:** Superintendent Jeffrey Sousa; Chairman Timothy Klepps; Vice Chairman Thomas Buzzi

**Board Members:** Megan Albert; Penny Miller (Board Secretary); Frank Rodenberg; Timothy Russell and Deirdre Tindall

**Board Members Absent:** Erik Perotti and Kristin Young

**Additional Present:** Kelly Carroll; Amy Kennedy and other members of the public

Chairman Timothy Klepps called the regular meeting to order at 7:00PM.

**A. Pledge of Allegiance**

**B. Order of Business**

Chairman Timothy Klepps has requested to add “line-item transfers” to the agenda to adjust the current 2024-2025 budget.

**MOTION** by Thomas Buzzi to add line-item transfers to the agenda under routine business. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

**UNANIMOUS**  
***Motion Passes***

**C. Communications to the Board of Education/Public Comment**

Mr. Klepps recognized there was one communication received by Jon Puz. In addition, there have been two communications, one from Daniel Jerram (on behalf the Board of Selectman) in response to the joint task force invitation sent by the Board of Education and second an information request to Mr. Sousa from Daniel Jerram. These documents are attached.

No Public Comment

**D. Superintendent s Report**

Student Representative, Dexter Cerutto gave the last update for the current school year. Preschool students have studied space and created their own rocket ship. Kindergarten students took their first field trip and learned about weather around the world. First graders learned about birds and how their body parts helped them survive. In May the students took a field trip to Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy in Litchfield. Second graders took a field trip to the Yale Peabody Museum where they learned about fossils and paleontologists. Second graders were assigned pen pals who met each other at Ann Antolini School. Superintendent Sousa awarded certificates to the student representatives, Dexter Cerutto and Emma Jack.

**Litchfield County Superintendent’s Award**

- Superintendent Sousa announced the Litchfield County Superintendent s Award to Tyler Bouchard and Olivia Pratt. These two students have been acknowledged for their accomplishments on May 6, 2025.

**Personnel Report / Update on 25-26 NHPS budget (Instructional Assistant & Clerical Aide) / Collective Bargaining - NHEA**

- Bittersweet, Ms. Marie Kitch, a school nurse, is in attendance as Mr. Sousa recognized Ms. Kitch for her 24 years of service at New Hartford Public Schools. She has decided to retire, Mr. Sousa has presented her with an award.
- The Celebration of Learning was successful thanks to Heather Mathes and Dr. Kelly Carroll.
- There are unclaimed funds from the State of Connecticut, in the amount of \$253.97 which Mr. Sousa has requested.
- The school band and chorus spring concert and field day took place.
- The teacher evaluation plan has been reviewed, the PEDAC committee met, and teachers are happy with new plan in place. There was a recommendation to make no changes at this time.
- The Instructional Assistant and Clerical aid position have been reinstated to the 2025-2026 Board of Education budget.
- In the fall negotiations will happen with teachers.

**E. Board of Education Chair's Report**

Chairman Klepps informed the Board of Education, a letter dated May 8, 2025, was sent out on behalf of the Board of Education regarding the "Joint Task Force Invitation" to both the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance. The Board of Education heard back from both expressing their interest in being involved. There are further details to be discussed and any volunteers from the Board of Education who are interested are encouraged to participate.

**F. Routine Business**

Minutes - May 6, 2025, and May 19, 2025

**Approval of Minutes: May 6, 2025 (Regular), and May 19, 2025 (Special)**

**MOTION** by Frank Rodenberg to approve meeting minutes from May 6, 2025 (Regular), and May 19, 2025 (Special). Second by Thomas Buzzi.

**UNANIMOUS  
Motion Passes**

Penny Miller questioned Mr. Sousa about several line items. First the professional development line, there was \$1,500 budgeted and \$3,000 has been spent. Ms. Miller is curious what caused the \$1,500 overage. Then under custodian substitute salaries, there was \$2,000 budgeted and more has been spent. What caused this overage in budget? Ms. Miller requested Superintendent Sousa of a ballpark estimate where the Board of Education will be at the conclusion of the current 2024-2025 budget year. Mr. Sousa informed Ms. Miller the outplacement tuition has changed and the projection is close to a net zero. Mr. Sousa's reply to Ms. Miller's inquiries is attached.

**Expenditure Report**

**MOTION** by Timothy Russell to approve the expenditure report as presented. Second by Penny Miller.

**UNANIMOUS  
Motion Passes**

## Line-Item Transfers

Line-item transfers (added to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting), is to cover high-cost expenses. Superintendent Sousa has come before the Board of Education with line-item transfer requests. There were savings from the projected medical insurance in the amount of \$185,000, which has been requested to cover Tuition-SPED and legal fees. See the attached 2024-2025 budget transfer requests document provided by Mr. Sousa.

**MOTION** by Penny Miller to approve the 2024-2025 budget (line item) transfers as requested. Second by Deirdre Tindall.

**UNANIMOUS**  
***Motion Passes***

## G. New Business

Approval of Revised Job Descriptions (new duties or responsibilities) for:

1. Data Systems Specialist (Union)
2. Director Information Technology (Non-Union)
3. Manager, Finance & Human Resources (Non-Union)
4. Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools (Non-Union)
5. Administrative Assistant to the Director of Student Services (Union)

Superintendent Sousa agreed to provide contracts for the Board's informational purposes.

**MOTION** by Thomas Buzzi to accept the job descriptions for the five positions listed:

1. Data Systems Specialist
2. Director Information Technology
3. Manager, Finance & Human Resources
4. Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools
5. Administrative Assistant to the Director of Student Services

Second by Timothy Russell.

**UNANIMOUS**  
***Motion Passes***

Thomas Buzzi inquired if these positions are currently filled. The only position not filled is the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools (Janet Terenzi retired), the other four positions are filled. The Data Systems Specialist and Administrative Assistant to the Director of Student Services are union positions; the other three positions are non-union positions.

Frank Rodenberg asked how salaries are determined. He suggested it would be good to know what positions are paid. The negotiations committee is informed of contractual increases. When positions are not a part of a bargaining unit, the salary is left up to the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Sousa informed the Board that the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools position has been posted and there are candidates applying.

### **Policy and Regulations - Students P5111.3 – Protection of Undocumented Students (1st Read)**

This policy is in place as a process if there are issues with undocumented students, how to train staff and to not interfere with any investigation. The importance of the policy is for everyone to understand if an agent of ICE were to come into the school, there would not be any interference, should this occur. This new policy is recommended by C.A.B.E. If there is an individual who needs resources, they can find those direct legal services through the policy. Thomas Buzzi questioned the wording in bottom paragraph about “their” immigration status. The word “their” means a member of the community.

### **Policy and Regulations - Students P5118 – Non-Resident Attendance (1st Read)**

There has been an update to non-resident attendance, the policy change defines non-residents, how people can demonstrate residency and what tuition is for non-residents, request yearly was not clear before. The changes tighten parents requesting their children to attend school in New Hartford that do not live in New Hartford. This is not a new policy it has existed. There were changes like the April 1st component and tuition payments. Ms. Miller asked how often non-resident students come to New Hartford, Mr. Sousa noted 3-5 per year which could be due to families moving in or out of New Hartford in the middle of a school year.

Chairman Timothy Klepps would like to receive copies of the policies with the changes highlighted to be able to see the change, a clear identification of the changes made.

### **H. Old Business**

#### **I. Reports**

**Plant Facility Subcommittee** – Thomas Buzzi reported on HVAC which dates back several meetings. HVAC reports are available online on the NHPS website. There has been a Phase 1 evaluation. There is a suggestion to change from an oil-fired system to a propane fired system. There are some areas in the school that are not up to code but are not unsafe as they grandfather because they were built prior to code. Within five years, schools need to be brought up to code. There is a proposal letter by Petrucelli who made recommendations for Phase 2, which would give information on what needs to be done and what it would cost thereof for each school, at \$4,900 per school. This would allow the Board of Education to come up with a plan to implement changes within the next five years. The \$4,900 per school if for Petrucelli to engage in a feasibility study at each location. Currently the boiler at Antolini is an issue if something goes wrong, there are limited resources for support to fix it. Chairman Klepps proposed at the next meeting in August; the Board explore the use of non-lapsing account funding and make a recommendation. There needs to be much further exploration through this process.

**Curriculum Subcommittee** - In year two ELA education students are producing high quality work. The next task will be the revised report card committee.

**EdAdvance** – Deirdre Tindall gave an update; many have written letters in response to losing funding of 8.7 million for mental health services. Many educational leaders crafted a response to the federal government and many Superintendents sent letters requesting them to reconsider taking the funding away. In April the Department of Health has closed five offices, monitoring this closely. Stay tuned.

#### **J. Public Comment - (For Agenda Items Only)**

Jay Bailey of 575 Main Street expressed his disappointment that the Board of Education was not at the Town Meeting currently taking place. Mr. Bailey questioned the Board of Education regarding the non-lapsing account, an account with funds from a previous budget year, not being used. His concern is there is an account with funding that the Board of Education is not using. He stated the Board of Education has funds to cover the positions cut, although chose not to use it. He expressed concern that there are three schools open and the taxpayers are

spending extra money that could be saved by consolidation. He stated there is seating for 1,150 students. Mr. Bailey asked Chairman Klepps if the schools were full, Mr. Klepps advised Mr. Bailey he cannot reply to the public comment.

#### **K. Executive Session**

##### **Superintendent Evaluation; Safety and Security, Personnel Matters**

**MOTION** by Penny Miller to enter Executive Session at 8:04PM and invite Superintendent Sousa to join. Second by Timothy Russell.

**UNANIMOUS**  
***Motion Passes***

*Everyone in attendance left the meeting.*

*The Board of Education and Superintendent Sousa remained for Executive Session.*

*Motions following Executive Session were provided by Superintendent Sousa.*

Executive Session ended at 9:18PM.

**MOTION** by Frank Rodenberg to extend the Superintendent's contract for 3 years with a 2.5% increase for 2025/2026. Second by Thomas Buzzi.

**UNANIMOUS**  
***Motion Passes***

#### **L. Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Thomas Buzzi to adjourn the meeting at 9:20PM. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

**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-ZlomWmjG81dc\\_QM3rfg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX-ZlomWmjG81dc_QM3rfg)

***Attachments:*** (Filed with the Town Clerk and available upon request, or see links included if available)

*Jon Puz Email (May 20, 2025)*

*Task Force Invitation Letter (from BOE to BOS and BOF, May 8, 2025)*

*2024-2025 Budget Transfer Requests*

*Silver Petrucelli + Associates Letter to Sousa/NHPS (dated May 6, 2025)*

*EdAdvance Letter (dated May 21, 2025)*

*EdAdvance (dated April 3, 2025)*

*Daniel Jerram to State Treasurer (on behalf of Mr. Sousa, unclaimed funds, May 12, 2025)*

*Daniel Jerram (BOS) Letter to Sousa/Board of Education (Regarding Joint Task Force, May 30, 2025)*

*Daniel Jerram to Sousa (NHPS – Information Request, May 21, 2025)*

*Sousa to Dan Jerram (Response to NHPS – Information Request, May 22, 2025)*

*Sousa to Board Member (Inquiry Response for custodial substitute and professional development, dated June 4, 2025)*

*Department of Education – Negotiation Notice*

*Letter from other Educational Leaders Regarding Loss in Mental Health Service Funding*

*Agreement of Employment – Paul Carmen (IT)*

*Agreement of Employment – Amy Norton (Manager of HR and Finances)*

*(5) Job Descriptions:*

- 1. Data Systems Specialist*
- 2. Director Information Technology*
- 3. Manager, Finance & Human Resources*
- 4. Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools*
- 5. Administrative Assistant to the Director of Student Services*