New Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education Regular Meeting
7:00PM on Tuesday, August 19, 2025
Ann Antolini School — Library

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

Board Members: Megan Albert; Penny Miller (Board Secretary); Erik Perotti; Frank Rodenberg and Kristin Young

Board Members Absent: Timothy Russell and Deirdre Tindall

Additional Present: Kelly Carroll; Amy Kennedy, Heather Mathes, Sara Voghel (Executive Assistant to the Superintendent), Dan Carroll (an Assistant Principal at Region 7) 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

C. Communications to the Board of Education/Public Comment - the Board of Education received an additional communication from Mr. Jon Puz who wishes to be part of the "joint task force".

D. Superintendent's Report

- Summer Updates — The theme for this year is THRIVE TIME. Mr. Sousa announced many staff updates and welcomed aboard other staff. Mr. Sousa reported updates such as video cameras being installed and the Ann Antolini cafeteria floor has been replaced. Tuesday September 16, 2025, is the next Board of Education meeting.

- Task Force Update — The Superintendent (Mr. Sousa) has put out a Request for Proposal on behalf of the Board chairs: Timothy Klepps, Kerry Guilfoyle and Daniel Jerram.

- 2024/2025 Budget — Mr. Sousa reported last year was a very difficult year and the Board came in about $2,000 under budget, even with many unknown Special Education and legal fees.

- Capital Updates – the floor at Ann Antolini was replaced. This was funded from money in an account from COVID. They removed the old flooring, installed an epoxy mitigation for new flooring to stop moisture and installed new flooring. The floor comes with a warranty of 20 years.

- Contract Negotiations NHEA – The Board of Education is in the beginning phase of negotiating with teachers' union.

- Legislative Updates – Mr. Sousa stated there are over 71 new mandates for the Board of Education and the community to know about. There are new requirements for the Superintendent. There are many changes to the non-lapsing account reporting, fixed annual cost of education, the State Department of Education must set rates by 2028 (transportation excluded), grants, Special Education outplacements, reimbursement rates, tuition caps and magnet schools.

Please see the attachment "2025 Education Legislation Summary Talking Points" for more detail.

E. Board of Education Chair's Report

- **Task Force** – Chairman Timothy Klepps reported there was an email from Samatha Wald (NH PTO President) for her interest in being part of the joint task force. Back in May Mr. Klepps sent a letter to the Board of Finance and Board of Selectman. He met Ms. Guilfoyle, Mr. Jerram and Mr. Sousa in July. The first step they took was determining the need to engage a professional. Consensus of the Board Chairs and Mr. Sousa was to obtain proposals for professionals who have done this in the past; their cost to assist New Hartford in the process. Thomaston is doing the same. Mr. Sousa stated the Request for Proposals are due back to the Superintendent by September 15, 2025. Kristin Young asked the question about the next step and when someone would be picked. Board Chairs will review the submitted proposals, roughly within 30 days after the due date. Many other colleagues have gone through this process who are doing this throughout the state. Thomas Buzzi asked how this would be paid for. The goal for the joint task force is to get cost savings without affecting education. Penny Miller also inquired more information on the timeframe – would this begin by the end of the year? Yes. Stay tuned.

F. Routine Business

- Approval of Minutes - June 3, 2025 (Regular)

MOTION by Frank Rodenberg to approve meeting minutes from June 3, 2025 (Regular) with an amended change to state Penny Miller and Timothy Russell left the meeting (prior to the motion after Executive Session, they did not participate in the vote). Second by Thomas Buzzi.

5-0-2

Aye: Megan Albert, Thomas Buzzi, Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller and Frank Rodenberg
Naye:
Abstain: Erik Perotti and Kristin Young

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

- **Expenditure Report**

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve the expenditure report as presented. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

G. New Business

- **Task Force Selection** — Mr. Timothy Klepps, spoke on the "joint task force", specifically to the Board of Education members who will be a part of the force. He requested the members to start thinking if they are interested. The Chairs have discussed the group be a total of 9 members. The 9 members would consist of: (3) from the Board of Education, (2) from the Board of Finance, (2) from the Board of Selectman, and (2) from the community, pending input from the selected consulting firm. He also asked the Board Members: "how would you propose we select which members should be on the joint task force?". Potentially one member without children in the school system and one member with children in the school system? Additionally, the joint task force will need public input from the community and the school's teaching staff.

H. Old Business

A. Plant Facility & Transportation Update – HVAC

Thomas Buzzi refreshed the Board of Education, at the previous Board meeting he reported on the phase to switch to propane. As of today, the HVAC is not up to code but is safe and grandfathered in for the next 5 years. The assessment by Petrucelli, who made recommendations, was at a cost of $4,900 per school. This would be paid for from the non-lapsing account, a total of $14,700. However, after discussion with Mr. Sousa, spending this money currently is not needed. Thomas Buzzi recommends the upgrade of Phase 2 be tabled until after the joint task force, because this is currently going to be further evaluated, to spend the money doesn't seem to be prudent at this time.

MOTION by Timothy Klepps to table the upgrade of Phase 2 evaluation until after the evaluation of the schools. Second by Thomas Buzzi.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

B. Policy and Regulations - Students P5111.3 Protection of Un-documented Students (*2nd read*)

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve Policy and Regulations - Students P5111.3 Protection of Undocumented Students. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

6-1-0

Aye: Megan Albert, Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller, Erik Perotti, Frank Rodenberg and Kristin Young
Naye: Thomas Buzzi
Abstain:

Motion Passes

C. Policy and Regulations - Students P5118 Nonresident Students (*2nd read*)

MOTION by Frank Rodenberg to approve Policy and Regulations - Students P5118 Nonresident Students. Second by Penny Miller.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

I. Reports

- EdAdvance

Mr. Sousa announced EdAdvance put a property on the market – and they have a buyer. It is still anticipated that the mental health services will end December 31, 2025. Please see the EdAdvance June Edition attached.

J. Public Comment - (For Agenda Items Only)

K. Adjournment

MOTION by Penny Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8:02PM. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

Recorded Regular & Special Board of Education meetings are posted to:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX-_ZlomWmjG81dc_QM3rfg

2025 Education Legislation Summary Talking Points
EdAdvance June 2025 Edition
Jon Puz (Email to BOE)
Samantha Wald (Email to BOE)
State of CT 2025-26 ESP Confirmation