

GOVERNOR WENTWORTH REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
GWRSD SCHOOL BOARD – BROOKFIELD TOWN OFFICE
AUGUST 4, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Deshaies called the Governor Wentworth Regional School Board meeting to order at 6:02 pm in the Brookfield Town Office.

Members Present: Tom Bickford, Kirsten Burke, Brodie Deshaies, Kayla Hewitt, Dr. James Manning, Mary Schillereff, Dr. Elizabeth Sheckler, Danielle Van Dusen, Nate Williams

Also present: Superintendent Caroline Arakelian, Assistant Superintendent Katey Hills, and Business Administrator Kathy O'Blenes

Motion: At 6:02pm a motion was made to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3, II (b) to discuss personnel matters.

Moved: Mr. Williams – **Second:** Dr. Sheckler

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Personnel matters were discussed.

Motion: To ratify the Superintendent's hiring of the following staff:

Brandon Balser – 100% Teacher, Salary \$64,601 Track 1/Step 10

Caitlin Gibbons – 100% Teacher, Salary \$49,921 Track 1/Step 3

Autumn Gaska – Preschool Teacher/Interventionist, Salary \$47,543 Track 1/Step 1

Freedom Mussari – 100% Teacher \$82,589 Track 3/Step 13

Donna Egan – 100% Teacher, Salary \$94,986 Track 4/Step 14

Moved: Dr. Manning – **Second:** Dr. Sheckler

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Motion: At 6:20 pm a motion was made to end the non-public session.

Moved: Dr. Manning – **Second:** Ms. Hewitt

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

The Board members resumed the meeting at 7:00 pm in the Brookfield Town Office. Middleton Board member Kelly Tivnan, a WCTV videographer, and a community member joined the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Brookfield Selectman Ed Gauthier.

AGENDA REVIEW

No Discussion.

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ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve the minutes of the May 29, 2025 Academic Affairs Committee meeting as written.

Moved: Dr. Sheckler – **Second:** Ms. Van Dusen

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen; Ms. Schillereff, abstain (not present)

Motion: To approve the minutes of the June 2, 2025 School Board meeting as written.

Moved: Dr. Manning – **Second:** Ms. Schillereff

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Motion: To approve the minutes of the June 16, 2025 Buildings & Maintenance Committee meeting as written.

Moved: Ms. Hewitt – **Second:** Ms. Burke

Vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Mr. Williams, yes

Motion: To approve the minutes of the June 16, 2025 School Board meeting as written.

Moved: Dr. Manning – **Second:** Dr. Sheckler

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, abstain (not present); Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, abstain (not present); Mr. Deshaies, yes

Motion: To approve the accounts payable (\$5,809,216.26) and payroll (\$6,988,393.97) manifests totaling \$12,797,610.23.

Moved: Ms. Schillereff – **Second:** Dr. Manning

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

PUBLIC INPUT

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent's District Update

Superintendent Arakelian reviewed the recent release of federal grant funds and explained that allocations may be smaller than expected. She also explained new guidance from NHED relating to DEI, stating that the district will review all programs, policies, and contracts to ensure compliance. She announced the district's transition to Infinite Campus for student information and grade 9-12 grading and the transition to a new .gov domain for increased information security.

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Carpenter School Update

Superintendent Arakelian reviewed the status of the Carpenter School construction project, explaining that the cost of the modulars will be covered by insurance, grade 2 students will be in the modulars, kindergarten and grade 1 will be safely in the building, and grade 3 will be in Crescent Lake School. She expressed gratitude for the generous and supportive Wolfeboro community and the First Congregational Church for their unwavering support at the end of last year. She announced that school will start on time as planned.

Legislative Update

Superintendent Arakelian confirmed that laws relating to the Parental Bill of Rights and a Personal Communication Device Ban bill were passed and resulting School Board policy updates will be shared during the Academic Affairs Committee update on the agenda tonight.

Authorization to Suspend

Superintendent Arakelian presented the annual statement authorizing the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent to suspend students for up to ten days in accordance with RSA 193:13-I (b) and continue a suspension of a pupil for a period in excess of ten school days.

Motion: To authorize the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent, or designees, to suspend students for up to ten days in accordance with RSA 193:13-I (b) and continue a suspension of a pupil for a period in excess of ten school days.

Moved: Ms. Schillereff – **Second:** Dr. Sheckler

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

The form was distributed for signatures.

Authorization to Sign Assurances for Grants

Superintendent Arakelian presented the annual statement authorizing the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Business Administrator, and/or Curriculum Director to sign the assurances for all grants and requests to and from trust funds.

Motion: To authorize the Superintendent, Dr. Caroline Arakelian, the Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Kaitlyn Hills, the Business Administrator, Kathy O'Blenes, and/or the Curriculum Director, Danielle Harvey, to sign the assurances for all grants and requests to and from trust funds.

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

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

The form was distributed for signatures.

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Food Service Costs

Business Administrator Kathy O'Blenes explained that the District will need to raise the cost of student lunches this year in order to comply with a federal mandate. The proposed pricing is \$3.75 for elementary lunches and \$4.00 for middle and high school lunches for the 2025-2026 school year.

Motion: To approve food service pricing of \$3.75 for Elementary student lunch and \$4.00 for Middle and High School student lunches for the 2025-2026 school year.

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

Discussion: Discussion included gratitude for the option for the community to contribute to paying off student debt and how to get the word out about this process.

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Freedom Tuition Agreement

Superintendent Arakelian presented the updated Freedom Tuition Agreement which proposes a 5-year term.

Motion: To accept the Tuition Agreement between the Governor Wentworth Regional School District and the Freedom School District as presented.

Moved: Ms. Schillereff – **Second:** Dr. Manning

Discussion: Discussion included the benefits of the stability of the extended agreement and that the agreement can be amended at any time.

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Mr. Deshaies shared a thank you card written to the Board by the National History Day students who traveled to Washington, DC with the support of funds from The Wood Estate. He also shared that he met with Dr. Manning, Superintendent Arakelian, and Brookfield selectmen to discuss the selectmen's residency and student enrollment concerns.

Mr. Deshaies announced the deadline of August 4th to submit resolutions to the NHSBA ahead of the Delegate Assembly. Several Board members expressed interest in attending. Resolutions will be discussed at the September Board meeting.

Motion: The GWRSD School Board elects Brodie Deshaies as its representative to the October Delegate Assembly.

Moved: Ms. Schillereff – **Second:** Ms. Hewitt

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Affairs Committee: Dr. Sheckler reported that the committee met just prior to tonight's Board meeting to review and recommend the emergency adoption of two new policies related to recent legislation.

Motion: To waive the second meeting limitation in order to take immediate action to adopt a new policy or revise an existing policy as allowed in School Board policy BG, Board Policy Process.

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

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Discussion of policy JICJ included the interpretation of policy wording, student safety, interruption of instructional time, medical issues, the time that will be spent enforcing the policy, an adequate definition of instructional time/day, and other electronic devices that are likely to become available to families.

Motion: To adopt School Board Policy AB New Hampshire Parental Bill of Rights as presented.

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

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Motion: To adopt School Board Policy JICJ Unauthorized Communication Devices as presented.

Moved: Dr. Sheckler – **Second**: Ms. Hewitt

Discussion: Classification of a smart watch as a communication device, discipline measures, and possible language for exceptions.

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, no; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Motion: To draft a letter to send to the State Legislative Delegation on this subject.

Moved: Ms. Burke – **Second**: Ms. Van Dusen

Discussion: Drafted letter will be reviewed at the next School Board meeting.

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Building & Maintenance Committee: Dr. Manning reported that the turf field is looking great, and the replacement project is running right on schedule. Dr. Sheckler asked about lead remediation at NDS. Ms. O'Blenes explained that the state required bids to be posted on the District's website for two weeks prior to approval, delaying the process somewhat.

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Community Relations Committee: Mr. Williams reported on the meeting held on 7/30 where the committee discussed long and short-term goals and planned a roundtable with PTOs prior to the October meeting to discuss their fundraising efforts.

Finance Committee: No report.

Human Resources Committee: Mr. Deshaies reported that there will be a meeting on 8/22 to begin negotiations with GWEA.

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Advanced Planning

Mr. Deshaies read the upcoming activities from the bottom of the agenda.

Public Input

Adrian Champagne, Tuftonboro – Shared an appreciation of cell phone access during the school day as a graduate of KRHS.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: At 8:50 pm a motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

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

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Ms. Burke, yes; Ms. Hewitt, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Dr. Sheckler, yes; Ms. Van Dusen, yes; Mr. Williams, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes

Respectfully submitted,



School Board Secretary

Approved by School Board: **9/08/2025**