New Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education Regular Meeting
7:00PM on Tuesday, October 7, 2025
(Virtual Only)

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

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

Staff Professionals: Kelly Carroll, Amy Kennedy, Michael Lynch and Heather Mathes

Chairman Timothy Klepps called the regular meeting (virtual only) to order at 7:01PM.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Order of Business

C. Communications to the Board of Education/Public Comment

D. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Sousa is very thankful to law enforcement who acted very quickly, along with Dr. Kelly Carroll and Jamie Heuschkel at the security breach at Ann Antolini Elementary School. Minimal damage occurred, some food was taken, nobody was injured and actions to make sure this doesn't happen again have been put in place. Every year the district-wide safety committee meets to review policies and procedures with all town officials, first responders and mental health professionals and the administration, this will take place soon.

a. Mandatory Superintendent Report Public Act 25-93, Section 32 (*See Attachment*)

This mandatory report includes **community-based organizations (CBO), workforce development programs and attrition data for certified and non-certified staff**. There are (3) CBO's: CJR (Connecticut Junior Republic), Winchester Youth Service Bureau and EdAdvance; BASES. The workforce development programs have none in NHPS (Sousa mentioned these are more geared towards high school students). Lastly, attrition for staff: there are (1) certified positions (2025-2026) and (7) non-certified staff positions (2024-2025). Timothy Russell asked if all the positions within the document have been filled, the answer is yes. This is brand-new legislation, a new requirement to be published on a yearly basis to the community and Board of Education.

b. Climate Presentation (*See Attachment*)

- **Family** Climate Survey Results consists of 122 survey respondents in the Spring of 2025. Previously there were 152 in the Spring of 2024 and 154 in the Spring of 2023. Results show 98% of parents say they agree that school is a safe place for their child and 98% feel comfortable discussing their child's needs with teachers at school. Parents also feel strongly about their expectations and the environment within the school. Another showed 95% of parents feel their children get the resources they need to be successful. Report cards are currently being revised. The staff have built a strong relationship with students and families, through trust and transparency. Results show an increase from last year through parents who know how their child is doing before they receive their child's report card, which received 90% this year, this reflects the ongoing efforts to improve communication.
- **Staff** Climate Survey Results show the staff feel the administration promotes a safe environment. The staff implemented a new ELA program, show 98% of staff feel they have access to high quality instruction materials. There is one more installation and all classrooms will have a promethean board. Last year a new plan was

implemented, and this shows 98% of the staff agree that the current approach to teaching evaluation is relevant and supportive to their professional growth. Previously 66% to the increased 84% of staff feel the school effectively addresses behavior issues, as well 75% to 89% increase results show that teachers and students treat each other with respect.

- **Student** Climate Survey Results, from grades 3-6 (Ann Antolini), 98% of students feel welcome at school, and 95% say if they witness or experience bullying that adults at school will help them. Top three student's requests are: assemblies, recess equipment and "keep it up".

Penny Miller questioned whether any of the percentages in the Climate Survey have gone down. Mr. Sousa stated roughly 92% have gone up, if a question went down a few points this doesn't show statistical data because the sample size is not the exact same. Chairman Timothy Klepps asked Mr. Sousa how many staff and students completed the survey. Mr. Sousa stated almost every student and staff completed the survey. Mr. Klepps questioned the results from parents, Mr. Sousa and Dr. Carroll explained parent's perception of how things are addressed and supported are hindered because of confidentiality. Dr. Kelly Carrol says sometimes it's difficult talking to parents because the school cannot always provide the information the parents are looking for. The report card committee is revising the report cards to help parents better understand expectations.

Mr. Sousa presented a slideshow on students in an out of school, "Moments that Matter: At School and On the Go". Negotiations are underway. Pre-K continues to have increased enrollment. Board of Education elections are taking place on November 4, 2025. In September during monitor sampling, bacteria were discovered at Bakerville School, if there is another violation, NHPS would not have portable water. NHPS will be on the Department of Public Health's watchlist, Mr. Sousa suggests again the chlorination system. There is potential "DRIP" (District Repair and Improvement Project) grant funding, Mr. Sousa stated based on calculations approximately $47,000 is due but not completely finalized yet and the chlorination system is about $14,000. More information will be available at the end of October, when approved at the State level (this grant is only to be used for small capital projects). Kristin Young asked Mr. Sousa more about the drip grant and Timothy Russell questioned what the install timeframe looked like for the chlorination system.

E. Board of Education Chair's Report

a. Task Force Update

There have been (3) proposals received for the Joint Task Force study, interviews will take place next Tuesday October 14, 2025, including: Chairman Timothy Klepps, First Selectman Daniel Jerram, Board of Finance Chairwoman Kerry Guilfoyle and Superintendent Jeffrey Sousa.

F. Routine Business

a. Approval of Minutes - September 16, 2025

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve meeting minutes from September 16, 2025 (regular) as corrected with an amended change to Old Business (H) item A to state "minority party representation" instead of "minorities" as requested by Kristin Young. Second by Deirdre Tindall.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

b. Expenditure Report

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

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

G. New Business

a. NEW - Policy 0523 - Mission Goals Objectives - Equity and Diversity *(First Read)*

Mr. Buzzi questioned the policy being recommended and by whom, he feels the NHPS is already doing a fantastic job and that this policy does not need to be adopted.

MOTION by Thomas Buzzi to not accept this policy. Second by Timothy Klepps (for discussion).

2-7-0

Aye: Meagan Albert and Thomas Buzzi
Naye: Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller, Erik Perotti, Frank Rodenberg, Timothy Russell, Deirdre Tindall and Kristin Young
Abstain:

Motion Fails

b. NEW - Policy 4118.4 4218.4 Rights, Responsibilities and Duties Electronic Mail *(First Read)*

c. NEW - Policy 4118.232 - Personnel - Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace *(First Read)*
d. NEW - Policy 5131.601 - Students - Medical (Palliative) Use of Marijuana *(First Read)*

e. NEW - Policy 5141.213 - Students - Opioid Overdose Prevention (Emergency Administration of Naloxone) *(First Read)*

Timothy Russell asked if there was a backup to the nurse, who is authorized to give naloxone. Right now, only the nurse, there is no backup as of now Mr. Sousa stated.

f. NEW - Policy P5141.231 / 4118.234 - Students - Psychotropic Drug Use *(First Read)*

H. Old Business

a. NEW - Policy 1312.3 Community Relations - Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy *(Second Read)-Mandatory*

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve Policy 1312.3 Community Relations - Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy. Second by Timothy Russell.

8-1-0

Aye: Meagan Albert, Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller, Erik Perotti, Frank Rodenberg, Timothy Russell, Deirdre Tindall and Kristin Young
Naye: Thomas Buzzi
Abstain:

Motion Passes

b. NEW - Policy 1312.4 Community Relations - Library Collection Development and Maintenance Policy *(Second Read)-Mandatory*

MOTION by Timothy Russell to approve Policy 1312.4 Community Relations - Library Collection Development and Maintenance Policy. Second by Penny Miller.

8-1-0

Aye: Meagan Albert, Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller, Erik Perotti, Frank Rodenberg, Timothy Russell, Deirdre Tindall and Kristin Young
Naye: Thomas Buzzi
Abstain:

Motion Passes

c. NEW - Policy 1312.5 Community Relations - Library Display and Program Policy *(Second Read)-Mandatory*

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve Policy 1312.5 Community Relations - Library Display and Program Policy. Second by Timothy Russell.

8-1-0

Aye: Meagan Albert, Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller, Erik Perotti, Frank Rodenberg, Timothy Russell, Deirdre Tindall and Kristin Young
Naye: Thomas Buzzi
Abstain:

Motion Passes

d. NEW - Policy 5118.2 Students - Educational Opportunities for Military Children *(Second Read)- Mandatory*

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve Policy 5118.2 Students - Educational Opportunities for Military Children. Second by Kristin Young.

8-1-0

Aye: Meagan Albert, Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller, Erik Perotti, Frank Rodenberg, Timothy Russell, Deirdre Tindall and Kristin Young
Naye: Thomas Buzzi
Abstain:

Motion Passes

e. REVISED - Policy and Regulation 5125 - Students - Confidentiality and Access to Student Records *(Second Read)*

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve Policy and Regulation 5125 - Students - Confidentiality and Access to Student Records. Second by Timothy Russell.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

I. Public Comment - (For Agenda Items Only)

J. Reports

a. EdAdvance (*See Attachment*)

Program spotlight for BASES provides programs for enriching learning experiences. The (11) program sites are operating at near capacity. New Hartford is on the waitlist because of such high demand. The next EdAdvance Board meeting is on Thursday October 9, 2025, Deirdre Tindall will have more to report after this meeting. Juleen Flanigan, who worked in Early Childhood passed away in September 2025, link to her obituary in EdAdvance report.

K. Adjournment

MOTION by Timothy Russell to adjourn the meeting at 8:26PM. Second by Penny Miller.

UNANIMOUS
Motion Passes

Recorded Reg. & Special BOE meetings will be posted to:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX-_ZlomWmjG81dc_QM3rfg

Attachments:
Annual Report per Public Act 25-93, Section 32
Climate Survey 24-25 Results and Goals
Moments That Matter: At School and On the Go
EdAdvance