AGENDA –Monday, March 23, 2026

SPECIAL BOE MEETING

Immediately following the 26-27 Budget Presentation for Norfolk

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7

BOARD OF EDUCATION

6:00 p.m.

Botelle School Cafeteria

Regional School District No. 7 Board of Education Mission Statement:

We believe the public education is an essential component of a free and democratic society. In a partnership of family, school, community, and local and state government, our mission is to enable all students to meet high standards, make productive choices in their personal lives, contribute to a diverse global society and act as responsible citizens.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

2.0 PUBLIC PORTION

3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 March 11, 2026, Regular Board of Education Meeting

4.0 REPORTS

4.1 Superintendent's Report: Steven K. LePage

4.2 Director of Finance and Operations: J. Gaskins

5.0 OLD BUSINESS

5.1 Updates

5.2 Discussion of the 2026–2027 RSD7 Budget with consideration of possible budget adjustments

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Adoption of Call of Budget Hearing, Decision of Referendum, Adoption of Referendum Question

6.2 **MOTION** to cancel the March 25, 2026, Regular BOE Meeting

6.3 **MOTION** to cancel the April 22, 2026, Regular BOE Meeting

6.4 **MOTION** to schedule a SPECIAL BOE MEETING on April 20, 2026, which is the Regional Budget Hearing for the Adoption of the Budget to take to the District Budget Meeting, to set final Dates of the District Budget Meeting and Referendum, and to authorize the Explanatory Text for 2026-2027 Budget

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 R. Delaney – HS PE Teacher – Resigned 3/20/26

8.0 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

Enclosures: March 11, 2026 Regular BOE Meeting Minutes
Adoption of the Call of Budget Hearing Motion, Decision of Referendum Motion, Adoption of Referendum Question Motion
Motions for Special Meeting - April 20
R. Delaney ~ Letter of Resignation

Next Meetings	April 7, 2026	@ 7:00 p.m. –	Third Town Budget Presentation ~ New Hartford Town Hall
	April 8, 2026	@ 6:00 p.m.–	Regular BOE Meeting - Library Media Center
	April 9, 2026	@7:00 p.m..–	Fourth Town Budget Presentation - Barkhamsted Elementary School
	April 20, 2026	@ 7:00 p.m. –	Regional Budget Hearing to Adopt Budget to go to District
	April 22, 2026	@ 6:00 p.m. -	Regular BOE Meeting ~ Motion to cancel
	May 4, 2026	@ 7:00 p.m. -	District Budget Meeting RSD7 Little Theater
	May 5, 2026		Referendum

We welcome the public to share their comments via publicinput@nwr7.org. Your emails will be considered during the Public Comment session of the meeting. Thank you for your participation.

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
Newbury Library Media Center
Board of Education Regular Meeting
March 11, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.
DRAFT

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Ms. Kim Crone (N), Ms. Deb Bell (N), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH) via phone, Ms. Terri Kenneson (C), Director of Finance & Operations, Mr. James Gaskins, High School Principal, Mr. Gary Franklin, Middle School Principal, Mr. Ryan Cornelius, and Superintendent Steven K. LePage.
Absent: Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Ms. Mimi Duran (B), Secretary / Treasurer, Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH)

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Ms. Sexton Read.

2.0 PUBLIC PORTION

A presentation from the "Surprise Squad", led by Assistant Principal, Mr. Andrew Bakulski. A group of approximately 25 students presented the Board with gifts in honor of Board Appreciation Month. Mr. Bakulski read a message thanking Board members for their years of dedicated service to the district, and Mrs. Blazys and her culinary students provided a baked treat.

3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Terri Kenneson, seconded by Kim Crone, to **APPROVE** the minutes for the February 25 meeting as amended. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson. NAY: None

Motion by Terri Kenneson, seconded by Kim Crone, to **APPROVE** the minutes for the March 4 budget workshop. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson. NAY: None

4.0 Reports

4.1 Student Representatives:

Amaya Washington:

- Campus Life: Senior courtyard is open; planning for new amenities (ping pong, corn hole) is underway.
- Clubs/Sports: NHS/FFA organizing volunteer events; Cheer placed 7th at States; Swim placed 3rd in Class S (Anthony Ficalora (backstroke) and Maeve Bean (diving) were Class S Champions).

Mia Doyle:

- Shared some of the projects and efforts of the High School Principal's Advisory Council, which included reviewing and proposing dress code revisions, among other subcommittee highlights; Juniors focusing on SAT prep, which is coming up soon.

4.2 Principal Reports:

Middle School (R. Cornelius):

- Testing: Grade 8 will participate in the NAEP assessment on March 17, since our district was one of about 200 schools selected for this year's testing. Significant time goes into preparing for the administration of this test, but we will not get any district-specific results.
- Community: NJHS is hosting a fun event for students in grades 3–6 from sending towns this Friday, March 19.
- Operations: New track uniforms delivered; scheduling for the 2026-27 school year and 7th-grade transitions are underway.

High School (G. Franklin):

- Testing: SAT, NGSS, and Seal of Biliteracy tests (Spanish, Italian, and Hungarian) are scheduled. The ELA and Math departments are offering after-school SAT prep sessions.
- Events: Graduation (June 15) and end-of-year activity planning are underway.
- Special Activities: Success with the Financial Reality Fair; Mock Interview Day for public speaking students scheduled for March 25.

4.3 Superintendent's Report (S. LePage)

- Strategic Planning: Met with NTA leadership (3/10) and Department Leaders regarding leadership realignments in 2026-2027 and 2027-2028, and impacts on the current leadership structure. A full faculty meeting is scheduled for 3/16 regarding Strategic Planning areas of focus and leadership restructuring/realignment plans.
- Budget/Staffing: A 3rd-shift custodial vacancy will not be refilled, saving approximately $95,000 in salary and benefits. These savings help offset a proposed $30,000 placeholder for an after-school/evening security position.
- Facilities: Baseball right field drainage (curtain drains) installed; grading/seeding to follow.

- District Repair (DRIP): Grant stands at $59,523.24. Certification of the grant was submitted by Mr. Lepage. Funding is expected to be released in May.
- Community: Mobile Penguin Plunge has raised $3,100 toward a $5,000 goal thus far; all are encouraged to support or sign up to jump along with Mr. LePage and several students and faculty/staff members. There will be a fundraiser for Kindness In Motion at the event as well.

4.4 Director of Finance and Operations (J. Gaskins)

- Operations: Updates provided on the ADP conversion and bond items related to roof non-payment.
- RFP: Interviews with the four lowest-bidding companies will be scheduled within the next two weeks.

5.0 Old Business:

5.1 2026-2027 Budget: Adjustments were made to the proposed budget reflecting the expansion of the Athletic Director position to become the Director of Athletics and Student Affairs, the reduction of a custodial position, and a placeholder for a proposed after-school/evening school security position. The Board was provided with an overview of the costs and benefits of an Armed Security Officer (an armed, retired police officer in good standing) versus an unarmed Security Guard. This discussion on which option would be preferred by the Board will continue at the next regular meeting, but it was agreed that there is a need for added security during these less structured and less secure periods in the day, and the $30,000 placeholder was maintained in the proposed budget. With everything factored in, the resulting budget increase is 1.99% with an assessment increase of 2.00%. The Board expressed agreement in moving this current budget forward to town presentations as the Board's Proposed Budget.

5.2 Strategic Plan: Discussion regarding the administrative personnel realignment with the BOE consensus that these shifts make sense for addressing the needs that were identified in the recent District Strategic Planning process.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

- **6.1 Healthy Food Certification: Discussion of the certification for the 7.1.2026 to 6.30.2027 cycle.**

Motion by Kim Crone, seconded by Deb Bell to **adopt** the following: Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215 F. Regional School District No. 7 Board of Education, certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools, under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut nutrition standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30,

2027. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including, but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises, sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.
AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson. NAY: None

Motion by Terri Kenneson, seconded by Deb Bell, to **adopt** the following: The Regional School District No. 7 Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut nutrition standards, provided that the following conditions are met. 1) The sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on a weekend 2) The sale is at the location of the event, and 3) The food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events, but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food sales.
AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson. NAY: None

6. New Business:

None

7. Correspondence:

None

8. Opportunity for the Public to Speak:

None

9 Adjournment:

Motion by Terri Kenneson, seconded by Deb Bell, to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 7:30 p.m.
AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson. NAY: None

ADOPTION OF CALL OF BUDGET HEARING

MOTION: for adoption of call of budget hearing as presented by Ms. Sexton Read,

"The electors and those entitled to vote in town meetings in the towns of Barkhamsted, Colebrook, New Hartford and Norfolk, Connecticut are hereby notified and warned that a district hearing for the Regional School District No. 7 will be held on Monday, April 20, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the Roberta S. Ohotnicky Little Theatre of the high school building, at which meeting the proposed budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2026 will be presented. Any person may recommend the inclusion or deletion of expenditures at such meeting. The Annual Meeting of said District will be held on Monday, May 4, 2026 at 7:00 p.m."

DECISION OF REFERENDUM
ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET TO TAKE TO THE REFERENDUM

MOTION: for adoption of the RSD#7 2026-2027 Budget to take to the Referendum on May 5, 2026.

Ms. Sexton Read "The Board of Education adopts the RSD#7 2026-2027 Budget to take to Referendum on May 5, 2026."

ADOPTION OF REFERENDUM QUESTION

MOTION: to adopt the referendum questions, "Shall the Regional School District No. 7 Annual Budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2026, be accepted?"

"Yes" Vote is for approval.

"No" Vote is for disapproval.

MOTION: SPECIAL BOE MEETING ON April 20, 2026

MOTION: to Schedule a SPECIAL BOE MEETING on Monday, April 20, 2026, for the REGIONAL BUDGET HEARING to:

*Adopt the 2026-2027 RSD7 Budget to take to the District Budget Meeting on May 4, 2026
*To Set the Final Dates of the RSD7 District Budget Meeting (May 4, 2026) and Referendum Date (May 5, 2026)
*To Authorize the Explanatory Text for the 2026-2027 RSD7 Budget

Mr. LePage and Principal Franklin,

I am writing to formally resign from my position at Northwestern Region 7, effective March 20, 2026. .

This decision has not come easily. Due to unforeseen circumstances involving my baby's health, I must step away from my professional responsibilities to focus fully on caregiving during this critical time. My family requires my full attention, and I am unable to continue fulfilling my role in the manner that both my students and the school community deserve.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have worked at Northwestern Region 7. It has been a privilege to support and teach our students, and I truly appreciate the support and collaboration of my colleagues and administration during my time here.

I will do my best to assist with the transition process in any way I can during this period. Please let me know how I may help to ensure continuity for my students.

Thank you for your understanding and compassion during this difficult time.

Sincerely,
Robert Delaney