New Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education Regular Meeting
7:00PM on Tuesday, October 20, 2026
Ann Antolini School – Library

PRESENT: Interim Superintendent Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote; Chair Timothy Klepps

Board Members: Thomas Buzzi; Penny Miller (Secretary); Kirby Morante; Erik Perotti; Jon Puz; Frank Rodenberg; Timothy Russell and Kristin Young (Vice Chair)

New Hartford Public Schools: Kelly Carroll, Amy Kennedy, Michael Lynch, and Heather Mathes

Timothy Klepps, Chair of the NHPS Board of Education, called the regular meeting to order in-person at 7:00PM.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Order of Business
N/A

C. Communications to the Board of Education/Public Comment

Aulay Carlson - Follow-Up to Selection of New Superintendent – September 2, 2026 – Picking a Superintendent – October 4, 2026
Kristin Young - on behalf of SFU-Task Force – Recommendation to BOE for Engineering Analysis – October 6, 2026
Commissioner of Education - Approving Interim Superintendent Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote – October 1, 2026

D. Interim Superintendent's Report

a. Entry Update

Interim Superintendent Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote expressed gratitude for the opportunity to be a part of New Hartford Public Schools. The overlap with Mr. Jeffrey Sousa was very informative and beneficial. She stated New Hartford is a "gem" of school district, the administrative team and Central Office staff have been very welcoming. Dr. Paddyfote plans to be in the schools every week, she has already been with New Hartford Public Schools for 13 days. On October 9, 2026, a Professional Development was led by Amy Kennedy and Dr. Kelly Carroll, which she noted as one of the best experiences she has ever observed, great kudos to the staff.

b. Certified Staff - Library Media Specialist Opening

The staff member is leaving on Friday and there have been a lot of applicants interested in the opening.

c. Vision of the Leaner / Academic Performance
There will be an update at the Tuesday November 17, 2026 Board of Education meeting.

E. Board of Education Chair's Report

a. Region 7 Curriculum Coordinator Proposal

Jeffrey Sousa and Timothy Klepps previously informed the Board of Education of a potential position at the regional level. The proposal continued further to a presentation by EdAdvance. To summarize, Timothy Klepps stated the offering was evaluated, although what is currently being offered is working very well. The position is not something New Hartford Public Schools needs to get involved in and he will inform Region 7 that the curriculum in New Hartford is working, the cost associated is not of an interest for NHPS. Frank Rodenberg doesn't feel the Towns are on the same page regarding curriculum. New Hartford Public Schools is currently looking at what EdAdvance is proposing to offer. Mr. Rodenberg suggests an update within 6 months. He does feel students go to Region 7 with different curriculum backgrounds. The NHPS administrative team assured they are working with multiple towns: *Colebrook, Barkhamsted, Norfolk and Hartland*. Chairman Timothy Klepps agrees with providing updates and hopes other districts will contribute and be a part of the process. Thomas Buzzi emphasized the difference between an "aligned" curriculum versus the "best" curriculum, when students come in with different backgrounds, the curriculums should be aligned, but if another town is doing it better, that's what should be done in New Hartford Public Schools. Heather Mathes strongly feels there is a good process in place. In other districts, they may only be 1 staff member and in New Hartford there is 3. They meet 3 times a year and last year was the first year to actually get the plan going again. Interim Superintendent JeanAnn Paddyfote suggests the evaluation of trends on 7th graders. How are they doing? Are they making good progress? Because there is more than 1 community, and each districts decides their own curriculum, it is a mountain to climb to align the curriculums. There has to be data to support what the best practice is. Is there a

problem? How are students from each district doing? Overall, Timothy Klepps informed the Board of Education that New Hartford is going to decline the program which Region 7 has presented.

F. Routine Business

a. Approval of Minutes - September 15, 2026 (Regular), and September 22, 2026 (Special)

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve the September 15, 2026 (R) and September 22, 2026 (S) meeting minutes. Second by Thomas Buzzi.

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b. Expenditure Report

MOTION by Kirby Morante to approve the Expenditure Report as presented. Second by Penny Miller.

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Grant funding has not been received and four line-item transfers are requested for consideration.

c. Line-Item Transfers

The purpose of the requested line-item transfers is to off-set the negative.

The proposed line-item transfers are:

- $29,800.00 for 1 FTE Occupational Therapist position, (150 Hours Physical Therapist)
- $27,000.00 for 1 FTE Bakerville School, Paraeducator Position
- $45,000.00 for 3 Long Term Substitutes
- $14,000.00 for Salary Increase, Vacancy filled at higher rate than budget

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve the line-item transfers as presented. Second by Timothy Russell.

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G. New Business

a. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Task Force Request for Expanded Engineering Analysis Scope

The School Facility Utilization Task Force is at the end of their study, the issue at hand which prohibits narrowing down options further is, the test fits. There is a proposal for SP+A to work with additional firms to do complete several studies, *Civil (Benesch), Structural (Michael Horton) and Environmental (Eagle)*. The proposal by the SFU-TF is to do one study at a time, first Civil, if Civil eliminates the option, then Structural and Environmental would not be completed. These studies are to validate if the options which remain are viable. This work must be done before the snow, weather may constrict the study. The maximum budget is $30,173.00. The School Facility Utilization Task Force hopes to come in lower as they do not anticipate completing every study, the SFU-TF has asked the Board of Education for approval. The 10% SP+A markup will only be applied to the services that are actually completed.

Frank Rodenberg asked where the funding for these additional analyses will come from. Kristin Young suggested this comes from Board of Education budget, she noted the Board of Education can certainly advocate for other parts of the town to participate. This request first goes to the Board of Education (*from the School Facility Utilization Task Force*), then the Board of Selectmen, then the Board of Finance. The other Boards will likely recommend the Board of Education use the non-lapsing account surplus. Thomas Buzzi expressed hesitation, is the funding being used for an option will the Town will not vote for? He expressed there has been no feedback from the Town voters. The studies are not for a specific option but rather to understand each site themselves. Options are not specific to the studies; the studies are to determine what is possible (or not) at each site. If a study says the option cannot be done because of site restrictions then it can be eliminated. Jon Puz expressed the value in the reports which are being requested, to the buildings themselves, a roof for example. His example of: 1 roof is needed immediately, another in the next 3-5 years. For a study at $2,400, the study contains good information moving forward, minimal cost for the studies to the cost of the projects themselves, for reports that will provide great value. Kirby Morante asked hypothetically if these services provided by SP+A may be able to be done for a lower price. In this instance there is a constriction of time. Jon Puz says the savings would be marginal, or may not fit, and could increase SP+A's time. Discussion occurred, what if these studies are not completed, what is the next steps? Kristin Young stated the School Facility Utilization Task Force is at the end of their research, without more site data. Timothy Russell feels a lot of time has already been put into the study and most likely the study will have to be done one way or the other. The Board of Education non-lapsing account has roughly $220,000. Jon Puz expressed the surplus funding is in an account, with a $3,000 from the videography.

He also feels the highest amount would not be utilized. Kirby Morante asked if the amount will go over $30,000. SP+A has worked with the proposed companies in the past. Penny Miller asked the other Board Members for the reason these analyses were not part of the original scope? Ms. Young clarified, SP+A does not do this type of work. She can't speak to the original scope as she wasn't included. But feels the scope in the beginning of this was to be as lean as possible.

Timothy Klepps expressed his thoughts a number at: *10, 20 and 30 million dollars*, the cost estimates are from hired professionals, but there has not been community input. These studies are very high level (*surface-level*), he is challenged to spend more money having received no community input, what is the appetite of the townspeople? Mr. Klepps feels there should be a pause on spending, he doesn't feel additional studies are needed at this time, some information is already had. He felt if there is an option chosen then the additional work may be helpful if the town wishes to proceed with that option. Jon Puz reminded the Board Members that many questions have come up which need to be answered by an Engineer. The Task Force is at a point where they cannot say what option is viable and which is not. Therefore, the Board of Education would bring imperfect options to the community, which the Task Force has previously discussed as irresponsible. There is no further action that the Task Force can do without information from an Engineer. Jon Puz reminded that the School Facility Utilization Task Force passed a vote to bring these analyses forward to the Board of Education as a proposal.

Frank Rodenberg is inclined to support this request but feels Environmental should be reviewed last, or only if needed. Thomas Buzzi feels if the School Facility Utilization Task Force was never created, the Town would not be spending 30 million dollars, he doesn't feel the Town has an appetite for a project of this nature. SP+A are not Civil Engineers. Timothy Klepps doesn't think the studies will make these numbers go down, he suggested a feasibility study – at a lower cost. Penny Miller noted there is plans from the previous time building and asked if anyone has bothered to look at them? There may be plans in the Town Clerk's Office. There may be information there which could answer certain pieces of the study, whether that means removing an option from what's on the table. There have been questions and the more that seem to be answered, the more questions there are. The Board of Education can say: *continue, change direction or stop*.

Erik Perotti advocates the Board of Education must have the information on viable options before asking for community input, he feels the Board of Education and School Facility Utilization Task Force are too far invested in the process, they must have the correct answers for the public. The public has had the opportunity to be involved through the entire process of the School Facility Utilization Task Force. Frank Rodenberg asked if the Civil Engineer would be enough? Jon Puz, strongly feels the Task Force is doing the best they can, but they need professional guidance to move further, the Task Force members are not professionals, they are volunteers. There have been members of the public who have advocated at School Facility Utilization Task Force meetings to have these studies be completed, this has been discussed at great length. Professional opinions cost money. Mr. Puz feels the Board of Education needs to determine tonight if they will support funding the studies or not. If the Board of Education does not wish to fund these studies, neither will the Board of Selectmen or Board of Finance. If the Engineered studies are not continued further the School Facility Utilization Task Force is complete and the problem of viable options comes back to the Board of Education. The School Facility Utilization Task Force can take what they have to date and present their findings to the Board of Education. Thomas Buzzi has requested a summary understanding of the options to the Board of Education, as to the options at this time. He would like to understand if a dollar amount is spent what options can be eliminated? Erik Perotti argues the Board of Education should have all the facts before making a decision. Erik Perotti feels the additional analyses are a good use of the surplus funding. There is a lot of deferred maintenance to get a hold of.

MOTION by Frank Rodenberg to approve $30,173.00 from the non-lapsing account to support the proposed additional site investigations by Silver Petrucelli & Associates *as proposed by the School Facility Utilization Task Force*. Second by Erik Perotti.

Aye: Erik Perotti, Jon Puz, Frank Rodenberg, Timothy Russell and Kristin Young
Naye: Thomas Buzzi, Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller, and Kirby Morante
Abstain:

(5-4-0)
Motion Passes

H. Old Business

a. Second Read and Approval of Revised Policies and Bylaw
   i. REVISION - Policy 0521 - Nondiscrimination
   ii. REVISION - Policy 5141.22 - Communicable/Infectious Diseases
   iii. REVISION - Policy 5141.221 - Pediculosis

iv. REVISION - Bylaw 9325.3 - Parliamentary Procedures

b. Item of Information - Administration Regulations
   i. R5141.22 - Communicable/Infections Diseases Exclusion Procedures

MOTION by Frank Rodenberg to table all policies and reports. Second by Penny Miller.

AMENDED-MOTION by Frank Rodenberg to table all policies (*with the exception of the Revision of Policy 5141.221 Pediculosis*) and reports. Second by Kirby Morante.

Aye: Timothy Klepps, Penny Miller, Kirby Morante, Erik Perotti, Jon Puz, Frank Rodenberg, Timothy Russell and Kristin Young
Naye: Thomas Buzzi
Abstain:

(8-1-0)
Motion Passes

Kirby Morante expressed her thoughts to include "the school bus" to Policy 5141.221 - Pediculosis, as students come in contact with each other for an extended period of time outside the classroom. The New Hartford Board of Education has policies, the Board may suggest revisions and direction of the regulations to the Superintendent/Interim Superintendent. Dr. Paddyfote clarified the School Medical Advisor endorses this Policy (P5141.221), and authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to work with the School Medical Advisor regarding the regulation, R5141.221(a). Interim Superintendent JeanAnn Paddyfote is in the process of reviewing the regulation with the School Medical Advisor. Thoughts from the Board of Education members can be shared with the Superintendent/Interim Superintendent. Discussion was had. Ms. Morante suggested review of the procedures regarding the school community, specifically the ten percent. Dr. Paddyfote will bring up these concerns in her discussion, when meeting with the School Medical Advisor. Jon Puz supports including the school bus as part of the guidelines and procedures.

MOTION-RESCINDED by Frank Rodenberg and Kirby Morante.

MOTION by Penny Miller to table **all** policies and reports. Second by Thomas Buzzi.

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I. Reports

a. EdAdvance
b. CABE

K. Adjournment

MOTION by Penny Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8:43PM. Second by Timothy Russell.

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Respectfully submitted by,
Elizabeth Domas, Recording Secretary

Attachments:
Additional Services for New Hartford Utilization Study: Civil, Structural and Environmental Services SP+A Project No. 25.186