New Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education Regular Meeting
7:00PM on Tuesday, November 17, 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, Heather Mathes and Acaica Ransom (School Nurse)

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

C. Communications to the Board of Education/Public Comment

- Ben Witte – October 23, 2026 "Additional Task Force Funding"

D. Superintendent's Report

a. Welcome Student Representatives - ***Zachary Harris and Sophia Parente***

Student Representatives presented "New Hartford Cafeteria Food"; the students celebrated fresh, local ingredients through farm-to-school connections. Zachary and Sophia had samples for the Board with the help of the Antolini lunch staff, the samples were: *Butternut Squash Soup, Purple Daikon Radishes and Warm Apple Crisp*. The apples for the Warm Apple Crisp came from March Farm in Bantam for the second year in a row. General Tso Chicken, Hot Dog and Cookie and Chicken Tenders are the student's favorite lunches. Harvest Garden Salad is served for students consisting of ingredients from local farms. The presentation by Zachary and Sophia in attached to the minutes.

b. Awards and Recognition

i. 2026 CABE Board Recognition Award

New Hartford Public Schools received recognition as a Level 1 recipient for the 2026 CABE Board Recognition Award. There is a conference on Friday November 20, 2026 and Interim Superintendent Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote will be in attendance.

ii. 2026 Bonnie B. Carney Award of Excellence for Educational Communications

1. Newsletter: Bright Futures Bulletin
2. Calendar: District Calendar

c. Academic Performance Presentation

The New Hartford Public Schools administrators: *Dr. Kelly Carroll, Amy Kennedy, and Heather Mathes* presented a "Academic Performance Update & Vision of a Learner". The New Hartford Public Schools Student Achievement results, at a glance show student achievement and growth very positively, there are many "Points of Pride". The results show **Strong Early Literacy**-82% of K-3 students are at or above the DIBELS benchmark in Spring 2026. There is **Positive Reading Growth**-70% of Grades 3-6 students are typical or high STAR reading, which was 60% previously. The **Encouraging Math Growth**-Grades 1-6 have demonstrated typical or high STAR Math growth. *S*tudents have **Sustained ELA Progress**, the Smarter Balanced average is higher across all tested grades compared to five years ago. The adjusted ELA program has sustained positive progress over time. DIBELS - Early Literacy (Grades K-3), shows the students in the Spring, 82% of them are at or above the benchmark compared to 64% nationally and Fall students (new students) show 66% began the year at or above the benchmark, compared to 51% nationally. DIBELS shows strong positive progress as seen in the previous year. STAR - Reading (Grades 3-6), results show 63% are at or above the benchmark compared to 59% in Fall 2025-2026. Grade 3 leads at 69%. The data shows focus Levels 1 and 2 have what they need. The STAR – Reading (Grade 3-6) student growth distribution shows that 70% show typical or high growth from last fall to this fall, which suggests a positive shift, up from 60% the prior year. STAR - Math (Grade 1-6), important to remember there are more students in this category, students started this fall a little bit stronger than last fall. These results are encouraging, there may be students not at the benchmark but they are making progress. This year 74% of the student's district-wide who show typical or better growth in math from Fall to Fall 2026-2027, which is up 9 points from last year's at 65%. The Smarter Balanced ELA achievement results are higher than typical, revealing leveled out trends. The blue shaded color is students who are exceeding. Results show Grade 3 to be excelling and Grade 6 needs additional instruction focused in the area of Mathematics. The Smarter Balanced measure gives students a goal for each year. Grade 5 students' growth in Math is a notable increase, 82% reached their target. The data shows very strong literacy outcomes and positive STAR (Reading) growth. This means students are starting the year stronger than the year before. In addition, the

administration has included their "Vision", which revised the ELA program. Low growth doesn't mean students are below the benchmark, or are not reaching the benchmark. This could be students of the highest intelligence, who don't show significant growth mostly because they are already the highest bracket of their class. Low growth students are looked at internally by the administration. The new ELA program has been supported by Professional Development, the same process and time needs to be devoted to Math. Math Olympiads is a program available for the high achieving students. These four critical pieces consist of: *High-Quality Tier 1 Instruction, Responsive MTSS, Protected FLEX Time and Continuous Improvement*. The Protected FLEX time is 30 minutes, teachers and support staff, this was implemented about 3 years. FLEX time was implemented to ensure students weren't missing instruction, during the FLEX time teachers can provide small group/personalized instruction.

The Vision of a Learner, is goals to have students be attributing members of the community. Portrait of a graduate is developed for what the administration aspires their students to embrace and grow with. **Effective, Ethical and Engaged Learners** are the three highlights emphasized. Looking ahead the administration team has goals to: ***Sustained Strong Literacy Outcomes, Strengthen Mathematics Achievement, Bring Vision of a Learner to Life, and Monitor Growth and Continuously Improve.***

E. Board of Education Chair's Report

a. Proposed Curriculum Coordinator Position (NWR7)

There was a meeting last month, Interim Superintendent Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote attended on October 28, 2026. The position landed that the work will be done by the K-8 Curriculum Council. The Superintendent and Curriculum Coordinator from Barkhamsted, Erika Sacharko, has set up strategic plans and goals that they will try to achieve. Some work in progress is the regional alignment of Science and Social Studies, which is a high priority. They will be conducting a 5-year cohort by town to review student transition outcomes and academic performance. The proposal from NW Regional 7 for a Curriculum Coordinator went through stages, from hiring an individual at the Region 7 level, to hiring through EdAdvance. EdAdvance set up a proposal that comes at a higher cost for New Hartford, as well as every other feeder district. The discussion has come full circle, the idea is back to all feeder schools being involved in this process in preparing the students for 7th grade. The Regional Curriculum Alignment Discussion from Region 7 is available to read.

F. Routine Business

a. Approval of Minutes - Tuesday October 20, 2026 (Regular)

MOTION by Timothy Russell to approve the October 20, 2026 (Regular) meeting minutes. Second by Erik Perotti.

UNANMIOUS

b. Expenditure Report

MOTION by Thomas Buzzi to approve the Expenditure Report as presented. Second by Timothy Russell.

UNANMIOUS

G. New Business

c. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Subscription for Shipman & Goodwin Policy Services

Interim Superintendent Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote brought to the attention of the Board, that there are many discrepancies within the Board of Education policies, especially the 4000 and 5000 series. Shipman & Goodwin has a one-time fee to review the difference in policies, determine what is required and what is in place suggested by CABE. There are policies outdated from 2007. Dr. Paddyfote felt it was her responsibility to inform the New Hartford Board of Education of the policy discrepancies. She asked Shipman & Goodwin for a discount, Shipman & Goodwin could not change the cost, but offered to give a "credit" for the calendar year. The cost is $4,500, but with Shipman & Goodwin's credit of $2,000 (*to any legal fees*), the cost is $2,500. The current process pays CABE $1,500 a year. Having Shipman & Goodwin review the policies would get the New Hartford Board of Education up-to-date and compliant with the current law. Policies from Shipman & Goodwin are written by attorneys, and policies from CABE are written by retired Superintendents. Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote says conducting this policy review will streamline the policies. Shipman & Goodwin is the Attorney used by the Board of Education.

MOTION by Kristin Young to approve the subscription for Shipman & Goodwin Policy Services not to exceed $4,500, and to authorize the Superintendent to execute the subscription agreement. Second by Penny Miller.

UNANMIOUS

H. Old Business

a. Action to Remove from Table the Following Policies:
   i. REVISION - Policy 0521 - Nondiscrimination
   ii. REVISION - Policy 5141.22 - Communicable/Infectious Diseases

iii. REVISION - Policy 5141.221 – Pediculosis

There is no mandated policy for Pediculosis, that states a student should stay home if they have Pediculosis (head lice). Students are considered healthy; a student is not considered to be unhealthy. Students with head lice are not required to stay home from school and restricting a student from attending school is not acceptable. Notification is not required and will not reduce the spread and only cause stigma and disarray. Thomas Buzzi questioned whether there could be repercussions from parents if the school requires a student to stay home or repercussions to allowing a child to come to school? Lead Nurse (Acacia Ransom) stated she has procedures in place, which they follow. Students will not spread lice to the child next to them like students may spread the common cold. Head lice cannot survive on a non-living host for a long period of time and only spreads from direct contact. Once a child is symptomatic, exposure could have already been there for four to six weeks prior. It is important for the community to be educated, as in many cases Head Lice does not spread within the school. This school year many of the cases came from a student originally being exposed over the summer. Fall is the most common time of year for exposure to Head Lice. Education on prevention is best practice to limiting the spread.

iv. REVISION - Bylaw 9325.3 - Parliamentary Procedures

MOTION by Jon Puz to remove from table the following proposed revisions: *Policy 0521 (Nondiscrimination), Policy 5141.22 (Communicable/Infectious Diseases), Policy 5141.221 (Pediculosis), and Bylaw 9325.3 (Parliamentary Procedures)*. Second by Penny Miller.

UNANIMOUS

b. Second Read and Approval of Revised Policies and Bylaw

MOTION by Penny Miller to approve the second read and adoption of revised Policies: 0521, 5141.22, and 5141.221, and revised Bylaw 9325.3. Second by Jon Puz.

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

(8-1-0)
Motion Passes

I. Reports

a. EdAdvance

EdAdvance has begun the budget process. The Food Service fee will be increasing from $8,000 to $35,000 for fiscal year 2027/2028. The loss for this year was $48,478 due to free breakfast and increased lunches, increasing the bottom line by $17,000. This increase announced by EdAdvance is to cover the $415,000 deficit in 2025/2026. This will help close the gap, not generate profit.

Mr. Jeffrey Sousa will transition to the position of Assistant Executive Director starting July 1, 2027 (*taking over for Lisa Bowden*), from the position of Director of School Climate and Mental Health Services (*the position previously held by Judith Palmer*).

b. CABE

The CABE Convention is November 20 & 21, 2026 and New Board Member Orientation is December 10, 2026. New Hartford Board of Education members Kirby Morante and Jon Puz are attending the orientation.

J. Public Comment - (For Agenda Items Only)

K. Adjournment

MOTION by Penny Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8:18PM. Second by Frank Rodenberg.

UNANMIOUS

Respectfully submitted by,
Elizabeth Domas, Recording Secretary

Attachments:
New Hartford Cafeteria Food
Academic Performance Presentation
Regional Curriculum Alignment Discussion – Region 7
Pediculosis (Head Lice) Information
EdAdvance – Pumpkin Spice Edition!