



HUDSON SCHOOL DISTRICT ♦ Hudson, New Hampshire
Hills Memorial Library 18 Library Street

**6:30 pm Budget Meeting
Non-Public Session**

Hudson School Board Meeting Minutes – November 6, 2023

In Attendance

Board Members

Gretchen Whiting, Chair
Maureen Dionne, Vice Chair
Ethan Beals
Mike Campbell
Gary Gasdia

SAU Staff

Dan Moulis, Superintendent of Schools
Kimberly Organek, Assistant Superintendent
Of Curriculum & Instruction
Rachel Borge, Director Special Services
Jen Burk, Business Administrator

A. Call to Order [0:00:18]

Chair Gretchen Whiting called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. Public Input [0:00:38]

A member of the public shared an experience she had regarding the culinary arts department catering for her daughter's baby shower. She was very impressed, and she commended the program.

C. Good News Update (Information) [0:04:09]

Ms. Organek shared the following:

- October 16: Early Learning Center at Dr. H.O. Smith – The first-grade community unit was a successful learning experience.
- Dr. H.O. Smith and Library Street held the Annual Halloween Parade.
- Hills Garrison School celebrated a successful Pumpkinfest.

- Nottingham West third graders took a trip to the Seacoast Science Center.
- Hudson Memorial held a dance; and a blood drive will take place on November 15
- Alvirne fundraiser Walk for Whiskers took place and \$16,534 was raised to benefit the Humane Society of Greater Nashua.
- Alvirne FFA went to Nationals – they were congratulated on an excellent showing.

D. Presentations to the Board [0:05:53]

1. The American Association of School Librarians National Conference (Update)

Hudson Memorial School Librarian Beth Sloat and Hills Garrison Elementary School Librarian Amy Chartrain gave an update on their recent AASL National Conference. Highlights included: 2,000 librarians from around the country participated; ChatGBT/AI workshop; Echoes on Reflections workshop; networking; session with novelist Alan Gratz; sessions on coding and vertically aligned curriculum; ASL; using Canva to create booklists and post; copyright information; and social/emotional learning using picture books for the elementary age groups.

2. Assessment Reports (Discussion)

Ms. Organek and Principals Scott Baker (Nottingham West) and Theo Tufts (Hills Garrison) reviewed assessment data.

Highlights included:

iReady (K-10) diagnostic from the beginning to the end of last school year:

Reading: 18% (from 28%) at risk for tier 3;

24% (from 38%) for tier 2;

58% (from 35%) for tier 1

Math: 20% (from 31%) at risk for tier 3;

30% (from 47%) for tier 2;

50% (from 23%) for tier 1.

Nottingham West Elementary School NH Statewide Assessment Data (SAS):

- Assessment taken between March and May 2023
- Data for 2019-2023; no data for 2020 due to Covid
- Reading and math: grades 3-5
- Science: grade 5
- Steady growth in reading (a focus on writing has been helpful).
- Not as steady growth in math (this was seen nationally). Math word problems are a weakness. The Math Curriculum Committee is meeting. Interventions in math are important.
- There was a discussion about diagnostics and cohort data.

iReady testing (different from SAS) was done the second week of school (based on end of year standards); it will be taken next in January of 2024. Growth will be reviewed. Teachers had iReady training including individualized performance pathways. Professional development and model lessons are helpful supports for teachers.

Hills Garrison Elementary School NH Statewide Assessment Data (SAS):

- Assessment taken between March and May 2023
- Data for 2019-2023; no data for 2020 due to Covid
- Reading and math: grades 3-5
- Science: grade 5
- Reading: slow progression
- Math: decrease in achievement last year
- Taking the SAS test later in the year might help with improvement.
- Special needs students took the same SAS test; the tiers and ranges are universal and representative of all learners and overall achievement.
- Progress was made in science (do more hands-on activities in science will help with improvement)

iREADY: improvement in diagnostic 1 and 3 (stronger in reading than in math). Incorporating geometry throughout the school year could help. There was discussion about retention to help struggling students. It was noticed that the timing of the different assessments is challenging for students and staff.

E. Old Business [1:12:05]

1. FY25 Budget Wrap-up (Decision)

The Board reviewed the FY25 budget for finalization.

School counseling: current caseload (by alphabet: ranged from 211 to 241; Mr. Hughen had 66) and recommended caseload (202 to 271; Mr. Hughen had 46). If the retirement position is not replaced, the caseload will need to be split over 4 counselors, increasing the caseloads by 50-54; Mr. Hughen would carry 99. Across the state, average caseloads are around 150-200. If counselor allotment is maintained, caseloads will range between 185-230 in 2024-25; if the anticipated retiree is not replaced, the caseloads will range between 238-305 with Mr. Hughen carrying 90 students. It is unusual for students to be assigned to a district-wide Director of School Counseling, because of their other responsibilities.

There was discussion about the pathways program; a pathways coordinator resigned last week. The vacancy has been posted and locations are being reviewed for the program. Keeping a semblance of that class will help with transitional success of the program where there are about 10 students. A suggestion is to reduce the coordinator position. There was discussion including the workload, courses to be

taught, the level of outreach, that it is a small, contained program, there is limited space, and the dollar value (equivalent to a teacher with a Master's degree and experience), etc. A few students benefit from the program who might otherwise need out-of-district placements.

Ethan Beals made a motion to reduce the Pathway Coordinator position line by \$102,724 leaving \$1. Gary Gasdia seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-2.

A teacher had created a video in support of the classroom management software that the School Board had seen last week. The feedback was helpful.

Maureen Dionne made a motion to add the classroom management software back into the budget for \$20,000. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-1.

School Board budget reductions now total \$1,446,114. The budget will move to the Budget Committee as presented.

F. New Business [2:07:20]

The December 18, 2023 School Board meeting is rescheduled to December 20 due to a scheduling conflict with the winter concert.

1. Travel Request (Decision)

Athletic Director Karen Bonney requested to attend the National Athletic Directors Conference in Orlando, FL in December. A board follow-up was requested.

Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the travel request for Karen Bonney to attend the National Athletic Directors Conference as presented. Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

2. Nominations (Decision)

Nominations included: Kathleen Murphy as the Hudson Memorial School Girls Basketball Coach (\$2,400) and various winter sport nominations.

Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the nominations as presented. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

3. American Legion Post 48 Donation to the Food Service Program (Decision)

Food Service Director Karen Atherton presented a memo regarding a donation from the American Legion Post 48 in the amount of \$1,651 that will be used first towards paying off debt of students who had incurred a balance at the start of the school year and who had submitted free/reduced lunch applications, and then based on need.

Ethan Beals made a motion to accept with appreciation the donation of \$1,651 from American Legion Post 48 as presented. Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

G. Policies – First Reading [2:13:26]

- JEB Age of Entrance
Policy with tracked revisions: changes related to the waiver process
- JKAA Use of Restraints and Seclusion
Current policy to be replaced by new NHSBA policy - legislative changes
- GBCD Background Investigation and Criminal History Records Check
District policy with suggested revisions including: differences with designated volunteers and bus drivers, monitors and substitutes
- JCA Change of Class or School or Assignment Best Interests and Manifest Hardship District policy with suggested revisions including: update with RSA 193:3, changes in definition of manifest hardship, and process revisions
- ACN Nursing Mothers Accommodations
New NHSBA policy
- JLCD Administering Medication to Students
Current policy to be replaced by new NHSBA proposed policy
- EFAA Meal Charging
Current policy with tracked changes

H. Recommended Action [2:21:00]

1. **Manifests**
2. **Minutes** - October 23, 2023
3. **Minutes** - October 25, 2023

Maureen Dionne made a motion to approve the minutes of October 23 and 25, 2023 as written. Gary Gasdia seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

I. Reports to the Board (Information) [2:21:40]

1. Superintendent Report

There was review of the four Superintendent goals:

1. Increase academic performance based upon summative assessments by 10-15%
2. Provide a new direction and vision for the district

3. Create systems to continue to improve district communication with families, community, teachers and staff, and students
4. Continue attendance and participation at professional conferences, workshops, seminars, and meetings with colleagues

Realistic goals regarding growth/success were discussed as well as community engagement (evidence of accomplishment, consistency and access of information.)

Recent events include:

- AHS welding students learned about steel fabrication career opportunities
- Students attended the FFA Nationals
- Meeting with ELC to discuss dyslexia testing requirements
- Hiring includes: Project Lead the Way teacher and a math tutor at Hudson Memorial; and a science teacher at AHS. Posted jobs include a Community Engagement Coordinator, a Pathways Coordinator, etc.
- AHS hosted the Leadership NH Conference.
- Visit to Hudson Food Pantry (partnership/outreach)
- Hills Garrison Pumpkinfest
- Alvirne Football Team competed against Nashua North
- Cross Country Meet of Champions took place.
- Student School Board Member workshop on December 2 (Ms. Tilley to attend)

2. Assistant Superintendent Report

Highlights included: Ms. Organek substituted at HMS last week (subs needed); professional day tomorrow; and professional development also in January (due to election date)

3. Director of Special Services Report

Ms. Borge attended a session with the DOE (preschool assessment tool discussion, changes to the bureau, etc.). She learned about episodes of treatment. She attended a parent information session on special education in Windham.

4. Business Administrator Report

Ms. Burke mentioned that the budget will be wrapped up and presented to the Budget Committee. Positions are still vacant in the district.

J. Committee Reports [2:54:46]

Ms. Whiting noted that there was a Budget Committee meeting on Wednesday where she provided information on School Board support for the forestry program. The committee asked for information on the HO Smith playground and mentioned that it did go to the voters twice.

K. Correspondence (Information) [2:56:12]

Ms. Borge reviewed Special Services informational reports including comparisons with other districts. Having this information as backup for the Budget Committee will help. The Special Services Department was thanked for their work and it was suggested that this be part of the budget cycle moving forward.

There was a review of the District Action Plan. Curriculum Instruction is put first and there are two benchmark assessments vs. three to align with the Superintendent's goal of having a mid-year check with the School Board. Expanding on student internships/dual enrollments is included for career opportunities. Evaluation of progress includes AP results, and student selection to colleges and career opportunities. Under assessment, an increased lab piece is added to the science portion. Under communication, an annual survey for feedback and a communication committee are added.

L. Board Member Comments [3:03:34]

Mr. Campbell went to the Halloween Parade at Hills Garrison, and he mentioned it was well attended. He thanked the food pantry and the Cub Scouts for Scouting for Food. He commended Hills Garrison for Walk Club activities and support.

Mr. Gasdia thanked everyone for their work on the FY25 budget. He recognized there were tough conversations and decisions that took place.

Mr. Beals agreed and thanked everyone for helping with the budget process, knowing the needs and trying to work as a team towards the same goals.

Ms. Dionne noted that the Recreational Soccer Team wrapped up on Saturday and she commended the work done by the Recreation Department. She congratulated those students involved as well.

Ms. Whiting said that the Budget Committee season will begin tomorrow with the town budget, and then the school portion in December. There is public input before each meeting.

M. Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3 II a, c and I [3:09:26]

At 9:40 pm, Ethan Beals made a motion to enter into a non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II a, c, and I. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. Roll call vote.

Legal update

Personnel update

Student matters discussed

Review of Memorandum of Understanding-Paraprofessionals

N. Exit Non-Public and Adjourn

At 10:15 Ethan Beals made a motion to exit non- public and adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mike Campbell. Motion passed 5-0. Roll call vote.

Submitted by

Susan DeFelice

Non-Public by Dan Moulis and Kim Organek