

**Hudson School District  
Hudson School Board Meeting  
Approved Minutes**

Present:

Dr. Darcy Orellana, Board Chairman  
Mr. Gary Gasdia, Board Vice-Chair  
Ms. Diana LaMothe  
Ms. Patty Langlais  
Mr. Ethan Beals  
Ms. Kara Roy, Vice-Chairman, Board of Selectmen  
Mr. Larry Russell, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Kim Organek, Assistant Superintendent  
Ms. Rachel Borge, Director of Special Services

**A. Call to Order:**

Board Chair Orellana called the meeting to order. Ms. LaMothe led the pledge of allegiance. Dr. Orellana mentioned that the board has heard from the public regarding personnel changes at Alvirne High School and the Wilbur H. Palmer Career and Technical Education Center or CTEC. She said as Board Chair she wants to be clear that personnel matters are held by the district confidentially and not publicly and that the Board must also maintain confidentiality regarding personnel matters. Dr. Orellana said however, this may have fueled the public narrative taking on a life of its own filled with assumptions and speculation about these changes. She said the facts are the assignment of the talent within the district is a responsibility of the superintendent based on operational needs. The principal assignments at Alvirne and the Palmer Center are interim or special assignments for one year. The Board will not violate confidentiality. As in any year, the Board expects the Superintendent and all employees to perform their responsibilities and obligations. Dr. Orellana mentioned that everyone is feeling the impact from the pandemic and many of the communications from the public spoke about anxiety and stress related to change. The mental health of our students is paramount and if any student feels the need with assistance with mental health concerns it is recommended that you contact your school counselor for help or a healthcare provider. Parents and guardians with concerns about their student may also contact the school counselors.

**B. Public Input: Dr. Orellana opened it up to public input.**

Camila Isaza, 57A Lund Drive. Ms. Isaza says she's here on behalf of the School fall sports and read a letter she had written prior to the meeting. Ms. Isaza said, "Hello members of the school board my name is Camila and I'm a senior volleyball player. I would like to advocate on behalf of all the fall student athletes. COVID-19 has taken a huge toll on everyone's mental health stability and we all have different coping methods to get us through difficult times. For athletes, it's playing the sport they love. Regardless of the current situations we find ourselves in, student athletes rely on sports as a therapy source. With that, these young athletes also need to keep themselves in shape and solid physical condition. Not all the students have a gym membership or other outlets that allow them to stay in shape for their sport. Nothing about this global pandemic is normal and as a community we had to adapt quickly and efficiently to keep the town of Hudson circulating. It has been significantly difficult to find motivation between all of this. Providing athletes with the thing that they are most passionate about gives them a sense of normalcy. It is important to provide students with all the things that keep them positive and optimistic in a negative situation. In some cases, students work hard to play at the collegiate level and taking a season away from them hurts their chances and their option to afford college

with a scholarship they might attain. Student athletes are also known as responsible. They are challenged to balance their schoolwork and events with sports which is not always easy. These students can be trusted to take the necessary safety precautions seriously. Staying safe is the most important, in times like these and these athletes are trusted to follow these in a proper manner. I appreciate your time on hearing me out and I know you will make the best choice for us”.

Dr. Orellana also said that they had 3 email public inputs which are as followed.

Jessica Keller; 16A Dugout Rd. Dr. Orellana summarized the following emailed public input from Ms. Keller: “The NH Department of Education has purchased a three-year license with a Learning Management Software-Canvas, that is being made available to all school districts in the state. Is the Hudson School District planning to take advantage of this resource to make remote learning more concise and to make it easier for parents to help make sure their students are completing all necessary assignments? Canvas is more streamline with successful college online learning platforms and has a parent login option to observe students work. When is the Hudson learning portal going to be made available for students and parents to familiarize themselves with this learning environment and to make sure that all personal own hardware is up to date with current software and programs necessary for the learning environment?”

Mr. Russell addressed what Ms. Keller wrote in her email. Mr. Russell said Canvas is a learning platform that the commissioner had bought for every district in the state that wanted to partake in it. Mr. Russell believes that in March or April when the offer was made to the districts and when they went to our student information system power school we rented it out for a whole year. He said it’s important to do that, but they were tempted to go straight to Canvas but they wanted to also make sure it would be appropriate for everybody. If there comes an opportunity to go into Canvas then they would take everything into consideration and see how successful it is in other districts. He also mentioned that he doesn’t know when the learning portal will open but he will find out that answer. Canvas was purchased with COVID money and after that, districts will be responsible for the cost.

Al Somers; 12 McKinney Drive. Dr. Orellana summarized the following emailed public input from Mr. Somers: “School Board Members, et al., As Hudson residents and taxpayers with recently graduated Alvirne High School (AHS) students we would like to voice our disagreement with the Superintendent's (Larry Russell) decision to move the established Principal (Steve Beals) to a departmental, non-educational leadership type role while back filling the AHS principal role with a new, temporary(?), staff member, especially during this historical time of need for our schools, teachers and students. As Hudson School Board members, and stewards of School District SAU 81 (which includes AHS), you have oversight of the Superintendents actions and the ability to block them when potentially harmful to district. This is one of those situations, and we hope you recognize and take the appropriate steps to ensure no impairment to AHS staff and students.

As School Board Members you should know Mr. Steve Beals (Principal, AHS) has been nothing short of amazing in his role. Think of the daily challenges he faces in our local social and economic environment; e.g. little to no money invested in our schools; and while the CTE investment/grant is helpful, let's be honest, this district needs a new state of the art high school to give our children/young-adults the opportunity they deserve in this ever changing world. Those challenges aside, you all know Mr. Beals has his finger on the pulse of all students who walk through the AHS doors. He knows all their names and makes it his passion to know each one of their stories so he can shepherd them down the right path. We've seen him inspire, praise, direct and protect them while building an environment where they can unleash their talents, building toward successful careers and lives.

As parents of students who recently attended AHS we could not have been more grateful to have such a wonderful, empathetic, adaptable, forward-looking principal guiding our own two young adults. Mr. Beals saw their capabilities,

vulnerabilities, and used his experience and passion to guide them through their medical and mental health challenges over their years at AHS enabling them to stay on track and become successful AHS graduate members of society. Today we are thankful to have a new college graduate NICU Nurse and a current undergraduate biology major with designs of becoming a foot doctor, both in the top percent of their respective classes. No doubt their successes are directly attributable to their learning and experiences at AHS enabled by the leadership of Principal Steve Beals. Please consider these facts in your evaluation of Superintendent Larry Russell staffing recommendations.

Regards, Al & Molly Somers Hudson, NH

Shawn O'Neil; 5 High Pine Drive. Dr. Orellana summarized the following emailed public input from Mr. O'Neil: "By allowing the transfer of Mr. Beals when the students needed him the most you have failed the students you are elected to protect. By the very nature of your lack of accountability in this situation and by continuing to allow this situation to move forward you have failed in one of your primary duties and that is to represent the will of the people that elected you."

Dr. Orellana then closed public input.

**C. Presentation to the Board:**

1. COVID Related Spending: Mr. Russell said he wants to keep the Board up to speed with what was presented last night (to the Budget Committee) and stated for a lot of these decisions, the Board was a part of the decision-making process. He said the hybrid model is going to be from grades 6-12 not 9-12. He said the remote learning academy was made available for anyone in k-12 that felt it was unsafe or had other reasons. He said obviously everything that we do is for the safety of our staff and students. Mr. Russell went on to talk about staff impact with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act which allows us up to 80 hours of paid sick leave. He said so if someone has symptoms or has to be tested, they get 10 days on top of their sick leave. Staff can also receive 10 weeks of paid FMLA to care for a child whose daycare is closed. Mr. Russell said they have around 3-5 staff members who have applied for a leave of absence.

Mr. Russell then went on to talk about the funding resources of the ESSER grants under the Cares Act and the IDEA grant and the remote learning grant which is for special education. For state funding we have NH homeland security and NH National Guard and the general fund. Mr. Russell said from the ESSER grant, the district received \$450,000 and out of that money, \$50,000 was allocated to Presentation of Mary Academy because the public districts take care of the private schools in town. The remaining portion was used on technology, supplies and services, student assessments, professional development, sanitizing supplies, and PPE. Another grant that was boosted up was IDEA which awarded another \$9,800 which was used to get glass barriers, bucket hat with face shields. Another grant they received was \$15,000 to make sure that students with disabilities were having their services and their IEPs are in compliance. With that \$15,000, they are allowed to spend it on technology, services for remote learning, software and programming, and PPE. NH Homeland Security gave them \$845 in supplies such as thermometers, cloth reusable masks, disposable masks, and gloves. The National Guard gave the district 1250 reusable cloth masks.

Mr. Russell said the cost overview with the pandemic is continuing to increase. They are trying to make the district as safe as possible and are continuing to get feedback from the staff to make sure everyone feels safe throughout the schools. He said every effort has been made to total up what has been incurred so far and what the future costs might look like. He said this is assuming that the safety equipment they have now will continue to last for three more months. If the supplies are used up quicker than three months, then obviously they know that they will need more supplies. Mr. Russell said they will replenish their supplies if they are running low before the end of the three months if needed. He said we cannot guarantee that the costs will not increase. He then went on to say that there were

some additional expenses which were for fiscal year 2020. We paid for services we did not receive such as bus drivers, services that were not able to do remote learning. He said regardless if they worked or not, we continued to pay them. The additional expenditures were permanent subs, bus monitors, substitute custodians, nurses, food service, task force, and school building meetings. These expenditures totaled to be \$271,000. Mr. Russell said without these people the district might have to go into a shutdown because in the past, if we were short one staff member then we could bring two classes to a cafeteria and work with both classes at the same time but now that is obviously off limits as social distancing needs to be put into every aspect of everything that is done. Mr. Russell said the computer and software costs were about \$206,000 for iPads and computers, etc. Another category where costs were incurred was PPE which cost \$130,000 so far as of August 26 but we are continuing to spend more each day, cleaning supplies were about \$76,000. He said that the district is going to be getting a third party cleaning crew that is going to come in mostly at night and do a deep cleaning and some of the night crew will be moving to the days to make sure the buildings are getting cleaned throughout the entire day. He then went on to talk about the transportation bus cleaning and how after every run all the touch points get wiped down and after every morning and night run there will be a company that does the deep cleaning. Overall, additional expenditures totaled \$946,000. Mr. Russell said the total expenditure for additional expenditures, expenditures for services not rendered, and additional workload was \$1.8 million.

Mr. Russell went on to talk about the revenue impact. There was no material impact to revenues. Preschool tuition was down due to school closures, so we lost about \$30,000 of fiscal year 2020 revenues. He also stated that the town finance director said there should not be a reduction with town funding. Mr. Russell said there is a deferred payroll for tax payment through the Cares Act that we are eligible for but that we are not going to participate in that due to it is just a deferment and would likely have to be paid January 2021. With the Cares Act there is also an employee retention credit that we are not eligible for that because state and federal government are not eligible. The FMLA expands family medical leave eligibility for the 80 hours. Mr. Russell said that this was the presentation that was presented to the Budget Committee and if anyone would like to see the slides, they will be online.

**D. Requests to the Board**

1. Donation Acceptance Request: Mr. Russell said they had a donation of \$3,000. The corporate offices matched the \$1500 that was raised by the Hudson facility employees which totaled up to \$3,000 combined. This money is going to be geared toward Chromebooks. Mr. Russell said they do have a problem with getting the hardware but when it does come available, the money will go toward that. Mr. Russell asked the Board to make a motion to accept the donations of \$3,000. Ms. LaMothe mentioned that she really appreciates the combined donation from both sides.

**Ms. LaMothe made a motion to accept the donation of \$3,000, second by Mr. Beals. Mr. Gasdia, aye, Dr. Orellana, aye, Ms. LaMothe, aye, Mr. Beals, aye, Ms. Langlais aye. Motion passes 5-0.**

**E. Old Business:**

1. School Reopening Update: Mr. Russell said staff returned to the buildings on August 24<sup>th</sup> and the Board had allowed for professional development and preparation time by delaying the start of school and mentioned it was really appreciated by the staff. He said however, no matter how much time we delay this isn't going to be a traditional start to the school year. Mr. Russell said some of the districts have already started up and they have reported saying that for the most part it hasn't been too bad but there was a big concern whether students were going to comply with the masks but he said that Salem and Derry who went full-in-class learning that masks compliance was almost at 100 %. Mr. Russell said even in our district, the young students who came in for the meet-and-greet were mostly in compliance as well. Mr. Russell said they have been setting the rooms up to make sure they are properly distanced.

Ms. Organek went on to talk about the professional development that has been happening. She said they had technology training; they have a new tool called Nearpod that teachers have the ability to use. The purpose of a

Nearpod is to make lessons more engaging for students. She said it can be used for all styles of learning and it can take a presentation. She ran her PowerPoint through the Nearpod and added activities which made it an interactive presentation. She said you can either use one of your lessons or use the many lessons that are in the library on a Nearpod and can make any changes to the current lessons that you would like. Ms. Organek said it is an up and coming tool and the teachers are very excited about using it. Ms. Organek said they have also had training on the new curricular maps and pacing guides. She said there is consistency across all levels with the curriculum that is being taught whether it be in person or remote learning. There was also a lot of training in grades k-5 in Math in Focus which was the new math program put in place. They have also been focusing on wellness and self-care for teachers especially if they are teaching remotely. She also mentioned that it was a luxury to have those extra couple of days to train and get everything ready for the students.

Mr. Russell went on to talk about how 9 days ago they switched over to hybrid in the middle school. He wanted to let everyone know that there will be a dashboard for each. Mr. Russell talked about why the middle school had to change and go into hybrid and listed off several of reasons which made sense for the change. Mr. Russell mentioned that there will not be use of lockers because they don't want students to congregate at them and not be social distancing. The criteria that could change from green, yellow to red are the student teacher to ratio, staffing, availability of PPE and cleaning supplies, facility limitations, transportation, community COVID status. Mr. Russell said he thinks they are ready for a great year but understands getting this year off the ground is going to be a struggle but the district is getting ready to take on all these challenges while making safety the top priority.

Mr. Gasdia mentioned that the Nearpod sounds fantastic because it allows the teachers to control their own destiny along with the pacing guide. Mr. Gasdia questioned if the teachers received training or found a technology solution for the off days that they are not seeing the students. Ms. Organek said when the students are in person seeing the teacher that is when class discussion, hands on, and are able to interact with the kids. Then before the day is over the teachers will give the students a workload to complete while at home, so they are prepared to come back the next day. Mr. Gasdia asked if that's how it would be for the high school, but what would happen with the middle school who will have a longer gap without seeing the teacher. Ms. Organek said the teachers will upload their assignments into Google Classroom and said that is a communication tool and there was talk about using the main page in Google Classroom with updates and communicating with parents. Ms. Organek said they had a professional development on how to communicate through Google Classroom with parents and students making sure everyone understands what's going on and staying consistent with everyone. Mr. Gasdia said it looks like we are in a better position than we were in the spring.

Dr. Orellana questioned if there are built in office hours for students who don't see teachers for quite a bit where students can post questions or get the extra help they might need. Ms. Organek said teachers should always be available to reach out to the students in their planning time and times they would normally would. She said Google Classroom is a great tool for this type of communication.

**F. New Business:**

1. Fall Sports: Mr. Russell mentioned that the Karen Bonney, Hudson School District Athletic Director, is here and any questions that Mr. Russell may not be able to answer she will be able to. Mr. Russell went over the profile of the landscape right now and how it evolved over time. He mentioned in this district the students started working together to create a safety plan which includes no carpooling, wearing a mask from the car to the field but once you start exercising the mask can come off as long as social distancing is still being applied. The students were all self-monitored on the way in and everyone was in compliance with the safety precautions they were told to take. Mr. Russell said as far as the region is concerned the superintendents presented a full-in model that all sports would be able to compete. Mr. Russell said he is recommending that we do go full-in with all our sports. He said this is based on the safety precautions that have been happening but also the athletic directors have been getting together and they have some criteria that

they want to put into place to ensure this can be as safe as possible. Health organizations have recommended that students have structured activities to participate in as well. Mr. Russell went on to describe what the fall season would look like. He said the fall season would be shorter and will be in a cohort with close towns. The safety measures that are going to be put into place is, everyone would sign a waiver to participate, prescreening before practices and games, reduce the amount of time spent in a locker room, transportation to and from games will be provided from the districts. On remote learning days students must still attend practices and or games. Home teams that have home games can have fans but the visitor teams' fans will not be allowed to attend. Mr. Russell said the athletic directors have been following the National Federation of High School sports guidelines to create this criterion. At the beginning, the middle school level would only hold practices and intramural sports where you can compete with your own classmates. However, the superintendents are now looking at having middle schools compete. Another area Mr. Russell is recommending is co-curricular activities if a safety plan is produced and efficient where it keeps everyone safe then he would like to move forward with that.

Mr. Beals questioned the communication that would happen if one of our students had to get tested for COVID that was also an athlete. Ms. Bonney said there would be communication going on throughout the week. Ms. Bonney also went on to say that throughout one week every single sport would play the same town. Once every sport plays that town they will go onto the next town. This allows them to get a sense of what's going on in the community as well as their cohorts. Mr. Russell had made it clear to all coaches if something were not to be reported to him or the athletic director then the coach would no longer be able to coach and lose his job. He expressed how important communication is with all of this. Mr. Beals also questioned the bus situation. Ms. Bonney said it would be the same situation as when students have to ride the bus during the school day. Mr. Beals then questioned when an athlete comes off the field from a game what is going to happen in regards to the masks, will there be a space where they can socially distance and catch their breath before putting the mask back on. Ms. Bonney said yes as long as they are able to socially distance then that should be fine. Mr. Beals went on to ask how the football fundraiser is going to work. Ms. Bonney said it will be happening virtually and no door to door house visits will be happening.

Ms. LaMothe said one of her concerns is if Hudson is following all these guidelines and they're playing other towns, how do we know that other towns are following the same guidelines that we are? Mr. Russell assured that these guidelines have been made in conjunction with one another and all guidelines are agreed upon.

Mr. Gasdia questioned if volleyball would be an inside or outside sport. Ms. Bonney said it would be an indoor sport because the game of volleyball is very different if it is played outside and the gym is now ready to go.

Dr. Orellana applauded all the efforts and thought that was put into planning all of this but also questioned what they are hearing from the recruiter schools. Ms. Bonney said as you can imagine colleges are looking very different as well. Ms. Bonney hopes to have all of our games videotaped so recruiters could watch them and not have to attend a game. Ms. LaMothe then asked if there would be a way to broadcast games like they do for football. Ms. Bonney said in all honestly, we only probably have the ability to do it for varsity games. Ms. Bonney also said that every school in our division is working together on trying to streamline the games so parents can watch their child compete.

**Mr. Beals made a motion to approve Hudson fall sports, second by Ms. Lamothe. Mr. Gasdia, aye, Dr. Orellana, aye, Mr. Beals, aye, Ms. LaMothe, aye, Ms. Langlais, aye. Motion passes 5-0.**

2. Extracurricular Nominations: Mr. Russell said they do have two nominations for the Middle School Adam Goldstein for the athletic director and Terry Savage for Special Olympics.

**Mr. Beals made a motion to approve the extracurricular nominations, second by Mr. Gasdia. Mr. Gasdia, aye, Dr. Orellana, aye, Mr. Beals, aye, Ms. LaMothe, aye, Ms. Langlais, aye. Motion passes 5-0.**

**G. Recommended Action**

1. Manifests- Recommended action: Make necessary corrections and sign.

**H. Reports to the Board:**

1. Superintendent Report: Mr. Russell said everything is basically about reopening the school which he already touched base on. They are concentrating on one thing which is getting the students back to school safely.

2. Assistant Superintendent Report: Ms. Organek said there was one other tool they were using this year which is called EquatIO and what EquatIO does is you write an equation and it types it out for you and this can be used at all grade levels. She also mentioned that some professional development sessions have been recorded so teachers can go back and see what they learned.

3. Director of Special Services Report: Ms. Borge said they are working fast and furious to get everything ready for next week. Ms. Borge said they are working on minor details but are pulling everything together.

**I. Legislative Updates:** There are no recent updates at this time.

**J. Board Member Comments:**

Ms. Patty Langlais: wants to wish everyone the best of luck next week and have fun in school.

Mr. Ethan Beals: Said he is appreciative of the support from all the organizations to provide us with grants or supplies. He also looks forward to fall sports back in the school and is excited for the start of school.

Ms. Diana LaMothe: Said she was able to see a lot of the CTE center and it is absolutely incredible how it came out and acknowledged how it is a great source of pride for Hudson. She also said she feels very confident with the teachers, staff, and parents with everyone's new routine. She said we will get through this and challenges will arise but we will get through it all.

Mr. Gary Gasdia: Wanted to echo what Diana said about the CTE center. He also acknowledged how far we came since March and said he is starting to feel a sense of normalcy with everyone slowly coming back.

Ms. Kara Roy: Mentioned that the work that has been done here has been incredible. She also wants to remind people that with school starting there are going to be buses on the road and there are going to be kids walking on sidewalks so give yourselves enough time and watch for crosswalks so we can all be safe. She also mentioned the first day of school is state primary day so if you are going to vote to go down to the community center. She also mentioned if you need an absentee ballot you can get it from 3-5pm on Labor Day and hopes everyone has a safe and happy Labor Day.

Dr. Darcy Orellana: Said the first day of school is always exciting and she wanted to echo everything that was said about how great everyone is going to do and applauds everyone for the hard work that has already been accomplished. She looks forward to hearing all about the progress this year.

**K. Non-public Session:**

**Mr. Gasdia made a motion to enter non-public session according to RSA 91-A: 3(2B, C) at 7:55 pm, second by Ms. LaMothe. Roll call vote, Ms. Langlais, aye, Mr. Beals, aye, Ms. LaMothe, aye, Mr. Gasdia, aye, Dr. Orellana, aye. Motion passes 5-0.**

**Mr. Beals moved to approved the nominations below, second by Ms. Langlais. Motion passes 5-0.**

Desiree Fazio	Grade 1 (1-yr)	37,000
Maureen Jozokos	Library Media Specialist (1-yr)	44,500
Stephanie LeBoeuf	Grade 2 (1-yr)	47,000
Nicole Moeckel	K	40,000
Lauren Neish	Grade 1 (1-yr)	41,000
Katie Nesbitt	Grade 1 (1-yr)	37,000
Marina Mastacouris	Grade 1 (1-yr)	42,500

Expelled student requesting to attend VLACS . Mr. Russell recommended permitting him to sign off on allowing the student to enroll. The Board did not feel comfortable with this recommendation. The suggestion of the Board was that the student could not do anything prior to the end of his year expulsion.

Ms. LaMothe requested to get information from Mr. Russell regarding impact negotiations. She was seeking clarification on the number of additional sick days requested and how many they already receive.

Ms. LaMothe asked who will be taking over for the Associate Principal's responsibilities since he is now interim principal. Mr. Russell said there will be an interim Associate Principal.

At 8:35 pm, the administration was excused while the Board remained in non-public.

The board briefly discussed when they would start the yearly evaluation of the superintendent.

**L. Adjourn**

**Mr. Beals moved to exit non-public and adjourn at 9:02 pm, second by Mrs. Langlais. Motion passes 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Gage (public)  
Ms. Organek (7:55 non-public)  
Mr. Gasdia (8:35 non-public)