

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

106 Hancock Road

Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 20, 2022
7:00 p.m.

Physical Location: SAU #1 Board Room

Livestream Link: <https://www.youtube.com/c/ConValEvents>

Minutes

BOARD

Tom Burgess, Keira Christian,
Richard Dunning, Alan Edelkind,
Katherine Heck, Greg Kriebel,
Janine Lesser, Kevin Pobst,
Doug Sutherland, Stephen Ullman

Katherine Craig, Student Rep.

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.
Lori Schmidt, B.A.
Carrie James, H.R.
Heather McKillop, CVHS
Erik Thibault, CVHS
Deb Riley, CVHS
Jen Kiley, ATC
Tim Iwanowicz, TES
Beth Gibney, FES/Pierce

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Janine Lesser called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Points of Pride

Kimberly Saunders shared various Points of Pride as reported to her by administrators.

Kimberly made a plea with the public for substitute staff. Dr. Saunders added that subbing is a great way to spend time in our schools.

3. Public Comment

Raiven Lewis, ConVal Senior, commented about the e-hall pass system at the high school. She said that she does not feel that it is fair. Factors are not being considered. ConVal has a lot of kids. They say we have seven opportunities to use the restrooms but there is not enough time to use the bathroom and get to class on time. There are lines at the bathrooms. School is from 7:35 to 2:20 and three e-hall passes are allowed. One of them has to be given up in order to get water or food at the cafeteria.

Girls have needs that require time that would otherwise cause health issues.

After two minutes of public comment, the board moved to allow Raiven additional time.

Raiven reported that she posted on the Peterborough Facebook page and reported that comments have been received. Teenagers cannot be trained to go to the bathroom all at the same time. She said that a basic human right is being taken away. Mental health breaks cannot take place. There is no time to use the bathroom. Comments were shared from the public.

After two minutes, an additional two minutes were voted.

Raiven said that all of the kids are being punished. Kids should be talked to instead of punished. This is causing kids to be disrupted.

The Board thanked Miss Lewis for her comments.

Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3,II

Alan Edelkind moved to enter into Non-Public Session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II at 7:14 pm for matters of personnel. Katherine Heck seconded. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Dick Dunning moved to exit Non-Public Session at 7:42 p.m. Stephen Ullman seconded. Unanimous.

Dick Dunning moved to seal the minutes of Non-Public Session for a period of five (5) years. Katherine Heck seconded. Unanimous.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Acceptance of School Board Meeting Minutes

1) September 6, 2022

b. Personnel

1) Nominations

The consent agenda was accepted.

5. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business

a. School Board Requests

Kimberly Saunders reported two outstanding requests, information related to Charter Schools and one related to the shared principal model.

b. Monthly Events Calendar

The Strategic Plan Committee will meet on Tues., September 27th at 6:30 p.m. at the SAU Office.

The Food Service/Wellness Committee will meet on Monday, October 3rd at 5:30 p.m. at the SAU Office.

c. Research Project Notification - Ann Forrest

Kimberly Saunders referenced a research project notification. No questions were asked.

d. Strategic Plan Draft Update

Kimberly Saunders reported that she anticipated a draft ready for comments out at the end of this week. The survey will be finalized. This will come to the board in October.

6. Reports

a. Student Representative – Katherine Craig

Katherine Craig reported that NH Tackles Hunger is underway. It is a competition to bring in the most non-perishable food items with the opportunity to win a pizza party. Homecoming was this past weekend with a lot of school spirit. The spirit team cheered for the first time since 2019. ConVal games took place on Friday. Underclassman spirit was strong. A Homecoming dance was held on Saturday. Lastly, CVHS Open House is tomorrow night at 6:30 p.m.

b. Teacher Representative

Absent a teacher representative, Greg Kriebel asked how the School Resource Officer is received and how things are going.

Katherine Craig said that kids feel he is nice and approachable. There is not a lot of positivity about how his presence is fixing the problems that we have e.g. vaping in the restrooms. We'll see how it goes.

Heather McKillop reports positive feedback from staff. Officer Hyland is doing a great job. Meetings about resources to support students have occurred. He has helped with truancy issues. He has met about school safety. It allows another lens. Ms. McKillop said that she has not received any negative feedback from any stakeholder. He is making connections with students.

c. Budget & Property Committee – Jim Fredrickson

Janine Lesser referenced information from Jim Fredrickson pertaining to the upcoming budget planning session. Advice from the board will be gathered for budget season.

Janine shared Jim's report which included maintaining "status quo" for budget guidance. No major program changes. Planned updates will be included e.g. curriculum, technology.

Baseline salary discussion took place. October 1st enrollment will be utilized for budgeting.

Capital improvements were discussed. Lastly, an estimated escalation is considered with certain items when budget planning. It is considered a wild card.

Kimberly Saunders said that leaving tonight's meeting with budget guidance is needed.

Dick Dunning said that he thought that the guidance was status quo.

d. Education Committee – Stephen Ullman

Stephen Ullman reported meeting last night with the music faculty K-12. They have completed a five-year review to assure consistency with state standards.

Stephen Ullman reported that one problem for music programming is scheduling and access at the high school. The high school lacks appropriate storage for music instruments. Humidity control is needed.

Second, Amy Janoch and Kathie Morrocco were present to share information about summer learning programs K-8. These programs were hands on rather than technology based. There were positive results for the program. Concern with enrollment of just over 100 students. Programs had decent attendance. Integrating with community organizations was part of the program. There were outside residencies incorporated as well. Parents surveyed found value in the program for their students.

Dr. Ann Forrest said that the high school is looking at schedules now and looking for the best one to serve our students. There are always challenges with scheduling.

The summer program did not include the high school.

Kimberly Saunders addressed the comment about a teacher representative. Planning and correcting take place in the evening. Some work second jobs. She understands that a teacher rep does not always come. With respect for our staff, there are real reasons why they are not present.

Stephen Ullman said that it was helpful to talk directly with the music educators at last night's Education Committee meeting. It is helpful to talk directly with teachers.

Kevin Pobst asked the plans to track the summer students in terms of a control group.

Ann Forrest said that pre and post assessments took place. Going into fall benchmark assessments, students who participated in the summer program can be looked at for differences in assessments. Kevin Pobst said that he would love to hear about that.

Dick Dunning said that he was really impressed with the Title I presentation last night.

Greg Kriebel suggested that the minutes of the Education meeting might provide more detail. He asked for the minutes from the recent subcommittee to be placed in the online drive to allow review ahead of time to have the opportunity to look at things.

Ann Forrest said that in the School Board shared drive, the presentations from last night are available in the folder.

Janine Lesser said that she would like to see the ability to get better information so that people can be informed about work in the committees.

e. Policy Committee

Policy Committee met tonight. They mapped out the New Hampshire School Board Association Fall Update and prioritized policies that will go forward for review.

7. Old Business

a. Legislative Update

Kimberly reported that she will be at the House Ed Committee on Thursday.

b. 2nd Read/Adoption Policies

- BEDH: Public Comment and Participation at Board Meetings

Katherine Heck motioned to approve this policy. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

- DFGA: Crowdfunding

Katherine Heck motioned to approve this policy. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

- EBCG: Communicable & Infectious Diseases

Katherine Heck motioned to approve this policy. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

- JCA: Change of Class or School Assignment Best Interests and Manifest Hardship

Katherine Heck motioned to approve this policy. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

- JCB: Change of School within ConVal School District Schools

Katherine Heck motioned to approve this policy. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

- JLC: Student Health Services

Katherine Heck motioned to approve this policy. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

- JLCE: Emergency Care & First Aid

Katherine Heck motioned to approve this policy. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

- JHCB: Immunizations of Students

Katherine Heck moved to remove this from a second read to allow additional work. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

8. New Business

a. Policies 1st Read

- FF: Naming of District Buildings and Facilities and Dedication of Areas

- EBB: School Safety

- JIC: Dangerous Weapons on School Property

The board was asked to review the above three policies and send questions or comments to Crista Salamy.

b. Budget Guidance

Kevin Pobst referenced item one under Capital Improvements to include \$1.0MM in the proposed Operational Budget. Katherine Heck said that policies are being developed to guide the board. Capital projects are one-time projects. This is to make sure that we are adequately maintaining our buildings.

Have we been underspending on maintenance? No. Then why state this? It is identifying funding sources e.g. trust funds. This is not trust funds. Facilities and technology can budget next year and in the out years what their needs will be.

Kimberly said that as an example, we might put \$500K in capital items in a year. Money might be pulled out of the budget and trust funds used to keep the budget and district assessment down. This is a different approach of the budget committee.

Katherine Heck said that she feels that some of the guidance is too broad and some is too narrow within the same guidance. Some schools will bring budgets to various people and then collect them. Then, it comes up the chain. She does not have enough information to confidently say that no program changes are needed.

Budget guidance should be broad to allow administration to bring forward based on student needs, student outcomes all aligned with goals. The most effective way is to craft the budget within a parameter with a budget increase maximum. Then the board decides what best fits with goals and responsibilities.

Janine Lesser said that the -R document is hoped to guide the process.

Discussion took place.

Kevin Pobst said that in the past we have provided a figure or target. It is a mistake not to do that. He would like there to be a target now, not after the proposed budget has been submitted to the board.

Stephen Ullman said that he likes the reminder about the ambitious goals that the administration has established.

Dick Dunning shared past frustration with the board where administration was provided a percentage to work with and then the board wasn't happy. It is better to provide a percentage to work with. If the needs of the budget will be addressed we need to know what it costs to do what we are doing now. That will be the baseline. The budget will be built with additions and costed out. He suggested building a budget status quo and then come with what else would be asked.

Katherine Heck said that she believes that the environment is ever changing. We are a large board with nine towns. We are passing fiscal capacity in some towns. Inflation is taking a toll. We have to pass the budget and voters cast their vote based on it.

Kevin Pobst said that we are a service organization and our clientele is shrinking.

Dick Dunning agreed with Kevin Pobst. There is a solution that would be helpful and that would be maximizing the amount of staff that we have. We have class sizes that are ridiculously small and it is not necessarily the best for students. It is a disadvantage. We struggle with the vastness of our organization.

Kimberly Saunders said that while our clientele is shrinking, their needs are increasing in exponential ways. We are spreading our resources really thin on top of it. The needs of children have changed. It is exacerbated by the stripping of wrap around services by the State.

Stephen Ullman said that enrollment has gone down approximately 35% and the budget has continually increased.

People in Antrim question that.

Kimberly Saunders said that is true but we haven't lost a single school.

Janine Lesser asked the board if they should consider maintaining status quo and dropping item one under it that states "no major program changes to be included in baseline budget"?

Kevin Pobst suggested bringing in status quo lean and mean.

Kimberly Saunders said that our auditors identified that we are running the SAU on a shoestring. Either buildings need to close or programs need to be cut. There is no lean and mean. If we cut at the middle and high school levels, we would be doing so to maintain eight elementary schools.

Katherine Heck said that when you build a budget, you can look at last year's numbers. The budget lines could shift and change. It is always changing based on inflation and unfunded mandates. She would like to see what administration comes up with while keeping in mind the taxpayers. She would like to see creative things happening.

Doug Sutherland said that he hears about a baseline budget and a dream budget. Neither seems to fit the needs.

Janine Lesser said that she hears from everybody about baseline and that administration will go back and build a budget based on known expenses. The figures will be available at the budget work session.

Direction on the implementation of the Strategic Plan and goals is asked.

Janine Lesser suggested looking at the guidance and determining what the bare minimum would be. She said that it is the estimated escalation and degree of certainty for items included in the budget along with wish list items.

Kevin Pobst said that the default budget is always considered to learn more about what would have to be cut not to raise the budget and to allow it to be flat.

What would it cost to maintain the current service knowing costs will rise?

Kimberly said that if three budgets are being asked to be created, more time will be needed.

The default is a total amount of dollars and not a budget. It is a calculation.

Dick Dunning said that if we costed what we are doing now with price increases it would be helpful. Then the additional items that would be needed could be considered.

Dick Dunning moved to instruct administration to bring a budget that would allow the district to operate as this year, with increases that would be needed to be added to do that. Bring what they would need to do to increase the budget with the Strategic Plan.

Kevin Pobst seconded.

Dick said that we cannot continue to operate with class sizes of 4, 6, or 8 in a classroom. Otherwise, we need to decide what we will lose programmatically.

Doug Sutherland asked if the budget will be based on the schools we have currently. Confirmed. He said that he would love to see a budget with the second part.....what do you want? He assumes the second part includes the first part.

Alan Edelkind said that what Dick is saying is right. He agreed that the second part builds on the first part. We are not going to have two separate jobs to put the budget together. It would be one budget that includes both.

Stephen Ullman called the question.

In favor of developing a budget as moved by Dick Dunning? Unanimous.

c. CTE Regional Agreement (Board Vote Required)

Kimberly Saunders referenced changes in the CTE Regional Agreement.

Dick Dunning asked Kimberly if she is supportive of the agreement. Kimberly confirmed that she is. She said that the Department of Education has been approached around the funding of the CTE renovation. The State believed that the agreement was written for ConVal. Therefore, the other two schools would not receive funding. This will allow for all parts to receive renovation dollars.

Dick Dunning moved to approve the recommendation as stated with the agreement.

Stephen Ullman seconded.

Greg Kriebel referenced #19 as blank. Kimberly said that would be if the region dissolved. Legal counsel will write language in that space.

Greg Kriebel requested that we wait until the complete document comes forward.

Jen Kiley said that all three Chairs of the Board from the three districts would need to sign. Then the DOE would consider which sites they would fund. We are behind in the process. The sooner the better.

Janine Lesser shared that she is nervous about letting it wait.

Jen Kiley said that if the center dissolved, anything purchased with Perkins funds would go to another CTE center and anything purchased with budget monies would stay with that school. We are the only site in the state with three schools.

Mascenic brought it to their board on Monday. Jaffrey has this in their hands.

Janine lesser recommended signing it tonight. Dick Dunning agreed for fear of the risk of losing funding.

Katherine Heck asked if counsel will look at all three districts independently. Kimberly Saunders said that our counsel looks at our agreement.

Stephen Ullman called the question.

In favor of approving this document tonight: Dick Dunning, Stephen Ullman, Alan Edelkind, Kevin Pobst, Tom Burgess, and Katherine Heck.

Opposed: Keira Christian and Doug Sutherland.

Abstained: Greg Kriebel.

The motion is approved.

d. Field Trip Proposal (Board Vote Required)

1) Great Brook School, 8th grade students, travel to Washington, DC from April 17th – 21st, 2023 as part of the 8th grade curriculum for Social Studies.

Dick Dunning moved to approve the field trip as proposed. Keira Christian seconded.

Greg Kriebel asked if South Meadow School is taking their annual trip or not. Kimberly said that she has not received paperwork as of yet.

Greg reminded that discussion about equity has taken place at the board level.

In favor of approving field trip proposal: Unanimous.

9. Public Comment

Heather McKillop, Principal ConVal High School, shared with the Board and those watching about the information about the e-hall pass system. Ms. McKillop read her communication that she sent out to families in mid-September. The primary concern was the number of students and amount of time that students were out of class during class time. In July, she sent a newsletter that outlined the proposed changes. It was accompanied by a phone call alerting the community about the newsletter. Administration met with students who had concerns. Three-bathroom, cafeteria, water station opportunities aside from ten other opportunities are available to students. Passes to the nurse or school counselor are not factored into this count.

Erik Thibault, Assistant Principal, shared that he met with Student Council last year with proposed changes. Feedback included that pushback would come but that the changes were reasonable. Student Council reaffirmed that the change was reasonable and highlighted the positive changes as a result of this. Students appreciate the steps taken to make school environment better overall.

Judy Bernardi, School Nurse, said that she attended the June meeting with other professional staff to discuss the proposed decrease in e-hall passes. Ms. Bernardi has heard from students that they were hesitant to use the rest rooms due to crowding and vaping. Students do come to the nurse's office to use the restroom. It is very accessible.

10. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)

Lori Schmidt certified that manifests listed totaling \$1,902,555.56 have been reviewed by her and found to be proper charges against the Contoocook Valley School District for goods and/or services received and have been properly processed prior to their submittal to the School Board.

Dick Dunning moved to approve the manifests as presented. Katherine Heck seconded. Unanimous.

11. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A: 3, II (If Required)

a. Negotiations

b. Legal

c. Personnel

Alan Edelkind moved to enter into Non-Public Session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II at 9:19 p.m. for the purposes of negotiations. Dick Dunning seconded. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Dick Dunning motioned to adjourn Non-Public Session at 10:04 p.m. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

Dick Dunning motioned to seal the minutes of Non-Public Session for five years. Kevin Pobst seconded. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok