

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
106 Hancock Road  
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

**CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD**

**School Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2024**

***Immediately following Public Hearing that begins at 7:00 p.m.***

**Physical Location: SAU #1 Board Room**

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

**Minutes**

**BOARD**

William Bryk, Tom Burgess,  
Richard Dunning, Alan Edelkind,  
Jim Fredrickson, Dan Harper,  
Katherine Heck, Michael Hoyt,  
James Kingston, Janine Lesser,  
Erin Pils-Martin

Lucy Jackson, Student Rep.

**ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.  
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.  
Brian Cisneros, B.A.  
Rachel Hill, FES  
Nicole Pease, DCS  
Heather McKillop, CVHS

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Dr. Kimberly Saunders called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**2. Introduction and Swearing in of Returning and New Board Members**

Kimberly Saunders recognized Erin Pils-Martin, Antrim; Mike Hoyt, Bennington; James Kingston, Temple; Katherine Heck, Greenfield, and Janine Lesser, Peterborough who were sworn in by the District Clerk prior to the start of tonight's meeting as School Board members.

**3. Call for Election of Officers – Superintendent**

**Katherine Heck moved to elect Dick Dunning for School Board Chair. Erin Pils-Martin seconded.**

James Kingston called Point of Order that no one has been nominated. Kimberly Saunders explained the policy that outlines that the second meeting in February as the meeting for declaration of intent to run for officer.

James said that the pitch should be made now.

Kimberly Saunders said that those that run for open school board positions are invited to the February meeting to hear speeches. Mr. Kingston was voted in as a write-in therefore, was not known to invite.

Kimberly Saunders said that we have motion and second.

**In favor: Dan Harper, Tom Burgess, Katherine Heck, Jim Fredrickson, Dick Dunning, Alan Edelkind, Janine Lesser, Mike Hoyt, Erin Pils-Martin**

**Abstained: James Kingston**

**Motion carried.**

Dick Dunning called for the election of School Board Vice-Chair.

**Katherine Heck moved to elect Alan Edelkind as School Board Vice-Chair. Erin Pils-Martin seconded.**

**In favor: Dan Harper, Katherine Heck, Tom Burgess, Jim Fredrickson, Dick Dunning, Alan Edelkind, Janine Lesser, Mike Hoyt, Erin Pils-Martin.**

**Abstained: James Kingston**

**Motion carried.**

**4. Points of Pride**

Kimberly Saunders reported on various Points of Pride as reported to her by administration.

## 5. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)

Brian Cisneros certified that Manifests listed, totaling \$2,954,278.62 have been reviewed by him 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.

**Jim Fredrickson motioned to approve the Manifests as presented.**

**Katherine Heck seconded. Unanimous.**

## 6. Public Comment

Ari Pape, Peterborough, sixth grade student at South Meadow School, thanked the board for all of the work they have done to make the schools strong. He would love to see teachers paid at the same level as other school districts. He said that his current teachers are working hard and he wants to attract good teachers. He said that Ms. Brezovec is the best and that she is retiring. He hoped that the robotics continues. He would also like to learn a foreign language. He thanked the board and urged them to continue to work hard. Dick Dunning thanked him for his thoughts.

Angela Pape, Peterborough, South Meadow School running club and track and field. She too thanked the board for their hard work. She said that she knows that the past months have been challenging. She encouraged the board to think about what families want and need for a high-quality learning environment. She asked that staff cut in the past be added back in and that teachers' salaries are increased. She said that she worried that if we keep cutting in the middle and high school that kids will not be prepared for beyond high school. She thanked the board for their work and encouraged them to keep prioritizing kids and focus on the middle and high school.

## 7. Reports

### a. Student Representative – Lucy Jackson

Lucy Jackson reported that tonight is the District Chorus Concert grades 4-12, last week was the band concert. Last Friday, there was a blood drive at CVHS with over 40 donors. The first day of Spring sports was yesterday. Solar Eclipse viewing will take place in April on the athletic fields. UNH Donated over 200 viewing glasses.

## 8. Consent Agenda

### a. Acceptance of School Board Meeting Minutes

- 1) March 5, 2024

### b. Personnel

- 1) 2024-2025 Resignations
- 2) 2023-2024 Nominations
- 3) 2023-2024 Co-Curricular Notifications

The Consent Agenda was accepted.

## 9. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business

### a. Voting Results

The budget passed at 59% and the Collective Bargaining Agreement at 64%

Amending Articles of Agreement did not pass with 45%.

Trust Funds passed.

Dick Dunning asked board members to let him know if you would like to change a committee you currently sit on. If you would like another assignment, please let him know. Committees will form and elect the Chairperson and set their meeting schedules.

Jim Kingston asked if there are mission statements.

Kimberly Saunders said that the committees include Budget & Property, Policy, and other ad hoc meetings.

Katherine Heck said that we can find prior results from voting in annual reports. She asked that the past five years of voting be placed in a shared Google Drive.

Kimberly Saunders confirmed.

Kimberly said that on March 12<sup>th</sup>, it ticked a decade since any budget or teacher's contract failed. The Board should be proud.

Jim Fredrickson referenced a summary of what happens to the budget now that Warrant Articles 1 and 2 passed.

\$1.1M is the max that can be retained.

The MS-22 Draft is currently in the packet and the one that will be signed will come forward next month. Jim Fredrickson said that if the State Legislation would come through and approve the additional adequacy, the District Assessment would go down.

Katherine Heck said that the plan is to use SWEPT to backfill it. It does not solve anything for the residents. There is an amendment in finance right now to move it into SWEPT.

Kimberly Saunders said that SWEPT = State Wide Educational Property Tax. SWEPT is now raised locally and has to stay local. Some districts can raise more SWEPT significantly. It has become an issue.

#### **b. Monthly Events Calendar**

The Monthly Events Calendar was reviewed.

#### **c. School Board Requests**

Kimberly Saunders reported that there are no outstanding School Board Requests.

#### **d. Outline of legal requirements of feasibility study**

Kimberly Saunders shared the process for withdrawing from a Cooperative School District.

We have two prior districts, Francestown and Dublin, who have directed the district to do a feasibility study.

Before May 10<sup>th</sup>, no later than 60 days after the March 12<sup>th</sup> vote, is the date that the first meeting must convene by.

There are three options from the committee – recommend withdrawal with a plan, not recommend withdrawal, or ask for more time.

One Selectperson from each town and one board member from each town will sit on the committee.

The Superintendent is not a voting member on a committee.

Attorney, Dean Eggert will be present at the next meeting to answer any questions.

Communications should be sent to those committees so that they provide a Selectperson and the first meeting can get started.

There have never been two withdrawal studies at the same time in one district. Work to see if the meetings can join is being researched.

The School District Board will have to look at withdrawal from the District but not the SAU. This means that there would be a Francestown District, Dublin District, ConVal District, and SAU.

Any questions:

How many people need to be on the committee? One member from each of the nine communities and one Select board member from each community.

Janine Lesser asked who would do the information gathering.

Kimberly said that the committee would do that work.

Janine further asked if this is additional work you are anticipating; quite a lot of additional work.

Kimberly Saunders responded that yes, I feel like I have made that very clear that this is a lot of work.

Janine Lesser asked how this work would get done, will you push other work to the side?

Kimberly Saunders said that she will do as directed.

Erin Pils-Martin asked if isn't the preexisting district ConVal and therefore one district?

Kimberly said that it is not, we go back to the inception documents where Francestown and Dublin were districts.

### **10. Old Business**

#### **a. Policies – 2<sup>nd</sup> Read/Adoption (Board Vote Required)**

IKL: Academic Honesty and Integrity

Jim Kingston asked for future proofing of this policy, as AI tools come on the market, can we say "including but not limited to AI tools".

Kimberly said that we use e.g. and "such as" so that we can say it is similar and meets the requirements of the policy.

Jim Kingston asked about the removal of the word "best" in the first paragraph.

Jim further asked about paragraph 5; academic collusion – unsure how a teacher's permission would come into play. The way this is written, a teacher could give permission for another student to copy a test.

Kimberly said that group work is called a jigsaw. Outside that permission, it would be academic collusion.

**William Bryk motioned to approve policy IKL for adoption. Mike Hoyt seconded.**

Dan Harper asked about AI. When is it okay? He said that he has colleagues that use it in their work. Where does the district stand?

Kimberly said that she would be happy to ask the integration team to present on this. The goal is to ask students to use it in an ethical way.

Would the board be interested?

Dick Dunning said that it is critical that the board learn as much as possible about AI.

Confirmed.

**Unanimous.**

IHBAM: Special Education Procedures Manual

**Janine Lesser moved to accept policy IHBAM as written. Erin Pils-Martin seconded. Unanimous.**

## **11. New Business**

### **a. Driver's Education Program Recommendation (Board Vote Required)**

Brian Cisneros said that a vendor, All Star Driving, approached us about providing Driver's Education at the high school. Everything is done outside of school hours. They gave a five-year proposal with the first three years at \$875 per student and years 4 and 5 at \$900 per student.

**Janine Lesser moved that we accept the proposal as offered with All Star Driving.**

**William Bryk seconded.**

It has been at least three years since driver's education has been offered at ConVal.

Katherine Heck said that she fully supports this to allow our students to have access to this. It is critical for our students.

Erin Pils-Martin asked if we know the student capacity for enrollment.

Kimberly Saunders said that it is typically 30-40 students.

**Unanimous.**

### **b. Data and Equity Audit Request for Proposal (RFP) (Board Vote Required)**

An RFP was sent out for an Equity Audit as part of the Strategic Plan and the ongoing work as authorized by the School Board.

Vendor EEC was the highest cost but did not have additional costs. One vendor had no experience with schools.

The recommendation is that vendor EEC be contracted with for this work. It was a long process to get here.

**Janine Lesser moved to accept the contract for an equity audit from a company named EEC in the amount of \$110,000.**

**Katherine Heck seconded.**

Katherine asked how long the process is anticipated.

Kimberly said that by September 13<sup>th</sup> prior to budget season.

**Unanimous.**

### **c. Field Trip Request Approval (Board Vote Required)**

1) ConVal High School, grades 9-12, students request to travel to Concord, NH, from April 11-12, 2024, to participate in the culmination of Youth and Government at the State House.

**Mike Hoyt motioned to approve the field trip request as presented.**

**Katherine Heck seconded. Unanimous.**

### **d. Amendment to ConVal High School Handbook (Board Vote Required)**

Kimberly Saunders said that we often have police in school. We are specific about when police can speak to students and when they cannot. If police are in schools around abuse or neglect, police have permission to speak to students. This change is to notify parents.

**Janine Lesser moved to approve the amendment to the ConVal Handbook.**

**Katherine Heck seconded.**

Jim Kingston said that it would go a long way toward relieving anxiety toward parent rights toward notification if you could summarize the RSA.

Kimberly Saunders shared that the handbook is electronic and this is a link.

Katherine asked should it be added to other handbooks.

Kimberly said that this will be looked at for all handbooks.

Jim Fredrickson asked what drove the change.

Kimberly said that we often are unwilling to allow a police officer to interview a student without a parent present. This needs to be made clear to both staff and families.

**William Bryk abstained.**

**All others in favor. Motion carried.**

**e. School Board Committees and Committee preferences**

This agenda item was discussed earlier under 9a.

**12. Public Comment**

Blake, from Dublin spoke with regard to AI, he urged caution when using and selecting AI in classrooms. It is a new technology. Bias is built into those platforms.

Jim Cleary, Bennington, said that he ran for Selectman and he learned that many were misinformed on Article 10. Many people thought that they would save on their tax bill. Many did not know what they were voting on. School Board members need to get these messages out. He doesn't want to see us go down the wrong road. Letting people know is important. He said that he is hoping we can all work together more to maintain what we have here.

Doug Sutherland, Hancock, congratulated the district on passing the budget. When it comes to Article 10, he encouraged the School Board to involve the community. He urged the board not to kick this down the road. He would love to see the School Board and community to come together to figure this out. When it comes to the budget; people are unaware. He encouraged the community to be involved as much as possible. The community is not exactly split but it is pretty close in terms of those who voted.

In other comments, Kimberly Saunders referenced the 2024/2025 calendar outlining when the SAU is closed.

**13. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A: 3, II**

- a. Negotiations**
- b. Personnel**
- c. Student**
- d. Legal**

**Katherine Heck motioned to enter into Non-Public Session, in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II, at 8:02 p.m.**

**William Bryk seconded.**

**Unanimous on a roll call vote.**

**Erin Pils-Martin moved to exit Non-Public Session at 8:38 p.m.**

**William Bryk seconded. Unanimous.**

**Erin Pils-Martin moved to seal the minutes of Non-Public Session for five years.**

**Katherine Heck seconded. Unanimous.**

**14. Adjourn**

**William Bryk motioned to adjourn at 8:38 p.m. Mike Hoyt seconded. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok