

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #51
PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD**

MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Meeting
April 2, 2020
Emergency Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Bea Douglas, Chair
 Heidi Asdot, Vice Chair
 Ted Mitchell, Secretary
 Jessica Drouin
 Adam Gauthier

Others Present: John J. Freeman, Superintendent of Schools
 Jessica Bickford, Director of Student Services
 Sally Blanchette, Financial Manager
 Melissa Brown, Director of Career Readiness
 Danielle Harvey, Dean of Instruction
 Kathy LeMay, Director of Interventions and Title I
 Tobi Chassie, Recording Secretary
 Members of the Public - via Zoom

Dr. Freeman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. REORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

Dr. Freeman opened nominations for the position of Chairperson.

Ms. Asdot nominated Ms. Douglas, which was seconded by Mr. Mitchell. No other nominations were made. The Board voted unanimously to elect Ms. Douglas as chair (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

Dr. Freeman congratulated Ms. Douglas and turned the meeting over to her at 5:32 p.m.

III. DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY MEETING

Ms. Douglas declared the meeting as an emergency: As Chair of the Pittsfield School Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

- a. Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting.¹ All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing one of the following phone #'s: 1(929)205-6099 or 1(301)715-8592 and using meeting ID: 567 045 143 password: 107036, or by clicking on the following website address:
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/567045143?pwd=V115U3RTcHVNMFZlZHZkdjdiRWtKdz09>.

- b. Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the Pittsfield School District at: <https://www.pittsfieldnhschools.org/board/agenda/>.

- c. Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:

If anybody has a problem, please call Danielle Harvey at (603) 410-9559 or email at धारवेय@पिट्सफील्डनहसकुलस.ऑर्ग.

- d. Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to- Know law.

Roll Call: Ms. Asdot, present with no one in the room; Ms. Douglas, present with no one in the room; Ms. Drouin, present, with no one in the room; Mr. Gauthier, present with no one in the room; Mr. Mitchell, present with no one in the room.

IV. REORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD (Continued)

Ms. Douglas nominated Ms. Asdot as vice chairperson, which was seconded by Mr. Gauthier. No other nominations were made. The Board voted unanimously to elect Ms. Asdot as vice chair (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

Ms. Douglas nominated Mr. Mitchell as secretary, which was seconded by Ms. Asdot. No other nominations were made. The Board voted unanimously to elect Mr. Mitchell as secretary (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

V. AGENDA REVIEW

The following items were added to the agenda:

- Court Brief (Dr. Freeman)
- Balloon Rally (Dr. Freeman)
- Transportation contract (Dr. Freeman)
- Grading (Dr. Freeman)
- Building Access (Dr. Freeman)

The following item was deleted from the agenda:

- Public Input

VI. ACTION ON AGENDA

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mr. Mitchell, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as amended (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

VII. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES - Action was deferred to the next meeting.

VIII. PUBLIC ACCESS

DIAL IN INFORMATION:

1(929)205-6099 or 1 (301)715-8592

Meeting ID: 567 045 143

Password: 107036

No participant ID required (# to skip if requested)

If any member of the public has trouble accessing the meeting using the above information, please call Danielle Harvey at (603)410-9559, or email at dharvey@pittsfieldnhschools.org.

IX. DEAN OF INSTRUCTION – No report.

X. DEAN OF OPERATIONS

A. Freezer / Cooler at PMHS

Mr. Hamilton explained to the Board that the freezer and cooler at PMHS is in need of repair. Three bids were received. Mr. Hamilton suggested that the Board consider using the same vendor for both pieces of equipment.

Ms. Asdot asked if the vendors offer a warranty. Mr. Hamilton stated he would have to investigate the warranty. Mr. Gauthier stated he would be more comfortable knowing if there is a warranty. The decision was deferred to the next meeting, and Mr. Hamilton agreed to contact the bidders regarding warranty of the work for the repairs..

XI. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES - No report.

XII. DIRECTOR OF CAREER READINESS - No report.

XIII. DIRECTOR OF INTERVENTION - No report.

XIV. SUPERINTENDENT

A. Nominations

Dr. Freeman provided a list of professional staff who are being nominated for continuing contracts. On a motion made by Ms. Douglas and seconded by Ms. Asdot, the Board voted unanimously to approve the nomination list (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

B. Employee Compensation

Dr. Freeman proposed paying all employees throughout the school closure. He stated more information has been received from State agencies and asked Sally Blanchette to explain the factors involved.

Ms. Blanchette said there were two options including continuing to pay employees as usual or lay people off temporarily so they may apply for unemployment benefits. Ms. Douglas stated that she is aware of another district who is continuing to pay staff as usual and thought that was the right action to take. Ms. Asdot agreed, as did Mr. Gauthier and

Ms. Drouin. Mr. Mitchell stated that he thought this decision will reduce stress for the people involved.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Asdot, the Board voted unanimously to approve continuing to pay the staff as usual (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

C. School Calendar

Dr. Freeman stated the Commissioner of Education has approved a ratio of four school days to one day for preparation, individual student coaching, student check-ins, or catching up on work. The Commissioner stated the four to one ratio would count for full days.

Another modification to consider is eliminating April vacation and closing the school calendar a week earlier than planned. Dr. Freeman stated he thought students would have a difficult time resuming their online engagement if interrupted by a vacation.

Dr. Freeman explained to the Board that the administration met with the teacher leaders to discuss these considerations. The group recommended elimination of April vacation and moving to a four to one weekly calendar. Monday through Thursday would be designated for teaching and contact and Friday would be designated for catch up, individual coaching, and small group meetings.

Dr. Freeman presented the results of a parent survey that was distributed electronically (220 people responded): 61.9% - eliminate April vacation; end school year early; move to four-day week; 18.3% - keep April vacation; move to four-day week; 16.8% - keep April vacation; continue with five-day week; 3.0% - keep April vacation; move to four-day week.

Dr. Freeman recommended an adjustment to the school calendar that included the elimination of April vacation. Using the hours count for meeting state standards, the last scheduled day of school would be Friday, June 12, 2020, and graduation would be Saturday, June 6, 2020.

The following guidelines were also developed by the administration and teacher leaders: K - 60 minutes; 1-2 - 90 minutes; 3-4 - 120 minutes; 5-6 - 150 minutes; 7-12 - 30-40 minutes per course with a total no more than 4 hours. These are intended to be guidelines, not strict requirements; individual students and curriculum will dictate that these may vary along the way, according to Dr. Freeman.

On a motion made by Ms. Asdot and seconded by Mr. Gauthier, the Board unanimously approved the elimination of April vacation, move to a four day week for instruction, and schedule graduation for June 6 and the last day of school for June 12 (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

D. Court Brief

Dr. Freeman stated the Board has received a court brief from Attorney Tobin. Mr. Mitchell stated he thought Attorney Tobin had done a great job, to which Ms. Douglas agreed. Dr. Freeman stated he would communicate with Attorney Tobin.

E. Balloon Rally

Dr. Freeman recommended approving the use of Drake Field so that the Rotary Club could continue with the planning for the annual Balloon Rally. On a motion made by Ms. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Mitchell, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Rotary Club using Drake Field for the Balloon Rally, if it takes place this summer (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes). Mr. Hamilton will be the Rotary Club's contact.

F. Transportation Contract

Dr. Freeman communicated with Lynn Marston when the school first closed to discuss modifying the contract that would allow Marston's to be fairly compensated, drivers to continue to be paid, and the bus service continue for meal deliveries. Ms. Marston and Jack Marston worked out a proposal that would achieve these conditions. The agreement would be for three months and would cost \$17,857 per month, which is 81% of the contracted cost of \$20,050 per month. Ms. Blanchette reported that surrounding districts are reporting a range of renegotiated amounts from 85% to 100% of the original contracts.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mr. Mitchell, the Board unanimously approved the modified contract (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

G. Grading

Dr. Freeman explained recommendations being made relative to grading procedures, which include: PES - narrative report; PMS - narrative reports with comments reflecting on on-pace / off-pace status; and PHS - narrative reports with comments reflecting on-pace / off-pace status, spring semester-only courses default to pass / fail, and yearlong courses option by student or teacher to pass / fail.

Ms. Douglas stated her concern for seniors, in particular, who are intending to graduate. She is also concerned about the students who are not completing work. She stated she is in favor of the pass/fail option. Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Asdot stated their agreement in the recommendations.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Asdot, the Board voted unanimously to approve the modifications in grading as presented (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

Dr. Freeman acknowledged the work of the District Leadership Team on the development of the recommendations.

H. Building Access

Dr. Freeman described recommendations relative to the access to the building. As of Monday, April 6, 2020, the buildings will be closed to students, parents, and visitors. There will be no specific hours for offices to be open (SAU office will continue 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with Ms. Blanchette and Ms. Dupere alternate days in the office), only staff members will have access to the buildings after signing up and following a protocol, administrators will continue to rotate building presence, and food service providers will continue their current schedule.

Mr. Gauthier asked about the services being provided to students with disabilities. Ms. Bickford stated most students' needs are being met remotely, with only a few students coming to the building.

Ms. Douglas stated her appreciation for the work of special educators and related service staff in ensuring services are being provided. Dr. Freeman stated that the services guaranteed to students through their individual education program have not been waived. If anyone hears of anyone who is not satisfied with the services being delivered, Dr. Freeman would appreciate Board members requesting them to contact Jessica Bickford.

I. Upcoming Board Events

Dr. Freeman suggested upcoming events such as someone visiting from the PACE Career Academy, a visit from board members from Prospect Mountain High School, and the School Funding Forum be put on hold for the time being. The Board agreed.

XV. SCHOOL BOARD

XVI. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS- Assignments deferred to next meeting

XVII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for April 16, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. in the Pittsfield Middle High School media center or by Zoom, depending on circumstances relative to Covid-19.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Mr. Mitchell and seconded by Mr. Gauthier, the meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m. (Ms. Asdot, yes; Ms. Douglas, yes; Ms. Drouin, yes; Mr. Gauthier, yes; Mr. Mitchell, yes).

Respectfully submitted,

Tobi Chassie
Recording Secretary