

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**  
**Thursday, September 1, 2022, 7:00 PM**  
**EPHING SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Epping Town Hall/ Epping TV Channel 22/Zoom**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Heather Clark called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the pledge of allegiance.

In attendance: Chair Heather Clark, Member Ben Leavitt, Member Robin O'Day, Member Julie Knight, Member Jen Jacoby, Superintendent Furbush, Business Administrator Christine Vayda, Student Carly Sanborn, and Student Jacob Twombly.

**SCHEDULED TOPICS**

a. Epping PTO President Nicole Kukesh - donation for Kindergarten improvements

Nicole Kukesh and Amy Hodgdon spoke about how the PTO typically fundraises to be able to give an end of the year gift back to the school. This past year there were many different needs, so instead of one big gift, they used the funds to tackle a larger number of smaller projects. The projects include the Kindergarten playground clean-up and fence expansion, installation of a gaga pit, and atomic clocks (which sync to the National Weather Service so the time is always accurate) for each room. The PTO thanked the volunteers and the community for all of their contributions. Heather mentioned that the high school students (starting with this year's Freshman class) are required to have volunteer hours, and this is a good opportunity to reach out. The Board and Superintendent Furbush thanked Nicole and Amy for all of the hard work they do, the sense of community they build, and the benefits they are able to bring to the staff and students. The PTO is hosting a "Monster Mash" October 28th and will be outdoors again this year. The next PTO meeting is scheduled for September 12th at 7:00 in the Elementary School Media Center and any parents/grandparents are welcome to attend.

**Member Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept the donation of up to \$10,000 for the Kindergarten playground, the large playground, and the atomic clocks. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

b. New Hampshire School Board Association Delegation Discussion

The Delegation Assembly is scheduled for Saturday October 1st at 11:00 AM. Robin volunteered to attend on behalf of the Board.

The Board discussed how Robin would vote for each proposal.

### Support

- Amend an RSA to exclude sub-committees and advisory committees from the requirement for a forum to be physically present to hold a meeting.
- NH SBA to oppose any subsequent legislation that would modify an adequate education for the school approval standards set forth in rules adopted by the Dept. of Education.
- State of NH shall pay an amount equal to or greater than 7.5% of the normal and accrued liability contribution for benefits under the retirement system for Group A Teachers.

### Do Not Support

- Every school needs to have a safety plan in place, and the State of NH should provide enough funding to accomplish this.
- The NH School Board Association will advise and confirm all the member SAUs are paying and segregating dues and payments to the NH School Board Association in accordance with RSA 15-5.
- The Federal Government seek and provide viable and sustainable funding to provide breakfast and lunch at no cost to students.
- NH SBA to advocate for legislative action that ensures local school boards comply with federal firearm laws and policies.
- NH SBA re-affiliation with COSSBA (Consortium of State School Board Associations).

## **POLICY**

### a. JFABD - Admission of Homeless Students - 1st Read

This policy was moved to a second/third read at the next meeting.

Superintendent Furbush noted that there was a change in the set of qualifications to be considered homeless under the current Act, awaiting foster care placement no longer qualifies. The rest of the changes made are already in practice. The purpose of the law and policy is to support the families and provide stability.

## **PERSONNEL**

### a. Nomination of Bailey Dangora Gr 7 Social Studies Teacher

**Member Robin O'Day made a motion to accept the nomination of Bailey Dangora as a Grade 7 Social Studies Teacher. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

### b. Resignation of Joy Page Gr 7 Social Studies Teacher

**Member Robin O'Day made a motion to accept the resignation of Joy Page, Grade 7 Social Studies Teacher. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

c. Resignation of Paul Lewis EMHS Science Teacher

**Member Jen Jacoby made a motion to accept the resignation of Paul Lewis, EMHS Science Teacher. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

d. Resignation of Marianne McDonough EES School Counselor

**Member Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept the resignation of Marianne McDonough, EES School Counselor. Seconded by Member Jen Jacoby. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

e. Nomination of Shawna Street EES School Counselor

**Member Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept the nomination of Shawna Street as an EES School Counselor. Seconded by Member Jen Jacoby. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

Amy Hodgdon asked the Board if there was any concern with replacing a teacher during the school year, and if the contract was being adhered to. Superintendent Furbush explained how the current contracts work with the 60 day window to find a replacement, and that there were significant proposed changes to the CBA that had failed. He also stated that the contract was followed and not broken by either side.

## **REPORTS**

a. Student Reports

Carly and Jacob spoke about how well the start of the school year was going and how great a job the Guidance Team has done. They highlighted some of the extracurricular activities including Girls' Varsity Soccer, Girls' JV and Varsity Volleyball, Boys' Varsity Soccer, Epping-Newmarket Football, and Cross Country. They also noted some mid-session SST students were having trouble with their shortened lunch, and this issue is now being resolved. There have also been multiple issues with the newly enforced "no outside food or drink" rule. Some students are using water bottles to bring in outside drinks and enforcing this rule doesn't seem to be solving the problem. The students were very saddened by the resignation of Mr. Lewis, but they wished him the best of luck. Also, there has been a lot of positive feedback on Mr. Lewis' replacement.

Heather asked the students if there was enough space at lunch time and if there was enough time to eat. The students stated that it is still slightly crowded at lunch, and they are hoping to get a little bit of a longer lunch in case a bus is running late.

b. Principal Reports

Principal Chris Mazzone applauded the students for their report and for bringing in issues that they have seen firsthand in the school. He spoke about the issues that are ongoing with the water bottles and said the students were more receptive to the policy after he explained that it

was due to the USDA guidelines. He also talked about the SST students and stated that they are looking into some short term steps to allow these students more time to eat. He also hopes to get a class meeting organized to happen at least quarterly for students to be able to voice concerns directly. Mr. Mazzone also discussed the crowding in the lunch room and provided some potential solutions that are being looked into. Jacob added that there are some concerns from the Senior class over the “no outside food or drink” policy. He said if students leave to go get food, they don’t have time to sit down and eat.

Robin asked if students were to make coffee or hot chocolate at home if there is anyone policing their water bottle. Principal Mazzone said that they have outlined the expectations, and he believes that students will follow the policy.

Principal Mazzone said behavioral referrals are down to only 4 this year as opposed to 14 at this time last year, and tardy slips are down 50% from where they were last year. He also spoke about how he would like to start a tradition to have a banner/sign where the Senior class gets to pick the quote. He stated that Freshman orientation was phenomenal and thanked everyone who helped to put it together. He also talked about Positive Action lessons, which will be given once or twice a week for grades 6-12, and they are working to fit these lessons in for SST students as well.

Heather thanked Principal Mazzone for including grades 10-12 in the Positive Action Curriculum as it teaches crucial skills. She also noted that she has been getting a lot of positive feedback from students in regards to all of the changes happening. She asked Principal Mazzone and Principal Lizier to please make certain that the Board receives the notifications being sent out as well.

Principal Jill Lizier gave an EES update. She said that their recent staff meeting was great and was an awesome networking event. They have been tightening up their policies and procedures to make sure all students are safe and comfortable. The principals have been going around to the classrooms to give a 20 minute overview of the student handbooks in order to educate the students. She gave some examples of what is included in the overview. They had their first Team Leader meeting to discuss their norms. She thanked the PTO for all their support, the custodial staff for keeping their buildings clean, and the parents for their kindness.

Heather is looking forward to hearing from teachers and students as well during the Principal Reports in the near future.

Jen said that her elementary school student has been coming home happy everyday and that he is enjoying the school day. Ben said it’s apparent that the district staff is creating a warm, welcoming environment. Robin said she has been loving the reports and how colorful they are. Julie said that Pre-Covid, on the first day of school, families were welcomed in for an assembly, and she said it would be awesome if they brought that back. Heather also mentioned the Info Fair that used to happen at the beginning of the school year that would provide an opportunity for families to gather more information about different organizations and access resources.

c. Superintendent Reports

Superintendent Furbush said that the opening of the schools went great. He said everyone worked really hard to make the opening a success. He thanked the Selection Committee for their efforts in choosing the two new Administrators. He discussed the Administrator Retreat and the importance of it. It was a great opportunity to collaborate and align on district wide goals. He said the Board Retreat was also really productive. He said that if parents have any questions or concerns to reach out to the Administrative team, they'll be happy to help. Budget season has started. He said that they are in great shape in terms of staffing.

**FINANCIAL BUSINESS & DISTRICT SERVICES**

a. Financial Report

Christine completed and submitted the DOE 25 and MS 25 Reports. This means the Year End can be completed soon. The District is returning \$563,375.94 back to the Town this year. They received \$380,545 in ESSER Grants this year which helped contribute to that return. They retained \$200,000 for the fund balance and \$300,000 for the trust funds this year. Robin asked a question about the Food Service costs.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. Public Minutes of August 18, 2022

**Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve the Public Minutes from the August 18, 2022 meeting as amended. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0-1. Motion carries. Member Ben Leavitt abstained.**

b. Public Minutes of District Walk-Through August 24, 2022

**Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve the Public Minutes of the District Walk-Through from the August 24, 2022 meeting as written. Seconded by Member Jen Jacoby. VOTE: 4-0-1. Motion carries. Member Robin O'Day abstained.**

**MANIFEST**

a. Accounts Payable deposited on August 25, 2022

**Member Ben Leavitt made a motion to approve Accounts Payable deposited on August 25, 2022 in the amount of \$612,496.47. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. VOTE: 4-0-1. Motion carries. Member Jen Jacoby abstained.**

b. Payroll Manifest deposited on August 5, 2022

**Member Ben Leavitt made a motion to approve Payroll Manifest deposited on August 5, 2022 in the amount of \$127,539.44. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. VOTE: 4-0-1. Motion carries. Member Jen Jacoby abstained.**

c. Payroll Manifest deposited on August 19, 2022

**Member Ben Leavitt made a motion to approve Payroll Manifest deposited on August 19, 2022 in the amount of \$112,463.14. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. VOTE: 4-0-1. Motion carries. Member Jen Jacoby abstained.**

The Board voted on the new Vice Chairperson.

**Member Robin O'Day made a motion to nominate Ben Leavitt for the Board Vice Chair position. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0-1. Motion carries. Vice Chair Ben Leavitt abstained.**

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Amy Hodgdon apologized for her tone earlier in the meeting. She said that she has been pleased with the start of the school year thus far. She commended Superintendent Furbush for his planning efforts in terms of field maintenance. She also commended the Administration for their good stewardship. Amy pointed out that with public comments being at the end, it takes away the opportunity for the public to address the Administrators. Heather will adjust the timing of public comments. She pointed out that her son is unable to take his final year of Engineering this year at SST due to an Epping class scheduling conflict. She is hoping they'll be more mindful of scheduling conflicts in future years. She said Principal Mazzone handled it really well. Amy commented on the elementary lunchroom behaviors that are expected of students and expressed her dislike for them. She also noted that third and fifth graders have to eat lunch in their classrooms everyday. She would like to bring some student voice into these two topics. She said that she loves the direction that the District is heading in when it comes to rigor. Heather asked if Amy likes Parent Square, and she does!

### **BOARD COMMENTS/OTHER**

Superintendent Furbush thanked Amy for her comments.

Ben mentioned that there is an Elementary PTO meeting on 9/12. Ben thanked Amy as well and told her to continue sharing her thoughts about contracts, etc and not get discouraged if the Board doesn't acknowledge certain topics since they aren't allowed to.

Julie mentioned school safety and suggested a foyer or a window as a security check to see why a visitor is at the school before buzzing them all the way into the building. Heather explained the current procedure. There was a discussion about this. Christine said that she and

Joe will look into Julie's suggestion. Christine said that she has applied to some safety grants. That project would be around \$80,000-\$90,000. Julie said that she has had parents ask if EES can have two recesses. They will make a public forum for this. Julie noted that there was some frustration with the enrollment process. Superintendent Furbush said that NH schools will be making a transition away from PowerSchool.

Jen said that the walkthrough was awesome! Heather agreed and said it was one of her favorite events of the year.

#### **NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED**

a. September 15, 2022 regular meeting

**NONPUBLIC SESSION**: Non Meeting **is scheduled** for September 1, 2022 following the public meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Member Robin O'Day made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 pm. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Wilkins

School Board Secretary