

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY APRIL 2, 2018  
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TOCCI LIBRARY  
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**The Gilford School Board held a regular meeting on Monday April 2, 2018 at the Gilford Elementary School Tocci Library. Present were board members Gretchen Gandini, Chris McDonough, Rae Mello-Andrews, Jeanin Onos, and Karen Thurston. Representing Gilmanton were Michelle Heyman and Frank Weeks. Administrators present were Kirk Beitler, Danielle Bolduc, Scott Isabelle, Peter Sawyer, Anthony Sperazzo, Steve Tucker, and Sean Walsh. Student representative was Greg Madore.**

**OPENING** Superintendent Kirk Beitler called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance, and confirmed posting of the meeting.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS** Karen Thurston moved that the current slate of officers serve for the 2018-2019 school year. Gretchen Gandini seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Frank Weeks and Michelle Heyman abstained.

**COMMITTEE  
ASSIGNMENTS**

The following members volunteered for these respective committees:  
Wellness Committee: Karen Thurston  
Meadows Committee: Karen Thurston  
Building and Construction Committee: Chris McDonough, Rae Mello-Andrews  
Capital Improvement Committee: Chris McDonough  
Warrants: Gretchen Gandini, Karen Thurston, Rae Mello-Andrews  
Policy Committee: Jeanin Onos, Gretchen Gandini  
Budget Committee: Chris McDonough with Karen Thurston as alternate

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Gretchen Gandini made the motion that the board approve the minutes of the March 5, 2018 meeting. Karen Thurston seconded the motion and after discussion of corrections it was voted in the affirmative. Jeanin Onos abstained.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** Tim Sullivan asked that the board's meeting calendar be prominently displayed on the district's website.  
Rae Mello-Andrews reminded that the Gilford School Board meets the first Monday of every month unless preempted by a holiday.

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**Student Council Report**  
Greg Madore outlined a trip to Concord by 32 students from Mr. Zulauf's Youth and Government group to "take over the State government." Some will serve on different mock committees and take leadership roles, one will act as a Supreme Court Justice, and others will serve on Democratic or Republican committees in the House and Senate. "It's a valuable opportunity to introduce students to the democratic process and encourage them to continue taking part in our government."  
Former Supreme Court Justice John Broderick addressed the student body about his experiences with mental illness and what students can do to help each other. "His talk made an impression on the students here at Gilford High School. We are discovering more actions we can take to help those in need."  
Rae Mello-Andrews noted that she attended this presentation and was impressed with the behavior of the students.  
The Theater Department presented *A Few Good Men* after being delayed by weather and illness. "It was well received and enjoyed by all who saw it."

**Youth Risk Behavior Survey Presentation**  
School nurse Meg Jenkins narrated a PowerPoint presentation on the preliminary results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey taken on February 21, 2017. She reviewed that the 100-question survey comes from the Center for Disease Control

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and has been conducted every other year at Gilford since 2007. Participation is entirely voluntary, and students can answer all or only those questions they may choose. Ms. Jenkins' observations are summarized as follows:

- Binge drinking and the number of students who use someone else to obtain alcohol have both reduced.
- Perceptions of marijuana use are changing, likely as part of a national dialogue and the fact that nearby states are changing their marijuana laws.
- Prescription drug use has increased, which appears to be a nation-wide phenomenon.
- Perceptions of prescription drug use have also changed, which reflect a "very pill-happy society."
- Tobacco behaviors include use of "vape" devices, which is a new area of inquiry for the survey.
- Some questions about bullying with respect to safety and weapons, are new to the survey. The number of students who responded that they did not go to school because of safety concerns remains steady.
- The number of students who responded that they were bullied on school property in the last year has decreased from 30.3 percent to 21.2 percent.
- There was an increase in the number of students reporting suicide attempts from 5 percent to 8.2 percent. The school has begun to implement programs to address this increase, as detailed by Ms. Belanger below.
- The number of students reporting an incarcerated family member reduced from 9.8 percent to 6.8 percent.

Ms. Jenkins concluded her portion of the presentation by remarking that overall the survey yielded relatively few areas of concern, "but there are always some behaviors we can't control. We try to educate, and so does guidance."

Student support and crisis counselor Laurie Belanger discussed some of the programs that aim to address some of these concerns. She emphasized the benefit of peer programs, noting that students talk to each other before they talk to adults. Some of the programs "have better benefits than we hoped for."

Twelve students have received training by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) to help students recognize other students who are having mental health emergencies. Training includes how to recognize signs of depression and then alert an adult. There is also a focus on the use of social media. The entire faculty and several support staff have likewise received this training.

Another group is aimed at providing a support network for LGBTQ students "where those kids can comfortably come and support each other and identify different goals in their own life."

A partnership with Navigating Recovery provides a trained counselor who leads an Ala-Teen group to support those living with addiction in the household. New Beginnings offers a group for students who may realize that some of their relationships may not be healthy. Ms. Belanger spoke of the young social worker who leads this group and offers a positive role model. "The best part is it gives them 24-hour access to crisis services if the individuals find themselves in an unsafe situation."

Other services, not peer-directed, include crisis counseling and suicide assessment. With the advent of social media students are immediately aware when others post concerning messages. There is an evolving shift toward thinking that telling an adult about such situations is acceptable: "If you see something, say something. We try to de-stigmatize: you're not a snitch, you might be responsible for keeping someone safe." Ms. Belanger spoke of other partnerships with New Hampshire Hospital, Hampstead Hospital, and local

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healthcare and mental health providers to assist those returning from a long period of hospitalization.

Considerable discussion ensued. Attendees' comments are highlighted as follows:

- Anthony Sperazzo noted that the kinds of issues being addressed today are far different from those of only five years ago, and now require staff training at the middle school level. The school actively seeks support from the community. He observed that the district has 1100 students it, can influence only until they leave the grounds at 3:00 every day.
- Karen Thurston noted that the National Guard offers a family program which serves military families in all branches. They offer a camp during spring vacation, and an 800 telephone number “to bring kids together so they can share their commonality.” She suggested posting survey results on the district’s Facebook page. She also suggested that behaviors are beginning earlier so efforts should begin at Grades 3 and 4 students.
- On the issue of parental perception regarding drug and alcohol use, Gretchen Gandini suggested that parents need to be informed of these survey responses, and asked “at what point will we communicate all this to parents?”
- Kirk Beitler noted that the survey results comprise 92 pages of data; a more streamlined approach to disseminating the information to parents would be through the use of bullet points in Parental Updates at each building level.
- Frank Weeks observed that contributing to some of the issues is the perspective of some parents that “kids will be kids.”
- Chris McDonough asked at what year does the curriculum for prevention education begin. Peter Sawyer and Sean Walsh replied that general education about healthy choices begins at the elementary school but Grade 5 is when students begin receiving more direct instruction.
- Steve Tucker related that at a conference on the impacts of digital media on youth it was revealed that students are receiving cell phones as early as Grades 3 and 4. “That means they’re exposed to the information; the reality is they get no training on how to use those cell phones.”
- Michelle Heyman inquired whether the high school ‘tip line’ mentioned at the March meeting was ready for implementation.
  - Mr. Sperazzo and Mr. Beitler responded that the instrument awaits word from legal counsel as to the district’s liability if a report is received outside of school hours.
  - Chris McDonough shared his recollection that the instrument was to be a means to report a bullying situation that would be less intimidating than walking into the principal’s office. It is not intended as a means to report a life-or-death situation.
  - Ms. Belanger related that during his presentation Justice Broderick asked every student to enter 1-800-273-TALK into their cell phone which is a 24-hour talk line staffed by master’s-level counselors trained to help students with suicide issues. She noted that the school posted 100 magnets bearing that number and within 24 hours 50 of them were gone. She stressed the importance that students have an alternative means to address these issues, as “we’re not a mental health agency. Sometimes it’s important to make that distinction.”

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Superintendent Report

Kirk Beitler reviewed his written report.

Noting that Gilford had experienced nine snow days, he proposed that the school day be given an additional ten minutes at the start of the day for 36 days to make up the deficiency. Teachers will have the opportunity to make up snow days by collaborating on end-of-year professional development projects.

The Department of Education has clarified that no waivers will be issued: schools must meet the requirement of 180 instructional days or 990 instructional hours for middle and high schools and 945 instructional hours at the elementary school.

Graduation date is proposed for June 17, also Father's Day, at Meadowbrook beginning around 10:00 AM. Confirmation from Meadowbrook is anticipated by April 10, 2018.

After discussion, Karen Thurston moved that High School Principal Anthony Sperazzo be authorized to secure the Meadowbrook facility, if offered, for graduation on June 17, 2018 at 10:00 AM. Gretchen Gandini seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Beitler broached the subject of "blizzard bags," instructional materials to be used during select snow days. Discussion ensued. Mr. Beitler will return with a comprehensive proposal.

NHDOE grants for bollards at the high school entrance, glass at the high school and elementary school entrances, blue emergency lights at all three buildings, and additional security cameras have been "placed on hold pending more funding and recommendation."

Gilford Elementary School

Danielle Bolduc reviewed her written report. Chris McDonough inquired about growing enrollment in Grades 3 and 4, and at what point would an additional teacher be considered. Ms. Bolduc acknowledged that that the Grade 3 classroom size guideline is 18 so at 19 Grade 3 is above the guideline. Grade 4 guideline is 24, so at 17 it remains below the guide. "We look at the guideline as the enrollment comes in. We don't yet know what the kindergarten numbers will be."

Gilford Middle School

Peter Sawyer reviewed his written report. He corrected that the DARE graduation is now April 19. He brought forward a donation from Hannaford Supermarket's Helping Hands program in the amount of \$2,797. Karen Thurston moved that the board accept the donation of \$2,797 from Hannaford Supermarket's Helping Hands program. Gretchen Gandini seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Gilford High School

Anthony Sperazzo reviewed his written report. He added that Justice Broderick spent 45 minutes in discussion with 15 NAMI-trained students before his presentation. "It was special for him to learn about our students."

Mr. Sperazzo brought forward two donations: one in the amount of \$2,000 from Trinity Episcopal Church in Meredith for the robotics team; the other in the amount of \$3,000 from New Hampshire Ball Bearing also for the robotics team.

Karen Thurston moved that the board accept the donation of \$2,000 from the Trinity Episcopal Church in Meredith. Chris McDonough seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Thurston next moved that the board accept the donation of \$3,000 from New Hampshire Ball Bearing for the robotics program. Chris McDonough seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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Mr. McDonough inquired at what point donations might exceed the budgeted amount for robotics and what happens to unused donated funds.

Scott Isabelle clarified that the budget anticipates supporting the robotics team through its first competition and the team will pay for further levels of competition by fundraising efforts. Unspent funds are retained in a student activity account, which carries over each year. Donations are not returned to the taxpayers.

**Curriculum Report**

Steve Tucker shared an article about competency based education and how it relates to Gilford School District. As opposed to an education system that rewards memorization, competency-based programs focus on relating learned concepts to real-world applications. "It's not to say that students don't need to know things; but it's how they're going to apply that knowledge in a real-life way." He noted that as of July 1, 2015 the minimum standard for high schools was to have graduation competencies. Gilford has had competencies for approximately 10 years, being among the first in the state to adopt and implement them. As of July 1, 2015 competencies were to have been adopted from Kindergarten through Grade 8. Statewide "it's still something people are working pretty hard on right now."

Chris McDonough asked for an example of a competency-based lesson.

Mr. Tucker offered that in the middle school there are competencies based on systems and others based on STEM practices. "So if you had a bog, or a solar system, some kind of system where organisms interact, the goal would be for the student to demonstrate that they understand deeply what those systems were about, and demonstrate content knowledge. Then the process would be, can they use the scientific method and practices to discover or show something. It puts the student in a role, say the role of a scientist, who will present their findings on some kind of ecosystem and hopefully the student will be more engaged, more real, than looking at a textbook. We'd be putting them up in front of their peers or a panel so they can demonstrate what that system is about, to uncover information and present their findings in a scientific way."

Mr. McDonough observed that the site-plan project is a good example; Mr. Sawyer offered that Ms. Kovar's room design is another; Mr. Beitler offered that the sap-collecting project is yet another example.

Jeanin Onos inquired whether the district sees "transition issues into colleges that don't do this kind of work." Mr. Tucker identified the difficulty of translating competency based measurements into traditional "grade" measurements, and offered "there are ways of doing that." He further observed that colleges around the state have said they endorse some of these kinds of evaluations.

**Business Administrator Report**

Scott Isabelle submitted his report as written. He elaborated that a seven percent decrease in health insurance cost has been confirmed, which would yield about \$700,000. Competing carriers have shown increases of 15 to 28 percent. Mr. Beitler credited the district's healthy workforce and incentive programs.

**Chair Report**

**NHSBA Workshops and Training**

Rae Mello-Andrews reviewed new member orientation and board chair workshops on May 2 and May 10. She reported that she had attended ALICE training and encouraged board members to attend as well. She learned techniques that can be used in similar situations in any public building.

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**POLICY REVIEW AND  
REVISION**

First Reading:

Kirk Beitler reminded that the next policy meeting is April 10, 2018 at 7:30 AM and brought forward the following policies for first reading:

IHAM—Health Education and Exemption from Instruction

This is a new policy being recommended by NHSBA in response to 2017 House Bill 103.

IHAM-R—Health and Sex Education Exception: Opt-Out Form

This is an update of a current policy as recommended by NHSBA, and contains language referencing RSA 186:11, IX-e as amended in 2017.

JICD—Student Discipline and Due Process

This is a new policy to replace current JICD, Student Conduct, Discipline, and Due Process Safe School Zone as recommended by NHSBA to reflect changes brought about by HB 216, Chapter 12 effective June 16, 2017.

IHCD-R—Memorandum of Understanding

IHCD—Advanced Coursework / Advanced Placement Courses and STEM Dual Concurrent Enrollment Program

This policy is recommended to replace existing IHCD Advance Course Work/Advanced Placement Courses. In conjunction with IHCD-R it is required for students seeking reimbursement. It was prompted by Senate Bill 101.

Second Reading

Mr. Beitler advised that the following policies were submitted to GEA for review and GEA provided no input.

KCD—Accepting Donations/Gifts

It was clarified that public hearings regarding acceptance of donations in excess of \$5,000 must be published in advance. The applicable RSA is included for reference by future boards.

Karen Thurston moved that the board accept Policy KCD—Accepting Donations/Gifts. Chris McDonough seconded the motion. After discussion of edits to achieve internal consistency, the motion passed unanimously.

JLJI—Student Wellness Policy

Mr. Beitler reviewed language additions.

Chris McDonough moved that the board accept Policy JLJI—Student Wellness. Gretchen Gandini seconded the motion. After discussion of edits to achieve internal consistency, the motion passed unanimously.

IGE—Parental Objections to Specific Course Material

This policy replaces existing policy pursuant to HB 103.

Karen Thurston moved that the board accept Policy IGE—Parental Objections to Specific Course Material. Gretchen Gandini seconded the motion. After discussion of edits to achieve internal consistency, the motion passed unanimously.

Kirk Beitler informed the board that GEA has requested to have a teacher representative on the policy committee. He noted that he had never encountered a teacher or union representative at a policy committee at other districts where he had worked. He has not received advice from legal counsel or NHSBA about including such representation on policy committees. Discussion ensued, with attendees' comments highlighted as follows:

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- Mr. Beitler opined that that the school board’s primary responsibilities are planning, budgeting, and policy. “In the board’s oversight and management of the school district it develops policies that are supposed to run the district.”
  - Rae Mello-Andrews observed that those with “boots on the ground” can offer insight as to how a particular policy might work. Those individuals can offer advice about which the committee lacks knowledge.
  - Gretchen Gandini agreed with Ms. Mello-Andrews. She remarked that the committee could do a better job if it knows how the policies are being implemented. She also observed that the policy committee meetings are open to the public.
  - Chris McDonough cautioned that the same inclusion argument could be made about any affected stakeholder. He moved that the board request feedback from NHSBA and that the discussion be tabled pending that input. He further requested to know if such individuals are routinely included in policy committees state-wide and if so, to seek feedback from the superintendents of those districts.
  - Jeanin Onos concurred with Mr. McDonough. She reminded that the input of GEA is sought on all policies, and cautioned that including all potentially affected stakeholders could become unwieldy.
- Mr. Beitler agreed to consult with NHSBA.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was offered

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION  
RSA 91-A:3 II**

At 8:16 p.m., Karen Thurston made the motion to enter non-public session pursuant to the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II(a). Gretchen Gandini seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Gretchen Gandini  
School Board Secretary**