

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 2022
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The Gilford School Board held a meeting on June 30, 2022 in the Gilford High School Library. Present were Board members Jeanin Onos, Kyle Sanborn, Audra Kelly, Nicole Hogan and Jessica Jacques. Gilmanton representatives were Adam Mini and Michelle Heyman. Administrators present were Superintendent Beitler.

Opening

School Board Chair Jeanin Onos called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Superintendent Beitler confirmed posting of the meeting.

Public Comment

Chair Onos opened the public comment session.

Lisa Lulka stated that she agrees with the proposed change to inform parents.

Drew Taylor spoke about liability and he continues to support the vote he cast at the June 14, 2022 meeting.

There being no further comment, Chair Onos closed the public comment.

Policy Review

Kyle Sanborn motioned to open discussion on policy JBAB. The motion was seconded by Audra Kelly and passed with a 7-0 vote.

Nicole Hogan and Jeanin Onos shared their proposed revisions to the policy. Superintendent Beitler shared recommendations from the District's attorney as well as Kyle Sanborn and Audra Kelly's recommendations.

Kyle Sanborn stated he agrees with legal council's revisions and feels we should follow the legal advice. Discussion ensued regarding the privacy section.

Nicole Hogan shared her concern about protecting students' mental health and stated that the first disclosure is usually not to family. She feels that these are conversations the counselor is equipped to deal with.

Michelle Heyman felt that we are asking staff to out the student. She did not disagree but feels the parent has the right to know.

Jeanin Onos was concerned about how much we are putting on staff and doesn't want to lose the child's trust. The job of a teacher is to teach.

Kyle Sanborn stated that the student is going to progress through this best with their parent. He does not see any scenario where the parent is not notified. At the end of the day, the parent has the right to know.

Nicole Hogan stated that this is what is happening now and what she put in her suggested revisions.

Jeanin Onos expressed concern regarding changing student names without legal documentation. Superintendent Beitler clarified that we cannot change the legal name. There is a "preferred name" option in our student information system, which is where we would enter the preferred name, but it would not change the legal name.

Jessica Jacques stated that she wanted students to feel safe.

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After more discussion, the Board agreed to the following:

III. GUIDANCE

A. Privacy

The Gilford School Board recognizes a student's right to keep private one's transgender status or nonbinary presentation at school. The Board also recognizes a transgender and nonbinary student's right to discuss and express their gender identity openly. Information about a student's transgender status, legal name or biological sex listed on a person's birth certificate also may constitute confidential information. School personnel should not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender status or nonbinary presentation to others. School personnel shall include parent(s) or legal guardian(s) when implementing a written plan for a student to address their needs as it relates to their transgender or nonbinary status.

When contacting the parent or legal guardian of a transgender or nonbinary student, school personnel should use the student's preferred name and pronoun listed in the student information system. Student's legal names shall not be changed in the official records unless legally required to do so.

Discussion ensued on "C. Names/Pronouns."

Kyle Sanborn stated that legally, "should" is not a mandate. He liked qualifying the statement with the language the attorney put in "Should does not mean shall." You cannot force them, as it is unconstitutional.

Nicole Hogan stated that when we say you do not have to, Board members are setting the tone. This could cause the student emotional distress.

Jessica Jacques stated that she agreed with legal council's recommendations.

Adam Mini opinioned that if you want to be addressed as such, there is a process.

Superintendent Beitler stated that by adding the disclaimer, it opens up opportunity to argue with administrators. He felt we would be creating an opportunity to challenge the administrators. Students can simply not address the student.

Jeanin Onos felt the opportunity is there and this just points it out.

Adam Mini pointed out that there is another policy to address situations if students are going to keep being disrespectful, there are consequences. Jeanin Onos agreed and said we could reference JICK policy.

After more discussion, the Board agreed to the following:

Students under this policy should be addressed as their preferred name or pronoun that corresponds to the student's gender identity that is consistently asserted at school.

Discussion ensued on IV. Staff Training.

Nicole Hogan suggested adding language to allow resources pertaining to transgender and nonbinary students be available in the counseling office. She felt that if we trust our school counselors to speak about these things, it would be helpful for students mental health.

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Jeanin Onos said she had an issue with handing out resources and felt it was a slippery slope. Kyle Sanborn agreed.

Adam Mini asked if the resources could be built into a presentation with an opt in or out option. He felt this might not be the topic for tonight and maybe have Superintendent Beitler look into it.

Jessica Jacques felt there could be an education piece. Is there a need for it? She does see value in it. She suggested we reach out to the student leadership group and ask them if they feel there is a need for it.

Superintendent Beitler stated that there is a need for awareness and education around diversity and acceptance for students and staff. We have had some incidents this year. We need to create a space for our students to accept other students with unique situations.

Michelle Heyman agreed with Adam Mini and said this may not be the topic for tonight.

The Board agreed to change “gender non-conforming” to “nonbinary” throughout the policy.

Jeanin Onos asked that the policy be updated, reviewed by the District attorney and then go to the Board for first reading.

Public Comment

Chair Onos opened the public comment session.

Lisa Lulka stated that she was appreciative of the Boards thorough considerations and felt it was very informative.

Drew Taylor complimented Chair Onos, Superintendent Beitler and the Board.

There being no further comments, Chair Onos closed public comment and thanked the Board for their time and consideration of this policy.

Non-Public Session

At 8:16 p.m., on a motion by Jessica Jacques and a second by Michelle Heyman, the Board voted to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3II (c). A roll call vote was taken as follows: Nicole Hogan, yes; Jeanin Onos, yes; Audra Kelly, yes; Kyle Sanborn, yes; Jessica Jacques, yes; Michelle Heyman, yes; Adam Mini, yes.

At 8:59 p.m., the Board came out of non-public session.

At 9:00 p.m., on a motion by Kyle Sanborn and a second by Nicole Hogan, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Audra Kelly
School Board Secretary