

Concord School District
Board of Education
Special Board Meeting

Date: May 16, 2018

Board members present: Jennifer Patterson, Maureen Redmond-Scura, Clint Cogswell, Liza Poinier, Pam Wicks, Jim Richards, Chuck Crush, Tom Croteau

Board member absent: Nathan Fennessy

District staff present: *Superintendent* Terri Forsten; *Assistant Superintendent* Donna Palley; *Student Services Director* Robert Belmont

Board President Jennifer Patterson called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to consider a recommendation from the Instructional Committee regarding a contract for services to support students with autism and behavior challenges in Concord schools. She noted that a Request for Proposal (RFP) for these services was issued in March. The Board was seeking a vendor to provide services across the District, preschool through high school, for professional development, consultation and one-to-one student behavior specialists. Four proposals were reviewed for scope of work, staff qualifications, experience in public schools, references and cost of services.

Maureen Redmond-Scura presented the recommendation from the Committee that the contract be awarded to Bill White and Associates. She noted that the company was well-respected, providing support both in the area of autism and with emotional challenges, and currently worked in 25 school districts in the state. On the financial side, this proposal was closest to target as far as qualifications compared to cost of the services.

Clint Cogswell noted that Bill White's proposed cost of \$893,712 was slightly lower than the amount proposed for the 2018-2019 budget. This was a result of the fact that several fewer students will require direct one-to-one services than were anticipated in the fall when the budget was developed.

Chuck Crush requested information about the number of students who would receive services related to the contract. Superintendent Forsten will bring that information back to the Instructional Committee.

Tom Croteau requested that the Instructional Committee develop a timeline and process for monitoring the effectiveness of these services for students. He noted that, given the investment of funds for these services, it would be important to have evidence that progress was being made by the students.

Jim Richards indicated that he had additional questions and would like additional information about these services.

Mr. Crush asked whether this would be a formal, one-year contract. Superintendent Forsten responded that this would be a one-year contract. She noted that completing an RFP process every year would be challenging.

Pam Wicks noted the time-sensitive nature of these services, stating that staff needed to be hired to do this work. Students receive services over the summer; she was in favor of moving forward with the contract.

The Board voted 6-2 (nay votes: Mr. Richards and Mr. Crush) to award a contract for behavior and autism services to Bill White and Associates for the 2018-2019 school year in the amount of \$893,712 (motioned by Ms. Redmond-Scura, seconded by Mr. Cogswell).

Board members expressed an interest in receiving additional information about student needs and services provided to them. Mr. Richards questioned whether this was the best and most cost-effective use of funds. Mr. Crush requested more information to develop a deeper understanding of the services being offered. Liza Poinier indicated she would like to review the RFP and Mr. White's proposal, and would appreciate having Bill White present. Ms. Wicks appreciated that the contract offers support and training to District staff so eventually they would carry this work themselves, and was interested in hearing more about it.

Board members discussed possible dates for a meeting but deferred to Superintendent Forsten to set a date in June or July for this discussion

The Board voted 8-0 to authorize the Instructional Committee to identify a timeline to evaluate autism and behavior services, including deciding what to evaluate, a means to do that, and how to share that information with the public (motioned by Mr. Croteau, seconded by Jennifer Patterson).

The Board voted 8-0 to adjourn (motioned by Mr. Croteau, seconded by Ms. Redmond-Scura).

The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Redmond-Scura, *Secretary*
Donna Palley, *Recorder*