

Concord School District  
**Board of Education**  
**Regular monthly meeting**  
**August 5, 2019**

**Board members present:** Tom Croteau, Chuck Crush, Barb Higgins, Nancy Kane, Jennifer Patterson, Liza Poinier, Jim Richards, Danielle Smith, Pam Wicks

**Administrators:** *Superintendent Terri Forsten, Assistant Superintendent Donna Palley, Business Administrator Jack Dunn, Director of Human Resources Larry Prince, Director of Facilities Matt Cashman, Director of IT Pam McLeod*

Agenda Item 1. Call to Order

Board President Jennifer Patterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of Agenda

Chuck Crush motioned to approve the agenda. Tom Croteau seconded the motion.

**The Board voted 9-0 to approve the agenda as amended (motioned by Mr. Crush, seconded by Mr. Croteau).**

Agenda Item 3. CHS First Robotics proposal

Six students introduced themselves as members of the CHS First Robotics team and described the fundamentals of the activity. "Tidal Force" is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that started in 2006, and currently has 25 high school students involved.. The students described the various teams they have created (First Lego Teams, etc.) and their opportunities to act as mentors to younger students. The team won the "Chairman's Award" in a competition in Boston this past year. They create their own robots from scratch, including software. They discussed the limitations of the build spaces they have been working from and described their current space, located between Main Street and Commons C. They are interested in student accessibility, storage space, island tables/benches/chairs, and other improvements. They also described their proposed lathe, standing drill press, standing band saw, workbenches and storage spaces, and other equipment. The students laid out the timeline they are anticipating for the construction of their new space. This self-sustaining project will be entirely funded and run by their non-profit group. The students showed how their robot operates. Mr. Crush thanked the group for its attention to accessibility. One student described the group's plan to demand wheelchair ramps in the First NE competitions. Barb Higgins asked whether the students

receive academic credit for their work on the team; the student noted that the group's next goal was to work toward achieving academic credit.

#### Agenda Item 4. Public Comment – agenda items only

Ms. Patterson described the Board's process regarding public comment and briefly reviewed the agenda. She reminded members of the public of the 5-minute time limit for each commenter, to be fair to all. She reminded the public that the purpose of the meeting is to conduct the business of the Board.

She noted that the Superintendent will provide a report to the Board at the start of the school year on efforts to ensure student safety: handbooks, changes in educational approach, policy work and staff training. Ms. Patterson noted that a waiver of first and second reading of several policies included in the Board packet for revision (or new) will be voted on by the Board during the meeting. She said the Board will also consider a proposal to delay the first day of school in order to train staff on student safety.

Ms. Patterson updated the Board on the status of the independent investigation. At its last meeting, the Board voted to engage independent investigator Attorney Djuna Perkins to investigate events in December 2014 and December 2018 related to former teacher Howie Leung, and whether Board policies and procedures were followed at those times, and Attorney Stephen Bennett to serve as liaison between Attorney Perkins and the Board. When completed, the Board will receive and review the report and determine what can be shared with the public, taking into account laws that ensure student and personnel confidentiality. She said that CHS Principal Tom Sica went on voluntary leave status in June and that status will continue until the report has been received and reviewed.

Concord resident Jennifer Kretovic spoke as the Chair of the Crisis Center of New Hampshire. She described the Center's charge as including providing advocacy, empowerment, etc. She said her group has worked with District students, but its offer to provide training for staff has not been welcomed in the past. She said the Crisis Center is offering its services and that advocates are specially trained to receive reports and conduct investigations. The Center runs a crisis hotline and offers peer counseling; she suggested the District display posters for the Crisis Center community hotline.

Concord resident Penny Duffy noted that her daughter has finished her freshman year at CHS, and there was a point at which she was feeling her children would be unsafe at school. She thanked the administration and Board for its significant policy work and asked the Board to remember that implementation of these policies is critical.

CHS student Cadence Solsky reported on an incident that happened to her last year. While the administration allowed her to park in staff parking due to an "invisible" disability, there was backlash from students: she said she was called names and her tires were threatened to be slashed. On Homecoming Night she ended up in a wheelchair and, while multiple assistant principals helped, a number of students called her "a freak." She said other teachers or staff who were present said they heard nothing, and she felt those

staff were protecting that group of seniors. She claimed the school did nothing to punish them. She said one girl spoke directly to her, and a month later, her tires were slashed on school property. She said when she talked with a teacher she was told “the security cameras in the staff parking lot didn’t pick up any sort of behavior in that parking lot.” She later talked with the school resource officer, who told her there are no cameras in the staff parking lot. She said the “head of the case” lied to her, protecting the guilty student. Cadence said there is a culture of not believing the victim, but these collective experiences demand attention and reform.

Linda Douglas, a trauma-informed specialist from NHCADSV, said it was very important that staff understand how trauma affects students: it will affect how students report – if they report – their memories, and their grades. She said trauma affects the brain and one’s ability to make plans. She noted that free training is offered by the Crisis Center, above and beyond Project Grow, which includes what staff can do when listening to a disclosure of abuse. She stated that staff need to be trained to respond in a trauma-informed manner and be sure not to stigmatize students.

Concord resident Melissa Hinebauch suggested the Board consider four points: student safety always come first; believe, support and empower students and the community; a change of culture is needed in the District; transparency is important in the work of the independent investigator.

Concord resident and parent Dan Habib said he attended the last two meetings of the Communications and Policy Committee and thanked the administration for its work. He pointed out a flaw in the updated Memo of Understanding: mandatory reporting for simple assault of a student by an adult was not included. He said that, as students with disabilities are disproportionately affected by abuse, anything other than the constraints specified in the contact/restraint policy [Policy 536.1 Restraint and Seclusion] should be reported to Concord Police Department (CPD). He said these new or revised policies are excellent, and also asked how students will be engaged in reviewing and understanding them. He further noted that it is essential the Board releases the independent investigator’s report to the greatest extent it can, stating that the community will not get past this without knowing what happened and how it happened. He said that the community needs to have full transparency by publication of the report.

Hopkinton resident Darlene Gildersleeve is a Board member of the Disability Rights Center and was on the “MOU” committee. She commented that in the current agreement, “Discretionary Reporting Events” was left up to the discretion of the Principal, and this should be stricken. She mentioned a concern that there is no mechanism in place to notify the Superintendent of the other district if, for example, a Hopkinton student was assaulted on a bus traveling to CRTC.

Concord resident and parent Tara Reardon noted that as a Board member of the Crisis Center, she knows that the way a community responds to reports of sexual assault says a lot about it. She noted that not every problem is solved by policies and processes, but that training must be provided for all staff and all students and must be reinforced each year.

She said that victims and witnesses need to be believed by default, to promote an environment that encourages reporting, and that the current culture must be changed. She encouraged the Board to revise its policies and to look closely at the current agreement between St. Paul's School and CPD.

Concord resident Paula Czech-Lesmerises provided a number of statistics and facts about sexual assault and sexual predators, emphasizing it is highly likely there are other sexual predators currently in the District. She asked when staff and volunteer training would take place. She said it was extremely important that all staff know it is mandatory to report suspicions of neglect or abuse, and that training about domestic violence be included. She asked if there would be consequences for failure to attend the training and whether it would be annual.

Concord resident Rick Stevens said he was shocked at the amount of new language proposed in the policies under consideration, and asked how the additional information has taken so long to rise to the consciousness of the Board.

Concord resident Shawn Hackshaw said he has heard a lot about the need for cultural change in Concord. Describing incidents of teacher misbehavior dating back to the 1980s at CHS, he said "nothing was done then. Now, 40 years later, it has hit the news. It is important for everyone to know that this is nothing new." He stated that policy changes need to be made and students need to know they will be believed, to restore trust in the District.

Allie Maltais, who attended CHS, has a child with moderate to severe autism in the special education program at BMS. She said she worries about restraint and seclusion, commenting on the Restraint and Seclusion policy. She said she is worried, anxious and scared and she and her husband are looking at other districts. She wants to know that the District is the great, wonderful and fun place it was back in 2001 and 2002.

Concord resident and parent Andrew Player said one of his children will be attending a private school due to bullying. He noted that they met with the administration several times, who did try to make accommodations for their son, but he was not confident that the issues were addressed with the bullies at the school. He said the current sexual harassment policy is not a sexual assault policy. The word "persistent" in the definition of sexual harassment concerned him and should be removed.

Concord resident and parent Betsy McNamara said she has learned that while unprofessional behavior was reported as early as September 2018, an investigation did not start until December when Howie Leung was reported being in a car with a student. She said she was involved in the Board's work on the policies that will be adopted as a first step and stated that this need to be an iterative process.

Concord resident and parent Amy Girouard said that the revised Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect policy [Policy 432] does not specifically state that everyone in the District is responsible for reporting child abuse. She also said she was concerned about the sexual harassment reporting form, which requires an attestation that what the reporter is talking

about is true. She asked about training at the start of school, and how the Board will let parents know about changes to the restraint and seclusion policy.

Concord resident Tina Smith thanked the Board for its work on policy development. She asked the administration to work closely with NHCADSV on procedures to make sure students are put first and are dealt with in a trauma-informed way.

CHS student Charlotte Goble said it was important to guarantee student safety – when she goes to school every day, she needs to know that students can trust the people who guide them and are their leaders.

Bedford educator Julie [Warren] discussed her son’s experience with bullying. He is now going to a private school. She suggested that when staff sees a child is struggling, they should do something about it. She wished someone had put energy into reprimanding the child who was causing the problems.

Concord resident and guardian Brian Harlow said more people would be at this meeting but are caring for children at home. He asked what the exact plan was, and what support the Board was providing, for students who have been affected by Mr. Leung. He noted that trauma affects a child’s ability to process information. He said his youngest is non-verbal and that many parents were there to speak for children who cannot speak for themselves. He asked the Board to have consideration for the safety of children who have challenges and may be non-verbal. He said that the break in trust between the community and the Board/administration can be mended with transparency, and with trauma-informed policies “with teeth.” He thanked the Board for hearing the public’s concerns.

CHS graduate Leeza Richter noted that she had a positive experience at CHS, remembering that her teachers were fundamentally “there” for the students. She said she was surprised there isn’t more backlash that the District has not adhered to policies that were already in place, yet now there will be new policies. She said she opposes policies that might cancel many of the good things in the District: a teacher covering expenses for a student who otherwise could not afford to participate in an activity, private conversations, non-formal counseling. She asked the Board to consider that she doesn’t want teachers, who are fundamentally good people, to be punished because of one bad person.

Concord resident John DeJoie, whose two children graduated from CHS and who is involved with Waypoint (formerly Child and Family Services), noted that it is not sufficient to report suspicions of abuse to a Principal or administrator. He said that staff should reach out to a trained child advocate, who can guide and offer suggestions. He said his son was bullied, and was also a student in Mr. Leung’s classroom. He said he hopes the District will effect a change in climate – not just about how teachers relate to students, how teachers treat students in the classroom, and how students are handled, but also so students will be able to predict why they might be disciplined or suspended. He said that while very strong first steps have been taken with the proposed changes to the bullying policy, none of that is reflected in the student suspension policy [Policy 540 Code

of Student Conduct], which continues to be capricious in that the administration can suspend a student for “whatever they feel like.” He also noted that training is missing, not just on this policy, but how to effectively engage students in the classroom, especially those with challenging behaviors.

Concord resident Dellie Champagne suggested that there is distrust among Board members and that the Board has an image problem. She said it concerned her that “lines could be crossed;” she doesn’t feel that the Board represents the community. She suggested that employees sit with the public, and just the Board sit up front.

Concord resident [Karen Macia], parent of two CHS graduates, is an advocate for the Crisis Center and an educator (teaching reading to dyslexic students). She said when she spoke with the previous Superintendent about teaching strategies for disabled students, she was told “we don’t do that here.” She said she was concerned at the District’s lack of knowledge or unwillingness. She said child rapists cannot be allowed to hide behind union contracts. She asked how contracts will be negotiated so rapists are not allowed to continue teaching in the District. She spoke about the “culture of rape” in the District. She said she appreciated the meetings about policy.

Concord resident and parent Kimberly Wood asked what kind of staff background checks are being done, and how often they are being done. She shared several situations involving her children with IEPs, and the lack of support she experienced from one Principal about a particular male special education teacher. She said several teachers went to the Principal about this teacher, and after further discussions, the Principal made accommodations for her child. She later heard this teacher would never teach again. She suggested that situations like the Leung case start at a smaller level, and asked what steps will be taken to safeguard the community’s children.

CHS graduate Kate Richards stated that she really loved being part of the “Feminists Now” group when she was at school, which became especially relevant after 2016. She said the short video about consent, “Tea is Consent,” in her advisory, and her health class, and Respect Week, were treated as jokes by many students. She said that, as a student, she herself had to mend many gaps in her education. Everything her group wanted to do had to go through layers of administration, and their efforts sometimes felt futile. She said the only change she ever saw was led by students and that, even though they were underage, she felt it was up to them to make themselves feel safe. She said that at graduation Mr. Sica thanked her for all she had done, but she felt she did not do enough for her peers.

CHS resident and parent Gina Cannon noted that she appreciated being part of the policy working group; it was helpful to see the process and validating to be involved. She said she still does not have any greater sense that her daughter will be safe in school nor that policies will change the reality when she walks through the school doors. She is anxious to hear specifics of the upcoming training and noted the perception in the community that Board members and administration “feel there is a cadre of moms stirring things up and otherwise everything would be fine.”

Concord resident and parent Karen [Crarer] said it was important for the Board to know that there are a number of parents who are treating this issue as a priority. She wants kids who have not been heard to have their confidence restored. She thanked those who worked on the policy update and said she needs assurances that these issues will remain a priority and will be continuously updated.

CHS graduate 2018 Laila Ruffin said Concord is a welcoming community and residents love the city and love the District. She said that as many staff members live in Concord and work in the District, and many are also CHS alums, this creates the notion that certain staff will be protected no matter what they do and that some people, who may have been in their positions for years and years, feel they are irreplaceable. She said it is important to let people know that just because they may have worked here for a long time does not mean the rules do not apply to them. She said it was important to recognize the impact of Title IX on the claim of sexual assault when measures were not taken because the victim did not say no. Ms. Ruffin said the administration cannot say one thing but do another, and that it was important that the District reflect values that students are taught in the classroom. She said that right now, students feel that staff will not take their concerns seriously.

CHS resident and parent Jill Keller echoed Ms. Ruffin's comment regarding the status quo of the toxic culture. She said she was told, about a coach who made inappropriate comments to her daughter, that "he's been here 22 years and that's just the way he is." She stated that every single action from every single teacher and every single coach is setting an example for how children should behave. She said her daughter will have this same teacher in the future, but she does not know who to call with her concerns as she does not trust anyone. She said that her daughter McKenna was president of the SOCK club and that "there were lots of things going on that are completely unacceptable."

Concord resident and parent of two CHS graduates Karen Knowles commented that, while listening to the policy discussion, not a lot was said about what happens to students when they do report: whether this would go on a student's record, and who could find out about it. She said these kids are not professionals, and they need to know before they make a report exactly what the process is going to look like. She spoke to the uncertainty a victim feels, when someone has controlled them like that. She said transparency was crucial to regain community respect.

Concord resident David Parker thanked the Board for its work in this area. He noted that a systemic problem in the District is "thinking we can solve our own problems." He noted to the Board that it is responsible for student safety, not the administration. He said the Board oversees the School District, and the best way to help is to be critical of the employees. He said he was uncomfortable that the Superintendent and Board President sit together at Board meetings. He said Board members and administrators should get involved with statewide associations and learn from their colleagues.

Concord resident and parent Meaghan Kelly said she hoped the Board was hearing the numbers of people concerned about this issue and that the Board was aware that this is a school climate issue.

Ms. Patterson thanked the public for its input, and stated that the Board was aware of the important work before it. She said that work on these specific policies is part of the ongoing review the Committee has been engaged in over the past few years. The policies being considered at the meeting were those most critical to be put in place before the start of the school year, but the Committee would soon review the Code of Student Conduct policy [suspensions] and how the Restraint and Seclusion policy relates to other policies.

There was no further public comment.

#### Agenda Item 5. Approval of Board Minutes

Ms. Patterson asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes of the regular Board meeting on July 1.

**The Board voted 9-0 to approve the minutes of the regular Board meeting on July 1 (moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Higgins).**

#### Agenda Item 6. Recognitions

##### Data Governance

Director of Technology Pam McLeod noted that NH state law RSA 189:66 V established minimum standards for data security, and the Department of Education recently published minimum standards derived from federal standards. She presented highlights of the data governance plan, which will be reviewed annually by the Board. Data governance is critical because schools are targets for malware (hijacking of financial data); student data is a high target as children have not established credit records. Their data can be stolen and used to impersonate them. She noted that parents can use a new federal credit freezing law for their children as well as themselves; the school district cannot do that for you. Using audit logs on District systems, only people who have reason to access the data have access to the data. Security processes include a secure, encrypted email option; cannot send emails with social security numbers out of the District; multi-factor authentication. She noted the number of daily emails, number of devices, servers, and 400 or more applications in the District. The IT department's upcoming priorities include a log server, systems redundancy, security audit/risk assessment of electronic systems, paper process, data classification levels and data dictionary. The new Policy 247 Data Governance was enacted in 2018. A new Right to Know bill, HB 329, includes discussion of information security in non-public sessions. State guidelines requiring the vetting of applications and securing privacy agreements with vendors resulted in the creation of a statewide collaborative which hired a privacy consultant at the cost of \$1/student per year and now represents 96,000 students. The department will need to provide parents with

lists of applications that have been vetted. She expected comprehensive list to be available in September. She noted that these are the most stringent requirements for vendors to meet in the country. This information be conveyed to parents using social media, through work with students in classrooms, on the website and in other ways. She noted that it is important for students to know how to protect their own data.

Superintendent Forsten shared work completed in the District over the summer. She spoke about the National Title IX conference attended by Student Services Director Bob Belmont in July. The training included developing the role of Title IX Coordinator; oversight of investigations; implement Title IX in pre-K through grade 12. The District plans to send additional people for more training in Title IX compliance. The parent/student handbooks are in the process of being revised. The Memo of Understanding with CPD is being examined.

She reported briefly on a number of policies, which were discussed later in the meeting. A new policy on professional expectations was developed by NHSBA and referenced the new NH DOE Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct, meant to promote a climate of responsibility and safety. Policy #432 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect was changed substantially, with input from NHSBA attorneys, experts through the state, and the public. The changes also reflect NHSBA 2019 revisions. The essence of the policy, as with the mandatory reporting law, is that if one suspects abuse, one should make the call to DCYF. It opens with "everyone is a reporter." While posters and signage have been in schools since the policy was changed not long ago, the District has produced updated posters and signage. The policy also clarifies expectation of annual training, and to that end the administration has been working with the "Know and Tell" program: last Monday 25 staff members were trained, and there will be another training on August 12 for an additional 25 to 30 staff members. The program is three hours of training, including videos and case studies. Proposed Policy #437 Employee – Student Relations, was based on the NHSBA model and highlights courteous and professional relationships and boundaries. The policy references the NH DOE Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct. Sexual Harassment has been changed to a single policy. Using materials from St. Paul's School, the new policy provides clarity on reporting procedures, retaliation, and the report forms themselves. Policy #539 Student Safety and Violence Prevention – Bullying was significantly changed, using St. Paul's School language and definitions from their related policy. Included are improved and clarified reporting procedures for parents, disciplinary action (always to include mediation and remediation), restitution (behaviors connected to learning opportunities), and revised reporting forms, from public input. Policy #812 Communication of Concerns, retitled Communication of Complaints about School District Employees, offers a hierarchy of complaint steps, and include students bringing forward complaints.

The MOU with CPD is not a policy and will be reviewed by Concord Police Chief Osgood, Board President Jennifer Patterson, and Superintendent Forsten. The memo is based on the NHSBA model, with the addition of hazing and the reporting of specified employee-student offenses.

Superintendent Forsten noted that parent/student handbooks are being revised to promote a safe and more trusting climate in the school. Everyone who is an employee of the District will be trained in a program called "Know and Tell," and on the sexual harassment policy and all policy revisions. The administration is also developing training for students from K-12. High school student training will be sourced from the UNH Prevention Innovations Research Center, designed to create safe high school campuses, recommended by St. Paul's School.

Opening day on Monday August 26 is traditionally a District-wide welcome back; time for teacher prep, reviewing IEPs, etc. This year, a presentation on positive relationships with students will be included.

Superintendent Forsten proposed that the Board amend the school year calendar to set Wednesday, August 28 as the first day of school (one day later). If the Board votes this change, August 27 will be a professional development day for all staff. She noted that the administration has received support from the unions representing Tutors, CAA, CEA, and CEOPA on this change. The Superintendent will get information to parents very quickly.

She noted that BMS has received an offer of \$38,000 of donated playground equipment which, according to Policy #214 Acceptance of Gifts, requires a Board vote. An audience member asked whether the equipment was "Universal Design" to be used by students with disabilities; Matt Cashman said he would need to look into whether it is accessible to all students.

Barb Higgins asked how the Powerpoint presentation being created by Title IX Coordinator Bob Belmont would be shared. Superintendent Forsten said this would be shared with faculty and staff in September and October, and also at PTO meetings.

Mr. Crush asked how the administration intended to change school culture other than through the parent-student handbooks. Superintendent Forsten noted that culture changes take time. The administration will address this through annual trainings and webinars for mid-term hires; making sure actions are reflecting policy language; analysis of how reports are being responded to; and an examination of zero tolerance in practice. In response to a question from Mr. Crush about how the Board and administration will continue the momentum of change, Superintendent Forsten noted she will report on these initiatives regularly; some policies require reporting on an annual basis.

Mr. Croteau asked for the key points of the "Know and Tell" program. Superintendent Forsten noted that the training is on the mandatory reporting law and has been developed in New Hampshire for staff in schools. She said that, essentially, the law requires that if you suspect a child is being hurt, report to DCYF. Representatives from DCYF and Child Advocacy Council were present during the training. Twenty-five administrators and staff were trained this Monday, and 30 will be trained next Monday; by August 28, over 1,000 staff members would be trained. She said while the intent is to have everyone participate, there is an online webinar for those who miss the first day.

Mr. Richards asked whether staff will be trained in understanding what constitutes sexual harassment and grooming techniques that, had they known of them, might have prevented what happened. Superintendent Forsten responded that staff will have three hours of Know and Tell training and 3 hours of training on responses to sexual harassment, bullying, and any other new or revised policy. The training would include custodians, lunch workers, bus drivers, maintenance and office staff. There is a possibility of some of this training being made available at PTO meetings in the fall, or at the Back to School Nights.

Donna Palley noted that students will be co-creators in this work; their voices will be at the table.

#### Agenda Item 7. Personnel

Larry Prince presented two administrator confirmations for 2019-2020:

Kerry Finnegan, Director of Special Education, Rundlett Middle School, \$106,915.04, Step III, M+30/CAGS, prorated 242 days. Kerry replaces Cynthia Courounis (prorated step III = \$99,542) – resignation. Budgeted at \$107,769

Brett Gottheimer, Assistant Principal, Rundlett Middle School, \$106,473.53, Step II, M+30/CAGS, prorated 242 days. Brett replaces Heather Barker (prorated step III, M+30 = \$104,615) – resignation. Budgeted at \$108,938

Mr. Crush asked whether Ms. Finnegan is certified in special education administration. Superintendent Forsten noted that she has these certifications.

Danielle Smith noted that she served on the search committee for Ms. Finnegan, noting that this candidate rose to the top with her credentials, personality and energy level.

Liza Poinier noted that she served on the search committee for Mr. Gottheimer and felt he had broad experience and great potential. He was the best candidate of the applicants.

**The Board voted 9-0 to approve the confirmations as presented (moved by Mr. Croteau, seconded by Pam Wicks).**

Larry Prince presented several teacher confirmations for 2019-2020:

Jennifer Hume, Occupational Therapist, District, \$29,107, 60% M-1. Jennifer replaces Victoria Hopkins (40% M-14 = \$33,570) – transfer and Fiona Quirk (20% M-13 = \$16,115) – transfer. Budgeted at \$45,293

Stephanie Brasley, Project SEARCH, Concord High School, \$83,926, M-14. Stephanie replaces Monica Unger (B-13 = \$76,164) – retirement. Budgeted at \$58,612

Erica Jones, Special Education Teacher, Concord High School, \$68,711, M-9. Erica replaces Chelsea Poisson (M-14 = \$83,926) – resignation. Budgeted at \$83,926

Chelsea Barrett, Special Education Teacher, Rundlett Middle School, \$73,783, M-11. Chelsea replaces John Giles (M-3 = \$53,540) – resignation. Budgeted at \$86,572

Tina-Marie Hussey, Classroom Teacher, Beaver Meadow School, \$46,616, B-2, one year only. Tina replaces Michelle Mulligan (B-13 = \$76,164) – LOA. Budgeted at \$76,164

Amy Michaud, Special Education Teacher, Beaver Meadow School, \$49,130, B-3. Amy replaces Cheryl Dolin (M+30-14 = \$86,572) – retirement. Budgeted at \$86,572

Savannah Goulet, Classroom Teacher, Broken Ground School, \$44,102, B-1. Savannah replaces Lynn Warner (M+30-14 = \$86,572) – retirement. Budgeted at \$86,572

Chelsey Lonergan, Classroom Teacher, Christa McAuliffe School, \$77,179, M-12. Chelsey replaces Allison Davis (M-9 = \$68,711) – resignation. Budgeted at \$68,711

**The Board voted 9-0 to approve the confirmations as presented (moved by Nancy Kane, seconded by Ms. Higgins).**

Larry Prince presented one coach confirmation for 2019-2020:

Amy Montanez, Girls Freshman Soccer Coach, Concord High School, \$2,356, Step 2, Group 11, 5.5%. Amy replaces Danielle Rossetti

**The Board voted 9-0 to approve the confirmation as presented (moved by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Ms. Kane).**

#### Agenda Item 8. Communications & Policy

Ms. Patterson noted that the Committee met on July 8 and July 22 to discuss existing policies and referenced state statutes related to student safety, with public input and experts also present. Revisions to several policies were presented; via Policy 141, the first and second readings were waived and Board votes were taken on each.

##### Policy #431 Professional Expectations

Ms. Kane asked whether the NH DOE Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics should be attached to the policy. Ms. Patterson noted that protocol regarding specificity of language has been: to what degree does additional text replicate the language of the standards the Board is adopting and to what degree does it reference it.

Mr. Richards asked that the recently-adopted NH DOE Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics be added to the District website in the policy section.

**The Board voted 9-0 to adopt Policy #431 Professional Expectations with changes as noted (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Mr. Crush).**

##### Policy #432 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Significant changes were made to this policy by the working group. Mr. Crush noted that he was part of that group and that it is a robust policy. He expressed a concern about an issue at a student's home and whether language should be added to include events that may happen in school, or wherever. Ms. Patterson suggested adding a sentence in the

second paragraph, after the first sentence: "The obligation arises regardless of the location where the abuse occurred, including school, home or another location."

**The Board voted 9-0 to adopt Policy #432/537 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect as revised in the packet and at the Board meeting (moved by Mr. Crush, seconded by Ms. Kane).**

Policy #437 Employee – Student Relations

This is a new policy based on a NHSBA model policy. It establishes clear expectations about relations between employees and students. Mr. Richards noted that a student had expressed a concern about teachers helping with fees. As the District provides scholarships/fee waivers, etc., students would still get what they needed. There is nothing to prohibit tutoring students or after school help. There was discussion about the language in items #5 and #14. Concord resident Dan Habib suggested adding the phrase "unless necessary to serve an educational or health-related purpose:" CHS graduate Laila Ruffin commented that it would be important to include student input in the development of this policy. She said students often need to speak with a teacher or guidance counselor with the door closed, as offices or classrooms can be considered a confidential space, on issues of gender identity, sexuality or other. She said it would be important to explain this policy to students before it is adopted. NEA Capital Region Uniserv Director Jason Faria suggested that training and buy-in by staff needs to be obtained. Concord resident Linden Jackett suggested adding language prohibiting teachers giving students rides in personal vehicles without specific, written permission.

Nancy Kane suggested the Board not pass this policy at this time.

**The Board voted 9-0 to refer Policy #437 Employee – Student Relations back to the Communications & Policy Committee to include student and staff involvement, with the intent to reconsider it at the Board's October meeting (moved by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Croteau).**

An audience member asked how the public could send input on this policy. Ms. Patterson noted that was always appropriate to email members of the Committee.

Policy #521 Sexual Harassment

This policy would now combine two separate policies – one related to students and the other to staff – and reflects comments from the working groups. Ms. Patterson briefly read through the policy, highlighting the main points. In response to a concern about the word "persistent" included in the definition of sexual harassment, Mr. Richards suggested the Board might seek legal advice, as the word "persistent" might be part of the law applying to businesses. There was discussion whether the policy covered sexual harassment or sexual assault, or both. There was discussion about whether there was a form that included an attestation. Ms. Patterson noted that the language of the policy made it clear that the form was not required. She said it was important to adopt this policy and reconsider it if clarification was later required. She said that attestation is helpful from a legal perspective, but it must be clear in the language. There is currently no form for

sexual harassment, but there are proposed forms for the revised Policy #539, but it was agreed to remove the attestation from any form that might apply to this policy. Superintendent Forsten noted that the NHSBA anticipates revising this policy in the fall.

**The Board voted 8-1 (Mr. Crush voted nay) to adopt Policy #521 Sexual Harassment as it appeared in the Board book, with the expectation that the policy would be revisited in the near future (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Ms. Poinier).**

Policy #539 Student Safety and Violence Prevention – Bullying

Ms. Kane noted that the working group wanted a policy that addressed all members of the school community, tightened up the notification timeline, included action outside school hours, and included a requirement that all reports be forwarded to the Superintendent, whether substantiated or not. Much of the new language comes from the NHSBA model policy.

Mr. Croteau suggested that under section V., Student Reporting, no. 3., the word “may” be replaced by the word “shall;” to wit, “The Principal shall develop a system or method ...” and that language be added as guidance for students on what reporting really means.

Ms. Patterson suggested adding the following sentence to section V., Student Reporting, no. 4: “The administration shall develop instructional practices to ensure that all students understand and are comfortable using the reporting process.”

Ms. Poinier suggested the committee discuss what constitutes a report in the first place. She suggested leaving the policy as is for now, and focusing on the reporting system in general. She said she was distressed to hear some people had reported incidents and did not feel adults had taken steps to address their situations.

**The Board voted 9-0 to adopt Policy #539 Student Safety and Violence Prevention – Bullying as amended at this meeting, with the expectation that the policy will be revisited in the near future (moved by Ms. Poinier, seconded by Ms. Higgins).**

Policy #812 Communication of Complaints about School District Employees

Mr. Richards noted that the focus of the former policy was changed to now reflect complaints only about employees, and asked whether there was a need for a policy to cover other topics. Mr. Crush suggested attaching timelines to the procedures. Ms. Patterson suggested the committee might later take another look at the policy.

**The Board voted 9-0 to adopt Policy #812 Communication of Complaints about School District Employees as presented in the Board book, with the expectation that the policy will be revisited in the near future (moved by Ms. Poinier, seconded by Mr. Crush).**

Memorandum of Understanding – Concord Police Department and Concord School District. Ms. Patterson noted that this is not a policy and does not require a vote;

Superintendent Forsten, CPD Police Chief and she will meet and further discuss this document.

#### Agenda Item 9. City & Community Relations

Ms. Poinier reported that the Committee met with City administrators and City Council members on July 24. They discussed the Stable Building proposal and maintenance and financial issues related to Memorial Field, the parent/student handbook(s), and changes to the proposed District brochure.

#### Agenda Item 10. Other Business

##### School Year Calendar

Ms. Patterson presented a proposal to change the start of school to Wednesday, August 28 in order to provide training on student safety to 1,100-1,200 staff members on Tuesday. August 27 Pam Wicks said she understands the reason for this proposal, but does not like such a short week, and advocated for change in the calendar for next year. Mr. Croteau noted that this change was proposed in direct response to public requests.

**The Board voted 9-0 to revise the school year calendar to add professional development on August 27 and start of school for students on August 28 (motioned by Mr. Crush, seconded by Mr. Richards).**

Jack Dunn asked the Board to set a date for a public hearing on refunding the elementary bond, which will be up in October 2020. By doing so, the Board will be ready to tap the market when the time is right, to take advantage of low interest rates.

**The Board voted 9-0 to include a Public Hearing prior to the regular Board meeting on September 3 on refunding of the elementary bond (motioned by Mr. Crush, seconded by Ms. Higgins).**

#### Agenda Item 11. Proposed calendar of meetings

Superintendent Forsten presented draft Board calendars for August and September.

#### Agenda Item 12. Public comment

Jason Faria of NEA NH noted that the unions have supported the change of first day of school and, while they want everyone to attend, there are childcare challenges for parents. The YMCA and Boys & Girls Club have indicated they can extend their programming, and NEA has reached out to members and retirees, etc. in hopes of additional support. He said an option was needed for members who cannot make the training.

Chris [Polanec] said he was speaking to cronyism. He read from the ADS handbook:

“Parent(s) can request the current classroom teacher consider a ‘teaching style’ and how it best meets their child’s needs for the following school year. The parental request, which needs to be made in writing (electronic or hard copy) by April 1st, should be submitted to the Principal for consideration during the placement process.”

He said the administration should make this open, public and provide fair access to the process. Schools must prioritize families with real needs.

CHS graduate Kate Richards noted that both she and Laila Ruffin had not-typical experiences while at CHS. She suggested that a goal of diverse representation when seeking student input on policy development, not just from club leaders or athletes.

Agenda Item 13. Adjournment

**The Board voted 9-0 to adjourn (motioned by Mr. Crush, seconded by Ms. Kane).**

The Board adjourned at 11:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Richards, *Secretary*  
Linden Jackett, *Recorder*