

Oyster River Cooperative School District  
REGULAR MEETING

October 18, 2023

Mast Way School - Cafeteria

7:00 PM

- O. MANIFEST REVIEW/APPROVAL AT EACH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
- I. CALL TO ORDER 7:00 PM
  - NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A2 I (a)
    - Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining for OR Intervention Tutors Association.
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- III. PUBLIC COMMENTS (*Total allotted time for public comment is 30 minutes*)
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES *Motion to approve 10/04/23 Regular Meeting Minutes.*
- V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS
  - A. District
  - B. Board
- VI. DISTRICT REPORTS
  - A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s)
  - B. Superintendent’s Report
    - Update on Aramark Contract
    - Sustainability Committee/Plastic Bottles
  - C. Business Administrator
  - D. Student Representative {Maeve Hickok}
  - E. Finance Committee Report
  - F. Superintendent Search Committee
    - Affirm Screening Committee.
  - G. Other:
- VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA *{Requires unanimous approval. Individual items may be removed by any Board Member for separate discussion and vote}*
- VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS
  - Draft Budget Goal. *Motion to approve the FY25 Budget Goal.*
  - ORHS Proposed Graduation Date. *Motion to select the ORHS Proposed Graduation Date.*
  - Topics the Board would like to cover at the Budget Workshop.
- IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES
- X. PUBLIC COMMENTS (*Total allotted time for public comment is 30 minutes*)
- XI. CLOSING ACTIONS
  - A. Future meeting dates: October 26, 2023 – Board Budget Workshop @ 8:00 AM – Durham Council Office  
November 1, 2023 – Abridged School Board Meeting 6:00- 7:00 PM – MS Recital Hall
- XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 II {If Needed}
  - NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A2 I (a) {Moved to beginning of the meeting.}
- XIII. ADJOURNMENT
  - NESDEC Workshop– following the Regular Meeting.
    - Candidate Profile

Respectfully submitted,  
Superintendent

The School Board reserves the right to take action on any item on the agenda.

**Oyster River Cooperative School District  
SAU #5**

Welcome to the School Board meeting. If you wish to be heard by the Board, please note “Public Comment” at the beginning of the agenda (reverse side). During the comment section of the agenda each speaker may have up to three (3) minutes within the time frame allowed. Board Chair may limit time allotment as deemed necessary. Occasionally, the Board may “suspend its rules” to allow visitor participation at the time an issue of specific interest is being addressed. A speaker will not be recognized for a second time on a particular topic.

Visitors should not expect a Board response to their comments or questions under the above since the Board may not have discussed or taken a position on the matter. The Superintendent, without speaking for the Board, may offer clarification as appropriate.

Agendas and background information are available on the district website prior to meetings. Agendas and additional information are generally available at the entrance to the meeting room or distributed at the time the item is introduced for discussion.

The ORCSD School Board will meet in regular session on the first and third Wednesdays of the month with additional meetings when necessary. The School Board appreciates your attendance at these meetings and invites your continued interest in its work on behalf of the children and residents of the District.

**Oyster River Cooperative School District Members:**

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Denise Day, Chairperson   | Term on Board: 2023 – 2026 |
| • Matthew Bacon, Vice Chair | Term on Board: 2022 - 2025 |
| • Brian Cisneros            | Term on Board: 2021 –2024  |
| • Daniel Klein              | Term on Board: 2021 - 2024 |
| • Thomas Newkirk            | Term on Board: 2023 - 2024 |
| • Heather Smith             | Term on Board: 2022– 2025  |
| • Giana Gelsey              | Term on Board: 2023 - 2026 |

**Information Regarding Nonpublic Session**

On occasion, the Board agenda may include (or be adjusted to include) a Nonpublic Session. When a motion is made to do so, it will be done under the provisions of the NH State Law RSA 91-A:3 II, and one or more of the following reasons will be claimed for entering Nonpublic Session:

- The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request will be granted.
- The hiring of any person as a public employee.
- Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting.
- Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real property or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.
- Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed against the body or agency of any sub-division thereof, or against any member thereof because of his membership in such body or agency, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled.

# Oyster River Cooperative School Board

## Regular Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2023

DRAFT

**SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT:** Denise Day, Dan Klein, Heather Smith, Matt Bacon, Tom Newkirk, Giana Gelsey

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:** Maeve Hickok

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Suzanne Filippone, Catherine Plourde, Amy Ransom

**STAFF PRESENT:**

**GUEST PRESENT:**

**ABSENT:** Dr. Morse, Brian Cisneros

**I. CALLED TO ORDER at 6:00 PM by Chair Denise Day. Tonight's agenda was abbreviated.**

### **II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Tom Newkirk made a motion to approve the agenda as written, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 6-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None provided.

### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Giana Gelsey made a motion to approve the September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Newkirk.

**Giana Gelsey made the following revisions:**

On page 2 in the last sentence of the first paragraph, delete “it takes away” and replace with “the Learning Everywhere program can take away local school board control...”

On page 4 in the second line of the fifth paragraph change “don’t” to “doesn’t.” In the first line of the second bullet insert “Exercise, Physiology, and Wellness” next to EPW and in the second line, change “EWP to “EPW.” In the second line of the third bullet, change “state” to “country.”

**Denise Day made the following revision:**

On page 4 add the bullet “Denise Day stated that she hopes students whose interests and talents lie within language arts rather than math also have the opportunity to advance in their coursework.”

**Motion passed with correction 6-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

**Heather Smith made a motion to approve the September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Non-Public Meeting Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 6-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

### ~~V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS~~

### **VI. DISTRICT REPORTS**

#### ~~A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s)~~

#### **B. Superintendent's Report**

##### October 1 Enrollment

In Dr. Morse's absence, Assistant Superintendent Suzanne Filippone provided an enrollment update. She said enrollment numbers are as predicted for October 1st. There is a slight decline in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade numbers, but overall, enrollment numbers are in line with projections and there are no concerns.

#### ~~C. Business Administrator~~

**D. Student Representative {Maeve Hickok}**

Maeve Hickok reminded the listening audience that tomorrow, October 5<sup>th</sup>, is Open House at 6 pm. Parents will use a schedule filled out by their child to locate classrooms and meet teachers. Several clubs will be available to provide information.

**~~E. Finance Committee Report~~****~~F. Superintendent Search Committee~~****~~G. Other~~****VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA – Chair Denise Day asked if any items needed to be discussed separately and there were no requests from the board.**

- List of policies for Second Read/Adoption: IHAM – Health Education & Exemption From Instruction, JJIB-A – Spectator & Parent Expectations, GCBD & R – Sabbatical Leave & Proposal, JLCE – Emergency Care and First Aid – Current with Narcan Language.
- Appoint Catherine Plourde as the FY24 Affirmative Action Officer.
- ORHS Leave of Absence from September 2023 through January 2024.

**Denise Day made a motion to approve the unanimous consent agenda as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Newkirk. Motion passed 6-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

**VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS**NH DOE Required Critical Shortage Letter signed by the Superintendent.

Suzanne Filippone explained the NH DOE required critical shortage letter and informed the board that it will need their approval. She said there are approximately 28 critical shortage areas identified by the state. Although Computer Science is not an identified area at the state level, the OR district has found the position challenging to fill for the past two years. For this reason, it can identify it as a local critical shortage area, which changes the pathway for certification and makes it more direct.

**Heather Smith made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to sign the required NH DOE Critical Shortage Letter, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 6-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

Barrington Tuition Rate for FY25.

Amy Ransom provided the Barrington Tuition Rate for FY25 in the amount of \$19,718. The Tuition Agreement requires our district to notify Barrington in October of the tuition rate for the next year.

**Tom Newkirk made a motion to approve the Barrington Tuition Rate for FY25, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 6-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

Draft Budget Goal. FYI for October 20<sup>th</sup> Action.

In Brian Cisnero's absence, Heather Smith updated the board on the Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> budget meeting. She said there are two dominating factors affecting the budget - health insurance and pay raises that approximate \$1,000,000 each. While the negotiated wage increase was anticipated, the higher insurance costs were not. In fact, they are the highest they have been in years, although they are not the highest in the state. For these reasons, the 2024-2025 budget discussion begins with approximately a 2-million-dollar increase. Since a 3% increase does not cover the costs described, the committee is recommending a four-tiered budget goal of 3.3%, 3.6%, 4.3% and 5%. Heather encouraged board members to reflect on this information and come to the Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> board meeting with questions and thoughts for discussion.

Denise Day wondered if option #1 – 3.3% is worthwhile to consider for the fiscal budget. Heather said the committee discussed this and concluded it would be a useful exercise to see what the district would need to lose to meet the budget goal.

Giana Gelsey stated that in the past the goal was to not exceed 3.3%. She let the listening audience know that a 3.6% budget goal would be an increase of \$1,920,099. Heather pointed out that this is not the amount taxpayers

would be responsible for, and other factors have not been configured yet for calculating the tax amount. She said identifying budget goal options is just step one and only one part of a bigger process.

Amy Ransom stated that the 15.1% insurance rate could come in less, but she was advised that it will most likely not. Tom Newkirk clarified that the actual cost will be identified and announced later. Amy said this is not the year to budget for a lower amount, but in the end, it could come in lower.

Denise reiterated that the budget increase options are suggestions, and the discussion will continue at the next meeting.

#### Appoint a Survey Committee.

Chair Denise Day stated that “Competency-Based Learning” was a board goal pre-pandemic, and it still needs finishing. A previously used UNH survey will be revamped by a survey committee to focus on relevant questions for parents, faculty, and students. Denise proposed a survey committee of board members Tom Newkirk, Dan Klein, and Giana Gelsey joined by administrators, faculty, and parents.

**Matt Bacon made a motion to appoint Tom Newkirk, Dan Klein, and Giana Gelsey as the School Board Representatives to the Survey Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Newkirk. Motion passed 6-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

#### **IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES**

The Manifest Committee met and completed the following manifests.

Payroll Manifest # 7 Total is \$783,490.32

Vendor Manifest # 8 Total is \$408,936.42

Heather Smith announced the Last Focus Group for the Superintendent Search is being held tonight from 7-8 pm in the high school multi-purpose room. She encouraged the public to attend, even for just a portion of the time.

Denise Day asked for an update on the attendance and search criteria identified during the Focus Groups.

Matt Bacon said he appreciate the new website and the pop-up feature, which provides reminders that are helpful and not burdensome for the user to bypass.

Giana Gelsey asked how spectators can access the new stadium seating at the ORMS turf field, noting that some are unsure and still watching from the sidewalk. Suzanne explained that the stadium seating is accessed through the parking lot alongside the field’s fence. In the corner nearest the bleachers is a worn-down grass pathway. In the future, this pathway will be paved and accessible. Giana suggested signage to indicate the pathway and its accessibility.

**X. PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None provided.

#### **XI. CLOSING ACTIONS**

**A. Future Meeting Dates:**      October 18, 2023 – Regular School Board Meeting @ 7:00 PM – Mast Way Cafeteria  
    October 26, 2023 – Board Budget Workshop @ 8:00 AM – Durham Council Office  
    November 1, 2023 – Regular School Board Meeting @ 6:00 PM – ORMS Recital Hall

~~**XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91 A:3 II**~~

~~—— **NON MEETING SESSION: RSA 91 A:2 I**~~

#### **XIII. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Heather Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Giana Gelsey. Motion passed 6-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Karyn Laird, Records Keeper

**The School Board reserves the right to take action on any item on the agenda.**

Office of the Superintendent  
Oyster River School District  
36 Coe Drive, Durham, NH 03824

---

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

---

TO: School Board  
FROM: Dr. Jim Morse  
DATE: October 13, 2023  
RE: Sustainability/Plastic Bottles

Due to past Board questions, and discussion surrounding plastic bottles, and with the Finance Committee review, I am recommending that this work moving forward involve the Sustainability Committee.

Office of the Superintendent  
Oyster River School District  
36 Coe Drive, Durham, NH 03824

---

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

---

TO: School Board  
FROM: Dr. Jim Morse  
DATE: October 13, 2023  
RE: Initial Budget Memo

At the last meeting you were presented with a draft budget goal for 2024-25 of 3.3%, 3.6%, 4.32%, and 5.0%.

Every budget has its unique challenges, which are noted in the historic record over the twelve years of my tenure. Over these years the range of increases has been from a low of .35% to a high of 4.4%. The lower increases at the beginning of my superintendency reflected decreased numbers of staff due to lower student enrollment. The highs were due to the state transferring the cost of retirement to the local school districts and the unpredictability of the cost of health insurance. Over the twelve years of my superintendency the average increase has been 2.97%.

As you consider a budget goal, having seen the “rough draft” which is still being refined for our Budget Workshop on October 26, 2023, it is predictable that you will need a budget increase which is above the 2.97% average.

This budget is driven by two factors that were unpredictable. The first being a 15.1% increase in health insurance, equating to approximately one million dollars. The second is a \$200,000 increase in utilities, based on a large increase in our electric costs due to the end of a locked in price of 6 cents KH nearly doubling to 11 cents KH and the savings from the solar array at the new middle school going to investors rather than to us. We are continuing to set aside \$125,000 annually to buy out the contract we have with ReVision Energy for the solar array.

Had these two factors not happened we would not be facing an uphill battle to bring in a reasonable budget increase. The path forward, which we will discuss at length at our budget workshop is to cut the draft budget and to identify additional revenues.

The draft goals presented at the last meeting were 3.3%, 3.6%, 4.32%, and 5.0%. We cannot meet 3.3% without a reduction in staff. We may be able to meet 3.6% but there would be no new positions nor additional support for clubs or organizations. A 4.3% increase would allow the Board to consider a mental health counselor, a strings person and some support for clubs and organizations. A 5.0% increase is not necessary.

A realistic budget goal for 2024-25 is 3.6% to 4.3%. You will have an opportunity to discuss this in detail on Thursday at our budget workshop.

Office of the Superintendent  
Oyster River School District  
36 Coe Drive, Durham, NH 03824

---

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

---

TO: School Board  
FROM: Dr. Jim Morse  
DATE: October 2, 2023  
RE: Recommended Budget Goal

The Budget Committee met on September 27, 2023, to discuss a proposed budget goal. The two issues that drove our discussion was health insurance and negotiated pay increased. We learned the guaranteed maximum rate (GMR) increase for health insurance will be 15.1% which amounts to approximately \$1,000,000. Second, negotiated pay increases would also be close to \$1,000,000. We anticipated the negotiated wage increases but the health insurance increase is the highest it has been in years. This means we start the 2024-25 budget discussion with approximately a \$2,000,000 increase.

The budget for 2023-24 is \$53,336,098. A 3% increase does not cover the costs noted above. The committee decided to use the similar tiered budget goal as we've done in the past but recommends a four tiered budget goal of 3.3%, 3.6%, 4.3% and 5%.

**Option One - 3.3%**

The 2023-24 budget is \$53,336,098 so a 3.3% budget goal would grow the 24-25 budget to \$55,096,189 or an increase of \$1,760,091.

**Option Two - 3.6%**

The 2023-24 budget is \$53,336,098 so a 3.6% budget goal would grow the 24-25 budget to \$55,256,197 or an increase of \$1,920,099.

**Option Three - 4.32%**

The 2023-24 budget is \$53,336,098 so a 4.32% budget goal would grow the 24-25 budget to \$55,640,217 or an increase of \$2,304,119.

**Option Four - 5%**

The 2023-24 budget is \$53,336,098 so a 5.0% budget goal would grow the 24-25 budget to \$56,002,902 or an increase of \$2,666,804.

As a reminder, last year we had a budget goal of 3%, 3.62% and 4.32% but the final budget recommended to the voters was only 1.5% due to a decrease in revenue. We made several significant cuts to keep the 2023-24 budget to only a 1.5%, but primarily we offset increases by dramatically cutting our facility capital account which is not an option for 2024-25. Central Office administration is only at the beginning stages of gathering budget information from principals and directors, so we are a few weeks away from a draft budget.

We are providing this information to the full Board so you can contemplate what you will support for a budget goal on October 18th. Please find the budget goal from 2023-24 modified to the recommendation of the Finance Committee.





FY24 Approved Budget \$53,336,098

**FY 25 RECOMMENDED BUDGET GOAL**

3.3% Increase	\$1,760,091	Total \$55,096,189
3.6% Increase	\$1,920,099	Total \$55,256,197
4.32% Increase	\$2,304,119	Total \$55,640,217
5.0% Increase	\$2,666,804	Total \$56,002,902

Office of the Superintendent  
Oyster River School District  
36 Coe Drive, Durham, NH 03824

---

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

---

TO: School Board  
FROM: Dr. Jim Morse  
DATE: October 13, 2023  
RE: Past Budget Increases

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Notes</b>
FY24 (2023/24)	1.54%	
FY23 (2022/23)	4.1%	
FY22 (2021-22)	2.39%	
FY21 (2020/21)	2.83%	
FY20 (2019/20)	3.72%	
FY19 (2018/19)	3.20%	
FY18 (2017/18)	4.41%	
FY17 (2016/17)	3.41%	
FY16 (2015/16)	3.33%	
FY15 (2014/15)	1.75%	
FY14 (2013/14)	1.22%	
FY13 (2012/13)	0.35%	

# OYSTER RIVER HIGH SCHOOL

---

Rebecca Noe  
PRINCIPAL

Nancy  
Michaud  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
STUDENT SERVICES

Michael McCann  
ASSISTANT  
PRINCIPAL

Shannon Caron  
DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Kristen Perron  
ASSISTANT  
PRINCIPAL

Andy Lathrop  
DIRECTOR

To: Dr. Morse & School Board  
From: Rebecca Noe  
Date: October 12, 2023  
Subject: Oyster River High School Graduation Date

This Memo is to request the Graduation date for the Class of 2024. Because we do not need to move the date based on snow days, we are able to set a date much earlier than in the past. Families have been asking for the date and setting it now will help families plan for the event. Historically, we have held Graduation on the Friday before the last day of school. We would like to continue this tradition.

Date: Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Todd Allen Track & Field Complex

Livestreaming will be available in the Oyster River High School auditorium.

Rain Date: Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>