UNITY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
April 8, 2026
5:30 PM
Unity Elementary School

Agenda Item		Notes
I	**Call to Order** **Pledge**	
II	• **Roll Call**	Shannon Popescu - here Rocco Ruggeri - here Atonya Hart - here Darlene Ayotte - here Kelly Simpson - absent
III.	• **Election of Board Officers** ○ **Chair**	Superintendent conducted the election of officers. Shannon was nominated by Rocco with the nomination seconded by Atonya. No one else was nominated. All approved and Shannon was elected Chair.
	○ **Vice-chair**	Rocco was nominated by Shannon to be the Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Atonya. No one else was nominated. All approved and Rocco was elected Vice Chair.
IV.	• **General Business** • **Agenda – Amendments and approval**	Sue suggested that the agenda be amended to include addition of a discussion and action on the District Treasurer and the addition of action on General Assurances. *Motion made by Rocco to accept agenda as amended. Atonya seconded. All approved.*
	• **Approval of previous minutes** • **03/11/26**	*Rocco made a motion to approve the minutes for the UES Board meeting held on 3/11/26 as written. Atonya seconded, all approved.*
	• **03/14/26**	*Rocco made motion to accept the minutes of the Annual School District Meeting held on 3/14/26 as written. Atonya seconded, all approved.*
	• **Citizen Comments**	No citizens asked to speak.
V.	**Discussion/Action** **A. Action Items** **1. Oberkotter Fund. Audit**	Sue: Nothing new to report
	2. Siding – Sue	Sue: There is no money for siding so nothing new to report.
	3. Garage update – Sue	Sue is going to have Kurtz come back in to look at grading around garage site so it is more stable.

	B. Superintendent SAU 109 contract (Action)	Rocco reported that Forrest Ransdell reviewed the draft contract and that Rocco had also given it to our lawyers to look at it. The lawyers made quite a few changes (mostly rewording and rearranging). No significant changes other than Rocco had wanted the contract to have the Superintendent start prior to July 1, 2026, but the lawyers changed it to make it an hourly rate prior to July 1 with the contract to begin July 1, 2026. There were several other changes proposed by the district lawyers (Drummond and Woodsum). The meat of the contract has not changed. Bulleted points did not change nor did the proposed compensation. Rocco is asking the board to approve offering Forrest a contract and as soon as it's agreed upon, to sign the contract and hire him. The contract includes a clause that requires Unity to pay the Superintendent if they decide to terminate. *Rocco made a motion to approve offering Forrest Ransdell the modified contract once it is cleaned up, and to approve moving forward to signatures after the meet-and-greet. Atonya seconded and all approved* The Board should consider holding some sort of public meeting for the community to meet the superintendent. This should not be done behind closed doors. Transparency is important to start the new SAU on good footing. Shannon – asked Rocco to ask Forrest whether he would be willing to do a meet and greet rather soon. Next Wednesday the Board is holding a meeting so doing the Meet and Greet at that time would work. Matt suggested that we have a QR code the folks can click on to provide anonymous comments for the meeting. There is a PTA meeting at 6:30 next week – perhaps we could combine?
	Marj Erickson	
	C. Personnel Slate SY27 (Action)	See attached proposed Personnel Slate for SY27 *Atonya made a motion to approve the proposed {Personnel Slate for SY 27, Darlene seconded, all approved*.
	D. Financial Update **1. Year to Date SY 26 (Expenditures & Revenues)**	Matt Angell: The cash balance in the general ledger as of today is $592,311. The cash balance is primarily due to the 4th quarter State Adequacy Aid Grant we received for $250,005.77.

		Revenues through March 31st were $3,338,675. This leaves a budgeted balance remaining to collect of $716,190 or 17.66%. Notable revenues for March were the Town's District Assessment payment for $243,062.11 and School Building Aid for $74,878.96. Expenditures through March 31st were $2,752,660, encumbrances were $824,987, and the amount remaining in the operating budget was $377,217 or 9.54%.
	2. School District Meeting Documents (Action) – signatures	*Atonya made a motion to approve the MS 22 (*report of appropriations actually voted by a school district at the Annual School District meeting)*, seconded by Rocco, all approved.*
	3. Vouchers	Board members discussed whether to have everyone sign vouchers each month or whether to have a smaller subcommittee do it. There was no resolution
	4. Audit update	Matt will close out books and will prepare the DOE 25 (the School District SY 26 Financial report) and will then hand off all information to the new BA (SAU109 BA) All financial information for Unity is with the auditors at this point but Matt cannot say when the audits will be done. When complete the audits will current up through SY26 Shannon asked about forensic audits. Matt responded that Unity needs to have their own lawyer (separate from SAU 6) to represent Unity (against) Claremont if disagreements come up. Matt has identified someone to represent Unity in the forensic audit but this is someone who cannot do educational law (she is a municipal lawyer) (Laura Spectrum-Morgan) – but if Unity is going to hire a law firm specializing in education, they should just use that lawyer.
	5. Other – School lunch	Sue – currently we charge $3 for full lunch. We haven't had an increase in a while and with prices going up we should consider increasing. With no increase we are looking at a net decrease in revenue of approximately $35 K. If lunch prices are increased to $3.50/ student lunch the net revenue loss would be closer $27 K which is close to the $25K we put in our budget to offset lunch costs. Sue proposed increasing student lunches from $3.00 to $3.50 and adults from $3.50 to $4.10. Shannon asked about increasing the adult breakfast price from $1.75 to $2.25. Matt – the State is changing how lunches are calculated such that Unity will have to change their price anyway.

		Dawn Kokiel is going to be the new "Chef Patrick" working for Abby group. She will also still stay as bus driver. *Rocco made a motion to increase lunches and breakfasts as proposed, Atonya seconded, all approved*.
	District Treasurer	Shannon received an email on April 1st from Kelly Simpson in which Kelly resigned from being treasurer so that she could become a school board member. Kelly has now been sworn in as a School Board member. *Rocco made a motion to accept Kelly's resignation, Atonya seconded, all approved* *Atonya made a motion to approve Marjorie Erickson to be school treasurer from now through June 30th, Rocco seconded and all approved*.
	D. Calendar SY 27 (Action)	Sue gave the Board a proposed calendar with several dates that are wrong. She corrected these as follows: Feb 22-26 is Feb break Spring break is April 26-30 Memorial Day is the 31st not the 24th. Sue reviewed everything for the Board noting that Newport and Claremont both have the same Christmas, February and Spring breaks. *Rocco made the motion to accept the calendar as corrected, Atonya seconded and all approved.*
	E. Policies (Action)	Sue provided context for the current slate of policies. We brought these policies forward because UES does not have many financial policies and with moving forward with getting a credit card and making electronic transfers easier we need these policies in place.
	1. DK – 1st read	Rocco – the first paragraph says that the Board can appoint 2 or more Board members to be designated to sign vouchers *Rocco made a motion to make DK a first read, Atonya seconded, all approved.*
	2. DGD – 1st read	Rocco – the SAU 109 BA will only be very part time position so the Board should determine who will be responsible for holding credit cards (take wording from policy). Sue- the Board should also define the limit on a credit card. Many places no longer take PO's they will only take cards. Rocco would like Forrest to weigh in on this. *Rocco made a motion to accept DGD as a first read, Darlene seconded, all approved.*

	3. DJ – 1st read	Sue and Forrest need to agree on how purchases will be made since the BA won't be very involved. *Rocco made a motion to accept policy DJ as a first read, Atonya seconded and all approved.*
	4. DJB – 1st read	This policy was not included in the School Board packets. Rocco suggests again that the Superintendent and Sue get together to decide how they want to handle purchases. *Rocco made a motion to accept policy DJB as a first read, Atonya seconded, all approved*
	5. DAF	*Rocco made a motion to accept policy DAF as a first read, Darlene seconded and all approved.* Sue suggests that we look through all the D policies as UES does not have many. Rocco suggests that Sue and the new Superintendent meet to discuss all of these.
	6. Tuition Policy/Letter	Rocco: How do we word our tuition policy that holds the situation like Fall Mountains (out of whack tuition) in check without hurting parents? We need to renegotiate with Claremont as the 2-yr contract is up SY27. Atonya suggests having a meeting with parents to lay out the issue with Fall Mountain. The Fall Mountain price is in the budget for SY27 so the decision is more for SY28. Sue suggests asking other districts what they do. Fall Mountain will give a break in tuition price if Unity guarantees more than 20 students but Unity does not want to have to guarantee numbers. Rocco will reach out to the Fall Mountain Board again to see if he can continue discussions with them. Our tuition policy needs to be dynamic since prices increase/change between the regional schools every year. Rocco will talk with Fall Mountain and the Board will discuss the path forward more at the next meeting, particularly with regards meeting with parents. Rocco would like feedback or suggestions from the Board regarding his matrix.

	F. New SAU 109 (Discussion/action) **1.MOU – end of year closeout**	Sue started building a spreadsheet of tasks and costs that she sent to the Board. Task Status: • We have a domain name www.sau109.org • We are going to remain with Parent Square • Sue did ERate and got bids for internet access and accepted Fidium's proposed rate (our current provider). • Our firewall is with WALLY • Started training with ALMA • Discussed hiring process, Sullivan CTY Sheriff will do background checks (for $50 for fingerprints) • Sue wants to stay with TYLER/Visions for accounting for now. $18,699/yr) • Forrest had some ideas for other companies other than ADP for HR that were lower price. An MOU describing specifics (who does what) for how Unity will separate from SAU 6 will be discussed at the SAU 6 meeting Thursday April 9. Sue plans to attend. Sue doesn't think Jason can switch us over to a new system before June 30th (no time or sufficient personnel) so Sue recommends staying with SAU 6 tech center for a bit longer – this should go into the MOU. Also – Sue believes that Matt needs to close out our books and audits and this should go into an MOU. We need a detailed MOU particularly including what the BA office will do to close us out this year.
	2. Auditor	SAU 109 needs to identify their own auditor. Sue got the name of Newport's Auditor.
	3. Attorney	Rocco did call attorneys to gain information regarding services provided, & costs. If we want a relationship with a firm before we need legal support most have an agreement that you would sign that you agree to work together. No retainers so only billed when services are provided. Hopefully most law firms would be similar. Jim O'Shaunessy (SAU 6 lawyer) told Rocco that an MOU is very simple. Kerry (interim SAU 6 Superintendent), Matt, Claremont Board and Unity Board would sit down to figure out what is needed in the MOU and then Jim would put it into appropriate terms. Jim can facilitate an MOU. Rocco believes that the Superintendent needs to lead the charge in obtaining a lawyer and writing an MOU with Claremont.
	4. Tyler/Visions	Discussed above

	5. Other	
	G. NEASC update	Not at this time
	H. CSI update	Not at this time
	J. General Assurances	*Rocco made a motion to accept the General Assurance, Atonya seconded and all approved.*
VI.	**Superintendent Report**	See attached SAU 6 Board meeting tomorrow night on separation of Unity from SAU 6.
VII.	**Principal Report**	No written report Water always seems to bring a problem with the septic in the spring. Yesterday the smell was very strong. Paul Moeller came to inspect (he is the town building/health inspector). He asked that the pressure for septic be tested. All seems intact but two gaskets were found to need replacement that were allowing septic odors to escape. They were replaced and now the smell is gone. All caps will be inspected this summer and replaced as needed. Sue reported that the students are doing well. We lost a few, gained a few and total is currently 103. NHSAS testing cannot be done until April 20th so now all testing needs to be crammed into that week and into May due to vacation the week of April 27th.. As part of the evacuation (for the septic smell), the 6th, 7th and 8th graders got a tour of the historical society displays in the basement of the town hall. Gary and Linda Ross gave the tours. Sue asked if the Unity Historical Society would be interested in having some of the information that SAU 109 receives from SAU 6 – (archived documents and information). There is interest. Yearbooks, photos, Sue wants to get the middle school students into going through and cataloguing the information. Kerry – transfer of archival documents should also be part of the MOU.
VIII.	**Future Agenda Items**	• May Agenda: 8th grade presentation for class trip • School Board Retreat – the Board desires retreat meetings. Shannon will have Sue send an email to the Board to try to identify dates. Week of April 20th or May 4th. April 22nd was proposed at 5:00 PM at Common Man. • Teacher presentations on data – Sue hopes to have the information for June. • Tuition policy • 5-year rolling test plan – The data is available that needs to be exported to a readable format. Rocco wants to look, for example, at the current 8th graders and their scores over the previous 5 years (as a class not individuals). Move this into Action for next month. • Parental Bill of Rights
VII	**Future Meetings**	● School Board Sessions April & May? ● School Board Meeting – May 13, 2026

		● SAU 6 School Board Meeting – 4.9.26 @ 6 PM ● SAU 6 School Board Meeting – 5.14.26
VIII	**Dates to Remember**	● April 6-24 NHSAS Testing for Grades 3-8 ● April 10 – Spring Picture Day ● April 10 – Middles School Dance – 6:30-8:30 PM ● April 22 – Images Field Trip -Grade 5 ● April 27 – May 1, 2026 – Spring Break ● May 1 – Lunch Hero Day (We will celebrate on May 4th) ● May 4-8 – Staff Appreciation Week ● May 11 – Field Trip to SCNH – Grade 4 ● May 13 – Science Fair – 4 PM to 6 PM (more info to follow) ● May 13 – 8th Grade Mandatory Meeting with Parents & Students ● May 22 – Memorial Day Remembrance @ 11:00 AM ● May 25 – No School – Memorial Day ● May 27 – 30 – 8th Grade Class Trip ● TBD – Summer Beach Day ● June 9 @ 6 PM – 8th Grade Capstone ● June 10th @ 7 PM – Graduation w/Reception ● June 11th – Last Day of School (Half Day) ● KKids: Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:00 PM ● BUILDERS CLUB: Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:00 PM ● Science Club: Wednesdays – grades 5-8 3:00 – 4:00PM ● Unity School Board Meeting: 2nd Wed of every month, 5:30 PM ● Unity PTA meeting: 3rd Wednesday of every month, 6:30 PM
IX	**Non-Public Meeting RSA 91 A:3(c)** **Motion to come out of Non-Public Meeting**	*Rocco made a motion to move into non-public according to RSA 91 A:3(c), Atonya seconded* *Shannon - yes* *Rocco - yes* *Atonya - yes* *Darlene – yes* *Rocco made a motion to come out of the non-public meeting at 9:15 PM. Roll call vote:* *Shannon - yes* *Rocco - yes* *Atonya - yes* *Darlene - yes*
X	**Motion for Adjournment**	*Rocco made a motion to adjourn, Atonya seconded.* *The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM*

Respectfully Submitted
Marjorie Erickson