# Board of Education Minutes – April 6, 2026

In Attendance: Pamela Walsh - President, Cara Meeker - Vice President, Liz Boucher - Secretary, Jess Campbell, Alex Dubois, Barb Higgins, Madeleine Mineau, Sarah Sadowski

Absent: Brenda Hastings

Administration: Timothy Herbert – Superintendent, Matt Cashman, Jack Dunn, Michele Garon, Terry Wolf, Kimberly Yarlott, and Jeni Mosca (virtual)

## Call to Order

Ms. Walsh called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Boucher conducted the roll call of attendance.

## Approval of Agenda

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the agenda. (Moved by Ms. Meeker, 2nd by Ms. Boucher).

Motion to amend the agenda to add a policy matter to the superintendent report (Moved by Ms. Meeker).

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the agenda as amended.

## Consent Agenda

a. Regular Monthly Meeting (March 2)
b. Budget Work Session #4 (March 2)
c. Budget Work Session #5 (March 4)
d. Sustainability Committee (March 5)
e. Building Committee (March 5)
f. Instructional Committee (March 9)
g. Budget Work Session #6 (March 9)
h. Budget Work Session #7 (March 11)
i. Budget Work Session #8 (March 16)
j. Budget Work Session #9 (March 18)
k. Executive Committee (March 23)
l. Public Hearing Work Session #10 (March 23)
m. Public Hearing Work Session #11 (March 25)
n. Work Session #12 Open Session (March 30)
o. Work Session #13 Post FY27 Budget (March 31)

Motion to approve Consent Agenda (Moved by Ms. Meeker, 2nd by Ms. Boucher).

The Board voted 8-0 to table and remove from the Consent Agenda the minutes from all budget work session minutes and the sustainability committee minutes (Moved by Ms. Boucher, 2nd by Ms. Campbell).

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as amended.

## School Celebration: ADS

Teachers and students from Abbot- Downing School presented the departmentalized fifth grade instructional model. The model allows students to remain in a homeroom while rotating among subject specific teachers for math, reading, and writing, supporting strong content instruction and preparing students for middle school. Teachers reported using a waterfall schedule in order to see students at different times throughout the day.

Students reported that switching classes improved learning, increased confidence, and helped them develop independence and readiness for middle school.

Teachers also shared how students actively track assessment data, set academic goals, and reflect on growth in reading and math, promoting student ownership of learning.

## Champions for Children

Jim Richards: Rundlett Middle School
Katy Liberty: Abbot-Downing School
Shawna Lavoie: Beaver Meadow School
Alexa Trolley Hanson and Jennifer McKinney: Broken Ground School
Danielle Moran: Christa McAuliffe School
Hannah Buiel: Mill Brook School
Jennifer Speidel: Concord High School

## Recognitions/Reports

Student representatives Aryn Bernardo and Clementine Mayala provided updates on Concord High School activities and events. They reported that Quarter 4 has begun and the school year is nearing completion. Upcoming events include a college fair on April 13, and the All State music festival will be hosted at CHS on April 16–18. Spring break will begin on April 27.

Additional updates included the start of spring sports, with some logistical challenges noted for track and field due to limited access to Memorial Field. Juniors are completing SAT testing, with additional statewide science assessments scheduled. It was also reported that over 56 seniors received National Honor Society graduation chords, and 43 juniors were recently inducted into NHS.

### Superintendent Report

The Board received a presentation from Great Schools Partnership on the district's Opportunity and Equity Audit. Consultants provided a brief overview of the audit process, which examined school environments, family engagement, PTO/PTA involvement, and student participation in cocurricular activities. Data sources included building walkthroughs, interviews, focus groups, and review of student participation data. Key recommendations included expanding relationship based family engagement strategies, reducing systemic barriers to participation, and implementing annual districtwide culture and climate surveys. The full report was included in the Board packet.

The Board will consider adoption of the Opportunity and Equity Audit report and its recommendations after Public Comment.

The District received multiple anonymous donations totaling $250 in support of Food Services. Appreciation was expressed to the donors.

The Board was informed of a $3,000 donation from Capitol City Subaru through its *Subaru Loves Learning* program. The donation supports classroom materials, resources, and supplies to promote equitable learning opportunities for students. This year's receiving school is Christa McAuliffe School.

The Board will vote to accept the donation after Public Comment.

Dr. Herbert reviewed the Statewide General Assurances document related to federal grant applications. The assurances confirm that the Concord School District will comply with all applicable federal and state requirements associated with grant funding. Administration explained that the Board's role is to acknowledge receipt of the assurances, which authorizes the Superintendent and a Board representative to sign and certify compliance in order to pursue federal grant funding for upcoming school years.

Administration reported that the annual audit of district grant fund usage was completed with no findings, confirming that funds were used appropriately and in compliance with grant assurances. In addition, Ms. Mosca reported that the district's special education programs were reviewed across required indicators for the 2025–2026 school year, with no findings and full compliance noted.

Dr. Herbert proposed Thursday, June 18, as the last day of school noting that the district utilized two snow days during the school year. The Board will vote to approve the proposed last day of school after Public Comment.

Administration and staff discussed transportation challenges resulting from athletic fields coming offline and increased use of off-site practice locations, including facilities in Penacook and Pembroke. Partnerships with neighboring schools and the New Hampshire National Guard have provided temporary practice locations; however, transportation capacity remains limited due to driver shortages and scheduling conflicts.

It was noted that the current transportation policy, originally adopted decades ago, does not fully align with current practices or the district's present operational constraints. Administration proposed consideration of an emergency policy to allow greater flexibility in transporting students to school sponsored athletic practices and events, including limited circumstances where parent transportation may be necessary. The proposal was reviewed by legal counsel and the district's insurer.

Board members discussed safety, liability, equity of access, volunteer requirements, insurance considerations, and the need to ensure students are not excluded from participation due to transportation barriers. Administration emphasized that district provided transportation remains the priority whenever feasible and that the emergency policy would serve as a temporary measure while a permanent policy revision proceeds through the regular policy process. Consideration of an emergency transportation policy will be held for a vote following Public Comment.

## Facilities Update

Mr. Cashman provided an update on district projects and upcoming work. During April vacation, a new 3000amp electrical service breaker will be installed at the high school to avoid disruption during the school session. Chiller work will be completed at Christa McAuliffe School and Mill Brook School. Sidewalk replacement at Rundlett Middle School will proceed during the break to minimize impact, with temporary use prior to opening the new school. Head custodians are preparing end of break cleaning plans, and capital projects approved during the budget process are being scheduled for the upcoming eight-week period.

## Middle School Project Update

Mr. Cashman provided an update on the new middle school project stating that early bid packages have been issued, construction documents are approximately 60% complete, and the project remains on track to reach 100% completion by August 1. Site mobilization, including fencing and trailers, is anticipated in early to mid-May, with initial foundation work beginning mid-to-late May. A neighborhood survey will be conducted prior to land disturbance. Full construction is expected to ramp up during the summer and fall. A Building Committee meeting is scheduled to review abutter feedback and discuss plans for a future groundbreaking event.

During follow-up discussion, a Board member noted increased public curiosity and neighborhood activity around large construction sites and suggested the use of signage at Rundlett Middle School once fencing is installed. Suggestions included posting informational signage, QR codes, or contact information directing community members to project updates. Administration confirmed plans to install a project storyboard and provide opportunities for transparency, including sharing updates and offering site tours when conditions are safe and appropriate.

## City & Community Relations

Ms. Higgins provided an update on the current condition of Memorial Field and recent discussions with City officials. It was reported that the track is unsafe for competition, bleachers are condemned and scheduled for demolition, and drainage and pooling water continue to be significant issues. Fields have not yet opened for spring sports. The Board has previously approved funding only for initial planning and permitting costs and has not committed to construction plans at this time.
The Committee discussed the City's request for guidance on the School District's priorities. After review, the Committee recommended not endorsing existing redevelopment options and instead focusing on a short-term, cost-conscious approach addressing urgent needs. Priority items identified include the track, infield, lighting, bleachers, and drainage, with the goal of restoring safe, multipurpose athletic use as quickly as possible.

It was noted that redesigning the track and infield could create a multi-purpose facility capable of supporting football, soccer, field hockey, and boys' and girls' lacrosse, addressing equity concerns raised previously. Parking and additional amenities were identified as secondary priorities.

The Committee recommended directing the City and the School District, in coordination with the Athletic Department, to develop a revised, scalable plan focused on urgent needs and mindful of cost constraints, to be presented to the Board by May 31 to align with the City's budget timeline.

## Finance

Mr. Dunn reported several budget areas under close monitoring with three months remaining in the fiscal year. Professional services and student transportation expenditures remain over projections, though transportation costs are improved compared to the prior year. Out-of-district tuition expenses continue to show potential overages, partially offset by encumbered funds.

Electricity costs may exceed the budgeted amount, as anticipated during budget development. Additionally, severance expenditures may fluctuate pending confirmation of retirements and contract changes.

Mr. Dunn will provide updated projections and a clearer year-end outlook at the May Board meeting.

## Negotiations

Administration reported that negotiations are ongoing with CEA, representing teachers and nurses. In addition, a preliminary meeting was held with the tutors' bargaining unit, and a counteroffer has been presented. The district is awaiting a response.

## Personnel

Ms. Garon presented a list of 6 new spring coach nominations for approval.

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the list of new spring coaches as presented (Moved by Ms. Higgins, $2^{nd}$ by Ms. Meeker).

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the list of CEA members being recommended for next school year (Moved by Ms. Higgins, $2^{nd}$ by Ms. Sadowski).

Superintendent Herbert brought forward the list of CEA members being recommended for the Veterans Salary Schedule for 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 school years.

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the CEA members being recommended for the Veterans Salary Schedule (Moved by Ms. Higgins, $2^{nd}$ by Ms. Campbell).

Ms. Walsh asked that the two requests for Leave of Absence be held until after non-public.

## Public Comment

Roy Schweiker Zone A expressed concerns regarding the financial impact of the middle school project, particularly the bonding structure and overall cost, and urged the Board to explore cost saving options, including adjusting the bond term or removing elements of the project. Mr. Schweiker also advocated for moderation in salary levels, suggesting that the district consider aligning compensation closer to statewide averages in order to reduce the burden on taxpayers, particularly those facing financial hardship.

## Votes

The Board voted 8-0 **t**o accept a $3,000 donation from Capital City Subaru (Moved by Ms. Boucher, 2nd by Ms. Mineau).

Motion to remove School Board support for the specifics of Memorial Field Option A and Option D (Moved by: Ms. Higgins; Seconded by Ms. Campbell). Motion was tabled following discussion Moved by Ms. Higgins, 2nd by Ms. Mineau). The Board voted 8-0 to table the motion.

The Board voted 8-0 to request that the Parks and Recreation Department and Concord High School Athletics work together to develop a plan addressing and prioritizing urgent Memorial Field needs, including drainage, track, stadium, infield, lighting, and bleachers, to be presented by May 31 (Moved by Ms. Higgins, 2nd by Ms. Meeker).

The Board voted 8-0 to set the last day of school as Thursday, June 18 (Moved by Ms. Higgins, 2nd by Ms. Sadowski).

Motion to amend Concord School District Policy 712 regarding athletics and transportation on an emergency basis (Moved by Ms. Meeker, 2nd by Ms. Higgins).

Amendment to add language requiring all parent drivers to be designated district volunteers (Moved by Ms. Walsh, 2nd by Ms. Higgins).

By roll call vote (8-0) motion carries as amended.
Ms. Campbell - yes
Mr. Dubois - yes
Ms. Higgins - yes
Ms. Meeker - yes
Ms. Mineau - yes
Ms. Sadowski - yes
Ms. Walsh - yes
Ms. Boucher - yes

Ms. Walsh asked that the policy committee review the proposed policy and report back at the May meeting.

The Board voted 8-0 to adopt the Great School Partnership report (Moved by Ms. Meeker, 2nd by Ms. Higgins).

The Board discussed adoption of the Equity and Opportunity Audit report. Administration clarified that adoption affirms the report as a guiding framework to inform the work of the Equity Advisory Committee, reflect on district equity goals within the strategic plan, and guide future consideration of recommendations. Adoption does not authorize immediate implementation or funding of all recommendations, which would require separate Board action.

## Other Business

Dr. Herbert presented the 2025–2026 enrollment progress report. School level enrollment shifts were reviewed, with slight declines at Beaver Meadow and Broken Ground Schools, while McAuliffe School enrollment remains strong. Kindergarten enrollment continues to be an area of focus due to higher class sizes, with instructional support in place. First grade enrollment at Mill Brook is also being monitored to maintain manageable class sizes.

High school enrollment decreased by three students due to attrition within the district. There was no enrollment change at Rundlett Middle School or CRTC. Homeschool enrollment increased, with additional requests received that are expected to be reflected in the next report. Out of district placements decreased by one due to program completion, and special education charter school enrollment remained unchanged. The number of students experiencing homelessness increased by seven, and support continues through McKinney-Vento services.

The Board considered a proposal to request that the Instructional Committee review Concord High School graduation requirements related to physical education and return with recommendations. It was noted that current district requirements exceed state minimums, and a review could identify opportunities to offer greater flexibility for students while potentially addressing staffing and scheduling constraints. Board members discussed how adjustments to requirements could increase access to advanced coursework, including AP classes, without increasing class sizes.

The Board voted 8-0 to request the Instructional Committee review and present recommendations regarding Concord High School physical education graduation requirements (Moved by Ms. Campbell, 2$^{nd}$ by Ms. Higgins).

## Proposed Calendars of Meetings

4/8 Communication & Policy 5:30pm
4/9 Building Committee 5:30pm
4/13 Negotiations Committee 5:00pm
4/13 Instructional Committee 5:30pm
4/20 Negotiations 5:00pm
4/20 Finance 5:30pm
4/22 Wellness Event at Bank of NH State 5:30pm
4/27 – 5/1 Spring Recess
5/4 Board of Education Meeting 6:00pm
5/7 Building Committee 5:30pm
5/11 Communication & Policy 5:30pm
5/13 Instructional Committee 5:30pm

5/18 Negotiations Committee 5:00pm
5/18 Finance Committee 5:30pm
5/20 Executive Committee 5:00pm
5/20 City & Community Relations 5:30pm
5/25 Memorial Day
5/27 Distinguished Educators & CSD Retiree Ceremony 6:00pm at ADS
5/28 CRTC Commencement Night 6:00pm

## Non-Public Session

The Board, by roll call, voted 8-0 to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 A, C, D
Moved by Ms. Walsh at 8:15 pm
2nd by Ms. Meeker

Motion to come out of non-public session made at 8:39 pm
Moved by Ms. Higgins
Seconded by Ms. Sadowski
Voice vote in the affirmative 7-0 (2 absent) to come out of non-public
*Cara Meeker left non-public session 8:25 pm

Motion to seal the minutes of the non-public session
Made by Ms. Boucher
Seconded by Ms. Campbell
Roll call vote in the affirmative 7-0 to seal the minutes

Motion to approve leave of absence request
Made by Ms. Higgins
Seconded by Mr. Dubois
Voice vote in the affirmative 7-0 to approve the leave of absence request

## Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 8:39 pm
Made by Ms. Higgins
Seconded by Mr. Dubois

Respectfully submitted, Sarah LeMay