

GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2025
GILFORD HIGH SCHOOL
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The Gilford School Board held a meeting on February 3, 2025 at Gilford High School. Present were Board members Jessica Jacques, Nicole Hogan, Lauren Huleatt, Robert McLean and Monica Sawyer. Drew Taylor, Grace Sisti and Bianca Weber represented Gilmanton. Administrators present were Superintendent Beitler, Amie Leigh, Danielle Bolduc, Katie Bryant, Tara Brosius, Anthony Sperazzo. The student representatives were Bella Bryant and Katie Strickland.

Opening

Chair Jacques called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Superintendent Beitler confirmed the posting of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Nicole Hogan and a second by Robert McLean, the Board approved the minutes of the January 6, 2025 meeting with an 7-0-1 vote. Monica Sawyer abstained from the vote.

Public Comment

Chair Jacques opened public comment.

Skip Murphy asked when the Board will have a meeting that he can get answers to his questions. Skip also spoke about Title IX and asked that policy JBAB be removed.

Kyle Sanborn also spoke about the Title IX policies stating that based on the January 9th judgement, the DOE has been advised to go back to the 2020 Title IX regulations.

There being no further public comment, Chair Jacques closed public comment.

Student Report

Bella Bryant and Katie Strickland reported on the following:

- On January 21st, both Bella & Katie had the opportunity to meet with elementary and middle school learners.
- High School students were able to see their course recommendations for the 2025-2026 school year on January 27th. This allowed students to look at classes that teachers recommended them for and also gave students the ability to see teachers about changes they would like to make.
- Starting on January 14th, sophomores and juniors were given the ability to attend an “SAT Bootcamp” every Tuesday after school in the library to help students find new study plans, improve their scores, and learn test taking strategies. The Board asked questions about the SAT Bootcamp and were very happy to hear that students were participating.
- Coffee House was on Thursday the 23rd and was a great success. It was an all-around good time with a great turnout.

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- GHS Performing Arts Department is starting up production of their spring show *Little Shop of Horrors* which will run March 27th, 28th, and 29th. The PAD is also hosting the State Theater Festival April 11th & 12th. The junior class is putting on the *Untalented Show* on March 13th to raise money for their class and the prom. It's an opportunity for everyone to showcase their talents. Auditions were held January 22nd.

Gilmanton Report

Drew Taylor presented the Gilmanton report which included:

- Update on the Gilmanton Deliberative Session
- Requested the 50th Celebration information be sent to Gilmanton
- Discussion of the AREA Agreement was ongoing.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Beitler reminded the Board that the Deliberative Session is on Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. Amie and Superintendent Beitler met with Moderator, Sandy McGonagle and Budget Committee Chair, Val Chase, on Tuesday to review the warrant. He has confirmed Attorney Peter Phillips will be present at the Deliberative Session to support the Moderator and School Board.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee has been established and includes: Jeremy Doucet (Gilford parent and business owner), Tim Goggin (GHS assistant principal), Mary Beth Godbout (GES teacher), Jessica Scudder, (GMS teacher and GEA tri-president), Carey Hough (Gilford human resource staff and Gilmanton parent), Grace Sisti (Gilmanton School Board member), Lauren Huleatt (Gilford School Board member and parent), Jessica Jacques (Gilford School Board member and parent), Katie Bryant (Director of Curriculum and Grants and Gilford parent), Kirk Beitler (Gilford Superintendent). Our facilitator is Chris Motika.

Chris was at GHS on January 31st to hold listening sessions for staff during the professional development day. We have a community listening session scheduled for February 10, 2025 from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. in the GHS library. There are two more listening sessions scheduled for March 8, 2025 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the Gilford Public Library and 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. at the Gilmanton Year-Round Library. We also have surveys for staff and community members that we will be distributing. All surveys opened on January 31st and will close on March 21st. We are still working on a student survey.

Superintendent Beitler stated that he received notice from the Office of Civil Rights that the Title IV regulations of 2024 have reverted back to the 2020 regulations. He shared a packet of the Title IX policies from 2020 as well as the current 2024 policies based on the 2024 Title IX regulations. Legal counsel recommended using the 2020 policies if we were involved in any Title IV investigations.

Chair Jacques stated that when the 2024 regulations came out, the Board approved the Title IX policies on an emergency basis and then they were vetted through the Policy Committee. She suggested the Board do the same with these policies.

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Nicole Hogan motioned to adopt the 2020 AC, AC-R/AC-E, ACA/AC-R, ACAC and ACE policies based on new federal guidelines for Title IX regulations and have the Policy Committee review the policies when they come out from NHSBA. Lauren Huleatt seconded the motion.

Nicole Hogan stated that she is voting in favor of reverting back to the 2020 regulations so the District can remain in legal compliance but wants to make it clear from a human rights perspective she does not agree with this decision and believes policies need to protect and support all individuals equitably and she remains committed to advocating for the wellbeing and dignity of every student regardless of gender or identity.

Grace Sisti also said she will be voting in favor of the changes but from a human rights perspective, she does not agree with the changes but merely supporting it to maintain funding.

Robert McLean agreed and added that whatever the outcome is, there will be other policies that will have to be looked at as well.

Drew Taylor said he understands everyone's position but had opposed the new policies when they were adopted.

Katie Strickland stated she will use her student vote in favor of the motion only to support funding.

Bianca Weber accepted the changes as well.

The motion passed with an 8-0 vote. Student representative, Katie Strickland, voted in favor of the motion.

Superintendent Beitler stated that on February 12, 2025 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. the high school will be celebrating the 50th anniversary. Anthony has invited former and current staff to the celebration. He is hopeful that we will be able to do tours in the locker rooms and new weight room. Board members are invited to attend the celebration.

The Gil-Gil sub-committee met on January 28, 2025 to discuss the high school and review parts of the AREA Agreement. These meetings are a relationship building opportunity for both communities to understand the challenges and celebrate the good work the two communities share in the high school relationship. There is another meeting scheduled for March 2025.

Principals' Reports

Danielle Bolduc submitted her report as written.

Tara Brosius submitted her report as written. Nicole Hogan commented that she was happy to see that 91% of learners feel supported. Discussion ensued as to how they are working with the remaining 9%.

Anthony Sperazzo submitted his report and highlighted the NH Scholastic Awards.

Anthony sought approval for a new club to be formed called Prism. He shared an overview of the club with the Board.

Nicole Hogan motioned to approve the Prism club. Monica Sawyer seconded the motion.

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Bianca Weber stated that she completely disagrees with having the club on school grounds. Mental health is not to be dealt with in a school setting. It's divisive not inclusive.

Drew Taylor stated that separating people into sexual preference can create more problems than it can solve. It is a segregation thing.

Monica Sawyer shared that from a school counselors' perspective, the adolescent suicide rate among the students who fall into these categories is the highest of all adolescent suicide deaths and attempts and she feels that there is a need for support in the school for students who are questioning their sexual identity. She hopes this will allow these students to have a safe space.

Katie Strickland shared that as a student in the school and who has tried to establish clubs like this, no matter how much parents don't want this in the school, it is in the school. It is a safe space for students by students. It is important for them to be seen and heard as students. She believes it is important to provide support to students by students.

Chair Jacques thanked Katie for sharing her perspective.

Nicole Hogan stated that this club is being proposed by students. A group of students is asking for this and feels it's important to support it.

Robert McLean shared that he was a little concerned when he read the proposal as he thought it may put a target on them but feels if the students want to get together as a group, he supports it as long as it's safe.

Lauren Huleatt asked if parents would be notified if their children join this club. Anthony Sperazzo stated it is not standard practice to notify parents if students are participating in any club.

Superintendent Beitler thanked Katie for sharing and it is about students who want to have a safe space in school and the adults need to listen to kids and we need to create the safe spaces for kids. They all deserve a safe space. Tolerance is good but acceptance is what we are really looking for. We want everyone to be accepted. This helps us to accept that yes, we do have gay students in our school and in our community and we need to accept that.

Chair Jacques moved the motion to a vote. The motion passed 6-2. Student representative, Katie Strickland, voted in favor of the motion. Drew Taylor and Bianca Weber were the opposing votes.

Curriculum Director's Report

Katie Bryant submitted her report and highlighted a great PD Day on January 31st.

Discussion ensued regarding the revised 306 rules.

Business Administrator Report

Amie Leigh submitted her report as written.

Budget Journal Entries

Amie Leigh presented a Budget Journal Entry:

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#21 - Budget Entry for Title IVA 24-25 grant

On a motion by Nicole Hogan and a second by Lauren Huleatt, the Board voted 8-0 to approve journal entry 21.

Policies – First Reading

GBGBA – Use of Automated External Defibrillators

JLCJ – Concussions and Head Injuries

JLCJA – Emergency Plan for Sports Related Injuries and Additional Protocols for Athletics Participation

All policies will move to second reading.

Policies – Second Reading

Policy JJIB – Interscholastic Athletics

On a motion by Nicole Hogan and a second by Lauren Huleatt, the Board approved policy JJIB with a 8-0 vote. Student representative, Katie Strickland, voted in favor.

Public Comment

Skip Murphy commented that he was disappointed on the vote on the Prism Club and clarified that the budgetary numbers for Prism would not happen until the 4th year of its existence. Chair Jacques confirmed. He feels funding is at risk due to JBAB. He stated that only Congress can change Title IX. Skip also gave kudos to the special education staff at GES.

Mike Giovanditto stated that he is disappointed in the approval of JJIB policy. He feels the policy only tried to close a loophole used by administration. He plans on taking the next step to change the policy.

There was no further public comment, Chair Jacques closed public comment.

Non-Public Session

At 7:22 p.m., on a motion by Nicole Hogan and a second by Lauren Huleatt the Board voted to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3II (c). A roll call vote was taken as follows: Nicole Hogan, yes; Jessica Jacques, yes; Lauren Huleatt, yes; Robert McLean, yes; Monica Sawyer, yes; Drew Taylor, yes; Bianca Weber, yes; Grace Sisti, yes.

At 8:08 p.m., the Board came out of non-public session.

At 8:08 p.m., on a motion by Nicole Hogan and a second by Lauren Huleatt, the Board voted to adjourn with a 5-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

**Lauren Huleatt
School Board Secretary**