

**Meeting of Board of Directors  
March 20, 2025, 7:00 p.m.  
Skowhegan Area Middle School**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Maine School Administrative District No. 54 was held on March 20, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. at Skowhegan Area Middle School Cafeteria.

**ATTENDANCE BOARD MEMBERS (956 present, 43 absent):**

Mark Bedard (Skow-53) PRESENT                      Janet Burrill\* (Canaan-43) ABSENT  
Sarah Bunker (Mercer-16) PRESENT  
Jeannie Conley (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Valerie Coulombe (Norr-46) PRESENT  
Karyn Curran (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Becky Eldridge (Norr-46) PRESENT  
Lauren Fox (Mercer-16) PRESENT  
Jean Franklin (Canaan-43) PRESENT  
Daniel Frey (Smith-27) PRESENT  
Tanya Groce (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Samantha Hilton (Norr-46) PRESENT  
Theresa Howard (Corn-30) PRESENT  
Michelle Kelso (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Michael Lambke (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Desiree Libby (Norr-46) PRESENT                      \*Excused  
Peggy Lovejoy (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Lynda Quinn (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Amy Rouse (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Sara Smith (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Michelle Taylor (Smith-27) PRESENT  
Timothy Williams (Skow-53) PRESENT  
Wayne Wofford (Corn-30) PRESENT

Olivia Huff (Student Rep) PRESENT

1. Call to Order

- a. Flag Salute – 7:00pm

2. Good News and Recognitions

At the direction of Music Teacher, John Lawson, Mill Stream Elementary School’s 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade chorus students performed the song *Obwisana*.

Chair Quinn introduced Samantha Hilton (Norr) to the Board.

3. Approval of Minutes – 3/6/25

**ON A MOTION BY Sarah Bunker, seconded by Sara Smith, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of 3/6/25 into the public record. (956 yes)**

4. Communications

a. Letters

The Superintendent acknowledged and accepted a letter of resignation from Roxanne Davis, Reading Specialist at Mill Stream Elementary School, effective June 2025.

b. School Personnel

There were no school personnel who wished to speak.

c. Visitors

Cornville resident, Julian Payne, commented on state election laws our towns being in compliance when appointing vacant seats.

Cornville resident, Vicky Wofford, commented on the biological differences between males and females and the importance of protecting our female athletes.

Elijah Wofford shared his opposition to boys playing girls sports.

Skowhegan resident Cecile Gray, commented on today's dismantling of the Department of Education. He also commented on chromosomal versus biological differences.

Karen Martin, newly elected Mercer Selectperson, spoke on budget cuts at the federal and state levels and urged the Board to consider additional cuts to avoid additional tax burden on residents.

5. Committee Reports

a. Personnel Committee – 3/6/25

**ON A MOTION BY Theresa Howard, seconded by Michelle Taylor, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting of 3/6/25 into the public record. (956 yes)**

Theresa Howard, Committee Chair, reviewed the minutes. There were no recommendations.

b. Support Services Committee – 3/13/25

**ON A MOTION BY Jean Franklin, seconded by Valerie Coulombe, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Support Services Committee meeting into the public record. (956 yes)**

Jean Franklin, Committee Chair, reviewed the minutes and asked the Board to vote on the following recommendation:

**ON A MOTION BY Jean Franklin, seconded by Sara Smith, the Board voted to approve the listed donations: \$300 from Caroline and David Webber for SAMS Students in Need; \$40 Anonymous donation for MSES Science Fair Materials; \$625,000 from KVCAP Building Better Beginnings; \$840 in donations to Canaan Elementary School in remembrance of the “Gift Lady”. (956 yes)**

6. Superintendent’s Report

a. Vacancies, nominations, recommendations

**ON A MOTION BY Jean Franklin, seconded by Lauren Fox, the Board voted to approve nominations page one. (956 yes)**

Superintendent Moody shared that positions are posted for Anticipated Early Childhood Special Education positions as a result of moving forward with the State’s Cohort 2 to move all CDS programming for 3-4 year olds to the school districts, which are 100% state funded.

b. Report on Assessment Payments to Date

Superintendent Moody shared that as of March 20, 2025, all six towns (Canaan, Cornville, Mercer, Norridgewock, Skowhegan and Smithfield) were current on their monthly assessment payments, with March due on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

c. Update on New School Construction Building Project

Superintendent Moody updated the Board we are ahead of schedule on the building project. We have 4.4M in local funding and are on track at zero dollars as a result of fundraising efforts. MSAD 54 is one of the only school district in the state to fully fund their local through fundraising and who hasn’t bonded that local funding.

The building construction deadline is set for June 15 completion. Phase 2 of the site work will begin and includes tearing down the old school, as well as building the bus loop and parent drop off, which will be completed before the start of school. Other groundwork will be completed by September 15<sup>th</sup>.

d. Update on Federal Funds

\*Update about testifying on Capitol Hill to Congress about the impact federal funding has on school districts...

Superintendent Moody reported that federal funds accounted for roughly 11% of MSAD 54's spending (anticipated \$5,800,000) in FY25.

- Title funding of just under 2 million dollars account for 23 full-time staff who provide instruction, interventions and supports for our neediest learners.
- Special Education funding (\$738,376) accounts for 15 full-time ed techs.
- Other funding includes Nutrition (Est. 1.25M), REACH 21<sup>st</sup> Century (295k, 33 staff), AEFLA (113k), MCCA (33k), Perkins (124k), 1<sup>st</sup> Ten Comm. (125k), CTEARP (101k), Gear Up (30k), EASE (142k)
- District anticipates roughly 400k in Medicaid billing in FY25, increased funding to 600k in most updated revenue sheet to lower local taxes.

Superintendent Moody reviewed the updated FY26 Budget Summary, which is currently up 5.05% (\$2,470,237). The net increase without CTE/Bond is 1.891% (\$949,785). Anticipated revenues were reviewed with local allocations increased by 1.891%. We will continue to work through the budget and additional cuts.

e. Presentation of FY26 Draft Status Quo Budget

Superintendent Moody distributed and reviewed the FY26 Draft Status Quo Budget to the Board. This budget was reduced \$1,233,466 from the prior budget shared with the board, and represents an overall budget increase of 5.07%, mostly as a result of pass-through funding from the state. CTE (\$652,515) and State Bonding of the New School (\$867,937) represent \$1,520,452 of the district's budget increase and are 100% funded by the state. The Superintendent explained when you back out the increases to CTE and the new school, which is 100% state funded, the overall budget is up 1.961%, or \$958,785. The Superintendent also shared that 75.35% of the budget increase is employee costs, and that this status quo budget already includes

f. FY26 Calendar Review

The 2025-2026 proposed District Calendar was reviewed and Superintendent Moody recommended the Board's approval.

**ON A MOTION BY Michelle Kelso, seconded by Michelle Taylor, the Board voted to approve the 2025-2026 District Calendar as proposed. (956 yes)**

g. Other

Superintendent Moody shared the following:

- An informational sheet was shared from Full Plate/Full Potential, on how proposed cuts to school meals would create unnecessary burdens on 75 schools in Maine. Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) would substantially decrease the number of schools eligible and make it harder for families to apply for free or reduced-price school meals.
- A Program for the Teacher of the Year (TOY) Gala was shared and features our own Kaley Brown. Both Kaley and her mother Debora Tanner (former TOY) attended the gala.

7. Assistant Superintendent and Support Services Manager

The Assistant Superintendent reported on the following:

- Feedback from staff on the March 14<sup>th</sup> Workshop Day "Choose Your Own Adventure" was very positive.
- The KVSA Showcase will be held at Cony High School on March 27<sup>th</sup>. Board members and legislators are welcome to attend. Students and staff from area school districts will be showcasing various projects they are doing. Our REACH Program will present as well as SCTC Digital Graphics will be displaying various projects and activities.

Jessica Brown, Support Services Manager reported preparations continue for the move into the new school.

8. Old and Unfinished Business

Wayne Wofford reiterated that discussion about Title IX will continue and is important to keep our girls safe.

Dan Frey asked, in order to assure the community that we are talking about this, is there anything we can do as a Board that would secure federal funding? Superintendent Moody has met with area legislators and followed up with the attorney to verify that we are not in violation.

Olivia shared that the Theater Team won Regional Theater Competitions for the sixth year in a row.

9. Introduction of New Business not listed on the Agenda

Desiree Libby proposed that the Board authorize a cooperative agreement to allow students who are interested in joining the Lawrence High School LaCross Team. Following questions and comments, the following recommendation was made:

**ON A MOTION BY Daniel Frey, seconded by Desiree Libby, the Board voted to authorize entering into a cooperative agreement with Lawrence High School's LaCross Team. (956 yes)**

10. The meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Moody, Superintendent of Schools