

**Kearsarge Regional School District  
Joint School Board/Municipal Budget Committee Meeting**

September 7, 2023 - 6:30 pm  
Kearsarge Professional Development Center  
165 Main Street, New London

**Open to Public**

<b>I. Call to Order</b>	The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.
<b>II. Pledge of Allegiance</b>	Mr. Bartholomew led the Pledge of Allegiance.
<b>III. Roll Call</b>	<p>Present for the School Board: Ken Bartholomew, Emma Bates, Arthur Bobruff, Ben Cushing, Eric Gregoire, David Keith, Kyle Lombard, Alison Mastin.</p> <p>Present for the Municipal Budget Committee: James Bibbo, Luke Gorman, Patrick McGowan, Tom Schamberg, Robert DeFelice (via Zoom), Robert Hemenway, Lyndsay Harkins, Michelle Kendrick (via Zoom), Richard Anderson.</p> <p>Winfried Feneberg, Superintendent; Michael Bessette, Assistant Superintendent; Larry LeBoeuf, Business Administrator; Beth Perkins, KREA Representative.</p> <p>Absent: Kristen Schultz; Owen Blood, Student Representative; Adara Boucher, Student Representative.</p>
<b>IV. Approval of Minutes</b>	<i>Mr. Cushing made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 24, 2023 School Board Meeting as written. Ms. Bates seconded. The Motion carried 7-0-1 (Mr. Bartholomew abstained).</i>
<b>V. Reports of Administration</b>	<p><i>Chair's Report – Ken Bartholomew</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Bartholomew stated that he had no report, other than to welcome the Municipal Budget Committee (MBC) for the joint meeting for budget presentations.</li> </ul> <p><i>Superintendent's Report – Winfried Feneberg, Superintendent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Superintendent stated it has been a terrific beginning to the school year, though a little hot. He apprised the Board of a very productive professional development day where the teachers focused on reconnecting and preparing their classrooms as well as engaging in new learning and reviewing of work in progress. Everyone was in high spirits!</li> <li>• The Superintendent stated that YCN has offered to do some filming about the start of school and the summer work that was completed throughout the District. Additionally, YCN will be filming a piece that will feature a grant funded project at the Middle School that involves students learning how to program and fly drones.</li> <li>• Since the beginning of the school year, the District has had multiple meetings to resolve issues bus transportation, results of the shortage of bus drivers. The Superintendent stated that he has spoken with the management team at Student Transport of America (STA) as well as</li> </ul>

Stacy at the local bus barn about the issues. In addition, other vendors have been contacted to see if they are able to help with transportation. At the Leadership Team Meeting, there was discussions about the legal and regulatory challenges that may be present if the District buys passenger vans and operates them in-house. Supt. Feneberg apprised the Board that a 15<sup>th</sup> bus driver has been hired for morning routes; however, Stacy at STA will still be driving the final afternoon route.

- The Superintendent invited the members of the Boards to the grand opening of the new Bradford Preschool scheduled for Wednesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m.
- The Superintendent stated that he had the opportunity to address the Middle School students on their first day of school, sharing with them the word of the year, courage, and took in a skit featuring two special guests: the Cowardly Chicken and the Courageous Crocodile played by Mr. Pruettt and Mr. Stoneking. The year is off to a great start!

***Assistant Superintendent's Report - Michael Bessette, Assistant Superintendent***

- Mr. Bessette commended the teachers working in the buildings during this very warm start to the school year. He stated that the teachers are doing amazing things to help keep students cool.
- Mr. Bessette discussed upcoming professional development days where teachers will have the opportunity to work with Karen Hess with a focus on the development of rigor tests and the competency development process.

***KREA Representative – Beth Perkins, KREA Representative***

- New London and Sutton fifth graders are preparing for the annual observance of Patriot Day. The ceremony will be held on Monday, September 11 at 11:00 am at the New London Fire Station. The public is welcome. The students have been learning about how first responders communicate this year.
- Katie Perkins took her Bradford 4th grade class on a field trip on Day 3. They did a scavenger hunt all over Bradford, Newbury, Warner and Sutton to locations that related to their curriculum. It was a great way to introduce the units fourth grade will study and to show them that everything we learn connects to life all around us. Thanks to lots of local businesses and public locations for making the students welcome.
- The Kearsarge Actors Guild/ Drama Club at the high school is proud to announce they will be producing 42nd Street Musical this fall in November. They have a wonderful cast that will include some Middle Schoolers and many students of dance. Save the Date: Nov. 9th, 10th and 11th! It's a Broadway extravaganza you don't want to miss.
- High School teacher Amanda Leslie is excited to be working this year with Rebecca Hemingway on coordinating Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs) for students. At this point, there are about 100 students involved in the ELO program, exploring projects in everything from Modern Manufacturing and Nursing (both group ELOs supported by industry professionals and partners) to Italian to Long-Distance

	<p>Swimming to Biochemistry. The students involved are excited and ambitious to dig into these areas of personal interest not covered by the regular KRHS curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot &amp; Cold Plated Desserts class at the High School is exploring various plating techniques. They are to pick one that speaks to them and are doing a small project surrounding that specific technique.</li> <li>• Culinary and baking classes are focusing on the history of each art as well as various careers paths available in those arts.</li> <li>• Ms. Perkins discussed the heat in the buildings during this start to the school year. She stated that this has been the hottest she has seen the buildings and that the teachers and students are genuinely suffering. She expressed that she felt it was time to really start thinking about cooling options of the schools. Supt. Feneberg stated that the buildings aren't built for these temperatures. He stated that the District will be beginning to look at what maintenance the District as a whole needs in the coming year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>VI. Public Comment</b></p>	<p><i>Mr. Bartholomew opened the meeting for public comment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Harkins asked Ms. Perkins if there was something that could be done in the immediate in terms of air conditioning, such as portable air conditioners. The Superintendent stated that anything that is done in the buildings is significantly different from what would be sufficient for a residential application. He stated that it would be better to spend some time on a comprehensive solution. Dr. Bobruff discussed the possibility of using dehumidifiers. He noted that the use of dehumidifiers has helped reduce the spread of COVID in areas where they are used and help rooms feel significantly cooler. Mr. Bartholomew stated that some steps were taken at Simonds Elementary in years past to help reduce heat intake from the front of the buildings.</li> </ul> <p><i>Mr. Gregoire made a motion to close public comment. Ms. Bates seconded. The Motion carried 7-0-1 (Mr. Bartholomew abstained).</i></p>
<p><b>VII. Presentation</b></p>	<p><i>Athletic Restructuring Proposal – Scott Fitzgerald, Athletic Director</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Superintendent reminded the Board that the Communications Committee has been working on defining an athletic mission and vision. He stated that this restructuring may have an impact on the budget.</li> <li>• Mr. Fitzgerald stated that as a part of the budget, the Athletic Department looked at how athletics are set up. He discussed the athletic opportunities offered throughout the District and how those offerings compare to other Districts around New Hampshire. He presented different figures regarding athletics at Kearsarge, noting that at the High School there are around 475 athletic events throughout a given school year in addition to 220 athletic events at the Middle School level. With that comes 75 coaches working on average 35 weekend days and travel a little over 3,000 miles for athletic events per school year.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Fitzgerald stated that there is a need for an Assistant Athletic Director to continue facilitating an extraordinary experience for students. He expressed that the current structuring of the Athletic Department is allowing them to just stay afloat, stating that the Department should be moving forward. He also noted that additional requirements set in place by laws and policies that Athletic Departments need to take into account to assure the safety of students. The Boards thanked Mr. Fitzgerald for his presentation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII. New Business</b></p>	<p><b><u>Building Principal 2024-25 Proposed Budget Presentations</u></b>  <b><i>Kearsarge Regional High School – Charles Langille, Principal</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Langille presented the Kearsarge Regional High School proposed budget to the Boards. He discussed different increases the certain budget lines including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the contracted services lines for professional development,</li> <li>repair lines for the maintenance of different machines in the woodshop,</li> <li>the assessment lines for programming that offers additional student assessments,</li> <li>the art supply line for the supplies needed for the additional art teacher (a position created by a retirement in the Social Studies department that was not filled),</li> <li>the auditorium equipment line for the purchase of new, safer choral risers as the current risers are beginning to fail,</li> <li>the cocurricular line for the relining and refinishing of the gym floor to include both basketball and volleyball lines, and</li> <li>the Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) travel line due to the increased number of students participating in ELOs, from 56 students last year to over 100 this year.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Mr. Langille also noted decreases in lines such as:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the new art equipment line due to the purchase of a pugmill last year,</li> <li>the new PE equipment line, and</li> <li>the industrial arts equipment line due to the donation of a number of tools.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Superintendent commended the High School teachers and admin for the increase in the number of students participating in ELOs. He discussed the State initiative “Learn Everywhere,” similar to the District’s ELO program; however, the initiative has only 8 approved “Learn Everywhere” facilities throughout the state. He stated that the District does it better at the local level. Mr. Bartholomew asked what percentage of students are taking advantage of ELOs during their High</li> </ul>

School careers. Mr. Langille stated that he didn't know the specific percentage; however, it is something he can provide. He also apprised the Boards that High School transcripts are now beginning to list certain credentials earned while in High School., like those earned in certain ELOs.

- Mr. Gorman stated that he had previously had the opportunity to be a part of Project Climb at the High School and asked if \$12,000.00 was sufficient to ensure that no student that wanted to participate in a trip was turned away. Mr. Langille stated that the figure should be sufficient.
- Mr. Anderson asked whether Mr. Langille had seen anything at the High School that is a reverberation of the pandemic as it fades. Mr. Langille stated that math skills are a big reverberation of the pandemic that he's seeing, noting that math is a difficult subject to teach remotely. He also noted the impact the pandemic had on students' social skills, stating that the High School has been seeing behavior that would more commonly be seen in the Middle School. Mr. Anderson asked if the High School currently has the staff needed to address these issues.
- Mr. Bartholomew asked Mr. Langille what the one priority was that he wasn't able to incorporate in the budget and, if he had to cut, what would be the last priority that could be cut. Mr. Langille noted that the one thing he would add if there were an additional \$100,000.00, it would be a math specialist. Additionally, he noted that in order to get to the \$100,000.00 number Mr. Bartholomew has discussed in past years in cuts, it would have to come from courses with low student enrollment.
- Dr. Bobruff discussed cutting the refinishing of the gym floor rather than the classes with low student enrollment. Mr. Langille stated that could be pushed to next year but expressed concerns regarding rising prices.

***Kearsarge Regional Middle School – Steve Paterson, Principal***

- Mr. Paterson presented the Kearsarge Regional Middle School proposed budget to the Boards. He discussed the addition of a 1.0 FTE position in the form of a Math Interventionist, pointing out the dip in math scores coming out of the pandemic. He stated that though the Middle School math test scores continue to be above the state average, the goal is to aim higher.
- Mr. Paterson discussed the budget line that contains funding for the Washington D.C. and Nature's Classroom trips. Mr. Anderson asked if the students still went to an amusement park on the final day of the trip D.C. trip as they had in the past. Mr. Paterson stated that they have not in the last couple of years and have used the time for other opportunities. For example, this past year the students finished the trip by going to the Smithsonian Zoo. In addition, Mr. Paterson discussed with the Boards the

Museum of African American History and the Holocaust Museum.

- Mr. Paterson point to increases in budget lines such as:
  - the scholar supplies line to purchase general supplies for students to ease the burden of families needed to provide these basic supplies,
  - the new drama supplies line,
  - the music replacement equipment line for the replacement of snare drums, and
  - the guidance supplies line for the continued use of the Youth risk Behavior Survey.
- Overall, the proposed Middle School budget totals about a 5% increase. ‘
- Ms. Harkins asked about the decrease in the maintenance salary line. Mr. Bartholomew stated that the decrease is a result of the District outsourcing custodian services.
- Mr. Anderson asked about the 1.0 FTE position Mr. Paterson proposed for a math interventionalist and noted that the High School doesn’t currently have such a position. He asked about the possibility of the High School and the Middle School sharing the position. Mr. Paterson stated that shared staff can be tricky. Mr. McGowan asked if there was any evidence that this model might achieve the outcomes the District is looking for. Mr. Paterson pointed to the elementary schools and the opportunities created by the math specialists.
- Mr. Bartholomew asked what one additional priority Mr. Paterson would have liked to see in the budget and which priority he would give up. Mr. Paterson stated that the one priority he would have liked to see in the budget would have been an additional administrative position to help with the behavioral issues, noting that those issues have become more complex and more time consuming. He stated that administrators at the Middle School frequently get into situations where there are 3 or 4 different sets of laws at all levels of government that apply to the situation. Regarding what priority he would cut, he said that it would depend on if it was a one-year cut, or a long-term cut. He noted that different lines could be cut for a year; however, the only option for long term cuts would be personnel.
- Mr. Anderson asked what Mr. Paterson has been seeing in terms of any long-term effects of the pandemic. He stated that developmental immaturity has been a long-term effect. He emphasized that instructing on content is only the tip of the iceberg in the school, discussing executive functioning and how students learn through play. Mr. Anderson asked if the Middle School had the staff needed to address these Social Emotional Learning (SEL) concerns. Mr. Paterson replied that he felt strongly that the Middle School is adequately staffed in that



area.

***KRES Bradford – Andy Chouinard, Principal***

- Mr. Chouinard presented the KRES Bradford proposed budget to the Boards. He stated that the proposed budget would be an 8.29% increase. He stated that the increase appears significant; however, the increases include added costs from the new Bradford Preschool.
- Mr. Chouinard discussed the newly added preschool lines throughout the budget, noting that if the preschool lines were not present, the KRES Bradford budget overall would be down about \$65,000.00.
- Mr. Chouinard pointed to increases in:
  - the English Language Arts line as a result of the District moving away for the Journeys program that was previously used,
  - the math instructional supplies line as a result of the District moving away from the Envisions Math Program previously used, and
  - the instructional assessment line with the addition of the Early Bird assessment, an assessment used in kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade as an early literacy screening.
- Mr. Chouinard discussed decreases in:
  - the tech online lines as certain programs have not carried forward out of the pandemic,
  - the music and science supplies lines, and
  - the kindergarten instructional supplies line
- Mr. Bartholomew asked what priority was not put in the budget. Mr. Chouinard stated that the priority that he would have liked to have seen in the budget would be funds to make the multipurpose room safer. He discussed the installing of pocket tables that could fold up into the walls rather than the current tables that are rolled out of the way for different events and classes in the room. He noted that the benches on these tables stick out and pose a safety concern. He stated the replacement of these tables would be about \$100,000.00. Mr. Bartholomew asked what he would cut. Mr. Chouinard noted that cutting from instructional lines wouldn't be an option, any cuts would have to come from personnel.

***Simonds Elementary – Tim Stokes, Principal***

- Mr. Stokes presented the Simonds Elementary proposed budget to the Boards. He discussed increases in:
  - the wages, benefits, and transportation lines,
  - the music line for the replacement of some instruments,
  - the special education supply line, and
  - the field trips line to account for increases to admission fees and

added field trips.

- Mr. Stokes also discussed decreases in:
  - the math instructional supplies line, and
  - the tech online line.
- Mr. Gregoire asked what the Envisions Math Program and Journeys program were being replaced with, as Mr. Stokes mentioned those programs are going away at Simonds in the upcoming year. Mr. Stokes stated that these programs will be replaced with local competencies and curriculum that has been created in the District over the last 4 to 5 years. Mr. Bessette noted that the curriculum designed in the District will cost about \$30.00 per student whereas Journeys was a couple hundred thousand dollars per year. Mr. Stokes noted that the development of this curriculum has led to meaningful collegial conversations.
- Mr. Gorman asked about the increases in the telephone lines throughout the budget. Mr. LeBoeuf stated that the increases reflect the costs of keeping the phones up and running.
- Mr. Anderson asked what headaches Mr. Stokes has been dealing with in the last year. Mr. Stokes stated that the issues after COVID have been very similar to the issues pre-COVID with the exception of some behavioral issues. He feels like things are back to regular school life.
- Mr. Bartholomew asked what priority Mr. Stokes wasn't able to put in the budget. Mr. Stokes stated that if he had an additional \$100,000.00 to put in the budget, he would use it to improve the facility and make it safer for the students.
- Mr. McGowan asked if anyone in the elementary schools is looking at how replacing the Journeys program is impacting outcomes. Mr. Stokes stated that the data is looked at very closely; however, with this being a new implementation it is too early to analyze any shifts.

***KRES New London – Kelly Collins, Principal***

- Ms. Collins presented the KRES New London proposed budget to the Boards. She discussed increases in:
  - the English supply line for the purchasing of books for the One Book, One School program,
  - the Environmental Camp line,
  - the tech online and software line
  - the assessment line for the purchasing of Early Bird, and
  - the new furniture line to provide new furniture for the District's Gateway program which has grown by 4 students last year and is expected to grow by 3 or 4 additional students in the year to come.
- Ms. Collins discussed the decreases in:



- the media non-print line and
- the math supply line.
- The Superintendent discussed the Gateway program noting that it is K-5 program with a number of students who have autism or are medically fragile. He stated that it is a very fun loving and welcoming program.
- Ms. Collins discussed replacing the playground at New London Elementary. She explained the disrepair the current playground is in, noting that there is caution tape warning students of an unsafe bridge portion and other areas of broken metal. She stated she is working closely with the PTO to fundraise for the new playground and is looking at some grants. In the budget, she noted she has included \$155,000.00 for the playground; however, the overall cost is estimated to be around \$500,000.00. Mr. Bessette explained a situation in Hopkinton around 2005 where the Hopkinton District installed a 3 bay swing set that totaled \$60,000.00 delivered without professional installation.
- Mr. Bartholomew asked what priority Ms. Collins wasn't able to put in the budget. Ms. Collins stated that the playground would be the first priority to increase and also the first to take out if she needed to add or remove \$100,000.00.
- Mr. Keith asked about the time frame for a new playground. Ms. Collins stated that she would like to see the playground in place in the next year. She noted that this is a community playground and hopes to invite other members of the community to participate in this project.

***Sutton Central School – Lisa Scolaro, Principal***

- Ms. Scolaro presented the Sutton Central School proposed budget to the Boards. She noted that the budget has an overall increase of less than 1%. Ms. Scolaro stated that the increases and decreases largely reflect that of the other elementary school budgets.
- Ms. Harkins stated that she would like to see the student enrollment numbers for each school. Mr. Bartholomew noted that will be presented and discussed at the next meeting. Supt. Feneberg noted that the District's enrollment has remained stable at about 1,700 students.
- Mr. Bartholomew asked what priority Ms. Scolaro would add to the budget if she was able. She stated that she would focus on the facility with any additional funds, citing the space concerns.
- Ms. Harkins asked about concerns regarding the heat in the schools during this warm spell. Ms. Scolaro noted that she cancelled recess earlier in the day as a result of the heat. The Superintendent stated that this concern is not at all being dismissed.
- Mr. Anderson thanked all the principals for all they do.

***The Municipal Budget Committee left the meeting.***

***Grant Bradford Elementary – Mr. Bartholomew***

- Mr. Bartholomew presented the Board with a grant from the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources - NH State Council on the Arts for Bradford Elementary in the amount of \$4,355.00 making the below motion:

***RESOLVED:*** *That Andrew Chouinard, Principal of Bradford Elementary is duly authorized to enter into contracts and agreements on behalf of the Kearsarge Regional School District with the State of New Hampshire, acting by and through the Department of Natural and cultural Resources – NH State Council on the Arts, and is further authorized to execute any documents on behalf of this Municipality which may be in his/her judgement desirable of necessary to effect the purpose of this resolution. Mr. Keith seconded. The Motion carried 8-0-0.*

***Mr. Cushing made a motion to accept and expend the \$4,355.00 from the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources – NH State Council on the Arts for Bradford Elementary. Mr. Gregoire seconded. The Motion carried 7-0-1 (Mr. Bartholomew abstained).***

***Grant Simonds Elementary – Mr. Bartholomew***

- Mr. Bartholomew presented the Board with a grant from the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources - NH State Council on the Arts for Simonds Elementary in the amount of \$2,285.00. Ms. Bates made the below motion:

***RESOLVED:*** *That Tim Stokes, Principal of Simonds Elementary is duly authorized to enter into contracts and agreements on behalf of the Kearsarge Regional School District with the State of New Hampshire, acting by and through the Department of Natural and cultural Resources – NH State Council on the Arts, and is further authorized to execute any documents on behalf of this Municipality which may be in his/her judgement desirable of necessary to effect the purpose of this resolution. Mr. Cushing seconded. The Motion carried 8-0-0.*

***Ms. Bates made a motion to accept and expend the \$2,285.00 from the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources – NH State Council on the Arts for Simonds Elementary. Mr. Cushing seconded. The Motion carried 7-0-1 (Mr. Bartholomew abstained).***

<p><b>IX. Old Business</b></p>	<p><i>Superintendent Search Update- Search Committee – Ms. Mastin</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Mastin stated that a search committee of 9 to 12 is ideal and the District is looking to have equal representation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>X. Sub-Committees</b></p>	<p><i>Policy Committee – Michael Bessette, Assistant Superintendent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Bessette stated that the Committee met earlier in the day to discuss further policies impacted by the District purchasing smaller passenger vans. He noted that the Committee is discussing the possibility with counsel.</li> </ul> <p><i>Finance and Audit Committee – Mr. Bartholomew</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Bartholomew stated that the Committee discussed the year end and surplus numbers. He noted that most of the surplus comes from unfilled positions. Dr. Bobruff asked if that surplus number of \$2.8 million that is returned to the towns is made public for taxpayers to see. Mr. Bartholomew noted that the Budget Committee is made aware of it.</li> <li>Mr. Bartholomew stated that the Committee discussed the roof replacement needs throughout the District, noting that it will cost around \$5 million to \$6 million for the work needed. He stated that Finance and Audit recommends making funds available for these repairs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>XI. Public Comment</b></p>	<p><i>Mr. Bartholomew opened the meeting for public comment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No public comment.</li> </ul> <p><i>Mr. Gregoire made a motion to close public comment. Ms. Bates seconded. The Motion carried 7-0-1 (Mr. Bartholomew abstained).</i></p>
<p><b>XII. Adjourn</b></p>	<p><i>Mr. Gregoire made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Bates seconded. The Motion carried 7-0-1 (Mr. Bartholomew abstained). The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m.</i></p>

Respectfully submitted:

Tom Hilton  
 School Board Note Taker