

**New Hartford Board of Education
Ann Antolini School Media Center
Special Meeting – July 10, 2018**

Present: Chairman Josh Adams, Tim Goff, Tom Buzzi, Penny Miller, Jenn Benaitis, Pat Spaziana, Stacie Cull (in at 7:05 pm), Superintendent of Schools Brian Murphy, member of the public.

Public Comment: Matt Flaherty, 162 South East Road, is in favor of having smaller kindergarten class sizes. He had done some research and it showed that there are benefits to having small kindergarten class sizes. Paul LeClair, 43 Burwell Road, asked about the current enrollment. He also said that in the past the kindergarten classes have been between 15-17 students.

Approval of Superintendent Evaluation

Chairman Adams said the board had been sent a write-up based on comments & suggestions sent to him on Superintendent Murphy's evaluation. As Ms. Benaitis & Ms. Spaziani had not received it a few minutes was taken so they could review it.

MOTION: by Goff to approve Superintendent Murphy's Evaluation, second by Miller

Aye: Adams, Goff, Buzzi, Miller, Cull; Opposed: none; Abstained: Benaitis, Spaziani

Motion passes

Superintendent Murphy said the Dianne Lissitchuk, 1st grade teacher at New Hartford Elementary School, is retiring after 42 years. He said she has made an indelible impact on the lives of the students that she taught. A round of applause followed.

Kindergarten Enrollment Projection / Staffing:

Superintendent Murphy said in late June there were 58 Kindergarten students enrolled and current enrollment is 61 students officially registered. With 3 sections projected class sizes would be 20 – 21 which is extremely high. Kindergarten students have unique, specific, academic, emotional, social needs. Supt. Murphy recommends that we add an additional teaching section for the 2018-2019. He also said there are several kindergarten students that need additional support and he recommended adding 1.5 tutors to this class. Mr. Buzzi asked about the additional cost for this. Supt. Murphy said the cost for a Step 1 Master's teacher would be \$48,000 plus benefits. The cost for the full-time tutor is \$24,000 and the ½ tutor is \$12,000 for a total of \$36,000. Mr. Adams asked when Supt. Murphy needed to know and he stated that he needed a decision tonight if the board would approve an additional Kindergarten teacher. Mr. Adams said when there have been unanticipated costs for special needs children we have worked with the town for the additional funds.

Mr. Goff asked if we add an additional section of Kindergarten where it would be located. Supt. Murphy said there would be two sections at Bakerville and two sections at New Hartford Elementary. Each class will have its own tutor. Mr. Goff asked what the class sizes would be. Supt. Murphy said there would be 15-16 students per class. They have already been identified as to which school they will be attending to keep that class sizes balanced. Mr. Goff asked about going back to the town for additional monies. Mr. Adams said in the past the Board of Education has always budgeted for special education costs that we knew would be required for the following school year. If a student moved into town with special needs that was over what was budgeted, we don't have a slush fund to draw from. We have gone back to the town and requested funds due to this realized cost. Supt. Murphy said an answer would be needed tonight

about adding this additional section so that the Board of Finance could be informed about the additional \$60,000 the Board of Education anticipates needing. Ms. Spaziani wondered if we could find the monies in the current budget to cover this. Mr. Goff said when the budget was approved we had 50 kindergarten students enrolled. At our last meeting Supt. Murphy said historically there are 5-6 Kindergarten students that register in the summer before school starts. He doesn't feel this is an unreasonable request to the Board of Finance.

MOTION: by Adams that the New Hartford Board of Education directs the Superintendent to add one teacher for Kindergarten for the 2018-2019 school year, second by Buzzi.

Discussion followed. Mr. Goff wants to make sure that we have two sections at Bakerville School and two sections at New Hartford Elementary and the class sizes are going to remain even. Supt. Murphy said there will be 4 sections and they will be balanced within 1 or 2 students. The swing line will remain at West Hill. Ms. Spaziani feels we should cut the full-time Instructional Assistant at \$45,000 and put that money towards our needs. She realizes that we need the additional teacher and tutors but the \$45,000 would go a long way to show the Board of Finance we are trying to make the effort. If this was a person that worked with the children she wouldn't have a problem with keeping this position.

Unanimous

MOTION: by Goff to add a full-time tutor and a part-time tutor to the 2018-2019 school year budget, second by Miller.

Discussion followed. Ms. Spaziani asked how it was determined the special needs of the incoming kindergarten class. Supt. Murphy said some of these children have been tested and we know their needs.

Unanimous

MOTION: by Adams instructing Superintendent Murphy to draft a letter to the Board of Finance communicating to them the newly realized financial needs of the District, second by Goff.

Unanimous

MOTION: by Miller to adjourn at 7:43 pm, second by Goff.

Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Miller
Secretary
New Hartford Board of Education