

RSU 54/MSAD 54
Meeting of Board of Directors
April 17, 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 April 17, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. at Skowhegan Area Middle School Cafeteria.

ATTENDANCE BOARD MEMBERS (910 present, 89 absent):

Mark Bedard (Skow-53) PRESENT	Jean Franklin* (Canaan-43) ABSENT
Sarah Bunker (Mercer-16) PRESENT	Desiree Libby* (Norr-46) ABSENT
Jeannie Conley (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Valerie Coulombe (Norr-46) PRESENT	Olivia Huff* (Student Rep) ABSENT
Karyn Curran (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Becky Eldridge (Norr-46) PRESENT	
Lauren Fox (Mercer-16) PRESENT	*Excused
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	
Peggy Lovejoy (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Lynda Quinn (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Amy Rouse (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Lisa Sironen (Canaan-43) PRESENT	
Sara Smith (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Michelle Taylor (Smith-27) PRESENT	
Timothy Williams (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Wayne Wofford (Corn-30) PRESENT	

1. Call to Order

a. Flag Salute – 7:00pm

2. Good News and Recognitions

Along with Principal Deidre Mitchell, Bloomfield Elementary School staff Holly Brown, Janalynn White and Daphne Labbe presented on Tier I and Tier II Approach to Behavior.

3. Approval of Minutes – 4/3/25

ON A MOTION BY Michelle Taylor, seconded by Sara Smith, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of 4/3/25 into the public record. (910 yes)

4. Communications

a. Letters

The Superintendent acknowledged and accepted the following letters of resignation:

- Alyssa Duchesne, Kindergarten Teacher at Mill Stream Elementary School
- Rebecca Hutchinson, Kindergarten Teacher at Canaan Elementary School
- Steven Demo, Special Education Teacher at Skowhegan Area Middle School
- Shelby Stevens, Culinary Instructor at Somerset Career and Technical Center
- John Easler, Custodian at Skowhegan Area High School

I have received and accepted a letter of intent to retire from Gurdon Boothby, Building Maintenance (38 years).

b. School Personnel

There were no school personnel who wished to speak.

c. Visitors

Several visitors were present and commented on Title IX compliance and what the plan of action will be.

5. Committee Reports

a. Support Services Committee – 4/3/25

ON A MOTION BY Mark Bedard, seconded by Sarah Bunker, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Support Services Committee meeting of 4/3/25 into the public record. (910 yes)

Mark Bedard, Committee Vice-Chair, reviewed the minutes. There were no recommendations.

6. Superintendent's Report

a. Vacancies, nominations, recommendations

ON A MOTION BY Karyn Curran, seconded by Sara Smith, the Board voted to approve nominations page one. (910 yes)

b. Report on Assessment Payments to Date

Superintendent Moody reported that as of April 17, 2025, all six towns (Canaan, Cornville, Mercer, Norridgewock, Skowhegan and Smithfield) were current on their monthly assessment payments, with April due on the 20th. The Town of Mercer had already paid their April Dues.

c. Update on New School Construction Building Project

Superintendent Moody shared that an area resident has voiced concern with the noise coming from the new school construction project to him as well as Skowhegan Police Department. Peggy Lovejoy shared a story of a special tour arranged with the contractors for her 99-year-old neighbor.

The Building Committee meeting on Wednesday, April 30th will be held at the new school beginning with a tour scheduled at 5:00 pm.

d. Review and Adoption of Budget

Superintendent Moody presented a final review of the FY26 Draft Budget of \$51,440,429, which included an increase in \$10,000 in local-only funds to support Adult education. \$1,520,425 of the budget increase is a result of CTE (\$652,515) and Margaret Chase Smith Community School Bond (\$867,937), each of which are 100% State Funded. When removing CTE and Bond Funds the budget is up \$1,033,768, or 2.115%. The budget included 15 positional cuts, as well as flat funding for programs and supplies. The Superintendent shared that there were just over \$470,000 in savings from positional adjustments associated with the opening of the new Margaret Chase Smith Community School. He shared that health insurance was up 5.19% this year, or \$621,667 over the FY25 budget. Superintendent Moody reviewed the impact on local allocations resulting in an overall increase of 2.346%. He also discussed the possibilities of moving away from 100% valuation in the future and recommended the Board consider moving forward with a process to review the cost sharing formula.

Following discussions, Superintendent Moody recommended the Board's approval of the FY26 Proposed Budget.

ON A MOTION BY Michelle Taylor, seconded by Mark Bedard, the Board voted to adopt the proposed FY26 Proposed Budget as presented. (883 yes, 27 no)

The Board reviewed and voted on the following recommendations:

ON A MOTION BY Jeannie Conley, seconded by Peggy, the Board voted to no longer provide State PLD retirement plans for Educational Technicians and to pay to divest from the retirement plan. (804 yes, 106 no)

ON A MOTION BY Tanya Groce, seconded by Sarah Bunker, the Board voted to authorize MSAD 54 to discontinue using MSMA services for Unemployment claims, and for the District to handle Unemployment internally. (910 yes)

ON A MOTION BY Lauren Fox, seconded by Michelle Taylor, the Board voted to approve the District provide paid family medical leave (PFML) through a private plan with the insurance contract issued by The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America, as presented (864 yes, 46 no)

e. Other

Superintendent Moody shared that he participated in a state meeting earlier in the afternoon which included an update regarding Title IX and state funding. The meeting was run by the Commissioner of Education and Assistant Attorney General. The Superintendent confirmed no MSAD 54 policies are in violation of the current Title IX according to both the Maine Attorney General and MSAD54's attorney. At the meeting the State confirmed that individual school districts cannot take action that would impact their receiving federal funds as this is a State issue and will not impact districts separately. MSAD54's attorney verified with the Federal Office of Civil Rights that an individual district would not be exempt from action against the State regardless of its having adopted a particular motion.

The Superintendent shared that he has had individuals reach out with concerns regarding the baseball field, which appears to remain an issue with the Town of Skowhegan. He indicated he will be reaching out to the town for more information and a timeline for the field to be completed.

7. Assistant Superintendent and Support Services Manager

The Assistant Superintendent reported on the following:

- Attended the Maine College Circle Future of Maine Aspirations Scholarship Dinner for 3rd through 6th graders. There were 33 recipients and was a joint venture with JMG/ASPIRE, as well as teachers, staff and students.

The Support Services Assistant Manager reported that propane prices have been locked in at \$1.749. She also reported that they are shutting down the pellet burners tomorrow.

8. Old and Unfinished Business

There was no old and unfinished business.

9. Introduction of New Business not listed on the Agenda

There was no introduction of new business listed on the agenda.

10. The meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Moody, Superintendent of Schools