

GOUVERNEUR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
GOUVERNEUR NEW YORK 13642
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

APRIL 7, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The REGULAR MEETING of the Board of Education of Gouverneur Central School District was called to order by President David Fenlong, at 5:30 P.M., in the High School Auditorium, leading those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustees Present: Todd E. Bates, Dr. William Cartwright, David Fenlong, Lisa McGregor, Laurie M. Roberts, Laura Spicer.

Trustees Absent: Brooke Bush, Nickolas Ormasen.

Also Present: Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools; Dale R. Munn Jr., Business Manager; Jessica Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum; Cory Wood, Executive Director of Operations and Personnel; Tatia Z. Kennedy, District Clerk.

II. COMMENT PERIOD

Proposed Budget. Parent Tina French addressed the Board, saying she is happy to see the addition of funds for summer programs and sports and appreciates the efforts of Mr. Munn and Mr. McEathron to make those dollars available.

Transportation Contract. Tina French and union/building representative Erin Gates expressed disappointment in separate statements related to the double-tripping as noted in the transportation bid, both preferring single-trip bus runs and commenting there are a number of parents and teachers who agree with them. Superintendent Kelly responded to their comments, explaining that in the RFP for the transportation contract, we did ask for proposals for both single- and double-tripping. The district will continue with double-tripping for at least one year of the 3-year contract, and because the RFP included both proposals, if the district decides to move to single-tripping after the first year, the financial impact is known and can be planned for. The process to transition is time consuming and will involve many stakeholders as well as a great deal of logistics including creating more routes, hiring more drivers, and reviewing board policies that address the amount of time that students spend on the bus.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Communications

Early Voting and Absentee ballot applications are available from the District Clerk or on the district website. School Board Candidate petition packets are available from the District Clerk.

B. Wildcat News

Mrs. Kelly announced that eight middle school students will be showcasing artwork at the Regional North Country Art Teachers Association (NCATA) Art Show in Canton, and eight elementary students' work will be displayed all month at the BOCES center in Canton. She thanked art teachers Mrs. Ormasen and Ms. Foster for instilling the love of Art in our students. The Gouverneur CSD has been awarded the 2025 Utica National Insurance Group's School Safety Excellence Award at the *Titanium with Honors* level. This distinction recognizes the district's efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of students, staff, and visitors, based on criteria including bullying prevention, playground safety, and transportation practices. Lastly, Mrs. Kelly addressed the Middle School students' visit to Albany and read the message that Middle School principal Michael Hammond sent to school families. The communication highlighted the educational field trip on April 3 when the student council and history club visited the NYS capital and met with Senator Mark Walczyk and Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush. Unfortunately, several misleading headlines framed the situation in a way that doesn't reflect the tone or the spirit of the visit. Our students were exceptionally well behaved. They showed maturity, curiosity, and respect throughout the day. The request for them to leave stemmed from a political misunderstanding entirely unrelated to our students' conduct. The message also thanked Tammie Nabywaniec, the Chief of Staff for Assemblyman Blankenbush, who was instrumental in organizing the visit. Thanks to her careful planning and warm hospitality, the students completed every item on the agenda for the day. Superintendent Kelly concluded by thanking the Board for continuing to support opportunities like this for our students.

C. Upcoming Events

Spring break begins April 18 through April 25. The next Board of Education meeting will be on a Tuesday, April 29.

April 7, 2025

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Monthly Financial Report – March 2025

(See Sheet #1, Board Minutes File Folder)

Mr. Munn prefaced his update to say that we are still awaiting a final New York State budget, as well as monitoring federal activities for potential impacts on school funding. Discussing expenses, he noted one major change is related to property insurance rates which will increase by 15%. This is mostly due to the number of high claims from other districts affected by natural disasters over the past year. He informed the Board that there are two major insurance carriers for all of the school districts in the state, Ours, Utica National, has an “A” rating. Mr. Munn also briefed the Board on utilizing some of our unassigned fund balance to propose a new Capital Reserve on next year’s ballot. He expects further information from New York State on how we will be able to utilize those funds for improvements.

B. 2025-2026 Budget1. Budget Draft Document #3

(See Sheet #2, Board Minutes File Folder)

Business Manager Munn highlighted two changes since the previous meeting. The first is to recommend that the capital outlay project focus on the middle school playground; and second, to budget resources towards the implementation of the likely cell phone ban, with the expectation that there will be corresponding revenue from the state rather than an unfunded mandate.

C. Discussion of Draft Reserve Plan

(See Sheet #3, Board Minutes File Folder)

Mr. Munn discussed the potential addition of a Capital Reserve as well as what to expect for numbers in the existing Reserves. The final Reserve Plan will be brought back for Board approval in June.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

President David Fenlong asked if any member on the Board wished to have any item on the Consent Agenda removed for special consideration and discussion. Trustee Roberts asked that Item C, CSE Business, be removed for special consideration and discussion.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda Items A, B, D, and E:

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Vice-President Bates, seconded by Trustee Spicer, that the Board of Education approve the following items, A, B, D, and E, as a consent agenda:

A. Minutes

Approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 17, 2025, as presented.

B. Claims Auditor’s Reports

(See Sheet #4, Board Minutes File Folder)

Approve the Claims Auditor’s Reports for the period 3/20/25 – 4/4/25, as presented.

D. CPSE Business

(See Sheet #6, Board Minutes File Folder)

Approve the services, including additions, modifications and deletions, for the following classified students, as reflected in the attached CPSE Meeting Minutes report:

5105118

5104938

E. Student Activities Report – 1st Quarter, 2025

(See Sheet #7, Board Minutes File Folder)

Accept the SA Report for the 1st Quarter of 2025, as presented.

Vote on Consent Agenda Items A, B, D, and E:

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS A, B, D, AND E, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

C. CSE Business

(See Sheet #5, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Roberts, seconded by Vice-President Bates, that the Board of Education approve the services, including additions, modifications and deletions, for the following classified students, as reflected in the attached CSE Meeting Minutes report:

5104855	5102780	5102769	5103084	5104722	5104589
5104293	5103000	5105052	5104581	5103790	5104312
5102693	5104178	5105034	5104438	5103136	5103035
5103045	5105112	5104337	5105003	5102832	5103886
5103868	5104875	5103322	5102036	5103150	5103547
5102202	5102754	5103496	5103122	5104008	5104600
5103914	5103824				

DISCUSSION: Specific student services were discussed for clarification.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. CSE BUSINESS, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA – PERSONNEL

President David Fenlong asked if any member on the Board wished to have any item on the Consent Agenda – Personnel removed for special consideration. No member asked that any items be removed.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda – Personnel

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Dr. Cartwright, and seconded by Trustee McGregor, that the Board of Education approve the following Personnel items, A-C, as a Consent Agenda:

A. Tenure Recommendations

- a) RESOLVED, that **Melinda Schiszler**, Grade 6 Teacher, who holds Professional certification in *Childhood Education (Grades 1-6)* issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of ELEMENTARY PRE-K-6 effective 09/01/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.
- b) RESOLVED, that **Megan T. Reddick**, Grade 3 Teacher, who holds Professional certification in *Childhood Education (Grades 1-6)* issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of ELEMENTARY PRE-K-6 effective 09/01/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.
- c) RESOLVED, that **Morgan Massey**, Grade 2 Teacher, who holds Professional certification in *Childhood Education (Grades 1-6)* issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of ELEMENTARY PRE-K-6 effective 10/12/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.
- d) RESOLVED, that **Kara J. Rockwood**, Reading Teacher, who holds Professional certification in *Literacy (Birth-Grade 6)* issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of REMEDIAL READING effective 09/01/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.
- e) RESOLVED, that **Gwen L. O'Shea**, Reading Teacher, who holds Permanent certification in *Reading* issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of REMEDIAL READING effective 09/01/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.
- f) RESOLVED, that **Brittany L. Lewis**, Special Education Teacher, who holds Professional certifications in *Students with Disabilities (Birth-Gr 2)*, and *Students with Disabilities (Grade 1-6)* issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of GENERAL SPECIAL EDUCATION effective 09/01/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA – PERSONNEL (CONTINUED)

A. Tenure Recommendations (Cont.)

- g) RESOLVED, that **Kristina M. Hitchman**, Special Education Teacher, who holds Professional certification in *Students with Disabilities (Birth-Gr 2)*, and Initial certification in *Students with Disabilities (Grade 1-6)*, issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of GENERAL SPECIAL EDUCATION effective 09/01/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.
- h) RESOLVED, that **Meaghan A. Matthews**, English Teacher, who holds Professional certification in *English Language Arts 7-12* issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of ENGLISH ACADEMIC TENURE, GRADE 7-12 effective 09/01/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.
- i) RESOLVED, that **Emily T. Elliott**, Speech Teacher, who holds Initial certification in *Speech and Language Disabilities* issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of SPEECH AND HEARING HANDICAPPED effective 09/01/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.
- j) RESOLVED, that **Jessica Miller**, Teaching Assistant, who holds *Teaching Assistant Level 3* certification issued by the Commissioner of Education, is prospectively awarded tenure in the tenure area of TEACHING ASSISTANT effective 09/17/2025, conditioned upon compliance with APPR requirements or waiver as determined by the State of New York.

B. Resignations

Accept the request for resignation from Tina Stowell, from her position as Individual Aide, effective February 14, 2025.

C. Appointments1. Instructional

Special Education. Approve the appointment of Melissa E. Sweeney, holding NYS Professional certification in Students with Disabilities (Grades 5-9), to the position of Special Education Teacher in the General Special Education tenure area, effective September 1, 2024. Ms. Sweeney has prior tenure and will have a three-year probationary period commencing on September 1, 2024 and anticipated to end on August 31, 2027. This appointment is contingent upon her successful completion of the probationary term.

2. Non-Instructional

Revision to Food Service Helper Appointment. Revise the appointment of Carrie Chartrand from a 5-hour Food Service Helper to a 6-hour Food Service Helper, effective April 8, 2025.

3. Extra-Curricular

2024-25 Spring Coaches: Approve the following coaching recommendations, pending completion of any outstanding certification requirements, and compensated in accordance with the 2024-25 Coaching Salary Schedule of the GEA contract, as presented:

MODIFIED BASEBALL	JENNIE DALTON	CLASS 4	Step 1
MODIFIED SOFTBALL – VOLUNTEER ASS'T	KEVIN CURRIER	UNCOMPENSATED	

4. Substitutes and Tutors

Approve the appointment of the following current staff to work as instructional tutors for the 2024-25 school year: Lindsey Daniels

Vote on Consent Agenda – Personnel Items

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. CONSENT AGENDA – PERSONNEL APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

President Fenlong congratulated and thanked all of the teachers receiving tenure; many were present in the audience.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Adoption of Proposed 2025-2026 Budget

(See Sheet #8, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Vice-President Bates, and seconded by Trustee Spicer, that the Board of Education adopt the proposed general fund budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in the amount of \$47,840,977, with an anticipated tax levy increase of 2.02%, as presented.

DISCUSSION: Responding to Trustee Dr. Cartwright, Business Manager Munn confirmed that even without a state budget in place, he was able to use the minimum amounts presented by the assembly, legislative, and governor's proposals to build our budget; if those numbers change in our favor, less unassigned fund balance will be utilized.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR THE 2025-2026 FISCAL YEAR, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

B. Approval of Property Tax Report Card for 2025-2026

(See Sheet #9, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee McGregor, and seconded by Vice-President Bates, that the Board of Education approve and authorize submission of the Property Tax Report Card for 2025-2026 to the State Education Department, as presented.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. PROPERTY TAX REPORT CARD FOR 2025-2026, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

C. Bid Award for Transportation Services

(See Sheet #10, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee McGregor, and seconded by Trustee Spicer, that the Board of Education accept and award the bid for transportation services (3-year contract) as follows: First Student Contract #1 Home-to-School: Double tripping \$29,280,771; First Student Contract #2 Field and Sports Trips \$5,211,143; First Student Contract #3 Summer Transportation \$1,166,987. Bids were opened publicly on March 26, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

DISCUSSION: A brief discussion took place on electric buses and related costs and reimbursement rates compared to traditional fleets.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. BID AWARD FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES, AWARDED AS PRESENTED.

D. Bid Award for EV Bus Charger Project

(See Sheet #11, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Roberts, and seconded by Trustee Spicer, that the Board of Education accept and award the bid for the EV Bus Charger Project to ENI Mechanical Inc., in the amount of \$88,450.00, as presented on the attached resolution. Bids were opened publicly on April 3, 2025 at 3:30 p.m.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. BID AWARD FOR EV BUS CHARGER PROJECT, AWARDED AS PRESENTED.

E. Indian River Field Band Merger Request

(See Sheet #12, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Spicer, and seconded by Trustee Roberts, that the Board of Education approve the Combined Services Agreement between Indian River CSD and Gouverneur CSD to combine their respective Field Band programs with respect to participation in the New York State Field Band Conference for 2025-26, as presented.

DISCUSSION: Trustee Roberts stated she is pleased the board can support that program again.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. MERGER REQUEST WITH INDIAN RIVER FIELD BAND, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

F. Give-back days – 2024-25 school calendar

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee Laurie M. Roberts, and seconded by Trustee Laura Spicer, that the Board of Education approve the following give-back snow days. *If additional snow days are used, the days will return to instructional days in reverse order starting with Day 3.*

Day 1 – Friday, May 23, 2025

Day 2 – Tuesday, May 27, 2025

Day 3 – Friday, June 27, 2025

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. GIVE-BACK DAYS FOR 2024-25, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

IX. COMMENT PERIOD

District Response. Parent Tina French spoke again to commend the district's response relative to the incidents that took place the previous week, with appreciation for keeping the students' safety a priority. Superintendent Kelly thanked her for the feedback, adding that we are fortunate to have a great relationship with our local law enforcement. Trustee Roberts spoke that even though there were parents who were not happy with the speed of information, she feels the district does a great job with communication after making sure students and staff are safe.

X. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Trustee McGregor, and seconded by Vice-President Bates, that the Board of Education move into executive session to discuss the employment history of particular persons.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 6:35 PM.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Open session resumed at 6:42 PM.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, motion made by Vice-President Bates, and seconded by Trustee Dr. Cartwright, that the Board of Education return to open session and adjourn the meeting at 6:42 PM.

YEAS: All Trustees Present. NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file
Tatia Z. Kennedy, District Clerk

Signature on file
David Fenlong, President