GOUVERNEUR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
GOUVERNEUR NEW YORK 13642
REGULAR BOARD MEETING OCTOBER 20, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

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

Trustees Absent: Brooke Bush.

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

II. PRESENTATION: Audit Report

Michael W. Crowley, CPA, and Pamela J. Halloran, CPA, of Crowley & Halloran, CPAs, P.C., were present to share the results of their audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. The District received an unmodified opinion, which is the highest opinion allowed. There was one instance of noncompliance in that the District's unassigned fund balance was in excess of the New York State Real Property Tax Law §1318 limit, which restricts it to an amount not greater than 4% of the District's budget for the upcoming school year. Overall, Mr. Crowley stated the district had a positive year and commended the business manager for proper utilization of reserve funds. During the Q&A, Trustee Roberts asked about Extraclassroom Activities, and Mr. Crowley confirmed that audit also received an unmodified opinion.

III. COMMENT PERIOD

Jerrilyn Patton, co-president of the GEA, in recognition of School Board Appreciation Week October 13-17, presented a token of appreciation to each member and thanked the Board on behalf of the GEA for their continued support of the membership as they work together to make the district a better place.

Erica Woodrow, parent and former employee, and Selena Bush, parent, both addressed the board to share personal concerns about situations occurring in their students' classrooms and urged board members to support effective solutions.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Wildcat News

Superintendent Kelly talked about school safety, saying the safety and well-being of every student, staff member, and visitor is our top priority. As a rural school district serving a close-knit community, the District takes pride in fostering an environment where students feel secure, supported, and ready to learn. She went on to say that this year, for the first time, each of our school buildings has a dedicated School Resource Officer (SRO) and they work together with our partners at the Gouverneur Police, St. Lawrence County Sheriffs, and New York State Police. She described numerous programs that build on fostering education and relationships, including the *Positivity Project*, *Sweethearts & Heroes*, and Sandy Hook Promise's *See Something, Say Something*. The District recognizes the critical role mental health plays in school safety and provides access to social workers in every building, and also houses Gouverneur Behavioral Health services at both the middle and high school and maintaining strong partnerships with local and state mental health providers and nonprofit organizations. Ongoing professional development keeps the staff prepared and responsive. Concluding, she said, "As we look to the future, the Gouverneur Central School District remains committed to leading with care, vigilance, and delivering the promise of a brighter future."

B. Upcoming Events

Superintendent Kelly announced the upcoming events and reminded everyone that the next board meeting on November 3 will be held in the Middle School cafeteria.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Financial Report for September 2025

(See Sheet #1, Board Minutes File Folder)

Regarding Revenues, Business Manager Munn said that due to the current federal government shutdown, the auditors were not able to complete the single audit portion, which is the report on government programs federally funded over $750,000, such as Title grants and the food service program. The auditors will forward that to the district as soon as they are able to and will return to address questions if requested. Addressing how the shutdown impacts the district, he said that for the short-term, the major grants that we have that are federally funded are also forward funded, so at this time there have been no funding differences for IDEA and Title programs; school lunch is currently safe since we have a healthy balance in the school lunch fund. A larger concern is the impact on New York State and if it affects how they allocate their resources with the potential for mid-year and future year cuts. Moving on to Expenditures, Mr. Munn said there has been little use of the contingencies set aside for the building project, but electricity costs have increased 28% over the same time last year. During the Fund Balance discussion, Mr. Munn informed the board that he would present a corrective action plan at the next board meeting, in response to the auditors' one finding of noncompliance of our unassigned fund balance being in excess of 4%. He said the plan would be similar to last year's plan, which was successful in getting the unassigned fund balance from 13% down to 7%. A brief discussion on reserve funding took place. Trustee Ormasen congratulated and thanked Mr. Munn and his department for all of their work reflected in this year's audit.

B. External Public Auditor's Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

(See Sheet #2, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Superintendent Jacquelyn L. Kelly, motion made by Trustee Spicer, and seconded by Trustee Roberts, that the Board of Education accept the External Public Auditor's Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, as presented by Crowley & Halloran, CPAs, P.C.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. PUBLIC AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR FYE 6/30/25, ACCEPTED AS PRESENTED.

C. Student Activities Financial Report for Third Quarter, 2025

(See Sheet #3, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Superintendent Jacquelyn L. Kelly, motion made by Vice-President Bates, and seconded by Trustee French, that the Board of Education accept the Student Activities Financial Report for Third Quarter, 2025, as presented.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. STUDENT ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR 2025 Q3, ACCEPTED AS PRESENTED.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Second Reading and Adoption of Revised Policies

(See Sheet #4, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Superintendent Jacquelyn L. Kelly, motion made by Trustee Roberts, and seconded by Trustee Dr. Cartwright, that the Board of Education approve the revisions to the Board Policy Manual, effective immediately, as presented: 3240 – *Participation in Shared Decision-Making*; 5250 – *Sale and Disposal of School District Property*; 5683 – *Cardiac Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in Public School Facilities*; 7521 – *Students with Life-Threatening Health Conditions and/or Anaphylaxis.*

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. REVISED POLICIES, ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.

B. Second Reading and Approval to Delete Policies

(See Sheet #5, Board Minutes File Folder)

Upon presentation and recommendation of Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools, motion made by Trustee McGregor, and seconded by Trustee French, that the Board of Education approve the deletion of the following policies from the Board Policy Manual, effective immediately, as presented: 3412 – *Threats of Violence in School*; 3510 – *Emergency School Closings*; 5681 – *School Safety Plans*; 8360 – *B.Y.O.D. (Bring Your Own Device)*.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. POLICIES DELETED AS PRESENTED.

VII. 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. No member asked for any item to be removed.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda:

Upon presentation and recommendation of Superintendent Jacquelyn L. Kelly, motion made by Trustee Dr. Cartwright, seconded by Trustee Roberts, that the Board of Education approve items A-D as a consent agenda:

A. Minutes

Approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 6, 2025, as presented.

B. Claims Auditor's Reports

(See Sheet #6, Board Minutes File Folder)

Approve the Claims Auditor's Reports for the period 9/30/25 – 10/17/25 as presented.

C. CSE Business

(See Sheet #7, Board Minutes File Folder)

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

5104147	5104906	5103764	5104462	5103762	5103136	5100775
5102890	5105274	5105277	5103791	5104081	5103509	5104434
5105295	5102898	5104803	5104002	5101916		

D. Treasurer's Report – September 2025

(See Sheet #8, Board Minutes File Folder)

Accept the Treasurer's Report for the month of September 2025, as presented.

Vote on Consent Agenda:

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. CONSENT AGENDA, APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

VIII. 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 and discussion. No member asked for any item to be removed.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda – Personnel:

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

A. Resignations

a) Accept the request for resignation from Brittany M. Davis, from her position as Cleaner – 8hr, effective at the close of business on October 15, 2025.

B. Appointments

1. Substitutes and Tutors
   a) Approve the following current staff members/substitutes to work as instructional tutors for homebound students: Kara Mashaw.
   b) Approve the appointment of the following personnel to work as per diem substitutes in instructional and/or support positions: Ashton Currier.
2. Extra Duty
   a) Gouverneur Elementary Extended Day Afterschool Tutoring - Instructors. Appoint the following personnel for the 2025-2026 school year: Lindsey Pierce.
   b) Gouverneur Middle School Extended Day Afterschool Tutoring - Instructors. Appoint the following personnel for the 2025-2026 school year: Autumn Baker, Catie Yablonski
3. Extra-Curricular
   a) 2025-26 Advisors. Approve the appointments of the 2025-2026 Advisors, to be compensated in accordance with the Club Salary Schedule of the GTA contract, as presented:

WINTER COLOR GUARD	HAILEY COOK	CLASS E	Step 4

Vote on Consent Agenda – Personnel:

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. CONSENT AGENDA - PERSONNEL APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

IX. NEW BUSINESS - None

X. COMMENT PERIOD

Scott Bush, parent, spoke out about safety and support concerns.

Superintendent Kelly addressed the members of the Board and community regarding recent concerns and public commentary, saying, "While we respect the right of individuals to voice their perspectives, these perspectives do not always give the full view of our practices in the situations in our schools and can lead to the unfair targeting of valuable members of our team. For example, we hear a lot about therapeutic crisis intervention for schools, or TCIS. Our staff is trained in TCIS, a nationally recognized trauma-informed approach designed to help educators respond to behavioral challenges with empathy, safety, and care. These strategies are not punitive; they are protective and supportive, especially for young children learning to navigate complex emotions. In fact, the district has previously faced similar complaints relative to our TCIS practices which were reported to and thoroughly investigated by the New York State Education Department. After a comprehensive review, the district was fully exonerated, confirming that we take all necessary steps to ensure student safety and provide appropriate training to our staff. Our practices and level of communication with families were complimented by a member of the NYSED team. These outcomes affirm the integrity of protocols and the professionalism of our staff. We welcome oversight. We expect accountability, and we remain committed to transparency. However, we will not allow misinformation or personal grievances to distract us from our mission, focusing on solutions, not division, and we invite others to do the same. Classrooms in schools present new and evolving challenges today, and all of our staff members are dealing with far different situations now than they were ten or twenty years ago. I have seen these changes firsthand over the 28 years of my career, but one thing remains the same, we deal with these challenges best by working together. Our students deserve a united front, one that prioritizes their well-being above all else. The Gouverneur Central School District continues to invest in professional development, family partnerships, and student-centered support services. We are not perfect, but we are committed to growth. I ask our staff, families, and community members to engage in respectful dialogue, seek truth through direct communication, and stand together in support of our children. Let us move forward with integrity, compassion, and a shared commitment to doing what's best for kids. Thank you."

XI. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Trustee French, and seconded by Vice-President Bates, to adjourn to executive session to discuss the employment history of particular persons; including the annual informal evaluation of Superintendent Kelly.

YEAS: All Trustees Present NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 6:41 PM.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Open session resumed at 8:44 PM.

XII. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, motion made by Vice-President Todd Bates, and seconded by Trustee Lisa McGregor, to return to open session and adjourn the meeting at 8:44 PM.

YEAS: All Trustees Present. NAYS: None.

MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file
Tatia Z. Kennedy, District Clerk

Signature on file
David Fenlong, President