

## Colebrook School Board Meeting Minutes

<b>Date</b>	3/4/2025
<b>Time</b>	6:00 pm – CAES Library
<b>Location</b>	Colebrook Academy & Elementary School library
<b>Chairperson</b>	Tim Stevens

### Attendance

Attendance Legend: **P** - Present **E** - Excused **A**- Absent **R** - Remotely

School Board Members				Principal		SAU Members	
E	Nathan Lebel	P	Cayenne Amey	E	Kim Wheelock	P	Dana Hilliard
P	David Brooks	P	Julie Brunault		<b>Asst. Principal</b>	P	Bridget Cross
E	Rhonda Lyons	P	Tim Stevens	E	Stephanie Cameron	P	Chris Paquette
P	Robert Murphy				<b>CTE Director</b>		
				E	Emilie Hall		
					<b>Student Report</b>		
				E	Sandra Minigell		
				E	Brodyn Cote		

### Minutes

Item	Subject	Action
1.	Roll Call: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tim Stevens at 6:40 pm and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance	
2.	Agenda Adjustments: Add Superintendent Report	
3.	<b>Hearing of the Public:</b> Hearing of the public opened at 6:41 pm Wendall Woodard commended the school board for listening to the public and approving a no tax rate impact budget <b><u>R. Murphy/D. Brooks:</u></b> Motion to end 15-minute public session at 6:42 pm.	<b>VOTE:</b> Motion Carries
4.	<b>Reading of the Minutes –</b> <b><u>D. Brooks/C. Amey:</u></b> Motion to approve the minutes of February 18, 2025, as presented.	<b>VOTE:</b> Motion Carries
5.	<b>Bridget Cross:</b> Business Manager <b><u>C. Amey/D. Brooks:</u></b> Motion to approve the roof shoveling bid from Brad’s Tree Service for \$4,600.00 if needed <b><u>J. Brunault/R. Murphy:</u></b> Motion to approve the tree removal bid from Brad’s Tree Service for \$1,875.00 <b><u>C. Amey/R. Murphy:</u></b> Motion to approve the bid from David White Trucking for sweeping the parking lot for \$1,200.00 Had discussion on what the bid was for last year. The bid came in at the same	<b>VOTE:</b> Motion Carries <b>VOTE:</b> Motion Carries <b>VOTE:</b> Motion Carries

	<p>amount.</p> <p><b><u>R. Murphy/J. Brunault:</u></b> Motion to approve the Election Configuration from DeomcracyLive for \$600.00</p> <p>Bridget talked about an ice jam on the roof of the SAU building that fell and damaged quite a span of gutters, some flashing and some siding. Carl has reached out to some contractors, and we have received one quote so far. The insurance company has also been contacted.</p> <p>We will wait until we receive more bids before making a decision on how to move forward with the damage to the SAU building.</p>	<p><b><u>VOTE:</u></b> Motion Carries</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Superintendent Report (Agenda Adjustment Addition):</b> Dana Hilliard</p> <p>Dana wanted to discuss the question that has come up regarding collaboration and consolidation. He wants people to understand that collaboration is already going on. We already collaborate with Canaan and the district of ENSU. We look at models on how to share staff, how we can move forward in the future, and we collaborate when there are winter storms. Consolidation is different and there have been 3 previous studies done on consolidation. Currently SAU 7 has students that can go to Canaan School however, there is a barrier that keeps Canaan from allowing their students to come to schools within SAU 7. There are big differences when dealing with another state; there is a different Governor, different Legislature, different Commissioner of Education with different requirements and they are a state with a sales tax and each state has a different perspective on education. Dana read correspondence between him and the Canaan Superintendent. Superintendent Lawcewicz wrote to ask if SAU 7 would be interested in exploring consolidation between SAU 7 and ENSU. Dana responded that he supports collaboration between the two but that he supports consolidation between the three school within SAU 7. Dana also read that the Canaan School District Board members would be reaching out to the board members within SAU 7 for direct discussions that would not include the Superintendents. Dana explained that he is the SAU 7 Board’s only employee and feels the strength of SAU 7 is within those 3 schools. He reviewed the goals that were established at the goal setting session done back in October 2024. Dana is asking for approval to send a letter he wrote to Superintendent Lawcewicz regarding the continuation of collaboration between ENSU and SAU 7 and not consolidation. Dana is seeking a motion to move forward with approval of the letter and authorization to have the Board Chair sign the letter. David asked how many students are being sent to Canaan? Bridget stated that 12 Stewartstown students attend Canaan High School and Colebrook has 2 students attending Canaan’s CTE classes. The tuition rate is 50% of the secondary tuition rate which is \$11,500.00 per student. There is a law in Vermont that if a student is a Vermont resident they cannot attend New Hampshire Schools unless they are tuitioned in, but they cannot attend CTE courses. Columbia did approve the letter and signed it earlier this evening and Stewartstown will be reviewing the letter next week as will the other boards.</p> <p><b><u>J. Brunault/D. Brooks:</u></b> Motion to table this discussion until the board has a chance to study this some more.</p> <p>Discussion: David Hodge stated he agreed with the board and how they are</p>	<p>VOTE: Motion Carries</p>

handling this situation. He brought up that he felt that the school is trying to have students do too many things at one time. Feels the school system needs to figure out if they want to offer a high-end education and if so, concentrate on providing that type of education so the students that take those courses become very advanced in that career path. Julie spoke and agreed with David that the students are currently going in too many directions, and we need to get back to the basics. But also need to move forward so that students can survive in this very competitive world. She continued to say we are lacking in teaching our students on how to be successful in the world. David mentioned that if students would like to go to the Canaan CTE Program that they should be able to do so if that is what is best for the student. Tim did state that is why even though they cannot send students to SAU 7 schools the board still feels if their CTE classes are best for the student they should and can attend Canaan CTE classes.

Carrie Rancourt stated that we do have students from Vermont who pay tuition and come to Colebrook School. Vermont residents can elect a full education program and pay tuition and come to a SAU 7 School. She did state that there are currently interstate districts between Vermont and NH in other districts. She continued to explain that there have been students from Canaan that came to Colebrook School. Tim explained that recently it was discovered that it was illegal by Vermont state law to have Vermont students attend Colebrook CTE classes, so it ceased immediately. Feels that prior to signing the letter that there should be input from the community. Does not feel we should be shutting our neighbors out. We need to focus on the children. When a student leaves our school should be able to apply to any type of college they want. We should not be limiting what they do. She asked the board to talk to their community members before signing this letter and feels we are better together and should not build SAU 7 into an island.

Brigid Wonkka-Green felt that there might be some confusion as we are not trying to stop collaboration, and students can still go for CTE Courses and are not being shut out. Would like to confirm that the letter is only stating that we do not want to consolidate with Canaan, but collaboration will continue. The board agreed that yes collaboration will continue.

Dana spoke about what is happening in the state of Vermont with the consolidation model within the SAU's. The Governor is directing to consolidate down to 5 SAU's within the whole state. As part of this model anyone who is currently in an interstate agreement would not be consolidated because they are in an interstate agreement with New Hampshire. Canaan has stated that they would like to enter into an interstate agreement with us so they would not become part of the State of Vermont's consolidation.

7.	<b>New Business -</b>	
8.	<p><b>Hearing of the Public:</b> The hearing of the public was opened at 7:30 pm by the Board Chair.</p> <p>Tyler Snyder stated he liked that the board is not taking anything away from our students. Does however, feel the board is cowardly for not signing the letter this evening. He feels that Canaan School only comes to us when they need help.</p> <p>Cayanne responded that by tabling this tonight and not signing the letter allows the board to communicate with residents a little more before signing.</p>	

	<p>Richard Cole asked about the \$600 fee for the state voting machine and if that is a cost sharing with the town. Bridget stated that the town is also being charged \$600.</p> <p>Brigid Wonkka-Greene – commented on the Superintendents message that students do better when they connect with their teachers, and she feels this is a true statement. There are a lot of good teachers in our buildings. Asking the board to reflect on their decision to cut the Spanish/Geography/Soccer Coach. Reminded the board to review how their decisions, when cutting positions, may affect the students.</p> <p><b><u>D. Brooks/C. Amey</u></b>: Motion to close the hearing of the public closed at 7:35 pm.</p>	
9.	<b>Non-Public Session –</b>	
10.	<p><b>Meetings:</b>  Colebrook School Board Meeting Tuesday, March 18, 2025, CAES Library at 6:00 pm  Superintendent asked to have the local Colebrook policy committee schedule a 5:00 pm meeting before the next meeting. All were in agreement</p>	
11.	<p><b>Adjournment:</b>  <b><u>D. Brooks/C. Amey</u></b>: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 pm.</p>	<b>VOTE:</b> Motion Carries

Respectfully Submitted,  
Billie Paquette

Board Adopted: March 18, 2025