

Bethlehem Elementary School Budget Hearing  
2/10/2026

Present: Board Members Bob Weir, James Noyes, Sarah Storella, Margaret Hocking, Erin Campbell; Business Manager Toni Butterfield; Superintendent CJ Watson; Principal Bryan Smith; Board Clerk Tana LeClair

Public Present: Chris Jensen, Cheryl Jensen, Sue Greenlaw, Christine Quigley, Emily Watson

Budget Hearing Commenced at 5:00pm

The school board presented the contents of the warrant articles, which are as follows:

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ARTICLE 01: To choose all necessary Officers for the School District ensuing year: Two (2) School Board Members from the town of Bethlehem for a term of three (3) years each.

ARTICLE 02: To hear the reports of Agents, Auditors, Committees, or Officers heretofore chosen, and pass any vote relating thereto.

ARTICLE 03: To see if the Bethlehem Elementary School District will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$4,237,751 for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the school district officials and agents, and for the payment for the statutory obligations of the district. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Bethlehem School Board

ARTICLE 04: To see if the District will vote to authorize the school board to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement containing an escape clause, pursuant to RSA 33:7-e, in the amount of \$1,328,737 (gross budget) to finance the purchase and installation of energy efficiency equipment and further to finance building improvements related to installation, purpose, or operation of such equipment, said lease to be for a term of 10 years with estimated annual payments of \$161,434. The first annual payment will be raised and appropriated as part of the 2027-2028 annual meeting. (Simple Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Bethlehem School Board

ARTICLE 05: To see if the District shall vote to adopt the provisions of New Hampshire RSA Chapter 194-D and become an open enrollment school under the terms of the RSA, to admit 2 students from outside of the District with zero percent (0%) of the resident student population eligible to seek enrollment outside of the District.

Recommended by the Bethlehem School Board

ARTICLE 06: To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund previously established on March 21, 1989. This sum to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Bethlehem School Board

ARTICLE 07: To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be added to the School Facilities Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established March 22, 1994. This sum to come from June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Bethlehem School Board.

ARTICLE 08: To see if the District will vote to establish a capital reserve fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 to pay for unanticipated tuition costs and to raise and appropriate the sum of up to twenty-five thousand one hundred three and twenty-eight cents (\$25,103.28) to be added to the fund, this amount to come from the June 30 fund balance in excess of twenty-five thousand one hundred three and twenty-eight cents (\$25,103.28) available for transfer on July 1. No amount to be raised from taxation. Furthermore, to name the school board as agents to expend from said fund. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by Bethlehem School Board

ARTICLE 09: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

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There were questions from Chris & Cheryl Jensen about the costs and necessity of Article 04 (related to the proposal for the hiring of Energy Management Consultants). The Board assured them that the overall intention is complete transparency for the taxpayers.

No other questions or concerns were discussed.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:04pm; the motion passed.