

SANDGATE, VERMONT TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING -- March 3, 2026 10 am

Call to Order: 10:03am

Attendance: School Moderator Sheila Kearns presiding; all Sandgate School Board members in attendance; 18 people in attendance

Minute taker: Jessica Lewis Stevens

Introductions and welcome from Sheila Kearns

Article 1: To hear and act on the report of the School District Officers.

No comments

Article 2: To authorize the School Board to borrow money by issue of notes not to excess of anticipated revenue for the fiscal year July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.

Margaret Phelps moved; Celeste Keel second; All in favor

Article 3: To elect one School Board Director for a 3 year term by Australian Ballot on March 3, 2026

No comments

Article 4: Shall the legal voters of Sandgate School District approve the school board to expect \$1,382,235, which is the amount the school board was determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that the proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$9,689 which is 0.84% lower than per pupil spending for the current year.

Allan Tschorn moves; Margaret Phelps seconds

Margaret Phelps states in years past there has been a line item for the Bus Sinking fund and asks if that is not there because there is not a concern for the replacement of a bus at this time. Allan Tschorn confirms an electric bus was purchased using grant funds and further funds are available if necessary.

Rick Dahm asks for clarification around balancing the per pupil costs with the total budget. Allan Tschorn provides details on how the pupil rates and total budget amounts are calculated based on state equalization amounts.

Margaret Phelps asks if Sandgate is in danger of losing School Choice in Sandgate. Allan Tschorn confirms this is at risk. The superintendent suggests visiting the SVSU website to read about how Act 73

is affecting School Choice. Allan Tschorn also suggests contacting Kathleen James via Coffee Hours for more information and updates or to express concerns.

Vote on Article 4: All in favor

Article 5: To transact any other business proper to be brought before said Town School District Meeting.

Rick Dahm states he was Chair of the School Board in the 70s, and reflects on the wide disparity in budget amounts over the span of those years. The superintendent states one of the largest contributors to the increased budget is quickly rising health insurance costs that they cover for teachers, faculty, and staff.

Nancy Tschorn asks if there is any legislation currently moving through the State legislature that would preserve School Choice. One bill would effectively eliminate School Choice and one would preserve it.

Margaret Phelps addresses concerns over how schools are selected to be closed and the effect it has on the local communities.

Motions to adjourn:

Nancy Tschorn moves; Allan Tschorn seconds; all in favor

Meeting Adjourned 10:23am

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Lewis Stevens