

**Benton School District
State of New Hampshire
2025 School Meeting Notes**

The School Moderator Pro-Tem, Jeremy Elliott, opened the meeting on the 11th day of March 2025, at 7:03PM. SAU 23 Superintendent Dolores Fox and SAU 23 Finance Director Kathryn Ducharme were in attendance.

ARTICLE 1: To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year.

Jeremy Elliott was nominated, seconded and elected with a unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 2: To choose a School District Clerk for the ensuing year.

Mike Stiebitz was nominated, seconded and elected with a unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: To choose one School Board Member for a term of three years to expire in 2028.

Dwight Swauger was nominated, seconded and elected with a unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: To choose a Treasurer for the ensuing year.

Penny Chicoine was nominated, seconded and elected with a unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 5: To hear reports of Agents, Committees, or Officers chosen and pass any vote related thereto.

A motion was made to accept as written, seconded.

Benton School Board member Dwight Swauger stated that there is no immediate impact of the budget cuts threatened by the Federal Government. In response to an audience question, he stated that there are presently 21 Benton students on the SAU23 rolls. The number of 22.61 students that was quoted from the SAU 23 financial overview refers to the extra charges incurred for some students who attend other local facilities for part of their day, such as Riverbend Career and Technical Center.

Sam Gregory was concerned that although Benton students are able to participate in after school activities, they are not afforded transportation back to Benton. It was explained that there would have to be another bus run to supply that transportation and it would be prohibitively expensive.

Motion to accept was made, seconded.

The article was then passed with a unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate Seven Hundred Thirty Thousand, and Five Hundred and Seventy-One Dollars (\$730,571) for the support of schools, the payment of salaries of school district officials and agents, and the payments of statutory obligations of the district. This article is exclusive of any other article on the warrant

A motion was made to accept as written, seconded.

The Moderator then asked for any discussion on this article. One audience member asked for the cost per student, and was told that it is \$16,447 per student.

Motion to accept was made, seconded.

The article was then passed with a majority voice vote.

ARTICLE 7: To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$30,000 for tuition and special education expenses and authorize the withdrawal of up to \$30,000 from the Benton School District Expendable Trust Fund created for that purpose. No amount should come from taxation. (The school board recommends this article.) (Majority vote required)

A motion was made to accept as written, seconded.

The Moderator then asked for any discussion on this article.

It was mentioned that the total amount needed will not be known until the end of the school year in June. Trustee of the Trust Funds chair Laura Richardson stated that there is currently approximately \$276,000 in the fund, so we are in good shape at the moment.

The article was then passed with a unanimous voice vote.

The Moderator asked for a motion to adjourn the School District Meeting. A motion was made and seconded, and the meeting was adjourned on a unanimous voice vote at 7:17PM.

All newly elected officials were sworn in at the end of the Town Meeting.

A true copy

Attest: Michael P. Stiebitz – Benton School District Clerk – 03/16/2025

Michael P. Stiebitz