

CANDIA SCHOOL DISTRICT DELIBRATIVE SESSION 2026 STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting opened at 6:20 on February 5, 2026

Moderator H. Clark Thyng read the rules of the session.

Pledge of allegiance lead by Stephanie Helmig

Moderator H Clark Thyng made introduction of those present:

- School District Clerk: Jennifer Maurice
- School Board Members: Stephanie Helmig (Chair of the School Board), Mark Chalbeck (vice chair), Dana Buckley (clerk), Merideth Wilson (member), Heather Tremblay (member)
- SAU administrators: Mr. William Rearick (Superintendent), Ms. Cindy Bourgeault (Business Administrator)
- School administrators: Mrs. Becky Wing (Principal), Dorothy Francini (Assistant Principal), Mrs. Stacey Eaton (Director of Student Services)
- School District Attorney: Attorney Peter Phillips Phillips
- Serving as assistant moderators today are Tracey Boucher, Rob Jones, Rob Boucher, John Helmig, Mason Thyng

Recognized to speak even though not residents of Candia with no objection: Mr. William Rearick, Mrs. Stacey Eaton, Becky Wing, Peter Phillips Phillips, Mike McGillen

The average cost-per-pupil for the preceding year (2024-2025) as calculated in accordance with RSA 189:75, I(a) is \$22,249.57.

Candia School District achievement proficiency scores for the preceding year (2024-2025) ELA Proficiency: 55%; Math Proficiency: 53%; Science Proficiency: 49%

Warrant article 2: Shall the Candia School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$11,585,787? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$11,817,330, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Candia School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Estimated tax rate impact is \$.50/per thousand. (0 Yes – 4 No) (Not Recommended by the School Board) (5 Yes – 4 No) (Recommended by the Budget Committee)

Stephanie Helmig made a motion to move the article to the ballot as read and was seconded by Mark Chalbeck.

Discussion opened.

Jason Gustin (Crowley Rd) made an amendment to the warrant article. Daniel Coughlin seconded the motion.

Shall the Candia School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$11,833,313? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$11,817,330, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Candia School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Estimated tax rate impact is \$.50/per thousand.

Jason explained his reasoning for the amendment included that the default budget is set by law on formulas for increased cost. His new budget number includes a value above the default because of two recent heating pump failures with numbers of average prices he could find online. In the future he would prefer suggestions to come from the budget committee about more appropriate ways to reduce costs rather guiding statements such as “figure it out” and suggesting to eliminate the vice principal position or reduce busing levels to that below which is required by law. Having a top 5% school in the state is an incredible achievement.

Susan Young made a request for secret yes no ballot. She submitted her five people who support the secret ballot.

Jason asked about the process of a secret yes or no ballot. Clark Thyng explained the process.

Susan explained that she wanted the secret ballot so there would be no fear in voting how you wanted to vote.

Called the vote to approve the amendment amount. Secret vote was in favor by a vote of 81 to 21. The vote was to approve the amendment amount.

Moderator H Clark Thyng called for a vote on moving the amendment to the ballot as written. There was no discussion on the amended amendment. The vote was in the affirmative for the amended article.

Stephanie made a motion to discuss warrant article 4 before warrant article 3 for those in attendance. With no opposition from the floor, discussion proceeded to article four next.

Warrant article #4 Shall the Town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 32:5-b, 32:5-e, and implement a tax cap whereby the governing body and/or Budget Committee shall not submit a

recommended school budget that increases the amount to be raised by local taxes for the Candia Budget, based on the prior fiscal year's actual amount of local taxes raised, by more than 3%. 3/5 Majority vote required. (submitted by petition)

(0 Yes – 4 No) (Not Recommended by the School Board)

(3 Yes – 6 No) (Not Recommended by the Budget Committee)

William Safie made a motion to move the article to the ballot as read and was seconded by Steve Trembly.

The moderator brought up that the RSA is wrong and that a motion is needed to clean up the warrant article. E needs to be changed to C. Council advised that it be changed when the body votes.

Moderator Thyng opened the warrant for discussion.

Jason Gustin (Crowley Rd) I have questions about the legality of the wording of the amendment.

Peter Phillips there are other options that can be done and can be done. There are other options that could potentially be done in terms of how you calculate the tax cap. But the particular warrant article does propose that the tax can't be based on a percentage which is under the article as present is 3%. That number could be amended by a vote by the governing body or the budget committee.

Moderator stated that he believes that the only thing that can be changed is the percentage.

Peter Phillips said you can interchange school and town in many instances. You can't change the subject matter. It would be appropriate to remove 32:5-e.

Jason continued to question the warrant article wording and the RSA wording.

Peter Phillips stated that this is the school budget. You could take that out to align it with the language of the statute. The RSA here is talking about a local tax. It is clear that the petition was about to be raised by local taxes limited the school budget by some percentage based on what that impact of the overall town taxes might be.

Jason made an amendment to the warrant article. Second by Daniel Coughlin.

Shall the Town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 32:5-b, 32:5-c, and implement a tax cap whereby the governing body and/or Budget Committee shall not submit a recommended school budget that increases the amount to be raised by local taxes for the Candia Budget, based on the prior fiscal year's actual amount of local taxes raised, by more than 15%. 3/5 Majority vote required. (submitted by petition) (0 Yes – 4 No) (Not Recommended by the School Board) (3 Yes – 6 No) (Not Recommended by the Budget Committee)

Discussion to the amendment opened.

Judy Lozt asked if someone could change the warrant article if it was a petition warrant article. She thought they could not be changed.

Moderator Thyng explained that minor changes can be made as long as the intent stayed the same.

William Safie (Patten Hill Rd) explained why he put the warrant article in. He wanted the taxpayers to have options.

Stephanie Helmig (Fieldstone Lane) explained where the increases of the default budget come from; health insurance, teacher salaries, Pinkerton, electricity, etc.

William Safie suggested that the school board could use warrant articles to fix the short cut if this town approves warrant article #4.

Peter Phillips stated that yes any future warrant articles would fall under warrant article 4's tax cap. Including the teachers CBA.

William Safie suggested the school cut somewhere.

Susan Young (Deerfield Rd) wants it sent to the voters and see what they want.

Dana Buckley reminded the body about the handouts about budget and how we are spending only 1.1% higher than the state average.

William Safie (Patten Hill) you are leaving out something in your expenses in what spend per student.

Moderator Thyng stated the number of student which is \$22, 249.57.

Dana stated how the number is made.

William Safie is saying that the number is not being calculated correctly.

Stephanie explained that the state picks how the number is calculated.

Bill Rearick, as a member of the budget committee, you get how the money is being spent. The state tells how the number is figured.

Roger Levitt (Cricet Rd) called the question.

Moderator H Clark Thyng closed the discussion and called for a vote on the amended percentage amount. The vote was in the affirmative for the amended percentage amount.

Moderator H Clark Thyng called for a vote on the new amendment. The vote was in the affirmative to move the amended warrant article to the ballot as written.

Stephaine made a motion to restrict reconsideration, and it was seconded by Mark Chalbeck. The vote was in the affirmative. The motion carries.

Ryan Young asked if the wording is legal for what was just done. 3% to 15% seems like more than a minor change to him.

Peter Phillips stated that the warrant article is legal now with the change in the RSA from e to c.

Carla Penfield was told that a citizen's petition had to go on the ballot as written. What does Mr. Safie do if he gets someone else to say that the school board lawyer was not correct?

Peter Phillips gave an example that the governing body has the right to make changes to warrant articles at deliberative sessions.

Jason Gustin (Crowley Rd) stated that procedures prescribed by law were reported to every voting member in town.

Moderator Thyng closed discussion on warrant article four and moved back to warrant article 3.

Warrant article #3. Shall the Candia School District approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Candia School Board and the Candia Education Association, which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2026-2027	\$184,528.76
2027-2028	\$198,486.82
2028-2029	\$212,602.37

and further to raise and appropriate \$184,528.76 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? Estimated tax rate impact 2026-2027 is \$.20/per thousand. Estimated tax impact 2027-2028 is \$.21/per thousand. Estimated tax rate impact 2028-2029 is \$.23/per thousand.

(5 Yes – 0 No) (Recommended by the School Board)

(8 Yes – 1 No) (Recommended by the Budget Committee)

Stephanie Helmig made a motion to move the article to the ballot as read and was seconded by Mark Chalbeck.

Discussion opened.

Steve Trembly (Chester Turnpike) why are we having another increase?

Bill in this years budget there is no increases for teachers. The contract expires as of June 30th. We negotiated a contract. The cost of the three year contract is in the warrant article and voters have to vote on every new contract. Those numbers will be built into the outline in the next years budgets if you approve in March.

Susan Young (Deerfield Rd) asked who negotiated the contract with the teachers?

Stephanie Helmig I do.

Susan Young they asked for 3.4% and they negotiated a 4% increase.

Mike Yergeau (Laliberte) when the CBA is negotiated is the CPI taken into account?

William Rearick we discuss what the taxpayers can afford and we try to also be competitive. We look around at other districts as well. We don't want to lose teachers either.

Stephanie explained how the percentages were given. Year one was 3/.5%, year two was 3.75% and year 3 was 4%. We negotiated the contract we wanted to get teachers an acceptable salary.

Moderator H Clark Thyng closed the discussion and called for a vote. The vote was in the affirmative to move warrant article to the ballot as written.

The Moderator will accept a motion to dissolve the meeting Steve Trembly. Seconded by Tim Darcy

The meeting is dissolved at 7:43.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Maurice

Given under our hands and seal at said Candia, New Hampshire, this ____ day of February, 2026.

SCHOOL BOARD OF CANDIA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Stephanie Helmig, Chair

Mark Chalbeck, Vice Chair

Dana Buckley, Clerk

Heather Tremblay

Merideth Wilson

A True copy of the Candia School District Warrant – Attest

I/We certify and attest that on the _____ day of _____, 20____, a true and attested copy of the Candia School District Warrant was posted at the Candia Town Hall, Post Office, Henry W. Moore School and Candia Youth Athletic Association in Rockingham County.

Stephanie Helmig, Chair

Mark Chalbeck, Vice Chair

Dana Buckley, Clerk

Heather Tremblay

Merideth Wilson