

**CANDIA SCHOOL BOARD PARENT HEARING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
HENRY W. MOORE SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER**

These minutes have been approved.

Board Chair, Stephanie Helmig opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Those in attendance were Board members, Merideth Wilson and Heather Tremblay. Also in attendance was Superintendent William (Bill) Rearick and Assistant Superintendent Heather Cummings.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Stephanie Helmig led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROOF OF POSTING

Bill Rearick provided proof of posting.

Resident David Ondzes (Crowley Road) was in attendance as he requested a hearing regarding his son's bus stop under NH ED 204.

Mr. Ondzes addressed the Board with his concerns for the safety of his 9th grade son and requested a bus stop closer to his residence. His documentation will be attached to these minutes.

During his presentation, Mr. Ondzes referenced a number of times SAU #15 changed or adjusted bus routes and said other SAU #15 towns have more buses and less miles to cover. He also stated that he had provided alternate bus routes to the Assistant Superintendent that would be safer and more efficient.

Bill Rearick summarized the process for bus requests and said that ultimately, administration defers to the professionals at the bus company. He said if an initial request is denied, the parent/guardian may ask for a meeting with the transportation committee. If the committee rules against the request, a Board Hearing can be scheduled, and that is the purpose of the meeting tonight. He said the committee met three times in August to address this particular request. This was not considered a feasible option as it would add twenty minutes to the run. Bill explained that each school Board determines the number of buses for their individual districts. It was a Board decision to consolidate as many high school stops as possible and they haven't budgeted for additional buses. The cost for an additional bus would be approximately \$50,000.

Stephanie Helmig stated that the Budget Committee has, in the past, cut hundreds of thousands from the budget and if they do it this year, those cuts would have to come from the high school bus budget as the focus for funding must be on education. She said there are many more stops now than there were in 2019. Heather Tremblay stated the Board cares about the safety of students, but there is only so much they can do. Bill Rearick said the district could streamline busing by having four consolidated stops, but that would create stops much farther apart and would affect many more families. Merideth Wilson asked Mr. Ondzes to update his revised routes to include all the current stops and to resubmit this to the Assistant Superintendent who will send it again to the bus company for review. Merideth said she was unavailable for the last meeting when this subject was previously discussed, and that she would have voted in favor of adding a bus. Mr. Ondzes asked if there was any way of combining towns on buses, to which Bill Rearick stated that Pinkerton is looking into such a consortium, and they will be having another meeting on it next month. Stephanie Helmig asked for ridership numbers and that the Board usually has to defend providing the (current) five buses it uses to the budget committee. Bill Rearick stated that they must assume all students will use busing, though some are driven in by parents. Heather Tremblay stated that if this is going to be an ongoing issue, they may have to consider clustering stops.

Next steps are to resend updated, revised routes to the bus company, get ridership numbers and add this item to the October 1 Board meeting agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Merideth Wilson, seconded by Heather Tremblay, to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m., and the motion carried unanimously.

The next regularly scheduled Candia School Board Meeting will be on October 1, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. immediately following the New Staff Meet and Greet.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca McCarthy
Recording Secretary

Dear Superintendent Rearick, Assistant Superintendent Cummings, and Members of the Candia School Board,

Following consultation with Chris Motika at the New Hampshire Department of Education regarding state administrative procedures, I am writing to formally request a hearing before the Candia School Board pursuant to **NH Code of Administrative Rules Ed 204**.

This request concerns the assigned bus stop for the Pinkerton Academy high school student residing at [215 Crowley Road](#). We are requesting that the Candia School Board place this matter on the agenda for its next scheduled public meeting, conduct a formal hearing, and issue an official written **Notice of Decision**.

Summary of Request & Facts

1. **Measured Pedestrian Distance:** Pedestrian navigation measurements confirm that the walking distance from 215 Crowley Road to the assigned stop at the Chester Road / Crowley Road intersection is **over 1.0 mile** (1.02 to 1.05 miles).
2. **Severe Physical Road Hazards:** Forcing a high school student to walk Crowley Road during early morning hours presents severe, unmitigated physical risks:
 - o **Complete Lack of Illumination:** Crowley Road has no streetlights, requiring students to walk in pitch darkness during fall and winter morning pickup times.
 - o **No Sidewalks & Narrow Shoulders:** Crowley Road lacks physical buffers or sidewalks.
 - o **Winter Snowbank Obstructions:** Plowing routinely eliminates shoulders, forcing pedestrians directly into the active vehicle travel lane.
3. **Established Route Precedent:** The district already operates elementary school buses directly down Crowley Road with established stops in front of 215 Crowley Road, demonstrating that the road is fully viable for district bus transit with no operational barrier.

Action Requested under Ed 204

In accordance with local administrative remedies under Ed 204, I respectfully request that the Board:

- Schedule a formal hearing on this matter at the next Candia School Board meeting.
- Extend the Pinkerton Academy bus route down Crowley Road to establish a stop at [215 Crowley Road](#).
- Render a formal vote and issue a written **Notice of Decision** setting forth the Board's findings.

Please reply to confirm receipt of this petition and notify me of the meeting date and time when this hearing will be held.

Sincerely,

David Ondzes

[215 Crowley Road, Candia, NH](#) 03035

[603-377-0271](tel:603-377-0271)