# School board meeting highlights bullying, ethics concerns and political tensions in RSU 73



At a Regional School Unit 73 board meeting held on April 10 at Spruce Mountain High School in Jay, Maine, concerns were voiced by staff, community members, and board directors regarding instances of bullying, ethics breaches, and divisive behaviour linked to school governance and the treatment of district employees.

The meeting opened with a reminder from Board Chair Don Emery to maintain civility during comments. This came ahead of several speakers addressing troubling episodes involving school board members and interactions with staff.

Jenna Cote, assistant director for special services and district Section 504 coordinator, shared her perspective on the district’s efforts to foster a safe environment for students by teaching them to recognise and oppose bullying, and emphasised the role of adult leaders as behavioural role models. Cote detailed incidents where a school board member publicly disparaged a middle school staff member through social media posts, using derogatory terms such as “dipshit,” “douche bag,” and “liberal hack.” According to Cote, the same board member exhibited aggressive behaviour towards her in person on school grounds, including raised voices and profane language, stating hostility towards her and threatening her job. Furthermore, the board member publicly posted threatening language ahead of the meeting, including phrases like “If you thought this spanking was bad, wait until April 10... I’m going to go off!” and made public mentions of staff names online, actions noted as violating board policy and raising concerns given the member’s access to confidential information.

“This is not civic discourse. This is targeted harassment,” Cote asserted, urging the board to implement enforceable consequences for policy and ethical breaches. She also called on the communities of Jay, Livermore, and Livermore Falls to consider a process for recalling or removing school board members who misuse their positions.

Expressing a different viewpoint, Tanya DeMillo of Jay noted some perceived divisions among board members, staff, and the public. She highlighted the importance of acknowledging that disagreement over budget votes does not equate to opposition to education or teachers. “I truly believe we all want the same things but we need to hear what the other side is saying,” she said, advocating for collaboration to improve the district’s reputation and empower parental involvement.

Chris Beaudoin, a school counsellor at Spruce Mountain High School with over two decades in the district and extensive experience as a clinical social worker and mental health counsellor, stressed the fundamental importance of ethics in leadership. Reading from the district’s Code of Ethics, he emphasised that ethical standards underpin all governance and decision-making.

Ed Walsh, another Jay resident, raised concerns regarding a school board member who contacted librarians requesting information about student reading materials, describing it as “worrisome.” He questioned the propriety of board members’ actions that might intimidate staff or students.

In response to these public comments, Chair Emery reiterated that board member viewpoints expressed on social media are personal and do not represent the board’s stance. He urged all board members to consider the tone and potential impact of their social media posts, emphasising the importance of encouraging positive dialogue and avoiding harm to community members. Emery called for improved communication and resolution of conflicts through face-to-face discussions to foster mutual understanding.

Board Director Roger Moulton of Livermore Falls shared his own experiences with intimidation and bullying within the district, noting that past incidents involving retaliation against him led to sanctions against him but not the perpetrators. He voiced frustration with what he described as a bullying culture tolerated within the district. Furthermore, Moulton stated that accusations that board members hate or do not accept any children are “slanderous” and harmful to children's mental health.

Moulton also commented on political tensions, indicating that conservative students feel unsupported compared to liberal students within the district, describing the situation as an “extreme left liberal problem.” He underscored his commitment to free speech rights, warning that tensions are likely to escalate, saying, “I did not give up my First Amendment rights when I took this role. Buckle up, it’s going to get worse.”

Some attendees responded audibly to Moulton’s remarks, and he exited the meeting prior to the board’s reading of the Code of Ethics.

The meeting highlighted significant divisions and tensions within the RSU 73 community, addressing issues of staff treatment, board member conduct, political dynamics, and the ethical framework guiding district governance. The discussions underscored the challenges faced by the district in balancing governance responsibilities with fostering a respectful and safe environment for students and staff.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.sunjournal.com/2025/04/28/bullying-by-adults-ethics-and-more-addressed-at-rsu-73-meeting/> - Corroborates discussions about bullying, ethics, and governance concerns raised at RSU 73 board meetings, including adult behavior and community tensions.
2. <https://www.sunjournal.com/2024/01/30/rsu-73-board-hears-books-bullying-concerns/> - Supports recurring bullying concerns and debates over school policies, aligning with incidents of board member conduct and staff interactions.
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRAxFR5QSK8> - Documents a March 2025 board meeting discussing related tensions, offering context for subsequent April 10 meeting dynamics.
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53_KqISG_QY> - Directly captures the April 10, 2025, meeting referenced in the article, including debates about bullying, ethics, and political divisions.
5. <https://rsu73.org/en> - Provides the district's official communications platform, relevant for policies like the Code of Ethics and governance standards discussed.
6. <https://www.sunjournal.com/2025/04/28/bullying-by-adults-ethics-and-more-addressed-at-rsu-73-meeting/> - Reiterates specific concerns about board member conduct, staff treatment, and community divisions, as described in the article.
7. <https://www.sunjournal.com/2025/04/28/bullying-by-adults-ethics-and-more-addressed-at-rsu-73-meeting/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data