

EASTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Eastford Elementary School
12 Westford Road
Eastford, CT 06242
April 11, 2024

Present: Lauren Barlow, Michael Bilica, Stephen Bowen, Terry Cote, Robert Ellsworth (virtual), Adam Minor, Jessica Perry (virtual)
Also Present: Dr. Donna Leake, Superintendent (virtual); Carole McCombe, Principal; Charles Kernan, Director of Pupil Services

I. Call to Order

Chair Bowen called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Bowen led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Citizens of the Trimester

Harper St. Lawrence, grade 3 student, and McKenna Tacy, grade 5 student, were named recipients of the Trimester Citizenship Award. The Board of Education recognizes students who exemplify the qualities of leadership, respect, support of peers and involvement in school activities. Both students were able to attend the meeting and be congratulated by the Board.

IV. Citizen Participation

None.

V. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: (Bilica/Minor) To approve the Board of Education minutes of the Regular Meeting on March 14, 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Correspondence, Communications

- EES Second Trimester Honor Roll
- The Woodstock Academy projected enrollment numbers 2023-2024 through 2032-2033

VII. Committee Reports

- A. Executive/Personnel— None.
- B. Fiscal— None.
- C. Policy— The Board received the minutes of the April 9, 2024 meeting.
- D. Woodstock Academy – None.
- E. EastConn— Ms. Cote stated that EastConn is working on their 2024-2025 budget and mentioned that Diane Dugas is retiring in August so there will be some restructuring of some positions.
- F. Long Range Facilities— None.
- G. Transportation – None.
- H. Curriculum– None.
- I. Scholarship Steering Committee – Ms. Cote reported that applications are not due yet, so there will be a short turnaround to complete the evaluations.
- J. School Safety Committee – None.

VIII. Superintendent Report

Provided the BOE with updates including:

- Highlight of the Month – Joining Grade 5 and 6 students at the Amistad at Mystic Seaport
- Educational Leadership – *Joining families at Astronomy Night *Educator Diversity Plan was acknowledged by the State *Supporting the work that Carole and staff are doing regarding the Science of Reading guidelines
- Facilities - *Roof/PV project waiting on Eversource
- Collaboration and Communication – *Regular communication with Deb Richards *Ongoing communication with leaders in other districts *Ongoing communication with nonprofit learning organizations
- Finance - *Successful submission of PV project invoices to the State *Spent time discussing 2022-2023 audit with new auditor
- Comments on selected agenda items

IX. Principal Report

Received the Principal's report which discussed and/or provided the following information:

- Field Trips/ Virtual Field Trips
- Readiness Program/ Council Update
- Data on Student Progress
- High School Information and Open Houses
- Professional Development
- Community, other events, and recognition – An additional 'thank you' to Mrs. Jeannine Spink for teaching additional student CPR classes

X. Director of Pupil Services Report

The Board received the April report, which shows changes from the March report.

XI. Unfinished Business

A. Preschool Discussion

Mrs. McCombe stated that there have already been two early entries into kindergarten requests, and one notification of homeschooling for a preschool student, so the numbers continue to change. Mr. Bowen asked that she keep the Board updated.

XII. New Business

A. Approve submission of the IDEA Grants

MOTION: (Bilica/Barlow) To approve submission of the 2024-2025 IDEA grants. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Approve submission of the REAP Grant

MOTION: (Cote/Minor) To approve submission of the 2025 REAP Grant. Motion passed unanimously.

C. High School Discussion

Dr. Leake asked that this discussion be added to the agenda due to the rising high school tuition costs, she is not saying anything against The Woodstock Academy or its educational services. Other districts, such as Regional District 19 (E.O. Smith), have shown interest in having Eastford students attend their schools, so Dr. Leake wanted to know if the Board would want to have representatives from other schools come in and present. She understands that this is not a quick decision, it will take time and much investigation. The current contract with The Woodstock Academy ends in June 2027.

Mr. Bilica suggested Putnam, Killingly and Parish Hill, as they are also in the vicinity. Mr. Bowen suggested that this be kept on the agenda so the Board can decide how they wish to proceed in the Fall of 2024.

D. Set the last day of school

MOTION: (Bilica/Barlow) To set the last day of school for students as June 14, 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

E. Set date of Grade 8 graduation

MOTION: (Bilica/Barlow) To set the Grade 8 graduation date as June 13, 2024. As graduation is to be scheduled for 7:00 PM, the Board of Education meeting already scheduled for that evening will be adjusted to begin at 5:30 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

XIII. Additional Agenda Items

None.

XIV. Financial Reports

A. March 2024 Disbursements—sent to BOE via email

B. Monthly Financial Summary, March 2024

The Board received and reviewed the monthly report.

C. Budget Transfers

None.

XV. Citizen Participation

None.

XVI. Adjournment

MOTION: (Minor/Bilica) Motion to adjourn the Board of Education meeting at 6:39 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kymberli A. Gaylor, Clerk