

Superintendent's Report: June 2024

Highlight of the Month: This month I have had several opportunities to engage with students. I enjoyed spending time with our grade eight students discussing their interest in the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant and the Podcasts they were creating. This led into a conversation about my traditional donation of books to the library in honor of the grade 8 class.

I also had the opportunity to spend time at the Connecticut River Museum with the students from grades 6 and 7. This provided me with an opportunity to share conversations with our students in a relaxing environment. Thanks to Charles Kernan for sharing his work with our students on producing Podcasts and to Candice Mead and Jennifer Barlow for sharing the wonderful field trip to the CT River Museum. So many people think taking students on a field trip makes for an easier day. I can confirm through experience it takes a lot of time and effort before, during, and after the trip to make it a successful learning experience. So, a special thanks to all teachers who provide amazing off-site experiences for our students throughout the year.

News and Notes

Educational Leadership:

- Since my first year in Eastford, I have promoted the importance of reading as well as given special recognition to the grade 8 class through discussion about and the purchase of book(s) they would like to have donated to the library in their honor. This year I purchased, based on their recommendation, a box set of the *Who Is/Who Was* books as well as individual copies of some books not included in the set. Based on their interest, I also purchased a copy of *Who is LeBron James* and *Who is Michael Phelps* for each student.
- To promote the importance of off-site quality learning experiences I join, when possible, teachers and students on field trips as well as advocating for sufficient resources for these trips to occur on a regular basis.

Facilities:

- We recently posted for a full-time night custodian and a part-time summer custodial helper. As we move toward filling these positions, I would like to thank Lory Kneeland and Nathan Kneeland for working with Carole to provide the coverage that we need to provide a clean and safe learning environment for our staff and students.
- Lory Kneeland is in the process of gathering the materials needed to do small repairs this summer as well as to replace the bathroom ceilings near the staff room.
- Since the beginning of my tenure in Eastford, with the support of the community we have accomplished many facility upgrades, including a new heating system, new roof sections, upgraded security measures including a keyless entry system, and an upgraded telephone system. We have now completed the second PV project at Eastford School which has already resulted in savings on our electrical costs. Paul Torcellini, selectman and member of the Town Roof Committee has been monitoring our success.

Communication and Collaboration:

- As a result of our after-school grant, we have been able to offer many free after school programming opportunities to our students and partnership opportunities for our families. In addition to what we have provided throughout the year, we will be able to offer passes for our families to enjoy visits, on their own, to places such as the CT River Museum, Mystic Seaport, Roger Williams Zoo and Mystic Aquarium. Details as to how these passes can be obtained will be provided to families prior to the close of the school year. I was fortunate to apply for and obtain a two-year competitive grant that made these opportunities possible, but it was the diligent efforts of members of the Eastford staff that caused the program to be successful. Many thanks to Kymberli Gaylor (grant budget coordinator), Mary Seguine,

(grant data coordinator), Candice Mead, (grant program coordinator), Stephanie Schleicher (grant family partnership coordinator), Melinda King (grant wellness coordinator) and Charles Kernan, (grant program director).

- During this year we have strengthened our partnerships with members of the Eastford Congregational Church, Discovering Amistad, Mystic Aquarium, and Ragged Hill Woods. We have started new partnerships with the CT River Museum and the Roger Williams Zoo. We have plans to develop a stronger partnership with the Eastford Baptist Church in the coming school year.

Finance:

- With the support of members of the Town Roof Committee, Deb Richards, Dean Petrucelli, and Michael Chambers, we have been able to complete all components of the roof/PV project. Working closely with the members of the State Department, issues with the reimbursement amounts have been resolved. The BOS approved the final payment request and Michael is working on the completion of the final State paperwork. The Town Roof Committee needs to meet to make a final, official recommendation to the BOE to close the project. The BOE can vote on this at their August meeting. The final request for payment and the final paperwork will then be submitted to the State following this vote. Many thanks to the members of the Committee for their work on this project: Rob Ellsworth (chair), Steve Bowen, Paul Torcellini, and Jim Trowbridge.
- I am continuing to obtain information pertaining to the programs offered and tuition costs of other local high schools for future review by the BOE and the community. I will also be obtaining comparative transportation costs.

Comments on selected agenda items

Unfinished Business

- A. Policy 5131.911, Bullying Prevention and Intervention and Safe School Climate Plan (sent via email)
- B. Policy 5119. Physical Activity, Undirected Play and Student Discipline (sent via email)
- C. Policies 1100, Non-Discrimination, Community Relations; Policy 4125/4225, Non-Discrimination, Personnel and Policy 5000, Non-Discrimination, Students (sent via email)
- D. Policy 5130, Field Trips (sent via email)

Items A-D: These policies are being presented to the BOE for a second reading and possible adoption.

- E. Approval of Scholarship Recipients 2024

Terry Cote, Lauren Barlow and Jessica Perry met to review and determine the scholarship recipients and associated awards. The names of the recipients are typically withheld until the recipients obtain a formal acknowledgement of the award. Terry Cote will be requesting that the BOE approve the decision of the Scholarship Committee, names to be released later.

New Business

- A. Resignation of PALS Associate
Sarah Boyd has submitted her resignation as PALS Associate.
- B. Non-Affiliated Salaries
The Executive Committee met and will provide the BOE with their recommendations for the staff members that are not affiliated with a union. This includes administrative positions, district and school level assistants, some grant-funded positions and substitutes. The BOE will be provided with the list of recommended increases for review and possible action.
- C. Ratification of the AFSCME collective bargaining agreement 2024-2027
Building on good relationships among the BOE, the administration and the members of the AFSCME unit, the BOE committee and the AFSCME union reached a positive agreement on the 2024-25, 2025-26, and the 2026-27 AFSCME contract in one meeting. A copy of the draft contract will be sent to all

BOE prior to the meeting for review and possible ratification at the meeting. AFSCME has ratified the contract.

D. Set Tuition Rate for 2024-2025 school year

Each year we set the tuition rate for Eastford Elementary School based on expenditures.

E. Approval of the Eastford Leader and Educator Evaluation Support Plan

Approval is needed to submit the Eastford Leader and Educator Evaluation Support Plan. A special thank you to Carole and members of the PDEC committee for the work they have been doing throughout the year. Carole will be prepared to answer any questions you may have.

F. Policy 2260, Retention of Electronic Records and Information (sent via email)

G. Policy 6176, Policy for the Equitable Identification of Gifted and Talented Students (sent via email)

H. Policy 5120, Homeless Children and Youth (sent via email)

I. Policy 4112.5/4212.5, Employment and Student Teacher Checks (sent via email)

J. Policy 5144, Administration of Student Medications in School (sent via email)

K. Policy 4146/4246, Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Assault Reporting (sent via email)

Items F-K are presented to the BOE for review and possible adoption due to the limited changes. Any BOE member; however, can also request a second reading for all the policies. Lauren Barlow will provide additional information.

L. Discussion and Possible Action Concerning New ELA Materials

As you are aware, as part of the new Science of Reading initiative, we are required to purchase some new K-3 ELA materials. Carole and her staff have been reviewing materials and are providing a recommendation to the Curriculum Committee for consideration. The Curriculum Committee will be meeting on June 11, prior to the Town Budget vote, and are expected to present the BOE with their recommendation. These items will be purchased using the Right to Read grant funds and dollars from the 2024-25 BOE budget.

M. Extension of Superintendent Contract

This is a request for the BOE to consider adding an additional year to the Superintendent's contract. This action is typically presented to the BOE prior to the final year of the contract.

Financial Reports

As always, please submit any questions or concerns regarding the financial reports and/or recommended transfers prior to the meeting so the administration can prepare the needed information.

D. End of Year Budget Transfers, Purchases and Unexpended Funds

We are in the process of making final budget expenditures and will be coming forward to the BOE with a recommendation that:

- 1. the BOE allow the Superintendent to make the necessary transfers to balance accounts,*
- 2. a close estimate of the remaining dollars and,*
- 3. a request, depending on the remaining funds, to ask the Town to transfer up to 2% of the budget into the Unexpended Education portion of the Town of Eastford's Municipal Reserve Fund for educational expenditures.*