

EASTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Eastford Elementary School
12 Westford Road
Eastford, CT 06242
October 10, 2024

Present: Lauren Barlow, Stephen Bowen, Terry Cote, Robert Ellsworth, Adam Minor, Jessica Perry (virtual)
Absent: Michael Bilica
Also Present: Dr. Donna Leake, Superintendent; 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. Citizen Participation

Jennifer Barlow, Catherine DePercio and Jeremy Barlow spoke about the Grade 8 trip to Washington, D.C., the Goods and Services Auction, and parent involvement. There is concern due to the rising costs for the trip, lower proceeds from the Auction, and the lack of family participation. Mrs. Barlow and Mrs. DePercio mentioned the possibility of making family involvement mandatory for families of Grade 5 to 8 students, or the possibility of having to charge families.

IV. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: (Ellsworth/Barlow) To approve the Board of Education minutes of the Regular Meeting on September 12, 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

V. Correspondence, Communications

- Letter from First Selectperson Deb Richards requesting FY 2025-2026 budget submitted to the Board of Selectmen by January 16, 2025
- Letter from Kimberly Bush, EastConn Transportation Director, to Eastford Bus One families

VI. Committee Reports

- A. Executive/Personnel— None.
- B. Fiscal— None.
- C. Policy— None.
- D. Woodstock Academy – None.
- E. EastConn— Ms. Cote mentioned that EastConn is still tightening their fiscal belt.
- F. Long Range Facilities— Mr. Ellsworth mentioned that two quotes were received to replace the dehumidifier in the library, though no action will be taken at this time, and that the elevator is currently in need of repair.
- G. Transportation – The Board received the agenda of the meeting held prior to this one.
- H. Curriculum– None.
- I. Scholarship Steering Committee – None.
- J. School Safety Committee – Mr. Kernan mentioned there will be a meeting in October, and that the main change to the Security Plan is the reunification portion.

VII. Superintendent Report

Provided the BOE with updates including:

- Highlight of the Month – *Appreciation for the support and dedication of an outstanding administrative/office team
- Educational Leadership – *Keeping current with recent policy legislation *Meeting regularly with Administration *Participating in meetings with other district leaders *Beginning review of prior RFP for bus contracts
- Facilities - *Estimates received on dehumidifier replacement *Continued work on indoor air quality reports
- Collaboration and Communication – *Meeting with Auditor on October 15 *Continued discussion with neighboring superintendents *Beginning new contract discussion with Regional District 19
- Finance - *Currently deferring unnecessary purchases
- Comments on selected agenda items

VIII. 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
- Professional Development
- 2024 Fall Sports Update
- Upcoming Events

IX. Director of Pupil Services Report

The Board received the October report, which shows no changes from the September report.

X. Unfinished Business

None.

XI. New Business

A. Approval of Title I, Title II and Title III Grants

MOTION: (Barlow/Cote) To approve the submission of the Title I, Title II and Title III Grants. Motion passed unanimously.

B. 2025 Board of Education Meeting Dates

MOTION: (Ellsworth/Minor) To approve the 2025 Board of Education Meeting Dates, with the August 21, 2025 option. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Approval of School Safety and Security Plan submission

MOTION: (Cote/Barlow) To approve the submission of the School Safety and Security Plan. Motion passed unanimously.

D. High School Discussion

Mrs. Barlow noted that the cost is the largest aspect in deciding whether to change our sending school. She feels that the Board does need to consider other options to keep within their budgets. She did visit E.O. Smith and was very impressed.

Dr. Leake suggested that before making any decisions, the Board invite representatives from other high schools to present their programs, including The Woodstock Academy, and Board members may want to visit those schools, which she would be willing to assist in arranging.

Ms. Cote and Mrs. Barlow both suggested the possibility of hosting a Community Conversation. All the Board members present were in agreement that they wish to visit other sending school options.

The Board asked Dr. Leake to invite E.O. Smith to present at the next meeting, and they wish to hold off on requesting information from The Woodstock Academy until next school year.

XII. Additional Agenda Items

None.

XIII. Financial Reports

- A. September 2024 Disbursements—sent to BOE via email
- B. Monthly Financial Summary, September 2024
The Board received and reviewed the monthly summary.
- C. Budget Transfers
None.

XIV. Citizen Participation

Mrs. DePercio stated she is very impressed with E.O. Smith as well, and she was pleased to find they offer numerous UConn classes so the students may earn college credits.

XV. Adjournment

MOTION: (Cote/Minor) Motion to adjourn the Board of Education meeting at 7:02 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kymerli A. Gaylor, Clerk