

EASTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Eastford Elementary School
12 Westford Road
Eastford, CT 06242
January 9, 2025

Present: Lauren Barlow, Michael Bilica (virtual), Stephen Bowen, Terry Cote (virtual), Robert Ellsworth, Adam Minor (6:14 PM), Jessica Perry (virtual)

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 6:03 PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

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

III. Citizen Participation

None.

IV. Approval of Minutes

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

V. Correspondence, Communications

- Letter from Christopher Sandford, The Woodstock Academy Head of School, congratulating Addison Beausoleil on receiving the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) Student Recognition Award
- EES First Trimester Honor Roll

VI. Committee Reports

- A. Executive/Personnel— None.
- B. Fiscal— None.
- C. Policy— None.
- D. Woodstock Academy – Mr. Ellsworth stated there is a meeting in February.
- E. EastConn— Ms. Cote stated that EastConn is implementing a mid-year 15% increase to their special education program rates, which will be followed by an additional 5% in 2025-2026.
- F. Long Range Facilities— The Board received the minutes of the December 12, 2024 meeting and an agenda for the meeting held prior to this BOE meeting. Mr. Bowen stated that the committee approved their long range plan.
- G. Transportation – The Board received the agenda for the January 8, 2025 meeting. Mr. Bowen stated that the committee chose to go forward with a one year contract with EastConn and they hope to go out to bid in the Fall of 2025 for at least a 5-year contract.
- H. Curriculum— None.
- I. Scholarship Steering Committee – Ms. Cote noted that the Ethel Cushing Gardner Music Scholarship is due by February 4.
- J. School Safety Committee – None.

VII. Superintendent Report

Dr. Leake did not provide a full written report, as her focus was on providing the Board with a 2025-26 budget to review. She did speak to items on the agenda.

Mr. Minor joined the meeting at 6:14 PM.

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
- High School Information and Updates
- Upcoming Events
- Special Notes

IX. Director of Pupil Services Report

Mr. Kernan did not provide a written report but spoke to questions raised at the last meeting.

X. Unfinished Business

A. High School Discussion

Dr. Leake spoke with Woodstock Academy Head of School, Christopher Sandford, who said he would be happy to attend a Board meeting to make a presentation about the program offerings at The Woodstock Academy. The Board agreed to invite him to attend a meeting.

XI. New Business

A. Discussion of the Ethel Cushing Gardner Music Scholarship (Hartford Foundation)

Ms. Cote and Dr. Leake spoke to the scholarship deadline of February 4. The announcement is posted on the school website and will be noted in the February 1 Communicator.

B. Review Regional District 19 contract

In accordance with this contract, the BOE will pay the tuition for students who elect to attend E.O. Smith. The district does not provide transportation.

MOTION: (Barlow/Ellsworth) To accept the contract with Regional District 19 for 2025-2028. Motion passed unanimously.

C. EastConn Transportation Proposal, Discussion and Possible Action

MOTION: (Minor/Ellsworth) To accept the recommendation of the Transportation Committee and sign a one year extension of the busing contract with EastConn (2025-26 school year).

Motion passed unanimously.

D. Budget 2025-2026, Discussion

Dr. Leake provided an overview of next year's budget, which was shared with the Board. Mr. Bowen instructed the Board to review it and have comments ready for the Fiscal Committee budget meeting on January 21, which all Board members should attend.

I. Additional Agenda Items

None.

II. Financial Reports

- A. December 2024 Disbursements—sent to BOE via email
- B. Monthly Financial Summary, December 2024

The Board received and reviewed the monthly summary.

C. Budget Transfers

None.

III. Citizen Participation

None.

IV. Adjournment

MOTION: (Barlow/Minor) Motion to adjourn the Board of Education meeting at 6:35 PM.

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kymerli A. Gaylor, Clerk