

## Superintendent's Report: February 2025

Highlight of the Month: This month I need to highlight the over-the-top commitment of our custodian, Lory Kneeland. We had issues with our heating system over the Martin Luther King weekend. EMCOR made several visits to the school to assess the situation and resolve the issues. Thanks to Lory's flexibility and willingness to spend most of the weekend at the school, the issues were resolved, and we were able to open the school and welcome students and staff back to a building with heat on Tuesday, January 21.

### News and Notes

#### Educational Leadership:

- I met with Carole and Lauren Rodriguez, our consultant from EastConn, to review the progress being made regarding our 2025-26 Strategic Plan. Thanks to Carole for the dedicated and insightful leadership that continues to move the learning community of EES in a positive and purposeful direction.
- I connected our second and third grade teachers with Lauren Bennett-Dionne from the CT River Museum regarding some new and interesting learning opportunities for our students.
- I remain current with the recent changes in legislation that are impacting some of the policies we recently adopted, e.g. Title IX, bullying and climate plans. I will be working with the Policy Committee to set up a meeting after we get through this phase of the budget process.

#### Facilities:

- OTIS Elevator has not yet provided a solution for our elevator, which is currently inoperable.
- After several visits, EMCOR resolved the recent situation with our old boiler and our gym blowers (they needed to be reset after the boiler was down). It cost a total of \$1,035.00 to replace the burner blower on Boiler #2. EMCOR did not charge us for the hours they spent investigating the issue and the parts they decided to replace, just in case they were causing the issue. The labor for the actual repair was deducted from our bank of hours.
- Paul Torcellini, a member of our PV/Roof Committee, continues to monitor the intermittent issues with our new PV system. Paul has been working with Jason from J.E. Shea Electric. Jason has been very responsive and is trying to find some third party testing equipment to see if it can identify the sporadic issues.
- I spoke with Venture Communications regarding their suggestion to develop a plan to upgrade/replace our fire panel. Parts of our current system are becoming obsolete in terms of ability to replace. I spoke with Deb Richards, and I will be contacting Doug Beaudoin to request his involvement with this project.

#### Finances:

- We continue to monitor the status of our 2024-25 budget, which has been impacted by unanticipated special education costs as well as some unanticipated repairs. I have been in contact with Deb Richards, indicating we may be requesting the dollars from the non-lapsing fund that we returned to the Town.

#### Collaboration:

Deb Richards and I met to:

- review the status of our State Construction projects
- review the questions from the auditor
- discuss the long-term capital plan
- discuss the upcoming budget process.

Good news –

1. We believe we have satisfied all questions received from the State regarding the close out of the roof/photovoltaic project.
2. We received an additional \$10,949.81 on 1/31/25 in reimbursement for the HVAC project. Combined with the original amount received on 1/31/2024 of \$208,058.00, we received a total of \$219,007.81 at a 60% reimbursement rate.

**Comments on selected agenda items**

X. Unfinished Business

a. High School Discussion

*As requested by the BOE, I invited the administration of Woodstock Academy to present at our March BOE meeting. Any other thoughts regarding high school choice can take place at this time.*

XI. New Business

a. Approve the submission of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance grant

*Charlie Kernan has been working with the State administrator of the McKinney-Vento program regarding the possibility of obtaining a grant that could be used to support our work with our students identified as homeless. He was able to get us into the second round of funding. Thanks, Charlie, for pursuing this grant opportunity.*

b. School Calendar 2025-2026, Discussion and Possible Action

*Attached is the proposed calendar, developed by the administrative team, for the 2025-26 school year. The proposed calendar contains 3 full and 4 half day release times for professional development. Based on our use of allocated professional development time this year, we are once again asking the BOE to accept a calendar that will allow us to support the professional development needs of our staff as well as our school-wide initiatives.*

c. Capital Plan, Discussion and Possible Action

*Attached is the draft of the Long-Term Plan being recommended by the Facilities Subcommittee for review and approval by the BOE. Although there are no new projects requested at this time, it is important to note that work on addressing new state regulations regarding temperature and humidity controls for schools will need to be underway by 2026. Also, there is a mandatory HVAC 5-year assessment due by the end of the 2026-27 school year.*

d. Budget 2025-2026, Discussion and Possible Action

*Following our Finance Committee meeting we received the cost increases at WA on regular education tuition, special education tuition and tuition for special programs. (Document included). We removed one tuition for QMC and added one possible tuition at the Agricultural Education Center at Killingly. We still have the possibility of another QMC tuition (different student) and additional E.O. Smith tuition that we did not include in the budget at this time. This brings the budget to a 7.08% increase. The Finance Committee will need to discuss this increase at its meeting on February 13 at 5:30PM.*

*If there are any questions regarding any items mentioned in the administrative reports and/or financial documents please, if possible, send your questions or concerns in advance of the meeting so we can be prepared to discuss. At this time, we will not be requesting the BOE to approve any budget transfers.*