

A Special Meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Tuesday, January 31, 2023, in the Ellington High School Library Media Center, 37 Maple Street, Ellington, CT 06029.

**The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Jennifer Dzen.**

**PRESENT** Chair Jennifer Dzen, Vice-Chair Mike Young (virtual), Secretary Jennifer Mullin, Treasurer Liz Nord, Gary Blanchette, Marcia Kupferschmid, Angela Moser, Kerry Socha, Miriam Underwood, Steve Viens

**ALSO PRESENT** Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations  
Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services  
Mr. Aaron Fliss, Director of Technology  
Ms. Jennifer Brown, Coordinator of Human Resources  
Mr. Rik Roy, Board of Education Student Representative

### **SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

**Ms. Christina Herrick, Distinguished Modern Classroom Educator, Ellington Middle School**  
**Ms. Michelle Murray, Co-Principal, EMS**

Co-Principal Murray introduced Ms. Herrick to the Board. Ms. Herrick has become certified as a Distinguished Modern Classroom Educator. As a Modern Classroom educator, Ms. Herrick offers blended, self-paced, and mastery-based instruction in her classroom. Congratulations to Ms. Christina Herrick!

### **BOARD CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Dzen addressed the community. Budget is at the forefront of discussions. The Board is working very closely with the Board of Finance to endure a budget that is worthy of the town and that is fiscally responsible, providing the needs and educational value that Ellington has been noted for throughout the state. We will put forth the budget on the 15th of February. Chair Dzen encouraged the community to reach out to a board member with suggestions. (Note: you can find Board contact information [HERE](#))

### **CITIZEN & STAFF FORUM**

Ms. Linda Burns-McAvoy of 397 Somers Road, Ellington, CT addressed the Board.

Watch [HERE](#)

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of minutes: Regular Meeting, December 14, 2022, 6:00 p.m.
2. Approval of minutes: Special Meeting, December 20, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
3. Approval of minutes: Special Meeting, January 4, 2023, 5:00 p.m.
4. Approval of minutes: Special Meeting, January 18, 2023, 5:00 p.m.
5. Approval of minutes: Special Meeting, January 21, 2023, 9:00 a.m.
6. Human Resources Monthly Report

Watch [HERE](#)

Ms. Dzen asked if anyone wished to remove any item(s) from the Consent Agenda. Ms. Dzen announced that with hearing none, the Consent Agenda is accepted as written.

### **REPORT AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **SPECIAL REPORTS**

Watch [HERE](#)

#### **Human Resources Staffing Update**

**Ms. Jennifer Brown, Coordinator of Human Resources**

Ms. Brown shared that 135 new staff have been hired since July 1st, 2022. Right now Ellington Public School's total staff number is 495, this includes full-time and part-time staff. The Substitute pool has greatly increased by utilizing a waiver system offered by the State that allows college students to student teach. Part-time special education aides are in constant need with 13 openings to be filled.

### **REGULAR BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Finance**

Watch [HERE](#)

Finance Committee Chair, Liz Nord shared that the committee met twice this month to discuss and review the budget in detail. The committee worked to decrease the budget by \$210,250. The discussion continued with budget questions directed to Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations.

#### **MOTION:**

First: K.Socha

Second: M. Underwood

Move that the Board of Education adopt a budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year of \$45,109,347, an increase of 4.89% over the current year, for submission to the Town of Ellington per Town Charter Section 1102 with the caveat to continue to look for cost-saving opportunities.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Curriculum**

Watch [HERE](#)

Dr. Young shared that the committee did not meet in January but will be looking at the state's emphasis on the Science of Reading and how it may affect EPS' reading programs to discuss at the February meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

**Policy** – No Meeting

**Operations** – No Meeting

#### **Communications**

Committee Chair Mullin shared that the next meeting is scheduled for February 8th at 5 p.m. Chair Mullin reported that she will be speaking to one of the High School classes on February 13, 2023, at 12:45 p.m. about how EPS does communications and why it is important to do different types of communications.

### **ADMINISTRATION REPORTS**

#### **Superintendent's Report**

Watch [HERE](#)

Dr. Nicol shared the proposed Legislative Platform 2023. House Bill 5003, *An Act Concerning Education Funding in Connecticut*, will benefit rural, urban, and suburban school districts and has bi-partisan support. You can read the letter [HERE](#). Dr. Nicol also shared that he will be submitting written testimony at a press conference on February 3, 2023, at the State Capitol and providing a verbal testimony in front of the Education Committee after the press conference.

#### **MOTION:**

First: M. Underwood

Second: J. Mullin

Move that the Board of Education adopt the Ellington Board of Education 2023 Legislative Platform and authorize the Superintendent, Dr. Scott Nicol to advocate its position on behalf of the Ellington Board of Education.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **Directors' Reports**

### **Monthly Financial Report**

Watch [HERE](#)

#### **Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations**

Mr. Greenleaf shared that there was a change from last month, the total balance on the budget is \$475,405.02, which does not include credits back for excess cost. Mr. Greenleaf is projecting a tight end of the year; formal projections will be done in the next couple of weeks.

## **BOARD LIAISON REPORTS**

### **Student Liaison Report**

Watch [HERE](#)

Student Liaison Rik Roy gave his report to the Board.

- 1/31/2023 – marks the start of the third quarter and second semester, providing a fresh start for all students.
- Winter sports – basketball and indoor track have started up. Home basketball games are popular among the students, and attending them is a great way to show school spirit.
- Early December – EHS vocal and band concerts were well attended and both went well.
- Senior Capstone Project – a few seniors held an art gala at the high school. It was amazing, as so many students were able to get involved. Budding artists could have their work displayed at the gala, and culinary students prepared refreshments for attendees.

### **Permanent Building Committee**

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Blanchette shared updates regarding the Windermere Building Project status and what is being done currently in the planning process.

### **Center School**

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Kupferschmid shared that the Holiday Concert in December was awesome. Tim Adams did a marvelous job. Climate Surveys went out and the results were very positive.

### **Ellington Middle School**

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Socha shared a shout-out to Beth Shaw who coordinates the Ski Club and stated that it is a well-run program.

### **Board of Selectmen**

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Mullin shared that all the recommendations were approved in the capital improvement process which included budget discussions.

### **Shared Services**

Liaison Dzen shared that the next meeting is in February.

### **Windermere School**

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Viens shared that Windermere welcomed a new Health and PE teacher, Dean Parkington, who has a wealth of PE experience and will be joining Windermere and Crystal Lake full-time. Ms. Murphy and Mr. Parkington will be running American Heart Health month in February. Donations will be collected for the American Heart Association. Windermere will be piloting Whale Wonder Awards linked to one of the tenets of the Seeds of Civility. If awarded, students receive a positive phone call from Principal Hill, certificates, and pictures posted in the hallways. This is a special Whale Wonder Award and will run for the month of February. Mr. Viens was invited to attend the PTO meeting in February.

### **Crystal Lake School**

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Underwood shared that Crystal Lake School will have its 1st Annual Sweetheart dance on February 10th. All students are invited.

**CREC**

Liaison Underwood shared that HASA/CREC/CABE will hold a Legislative Forum on Thursday, February 16th at 8:45 a.m. Legislators will be invited and this will be an opportunity to lobby for HB5003. Miriam Underwood and Dr. Nicol will be attending.

**Ellington High School**

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Moser shared that the Ski Club is great and suggested that it may be offered at the high school. Safe Grad is running a fundraiser in February selling cookies from LuAnn's bakery to raise money. Ms. Moser requested feedback from Rik, our student liaison, for his and other students' opinions on the new semester scheduled at the High School. The results of the NEASC report are still pending. High School sports are now serving concessions.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Watch [HERE](#)

**Approval of Medical Leave for Cindy Garrow**

**MOTION** First: J. Mullin  
Second: M. Kupferschmid  
To approve Medical Leave for Cindy Garrow.  
Motion unanimously carried.

**Approval of the Unpaid Child Rearing Leave Request of Danielle Aldrich**

**MOTION** First: L. Nord  
Second: J. Mullin  
To approve Unpaid Child Rearing Leave Request of Danielle Aldrich.  
Motion unanimously carried.

**Accept the retirement of Nancy Connelly, Teacher at Crystal Lake, effective June 30, 2023.**

**MOTION** First: M. Underwood  
Second: M. Kupferschmid  
To accept Accept the retirement of Nancy Connelly, Teacher at Crystal Lake School, effective June 30, 2023.  
Motion unanimously carried.

**Accept the retirement of Sherry Caron, Administrative Assistant at EMS, effective June 30, 2023.**

**MOTION** First: M. Kupferschmid  
Second: L. Nord  
To accept the retirement of Sherry Caron, Administrative Assistant at EMS, effective June 30, 2023.  
Motion unanimously carried.

**Approval of EHS Performance Ensemble overnight trip to the New England Music Festival in Woodstock, CT from March 23, 2023 to March 25, 2023.**

**MOTION** First: J. Mullin  
Second: A. Moser  
To approve EHS Performance Ensemble overnight trip to the New England Music Festival in Woodstock, CT from March 23, 2023 to March 25, 2023.  
Motion unanimously carried.

**Approval of EHS Performance Ensemble overnight trip to the CMEA All-State Festival and In-Service Convention in Hartford, CT from March 30, 2023 to April 1, 2023.**

**MOTION** First: A. Moser

Second: L. Nord

To approve EHS Performance Ensemble overnight trip to the CMEA All-State Festival and In-Service Convention in Hartford, CT from March 30, 2023 to April 1, 2023.

Motion unanimously carried.

**OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS** – None

**CORRESPONDENCE** – None

**ROUNDTABLE** – None

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION**

First: J. Mullin

Second: M. Kupferschmid

To adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board (7:48 p.m.)

Motion unanimously carried.

