

A Regular Meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, June 14, 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, Secretary Jennifer Mullin, Treasurer Liz Nord, Gary Blanchette, Marcia Kupferschmid, Angela Moser, Miriam Underwood, Steve Viens

ABSENT Kerry Socha

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Outgoing Board Student Liaison Mr. Rik Roy

Ms. Dzen thanked Rik Roy for his service to the Board. Rik extended his thanks and appreciation to the Board.

New Board Student Liaison Introduction

Watch [HERE](#)

MOTION First: S. Viens
Second: M. Young
Move that upon recommendation of Superintendent Scott Nicol and Principal John Guidry that the Board approve the appointment of Noelle Krawczynski as the Board of Education Student Representative.
Motion carried unanimously.

Anticipated Appointment Crystal Lake School Principal

Watch [HERE](#)

Dr. Nicol introduced John Powell to the Board and community as the next Principal of Crystal Lake Elementary School. Dr. Nicol recognized and thanked the members of the interview Committee. Mr. Powell shared his gratitude to the Board.

MOTION First: M. Underwood
Second: L. Nord
Move to endorse the employment of John Powell as Principal of Crystal Lake School, effective July 1, 2023, at \$162,914 for the 2023-2024 school year as aligned with the Ellington Administrator's Association contract.
Motion carried unanimously.

Anticipated Appointment Windermere Assistant Principal

Watch [HERE](#)

Dr. Nicol introduced JoAnna Schmidt to the Board and community as the next Assistant Principal of Windermere Elementary School. Dr. Nicol recognized and thanked the members of the interview Committee. Ms. Schmidt shared her gratitude to the Board.

MOTION First: S. Viens
Second: M. Kupferschmid

Move to endorse the employment of JoAnna Schmidt as Assistant Principal of Windermere School, effective July 1, 2023, at \$132,762 for the 2023-2024 school year as aligned with the Ellington Administrator's Association contract.
Motion carried unanimously.

Honoring Board Member Bary Blanchette for 30 Years of Service

Watch [HERE](#)

Dr. Nicol read a proclamation for Mr. Gary Blachette in honor of his 30 years of service dedicating the Ellington Public Schools sign in his honor.

MOTION

First: J. Dzen

Second: M. Young

Move that the Board approve the Gary Blanchette Proclamation on this 12th day of June 2023 and direct the Superintendent of Schools to authorize the dedication of the Ellington Public Schools' sign located outside of the Board of Education after Gary Blanchette.

Motion unanimously carried.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Watch [HERE](#)

Chair Dzen shared congratulations to all of the graduates who took the stage for graduation on June 9th. Ms. Dzen thanked all of the staff who took part in making the graduation possible. Ms. Dzen stated that it was an amazing event.

Second, Chair Dzen asked that everyone keep in their thoughts the EHS track Team who is on their way to compete in the Outdoor Track and Field National Championship in Oregon for the sprint and relay competitions. We wish you the best of luck.

In closing, Chair Dzen shared that as the school year draws to a close, she wanted to reflect on and thank all of those who make the year a success. It takes a village. To the bus and van drivers, teachers and paraprofessionals, nurses, custodians and maintenance staff, office assistants, cafeteria staff, specialists, security officers, library media specialists, administrators, guidance counselors, IT department, couriers, superintendent, and our central office staff, Ms. Dzen shared that they help to shape, help to prepare, help to guide and love our most precious family members and for that, she is eternally grateful.

CITIZEN & STAFF FORUM - None

CONSENT AGENDA

Watch [HERE](#)

1. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting, May 24, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting, May 26, 2023, 12:00 p.m.
3. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting, May 26, 2023, 1:00 p.m.
4. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting, May 31, 2023, 4:00 p.m.
5. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting, June 7, 2023, 4:00 p.m.
6. Human Resources Monthly Report

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

Anticipated Board of Education Endorsement of Ellington Unplugged

Watch [HERE](#)

Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Nicol shared that [Ellington Unplugged](#) is a document that grounds us to allow community members, staff, whomever to engage in concepts that will be healthy for them if they so wish. A Committee was put together that worked to create the document. Dr. Nicol thanked the Committee which was a mix of parents and staff. Kirsten Labranche and Linda Robinson were present to represent the Committee. You can view [the announcement](#) to the community on our website. A cookbook was created by the district to support the unplugged initiative to coincide with one of the tenets, [Cook from Scratch](#).

MOTION

First: J. Mullin

Second: M. Kupferschmid

Move that the Board of Education endorse Ellington Unplugged and direct the Superintendent of Schools to advocate for and implement throughout the Ellington Family.

Liz Nord and Miriam Underwood abstained.

Motion carried.

Progress on Ellington Public Schools Athletic Programs

Watch [HERE](#)

Mr. Anderson Rawlins, Director of Athletics and Wellness

Mr. Rawlins began by expressing his gratitude to the Board and the Ellington High School Administration for their support. Mr. Rawlins shared some of the accomplishments of the department. To start, the focus was to foster strong relationships and by doing so, attendance at games increased. The whole community came out to support the soccer and basketball championships. Mr. Rawlins was able to revamp sports awards nights where all athletes were recognized. Gymnastics won the first state championship, swim competed in the double L championships and the track team is competing at nationals. 300 plus scholar-athletes were recognized as students first, and athletes second. Mr. Rawlins shared that the boy's basketball team received the IAABO recognition for their sportsmanship on and off the court. This is a special recognition awarded by the CT Officials Association that is an honor to receive. Rik Roy, Chair Dzen, and Liz Nord shared their gratitude to Mr. Rawlins. Ms. Moser inquired how the department will proceed to work with the booster clubs. Mr. Rawlins expanded on how that relationship will progress. Seeing student and parent involvement will facilitate this moving into the 23-24 year.

REGULAR BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Watch [HERE](#)

Finance

Committee Chair Nord shared that the Committee discussed the athletics update to include the pay-to-play fees, an addition of a weight room supervisor, and technology for strength and conditioning. The Committee also discussed the addition of an Occupational Therapist within the Department of Special Services as well as an additional Preschool Teacher.

MOTION

First: L. Nord

Second: S. Viens

Move that upon recommendation from the Finance Committee, the Board of Education approve the Superintendent to adjust the Weight Room Supervisor stipend, upon the receipt of grant monies to cover the additional costs in FY24.

Motion carried.

MOTION

First: L. Nord

Second: M. Underwood

Move that upon recommendation of the Finance Committee, the Board of Education approve budget transfers necessary to reconfigure contracted services in order to hire an Occupational Therapist for the 23-24 school year.

Motion carried.

MOTION

First: L. Nord

Second: M. Kupferschmid

Move that upon recommendation of the Finance Committee, the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent to hire positions, including an additional teacher, necessary to staff a seventh pre-kindergarten classroom on a one-year basis, with funds coming from prepaid grants.

Motion carried.

Policy

Chair Moser shared that the Policy Committee will meet every other month with the next meeting date scheduled for July 11, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Communications

Chair Mullin shared that the next meeting date is August 7, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

Curriculum

Watch [HERE](#)

Dr. Young shared that the Committee met on June 13, 2023 and discussed the K-3 Reading curriculum materials pilot: Core Knowledge Program. The pilot was designed to represent grades from each elementary school. The CKLA curriculum will be piloted in Fall 2023. This will cost about \$25K, for 11 teachers, drawing on CT State funds at a level of \$45K over 2 years (total \$90K) for new literacy curriculum adoption.

The Committee also discussed the grade 5 pilot of Illustrative Math. The EPS existing math curriculum by Bridges was not doing all we had hoped for in 4th and 5th Math, especially in relation to problem-solving and conceptual understanding. The higher grades (6-9) are experiencing success with Illustrative Math. There was a need to align 4th and 5th math with the approach in the higher grades. Part of the justification for a change was to move toward a more student-centered approach, to support their application of mathematical thinking and problem-solving, and to increase rigor.

Operations - No Report

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Superintendent's Report - No report

Directors' Reports

Monthly Financial Report

Watch [HERE](#)

Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Operations and Finance

Negative balance is looking better as the excess cost money is being received for Special Education services. Mr. Greenleaf thanked the business office team for their work this year as the last payroll of the year was processed.

Class Sizes 2023-2024

Watch [HERE](#)

Mr. Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Please note that class sizes are robust through several grades at Center School, notably grades 2 and 4-6. If the number of students in those grades increases significantly during the next few months, we may need to adjust staffing resources to meet the needs of students. Dr. Nicol added that the kindergarten enrollment numbers across schools are subject to change based on our school enrollment BOE policy.

District Improvement Plan 2022-2023

Watch [HERE](#)

Mr. Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Mr. Barton shared a brief update. Presentations on each topic have been shared over the course of the last few months. The District Improvement Plan topics included Teaching and Learning, Emotional Intelligence,

and Operational Effectiveness. Mr. Barton stated that State data has not yet been received, the initial results look promising and we hope to report those results in September/October once the data is received.

BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

Watch [HERE](#)

Student Liaison Report

Student Liaison Rik Roy gave his final report to the Board.

Rik's report included the end-of-year senior events that took place. They included: Class "Knight", Academic Awards, Senior Walk Parade at the elementary schools, Graduation, and Safe Grad.

Rik also closed by thanking the Board for welcoming him and for having him as the student liaison.

PBC

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Blanchette shared updates about Windermere, the architects will come to a future Board meeting to present and allow for questions. The plans are extensive for the security of the building during construction. We are at a good pace right now for the project. Brian Greenleaf added that the goal is to open the school by September 2025.

Miriam Underwood added that there was public concern about safety and that there are no sidewalks and will be increased traffic of construction vehicles.

Center School

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Kupferschmid shared that Center School held its 6th-grade graduation. She shared that Principal Mike Verderame finished his 4th year at Center School and has done a great job.

Board of Selectman

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Mullin shared that the Board of Selectmen recognized Gary Blanchette for his service at their June meeting.

Board of Finance

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Liz Nord shared news from the Board of Finance meeting. The Town's mill rate, tax relief for seniors, daycare tax abatement, and the budget were discussed.

Windermere

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Viens shared that the elementary schools had a great Revolutionary War Day, he attended the Reading Olympics assembly and Windermere will hold their popular Bingo event. A lot of great things happening at Windermere School to wrap up the school year.

Crystal Lake School

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Miriam Underwood presented Crystal Lake with their Best Communities in Music Award at their final concert of the year. Ms. Underwood also shared that she is looking forward to meeting and working with Mr. John Powell, the newly appointed principal of Crystal Lake School.

Wellness

Watch [HERE](#)

Annual Wellness Report will be posted on the website.

CREC - No Report

Ellington High School

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Moser shared that Student Liaison Rik Roy covered the high school report.

ACTION ITEMS

Watch [HERE](#)

Second Read to Adopt Advanced Course or Program/Challenging Curriculum Policy in the 6000 Series

MOTION

First: A. Moser

Second: M. Young

To approve the adoption of Advanced Course or Program/Challenging Curriculum Policy in the 6000 Series.

Motion unanimously carried.

Second Read to Adopt Curricular Exemptions Policy in the 6000 Series

MOTION

First: A. Moser

Second: M. Kupferschmid

To approve the adoption of Curricular Exemptions Policy in the 6000 Series.

Motion unanimously carried.

Second Read to Repeal Health Assessments and Immunizations Policy in the 5000 Series

MOTION

First: A. Moser

Second: S. Viens

To approve the repeal of Health Assessments and Immunizations Policy in the 5000 Series.

Motion unanimously carried.

Second Read to Adopt Revisions to the Health Services Policy in the 5000 Series

MOTION

First: A. Moser

Second: L. Nord

To approve the adoption of the revisions to the Health Services Policy in the 5000 Series.

Motion unanimously carried.

Second Read to Adopt the Revision to Policy 6156 Parent-Teacher Communication

MOTION

First: A. Moser

Second: S. Viens

To approve the adoption of the revision to Policy 6156 Parent-Teacher Communication.

Liz Nord opposed.

Miriam Underwood abstained.

Motion carried.

Retirement of Mary Walsh, Music Teacher, Ellington Middle School, effective June 30, 2023

MOTION

First: M. Underwood

Second: J. Mullin

To approve the retirement of Mary Walsh, Music Teacher, Ellington Middle School, effective June 30, 2023.

Motion unanimously carried.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE/ROUNDTABLE

Watch [HERE](#)

Miriam Underwood shared that she attended the Annual Scholarship Awards. Sixty-one scholarships were awarded to our seniors totaling \$125,000. The Committee has awarded over \$1M in scholarships to students in this community.

Miriam Underwood made a motion to award the Ellington Community Scholarship Association a Friends of Ellington Award. Liz Nord seconded the motion. A friendly amendment was made after discussion to move this topic to the Communications Committee agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION:

First: L. Nord

Second: M. Underwood

Move that the Board of Education move into Executive Session to discuss security and a personnel matter and invite Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations, into the session.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Board entered into Executive Session at 8:02 p.m.

The Board exited Executive Session at 8:30 p.m.

Public session began at 8:31 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

First: M. Young

Second: A. Moser

To adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board (8:32 p.m.)

Motion unanimously carried.

Approved