

A Regular Meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, in the Ellington High School Library Media Center, 37 Maple Street, Ellington, CT 06029.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 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, Kerry Socha, Miriam Underwood, Steve Viens

ABSENT Rik Roy, Board of Education Student Representative

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 Information Technology

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Ellington High School Treble Choir, October 7, 2022 (Pre-Recorded)

Watch [HERE](#)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Ellington High School Football Team

Anderson Rawlins, Director of Athletics and Wellness, Mr. Keith Tautkus, EHS Football Coach

The EHS Football team was recognized for their display of good sportsmanship, maturity and respect when paired with their rival, the Rockville football team, for an afternoon of camaraderie and inter-team bonding.

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BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Chair Dzen thanked the Boards of Selectmen and Finance for their continued partnership with the BOE and community. The State HVAC grant was discussed. She shared that she believed that every member is behind the projects that benefit our children. She noted the factors to weigh in on: questions to be answered and fiscal impacts to be considered.

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CITIZEN & STAFF FORUM

Emily Rushton - 317 Jobs Hill Road, Ellington, CT

Ms. Rushton addressed the Board.

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CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting, September 27, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
2. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting, September 28, 2022, 6:00 p.m.
3. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting, October 11, 2022, 5:00 p.m.
4. Human Resources Monthly Report

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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](#)

Further Discussion of and Possible Action regarding October 25, 2022 Special BOE Meeting (HVAC State Grants)

Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations

Mr. Greenleaf summarized the discussion of the Special Meeting held in collaboration with the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance regarding application for the State grant to address HVAC needs at Center School, Ellington Middle School and Ellington High School. He addressed questions and provided detailed information regarding the project's needs and costs. The Board moved forward with a motion.

MOTION

First: M. Underwood

Second: J. Mullin

Move that the Board of Education hereby directs the administration to further develop educational specifications and budgets for HVAC projects at Center School, Ellington Middle School, and Ellington High School with an aggregate cost of approximately \$6.85 million with a reimbursement rate 55%, in anticipation of application for the competitive HVAC program due by December 1, 2022. Projects shall focus on Dedicated Outdoor Air Systems, Boiler replacement, and Building Management System upgrades, along with soft costs including contingency, for submission to the Town for consideration by the Boards of Finance and Selectmen. As has been done previously, and consistent with Zero-Based-Budgeting, the administration shall continue to examine if any operational costs associated with upgraded systems can be reduced during the annual budget process.

Motion unanimously carried.

October 1, 2022 Annual Enrollment Report

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Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations

Mr. Greenleaf shared that the district's October 1st enrollment of 2,583 is a decrease from 2021-2022. The district has seen this pattern beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. Mr. Greenleaf also pointed out volatility in elementary enrollment numbers, with last year's Kindergarten class (now first grade) being the second largest of the elementary cohort sizes sandwiched between two cohorts (current Kindergarten and 2nd grade) which are roughly 7-13% smaller than the average for elementary cohorts. The district has also seen a wider drop in enrollment from 8th to 9th grade in the past two years, as demonstrated by an increase in VOAG tuition in the 2021-2022 school year. The district will continue to examine this trend further and put potential strategies in place to retain students.

REGULAR BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Policy

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Angie Moser shared that the next Policy Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, November 1, 2022, to continue the review of the board policies.

Operations

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Kerry Socha shared that the Operations Committee met and reviewed HVAC projects, Capital Improvement projects, and Special Education van needs. Ms. Socha also talked about the Windermere Community Design Session and how the community could share their ideas and see multiple design ideas. She encouraged community members to attend any future meetings.

Finance – No Report

Curriculum – No Report

Communications

Jenn Mullin reminded the Board to share photos of events attended with the Communications Committee to share in upcoming Newsletters.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's Goals 2022-2023

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Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Nicol shared key areas of his goals for the 2022-2023 school year. Dr. Nicol stated that some of the goals were developed as a direct result of the Superintendent's evaluation. Dr. Nicol also highlighted a few topics such as the Director of Athletics and Wellness position and its role within the operations of the district. Dr. Nicol shared another key factor in regard to Special Education Services' short and long-term plans and needs within the department. Lastly, Dr. Nicol added a goal of continuing the exploration and development of partnerships/statewide legislation to benefit not only Ellington but districts throughout the state and region. Dr. Nicol will continue to keep the board abreast of progress and welcome suggestions/adjustments ahead of acceptance of the draft at the November Board of Education meeting.

Directors' Reports

Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations

Mr. Greenleaf reported that there are no notable changes since the September report.

BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

Permanent Building Committee

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Gary Blanchette called on Brian Greenleaf to share an update from the PBC. The next meeting will be on November 1, 2022, with a presentation of some of the work from DRA. Mr. Greenleaf encouraged Board members and the community to attend. Groundbreaking is anticipated in July 2023 with a September 2025 opening. The construction manager is the next goal of the committee. This person will oversee the trade contractors.

Center School

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Liaison Kupferschmid shared that Center school had a wonderful turnout for the Wellness Walk on National Walk to School day. Truck or Treat (10/26), the Harvest Parade and classroom celebrations (10/31), the book fair, and Donuts with Grownups are all upcoming at Center School.

Ellington Middle School

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Socha shared that the Town's Trails for Treats was a great event. Liaison Socha shared that the Middle School offers many clubs after school. They are having Spirit Week this week – Red Ribbon Week. Another Coffee Talk is upcoming on Friday, November at 7:45 a.m.

Ellington High School

Watch [HERE](#)

Liaison Moser shared that tonight is Senior night for the Boy's Soccer team. Our Student Liaison, Rik, is one of 18 senior boys on the team so he was not in attendance at the meeting. Liaison Moser shared that PSAT testing went well. Last week was high school Spirit Week and Homecoming was on Saturday night. The quarter closes on November 2nd and the Annual Veterans Day Celebration is on Friday, November 11, 2022, at 8 a.m., all are invited.

Board of Finance

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Liaison Nord shared that the Board of Finance met and discussed a senior tax relief bill that will give Ellington seniors 65 years and older a \$150 relief on their municipal taxes. Other topics discussed are the American Rescue Plan Act and the high school track project. The cost of completing the High School track will be much higher than anticipated and the Town will need to approve the additional amount to move forward with the project. Also, the rest of the ARPA funds have been received by the Town and will be spent on other needed projects.

Windermere School

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Liaison Viens shared that Donuts for Grownups and Scholastic Book Fair were well attended. The Color Run is on Friday, October 28th and the Preschool Fall Harvest Parade is on October 31st at 9 a.m. Ms. Dzen noted the stakes and ribbons around Windermere Community are the first sightings of the Windermere Building project beginning.

CREC – No Report

Crystal Lake School

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Liaison Underwood shared that Crystal Lake is having the Annual Block Party on Monday, October 31st from 3-5 p.m. Ms. Underwood shared that it is a great idea that they have included their small community in this event.

Board of Selectmen

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Liaison Mullin shared that the Town's trial run of the 4-day work week has been successful, all town offices will continue on this schedule with the exception of Public Works.

ACTION ITEMS

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First read to repeal Board of Education policies in Packet 1

MOTION First: A. Moser
Second: M. Underwood
To approve first read to repeal Board of Education policies in Packet 1.
Motion unanimously carried.

First read to repeal and adopt Board of Education policies in Packet 2

MOTION First: A. Moser
Second: M. Kupferschmid
To approve first read to repeal and adopt Board of Education policies in Packet 2.
Motion unanimously carried.

Approval of the 2023 Board of Education Meeting Calendar

MOTION First: J. Mullin
Second: L. Nord
To approve the 2023 Board of Education Meeting Calendar.
Motion unanimously carried.

Approval of the retirement of Lisa Kelly, PE/Health Teacher, effective June 30, 2023

MOTION First: J. Mullin
Second: A. Moser
To approve the retirement of Lisa Kelly, PE/Health Teacher, effective June 30, 2023.
Motion unanimously carried.

Approval of the Capital Improvement Plan 2023-2029

MOTION First: K. Socha
Second: L. Nord
To approve the Capital Improvement Plan 2023-2029.
Motion unanimously carried.

Approval of the 2022-2023 District Improvement Plan

MOTION First: K. Socha
Second: J. Mullin
To approve the 2022-2023 District Improvement Plan.
Motion unanimously carried.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS – None

CORRESPONDENCE – None

ROUNDTABLE

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Angie Moser commented to address assistance for student-athletes who have to take the bus and have to leave the school early and missing class due to busing issues. Kerry Socha and Jenn Mullin also shared their concerns on the busing issue – timing/spacing and mixing of teams and grades.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION First: K. Socha
Second: J. Mullin
To adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board (8:17 p.m.)
Motion unanimously carried.