

A Regular Meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, August 23, 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 Vice-Chair Mike Young.

PRESENT Vice-Chair Mike Young, Gary Blanchette, Marcia Kupferschmid, Angela Moser, Miriam Underwood, Steve Viens (virtual)

ABSENT Chair Jennifer Dzen, Secretary Jennifer Mullin, Treasurer Liz Nord

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
Ms. Alisha Carpino, Director of Finance and Operations

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

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Introduction of Matthew Reed – Ellington’s First Town Administrator

Dr. Nicol introduced Mr. Matthew Reed, Ellington Town Administrator to the Board and the community. Mr. Reed addressed the Board and shared that he is looking forward to working together and embracing the concept of “One town, One Future”.

Introduction of Alisha Carpino – Director of Finance and Operations

Dr. Nicol introduced Ms. Carpino to the Board and the community. Ms. Carpino addressed the Board and the community and expressed her thanks for this opportunity. The Board made a motion to appoint Ms. Carpino as the Director of Finance and Operations for the Ellington Public Schools.

MOTION First: K. Socha
Second: M. Underwood
Move to approve the appointment of Alisha Carpino as the Director of Operations and Finance for the Ellington Public Schools, effective August 7, 2023, with a pro-rated salary of \$143,500 for the 2023-2024 school year.
Motion unanimously carried.

Board Member Kerry Socha made a request to move Action Item A. to approve following Ms. Alisha Carpino's introduction. The move was approved.

Approval of Phase 2 Plans for Windermere School Project (#048-0060)

MOTION First: K. Socha
Second: M. Kupferschmid
We hereby certify that these final plans and project manual(s) as prepared for bidding and dated August 18, 2023, and the professional cost estimate, completed in accordance with Level 3 of ASTM International Standard E1557, Standard Classification of Building Elements and Related Sitework-UNIFORMAT II for this project, dated August 18, 2023, have been reviewed and approved for this project on the dates shown above. We further authorize the submittal of these plans, project manuals, and cost estimates to be submitted to the Office of School Construction Grants & Review for review.
Motion unanimously carried.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT - None

CITIZEN & STAFF FORUM - None

CONSENT AGENDA

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1. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting, June 14, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
2. Human Resources Monthly Report

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

REPORT AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

SPECIAL REPORTS - None

REGULAR BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Finance

Ms. Carpino shared the finance report with the Board. The committee discussed the closeout of the 2022-2023 budget, which is almost complete. An update was also provided on the paraeducator grievance arbitration case that paraeducators brought before the Board of Education last September. On August 1, 2023, we received the arbitration panel's decision in favor of the Board. We reviewed certified hiring, which is going really well and the district has brought in some really wonderful candidates. Ms. Carpino also addresses an internal clerical error that affected the salaries within the budget book. An updated budget book will be published on the website and the clerical error has been discussed with the Ellington Education Association. CMERS, reading pilot programming, and food service management updates were also provided.

Allocation of Unexpected Fund Balance

MOTION:

First: M. Underwood

Second: A. Moser

Move that the Board of Education request a reallocation of expenditures pursuant to the Unexpended Funds Agreement through the Board of Finance for tuition costs in excess of budgeted funds, in an amount necessary to close the aggregate FY24 general fund budget without a negative balance, not to exceed \$68,278.95.

Motion unanimously carried.

Policy

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Chair Moser shared that the Policy Committee met on August 22, 2023, and reviewed revisions to four policies that will go to the Board for the first read at the September meeting.

Communications

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Angie Moser shared an update from the meeting. Ms. Moser shared that the Back to School edition of Communications Corner will go out mid-late September. Facebook and Instagram also had a jump in followers over the summer and have maintained a consistent reach. Lastly, a new Board brochure has been created and will be available at the check-in table for visitors. The brochure includes contact information for the Board and answers FAQ.

Curriculum

Watch [HERE](#)

Dr. Young shared that the committee met on August 22, 2023, and discussed the NEASC work. Mr. Barton provided more details regarding the NEASC report. The report documents three priority areas: details, commendations, and recommendations. EHS fully met five out of six foundational elements and work is underway to address the remaining element. NEASC identified three recommendations including expanding co-teaching, student voice and opinions, and the stakeholders involved in the SIP, earlier in the process if possible. NEASC appreciated the time in the teacher schedules for collaboration to review curriculum

development. December 2024 will feature a follow-up site visit by a NEASC team at which these points will be discussed.

Operations

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Kerry Socha shared that the meeting focused on the Windermere Building Project. The committee was able to see the layout of the school and some of the interior details. She shared that the HVAC project has been posted and bids will be reviewed. She shared that we will continue with Whitson's as our food service provider. Breakfast will be free for students and they have discussed having less processed food available for breakfast grab-and-go. They also discussed making the food in smaller batches so it is always fresh and helps to reduce food waste. She shared that she is optimistic about being able to deliver quality food to the students. Dr. Young inquired about the character visits from Whitson's resuming in the elementary schools.

Approval of Whitson's Contract Renewal 2023-2024

MOTION:

First: K. Socha

Second: M. Kupferschmid

Move that the Board approve the administration to enter into a renewal agreement with Whitson's for the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to applicable statutes and regulations.

Motion unanimously carried.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Superintendent's Report -

Directors' Reports

Monthly Financial Report

Ms. Alisha Carpino, Director of Operations and Finance

The monthly finance report was shared in combination with the Finance Committee report during Regular Board Committee Reports.

District Improvement Plan 2023-2024

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Mr. Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Mr. Barton shared a brief update regarding the District Improvement Plan for 23-24. The process begins with administrators reflecting on the year as early as January and priorities are identified by May and from there ideas develop on what needs focus and work. This year was reframed into sections: Conditions for Learning, Academic Excellence, and Operational Effectiveness and Infrastructure.

Steve Viens shared his concerns about some of the survey results and asked Mr. Barton to speak to them. Mr. Barton shared that we recognize that there is room to grow and the schools will use the RULER program. Mr. Viens inquired about the SAT math and ELA results. Ms. Underwood inquired if there was long-term growth in this group, beginning after Covid and continuing. Mr. Barton shared he would like to bring that to the Curriculum Committee to look further into and will bring back more information to the Board. Kerry Socha asked if we can bolster the SAT prep program for students to better prepare for the SATs.

Enrollment Update

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Mr. Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

This year's report is being provided earlier. We are currently above last year's October 1st enrollment number. The Enrollment Policy is great and allows us to balance out classes as additional enrollments come in the last weeks of summer. Enrollment is a moving target and we are continuing to monitor enrollment daily.

A new program for kindergarten was held this summer, teachers were eager to try it out and this helps meet the children and make minor adjustments to the classes.

Dr. Nicol shared that Open Choice seats have been closed. New kindergarten enrollments will be assigned to CLS and grades 2-6 will be assigned to Windermere going forward.

Mr. Barton also added that day one of our new teacher orientation was today and was very positive.

BOARD LIAISON REPORTS - None

ACTION ITEMS

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Child Rearing Leave Request of Kelly Griffin, Art Teacher

MOTION

First: A. Moser

Second: K. Socha

To approve the requested unpaid extended child rearing leave of Kelly Griffin, to commence on the completion of her FMLA, approximately January 1, 2024, and to conclude June 30, 2024.

Motion unanimously carried.

Approval of the Revision of the Authorized Signers of the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs

MOTION

First: K. Socha

Second: M. Kupferschmid

To approve the revision of the authorized signers of the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs.

Motion unanimously carried.

CORRESPONDENCE/ROUNDTABLE

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Gary Blanchette added that Permanent Building Committee is having an interview session with HVAC technicians.

Marcia Kupferschmid asked if Board members could attend the first day of school. Dr. Nicol shared that a schedule will be shared with the Board.

Kerry Socha shared about the leak in the auditorium and requested an update about the roof. Dr. Nicol shared that Greg Kliman, Director of Facilities, is working on it.

Miriam Underwood shared a CLS update from her meeting with John Powell, Principal. Updates included: Mr. Powell has met with the PTO to plan for the year, Popsicles with the Principal events were held, Kindergarten Orientation was successful.

Angie Moser shared that Mr. Guidry has been a great contributor to the NEASC work.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION:

First: K. Socha

Second: M. Underwood

Move that the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss school security and invite the following into the session: Dr. Scott Nicol, Ms. Alisha Carpino and Ms. Tracey Deptula.

Motion unanimously carried.

The Board entered into Executive Session at 7:23 p.m.

The Board exited Executive Session at 7:49 p.m.

Public session began at 7:50 p.m.

MOTION:

First: K. Socha

Second: A. Moser

Move to approve the addition of a third School Security Officer to the Ellington Public Schools to begin as soon as possible.

Motion unanimously carried.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

First: M. Underwood

Second: A. Moser

To adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board (7:51 p.m.)

Motion unanimously carried.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Dr. Mike Young, Board Vice-Chair

