

A Special Meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, in the Ellington High School Library, 37 Maple Street, Ellington, CT 06029.

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. by Jennifer Dzen

PRESENT Chair Jennifer Dzen, Vice-Chair Kerry Socha (6:04), Secretary Jennifer Mullin, Gary Blanchette, Marcia Kupferschmid, Angela Moser, Steve Viens, Miriam Underwood (5:51), Dr. Lenora Williams (5:54), Michael Young (virtual).

ALSO PRESENT Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Alisha Carpino, Director of Finance and Operations
Aaron Fliss, Director of Information Technology
Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services
Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools
Stephanie Veturis, Coordinator of Accounting
Ellington Public Schools Administration

TOWN OFFICIALS Dan Keune, Board of Finance Vice-Chair, Board of Education Liaison
Mary Cardin, Board of Selectman, Board of Education Liaison
Liz Nord, Board of Finance and Permanent Building Committee

AGENDA ITEMS

Dr. Nicol opened the meeting by welcoming guests and the Administration to the meeting. Dr. Nicol shared kudos with the business team who has been tirelessly working on the budget and thanked all who have worked on preparing the handouts for this evening's presentation. Dr. Nicol shared that tonight, a high-level presentation of the budget overview will be held. Budget binders for detailed review were distributed in preparation for Saturday's Budget Workshop and will also be available on the Ellington Public Schools website. Jen Dzen announced that the annual Saturday Workshop time has been changed to an 8:00 a.m. start and concluding around 10:00 a.m.

Budget Discussion

Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Nicol reviewed the scheduled highlights to be presented. These included an introduction, budget themes, major drivers, and proposed net spending increase. Dr. Nicol continued to share background information before moving on to the items of particular focus for the 2025-26 proposed budget:

1. Programs and services will be fully financed and will continue to see enhancements.
2. No new positions are suggested for this budget.
3. The adjustments made over the past two years to align accounts, like those for athletics and facilities, have led to reduced variability and greater predictability for this year's budget and beyond.
4. The steady growth in revenue over the past decade, largely due to the effective management of special education services and an outstanding special education team, has resulted in an exceptional educational experience for Ellington students and those from neighboring towns who have enrolled in our special programs.

The Superintendent's proposed spending for 2025-2026 is \$48,200,266, which represents an increase of \$1,485,106 or a 3.18% increase over the current fiscal year. Ellington remains near the bottom of districts in the state for per pupil spending (2023-2024 ranking 149 of 166 districts) needing to spend an additional \$9.04 million just to equal the state median spending. Another major budget strategy is the evolving timeline for the 6th School (Alternative Programming) that began in 2017 and has continued to grow over the years where Ellington continues to be a desired district for outplacements from other schools and the student count in programs is rising. Education

cost-sharing funding, excess cost reimbursement, and magnet tuition are the variables in this 25-26 budget. Dr. Nicol closed by sharing a 10-year average increase to the education budget has been 3.21% with the school district's "share of the pie" remaining constant fluctuating between 64% and 66% of the Town's overall budget.

You may view previous meeting materials and minutes, including tonight's presentation on our [website](#).

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

First: J. Mullin

Second: M. Young

To adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board (7:22 p.m.)

Motion carried unanimously.

DRAFT