

The Business Meeting of the New London Board of Education was held on May 13, 2024 in the New London Public Schools' Welcome Center and via Zoom Webinars.

1. Call to Order

President Elaine Maynard-Adams called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Present for the Board of Education: President – Elaine Maynard-Adams
Vice-President – Bianca Alexis-Sylvain (*attended via Zoom*)
Secretary – Bryan Doughty (*attended via Zoom*)

Board Members Present: Alisha Blake
Nathan Caron
Danni Cruz
Susan Hambey

Present for the administration: Dr. Cynthia Ritchie, Superintendent of Schools

Due to members participating virtually, all votes were taken by roll-call vote.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Reports and Communications

- Board Chairperson's Report

Ms. Maynard-Adams thanked Senator Marx, Representative Nolan, and Representative Conley for their hard work and dedication to a Bill for \$2 million, earmarked by the State, to allow the district to continue the programming at B.P. for another year. This additional year of funding provides another year for the district to look for grants and alternate funding sources to continue the program and work being done for our families. Ms. Maynard-Adams also noted that the issues with lawncare between the City and District continue, and that she and the Superintendent have sent a letter to the Mayor and Council. As of this meeting, neither she nor the Superintendent have received any acknowledgement of receipt.

4. Information and Reports

- i. Superintendent's Report

- Year-Round Schooling Program Update

- Dr. Ritchie, along with Ms. Sherman-Watson and Ms. Leeanne Morgan (K/1 Year-Round Teachers at Nathan Hale) presented updates on the Year-Round Program with the Board. This presentation included the following topics:
 - Many photos highlighting the academics and activities of students
 - The Opportunity
 - Core Challenges to be Addressed
 - Fundamental Change Idea
 - Design & Implementation Process
 - Impact on our Students

A copy of this presentation is available in their entirety upon request.

Mr. Doughty was disconnected from the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

5. Approval of the Minutes

Motion by Mr. Cruz, seconded by Mr. Caron, to approve the April 29, 2024 – Business Meeting Minutes.

Motion carried, 6-0

Mr. Doughty was reconnected to the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

6. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, that the following items, as set forth on the Consent Agenda for the Business Meeting of May 13, 2024 be approved unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools:

A. Superintendent's Written Update

- I. Academics
- II. Human Resources
- III. Student and Family Support Services
- IV. Operations – Includes Magnet Pathways, Athletics, Facilities and Technology

B. Action Items

- I. Approve the Proposed Program Enhancement Projects Grant Application for FY2024-2025 for the New London Adult & Continuing Education
- II. Approve Policy 6141.31 – Bilingual-English Language Learning Education for its Second and Final Reading
- III. Approve Policy 5114.12 – Student Handbooks for its Second and Final Reading
- IV. Approve Policy 5131.111 – Video Surveillance for its Second and Final Reading

V. Approve Policy 5141.22 – Communicable/Infectious Diseases for its Second and Final Reading

7. Items Pulled from Consent Agenda

A. Superintendent's Written Report

- Business and Finance

Ms. Maynard-Adams stated that throughout the budget session, the board has heard criticism of how the district has spent COVID dollars. She explained that typically, grants are categorical in nature and a bulk of the COVID grants determined by the Federal Government were to address student mental health and learning loss from the Pandemic, which means that they could not have been invested in capital expenditures. She shared that Mr. Funk has done some research to help all understand the difference in ESSER funds at schools versus ARPA funds at cities and towns. Mr. Funk stated that he has heard conversations from people about why the Board is spending one-time money ESSER funds on non one-time things. He stated that ESSER funds for education were given to school districts through CSDE. He stated that some of the uses of ESSER funds allowed for the coordination and response efforts of local agencies to improve coordinated responses to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID. Additionally to address learning loss among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care, of the local educational agency. Mr. Funk reviewed the grant description overviews with the Board.

It was discussed that it might make sense to review this information at the City's upcoming Neighborhood Academy as well to be able to share this information broadly.

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Cruz, to accept the Business and Finance Report.

Motion carried, 7-0

8. Executive Session Pursuant to Connecticut State Statutes: Title I, Chapter 14, Section 1-200(6), Connecticut Freedom of Information Act

A. Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing:

- Proposed Contract Extension with First Student

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Cruz, to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Proposed Contract Extension with First Student.

Motion carried, 7-0

The following people were invited into Executive Session: The Board as a Whole, Superintendent Ritchie, Mr. Rob Funk.

Time into Executive Session: 8:13 p.m.

Time out of Executive Session: 8:26 p.m.

No votes were taken while in Executive Session

9. Possible Action Following Executive Session

- Possible Approval of the Proposed Contract Extension with First Student

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Hambey, to approve the proposed one-year contract extension with First Student.

Motion carried, 7-0

10. Board Comments, Questions

Mr. Doughty stated that our Legislators have done some great work. The Science & Technology Magnet School building project was completed a long time ago, but was never closed out. They have now been able to get \$1.5 million to close out the project, so New London will no longer have an obligation to the State. Thank you to the Legislators for their great work on this.

11. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Blake, seconded by Mr. Cruz, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, 7-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan Doughty
Secretary