

The Business Meeting of the New London Board of Education was held on May 28, 2024 in the New London Public Schools' Welcome Center.

## **DRAFT**

### 1. Call to Order

President Elaine Maynard-Adams called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present for the Board of Education: President – Elaine Maynard-Adams  
Secretary – Bryan Doughty (*Attended virtually*)

Board Members Present: Alisha Blake  
Nathan Caron  
Susan Hambey

Board Members Absent: Vice-President – Bianca Alexis-Sylvain  
Danni Cruz

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

At the beginning of the meeting, Ms. Maynard-Adams called for a moment of silence in recognition of staff member, Jennifer Singleton, who had passed away unexpectedly.

### 2. Student of the Month and Employee of the Quarter Recognitions

- Early Childhood Center at B.P. Mission
  - Student of the Month: Sarah Derino
  - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Gianna Varela
  - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Kelly Pierce
- Winthrop STEM Elementary Magnet School
  - Student of the Month: Peyton Gauger
  - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Lizabel Garcia
  - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Anne Darling
- Nathan Hale Arts Magnet School
  - Student of the Month: Fatima Alvarado Valencia
  - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Jennifer Triandafillou
  - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Bryan Dawidowicz
- C.B. Jennings International Elementary Magnet School
  - Student of the Month: Walter Gregory Lewis
  - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Hector Aquino
  - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Meegan Bunch
- Bennie Dover Jackson Multi-Magnet Middle School Campus/Visual & Performing Arts Magnet Pathway
  - Student of the Month: Farrah Melton
  - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Derek Rock

- Certified Employee of the Quarter: Melissa Cancel
- New London High School Multi-Magnet Campus/Visual & Performing Arts Magnet Pathway
  - Student of the Month: Robert Brown
  - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Meg Mahon
  - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Lillian Cook
- New London Adult & Continuing Education
  - Student of the Month: Elymar Cordero
- Central Office
  - Jill Karrenberg

### 3. Public Comment

Jeremiah, New London – Jeremiah stated that over the span of the past two months, the Board has heard from current and former members who have articulated the importance of wellness positions at New London Public Schools. They help to provide an increased focus and healthy relationships, as well as contribute to teacher well-being, transcending every facet of the school. City Council has increased the Board budget by approximately \$1.5 million. He stated that they worked with the Board to help make this happen, and that while all would like schools to get more money in the future, they are asking for the wellness interventionist positions to be reinstated into the budget.

### 4. Reports and Communications

- Board Chairperson's Report

Ms. Maynard-Adams reported that she is happy to say that the budget process is now over. It was grueling, but finally is over. This evening, there will be a discussion that she believes will make the young friends present happy, and possibly putting certain items back into the budget. She publicly thanked the students for coming, and stated that this is what democracy should look like. Ms. Maynard-Adams also reported that the Adult Education Graduation would be this coming Friday. She also expressed that she was happy to have been able to help the Assistant Athletic Director last week to be able to waive the park admission to Ocean Beach for approximately 45 students who met the physical fitness standards.

### 5. Information and Reports

#### i. Board Committee and Representative Updates

- Finance & Audit Committee

Ms. Maynard-Adams reported that the committee reviewed line item transfers and year to date expenditures, and it appears that the district is in good shape for the end of the year. She also noted that the District will be going live on MUNIS payroll in July.

- School Maintenance and Building Committee

Mr. Doughty reported that the middle school continues to move along, and should be completed at some point in July. He noted that there was a lot of discussion about rock removal, and some may go to litigation, but there are ongoing negotiations with the sub-contractor. He also noted that there were issues with a temporary roof which failed when it rained recently. For the North Campus, it was noted that the project is going through the closeout process. Mr. Doughty also noted that some districts have been trying to eliminate bussing, so he and the team are working hard to ensure that they get back as much of the 80% reimbursement from the State as possible.

Mr. Gautier, Executive Director of Facilities and Operations, shared that at the last SMBC meeting, it was implied by Director Sear from the City that the grass will be cut within the next 7-10 days. It was noted that there is still no long-term plan put into place, but that Mr. Gautier had asked for it to be cut before field days and graduation.

## 6. Approval of the Minutes

- May 13, 2024 – Business Meeting

Motion by Ms. Blake, seconded by Mr. Doughty, to approve the May 13, 2024 Business Meeting Minutes.

***Motion carried, 5-0***

## 7. 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 28, 2024 be approved unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools:

### A. Action Items

- Approve Line Item Transfers as Recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee
- Approve the Revised SY24-25 Calendar to Amend the PreK First Day of School

***Motion carried, 5-0***

## 8. Items Pulled from Consent Agenda

- Discussion and Possible Approval of Proposed Amendments to FTE Positions of the Board of Education's FY25 Budget.

Ms. Maynard-Adams stated that a number of positive things have happened regarding the budget. She explained that in January, when the budget was built, the projections showed a 9% increase in health insurance. The actual increase ended up being much less. The City also provided some additional funding.

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to restore 3 Wellness Interventionist positions to the FY24-25 Budget.

Mr. Doughty thanked Mr. C.J. Parker and other members of Hearing Youth Voices for coming to the Board both individually and publicly at meetings. He thanked Mr. Parker for leading the way, and the students for their amazing speeches. Ms. Blake stated that she has seen the work done by Hearing Youth Voices at the Capital and locally. The literacy that they have all received and possess with the way the State budget works and how it then comes to the Board and affects students in their daily lives is exceptional. She stated that New London is on the map because of all that they do and the ability that they show, and work they have done.

***Motion carried, 5-0***

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Doughty, to restore a Technology Specialist I position.

Ms. Maynard-Adams explained that the cuts to the technology department went pretty deep in the original budget proposal. Mr. Doughty has discussed his fears that they may have gone too deep. The department has developed a pretty good track record with the response time with tickets, and she would not like to see that jeopardized. She added that she has spoken with Mr. Gautier, who also feels that adding another position back would be the right thing to do.

***Motion carried, 5-0***

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to restore the Director of Academics position.

Ms. Maynard-Adams stated that this position was proposed to be eliminated in the early spring. She was in favor at the time, but not now. She stated that she thinks the position is important, and also thinks that this is a good opportunity as the District is on the cusp of magnetizing Jennings to search and find an elementary principal who is experienced with MLL, SPED, and who can help to grow the magnet program. Ms. Blake agreed and stated that having a child in that school, she thinks that it is important. She also noted its importance as the leadership in that building has been ever-revolving, and it would be prudent to have someone there who understands the demographic of our students.

***Motion carried, 5-0***

The request is that the Administration work to bring forward an updated budget including these amendments to the Board for approval.

Regarding the budget, Ms. Maynard-Adams shared that in the past, there was a Joint Budget Task Force developed between the City and the Board. This was created in 2022-2023 by City Council, specifically in anticipation of this moment we have arrived to, when COVID dollars disappear. The Task Force consisted of three City Council members and 3 Board of Education members. Typically, the President of each entity and an additional two members. She stated that she had asked the Task Force to meet, but that she was told by the Council President that the resolution had expired, and it would need to go through the process of getting Council support for a new resolution. She stated that she sent an email to the City requesting copies of the resolution. She stated that she received one for 2022-2023 and one for 2023-2024, which does not end until July 30, 2024. She stated that she is sharing this information because the task force has been in existence this entire year, and the Council has failed to meet. This is important to know because the Board has taken such abuse over the Task Force, but they have no authority to call the meeting. In August, she spoke with then Council President Dyess and asked her to call a meeting which she did. There was a discussion about increased funding for before and after school programming. The Task Force has been in existence throughout this process, and at any point in time during this process they could have called a meeting to get a better understanding of the Education Budget, but chose not to. She stated that about four weeks ago she sent a text to the Council President asking him to call a meeting, but she has not received any response. She stated it might be because he thinks it does not exist anymore.

#### 9. Board Comments, Questions

Ms. Hambey expressed her pride for the New London High School Multi-Magnet Campus marching band which participated in the Memorial Day parade in Washington, D.C. She enjoyed watching the new Year-Round advertisement video. She also thanked New London Adult Education for providing successful education and training programs.

Mr. Caron expressed that he continues to be impressed with the students who have come to meetings.

Mr. Doughty thanked Mr. Rodriguez who stepped in with the band in the Spring of this year.

Ms. Blake stated that she is excited for the promotions coming up. She is happy to be a part of the process here.

#### 10. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Blake, seconded by Ms. Hambey, to adjourn the meeting.

***Motion carried, 5-0***

***The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan Doughty  
Secretary