

**GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 26, 2024 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11/HYBRID**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jay Weitlauf – Chairperson (arrived remotely at 6:40 p.m.), Beverly Washington – Vice Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman, Dean Antipas, Adrian Johnson, Matthew Shulman (remote), Ian Thomas (remote), Michael Whitney

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jennifer White

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Ray Engle, Clint Kennedy

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mrs. Beverly Washington, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The first order of business was the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag led by Mr. Adrian Johnson.

II. RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATION OF VISITORS AND DELEGATIONS

NONE

III. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

NONE

IV. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

NONE

V. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

NONE

VI. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

A. Superintendent Report

1. Opening of Schools – Superintendent Austin gave an overview of the Convocation (Attachment #1). Superintendent Austin and Mr. Engle gave an update on the 2 Administrative positions.
2. Operational Review – Superintendent Austin shared that the business office does not have the capacity at this time for the operational review on top of the regular audit for FY24 and has recommended postponing until well after the business manager has transitioned in with Mr. Engle's support. The Board held extensive discussions of the status of the audit, including discussions of possible method of how to proceed.
3. Potential Shortfall FY25 – Superintendent Austin noted the DOD Supplemental in the amount of approximately \$500,000 that could be used to fund the nurses. In addition, working with the town manager, the Impact Aid for military children with severe disabilities will be coming to the BOE in the amount of \$175,000 and the Superintendent is authorized to use funds specifically for special education.

B. Reports and Information from the Staff

1. Director of Finance

- Mr. Engle gave an overview of his narrative of the budget. Mr. Engle noted the Groton BOE PBC list dated 8/15/24. (Attachment #2)
- Object Code Summary FY24 – Mr. Engle gave an overview of the Object Code Summary dated 8/22/24 showing an ending balance of \$77,838.
- Mr. Engle stated high praise for the Business Office staff and their efforts during the current deficit.

2. Director of Buildings and Grounds

- Update re: School Facilities
 - Mr. Kilpatrick commended the Supervisors and staff for their efforts in getting schools ready for opening day.
 - The Gym Floors at FHS
 - Wood chips at CB, NEA, TR
 - Floor tile repairs at FHS
 - End fill on artificial fields
 - CB – still working with architects
 - HVAC filters
 - GMS Scoreboard donated by EB
 - CIP – putting back the NEA HVAC

Mr. Thomas left the meeting at this time.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Policy – Mr. Shulman noted that the Policy Committee discussed the Electronic Communications Devices regulations. The committee gathering information from students, parents, teachers, and administrators. The committee will meet again on Tuesday. At the 9/10 meeting the committee will look at policy changes throughout Connecticut and CSDE guidelines.
- B. Curriculum – There was no report.
- C. Finance/Facilities – Mr. Antipas stated that the Finance/Facilities Committee met on August 6, 2024, and discussed where we are on the audit; progress with the new Business Manager; received a report from Mr. Kilpatrick and stated that the schools are being cleaned up.
- D. Ad Hoc Budget Procedure – Mr. Thomas noted that the Ad Hoc Budget Procedure Committee will be meeting on Thursday at 6:45 p.m.
- E. Other
 - LEARN – Mrs. Washington noted that she is on the building committee at LEARN and they are building a new early childhood center on Daniels Avenue in Waterford.
 - Athletic Fields – There was no report.
 - Trails Committee – There was no report.
 - Library Committee – Mr. Shulman noted that there will be a parent's night to sign up students for library cards.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Consent Agenda

MOTION: Antipas, Johnson: To approve the Consent Agenda.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

B. Old Business

NONE

C. New Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the withdrawal of the Board of Education's request at its special meeting of June 6, 2024, for a supplemental appropriation for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

MOTION: Shulman, Antipas: To approve the withdrawal of the Board of Education's request at its special meeting of June 6, 2024, for a supplemental appropriation for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

Mr. Weitlauf left the meeting at this time.

MOTION: Johnson, Antipas: To postpone action until the next Regular meeting in September.
YES – Washington, Ackerman, Antipas, Shulman, Whitney
ABSTAINED – Johnson
ABSENT – Thomas, Weitlauf, White
PASSED

2. Discussion and possible action regarding recognition of National IT Professionals Day

MOTION: Whitney, Johnson: To recognize September 17, 2024, as National IT Professionals Day, and to direct the Superintendent of Schools to send a letter of appreciation to the IT staff.
YES – Washington, Ackerman, Antipas, Johnson, Shulman, Whitney
ABSENT – Thomas, Weitlauf, White
PASSED

3. Discussion and possible action regarding approval of out-of-district tuition rates for the 2024-2025 school year. (Attachment #3)

MOTION: Antipas, Shulman: To approve the out-of-district tuition rates for the 2024-2025 school year.
YES – Washington, Ackerman, Antipas, Shulman, Whitney
ABSTAINED – Johnson
ABSENT – Thomas, Weitlauf, White
PASSED

IX. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Letters, communications, and comments by Board members on meeting items and any other items in their jurisdiction.

- Mr. Shulman noted a letter from a parent regarding bus hub stops. She asked if the Town would be building hub stops. Superintendent Austin said the school district is responding to parent feedback regarding routes.

X. ADVANCE PLANNING

A. Future Meeting Dates and Calendar Items for Board Attention

As noted in the agenda.

B. Suggested Agenda Items

- Staffing at a COW
- FY25 Short Fall

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Whitney:

To adjourn at 8:50 p.m.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Grace and Gratitude 2024

LET US GIVE IT TO OURSELVES AND
THEN TO OTHERS

Grace and Gratitude - What does that mean?

- Grace is the exercise of love, kindness, mercy, favor; the disposition to benefit or serve another.
- The word gratitude comes from Latin word gratis, which means thankful or pleasing. The Latin root is also where we get the word grace, which is an unearned gift from within.
- Gratitude is the practice of acknowledging and appreciating the positive aspects of our lives, while grace is the ability to accept and forgive ourselves and others

Welcome Aboard

We are all in this together!

Just like in the Navy, every member of the boat has important work to do for our national safety and security.

As Groton Schools has important work to do for our students.

Everyone in Groton Public Schools is critical to our mission of Teaching and Learning - Teachers, Administrators, Admin Assistants, Paraeducators, Tutors, Aides, Food services, Custodians, Maintenance, Central Office, the Board, and our Community.

Getting Better in Groton - Together

Reflections from 2024 and Continued Goals for 2025

- Reading K-5 implementation of curriculum and programs, reflecting the science of reading
- Building Thinking Math Classrooms
- World Language expansion into the elementary (grades 3-5), with improved performance and many Seals of Bi-literacy at the secondary level.
- Intra-district Magnet Elementary Schools - IBMYP STEAM GMS - Career Pathways @ FHS leads to College and Career
- Continuously improving student performance - academics, sports, music, art, drama, JROTC
- Navigated budgets with care, caution, and efficiencies - Together!
- Goals around positive culture and climate in all of our district, schools, classrooms, and community
- Access, Equity, and Belonging in all our schools for all our students and staff
- Falcon's R.I.S.E. Portrait of the Graduate



R.I.S.E. - OUR VISION OF A GRADUATE

At all levels we strive for our students to RISE and be Resilient Individuals, Innovative Learners, Socially Aware Citizens, and Engaged Communicators.

**Our Strength comes through community,
commitment, and resiliency.**

We are Better Together!



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL 2024-2025

LET'S REMEMBER TO GIVE OURSELVES GRACE AND
GRATITUDE THEN PASS IT ALONG

"Living in a state of gratitude is the gateway to grace."

Arianna Huffington



Finance Report

Groton Public Schools

08/29/2024

Narrative:

Due to yearend processing, we will provide the utilities dashboards as well as the Healthcare dashboard in the September meeting.

We are continuing to question and review expenditures along with the invoices as we attempt to clear all obligations and to reduce the deficit for fiscal year 24. As of the creation of this report the team has reduced the deficit to a surplus of \$77,386.

As time permits, I am working on a more detailed version of the expenditure report. Hopefully we will have something in September.

The business office has been working with the auditors (Stephen, Raquel and Melinda) regarding the audit. At this time, we have submitted our preliminary material to the auditors and working with them on the time line. (See attached). We also had a conference call Thursday 8/22 to discuss and plan for the September audit cycle. The goal is to wrap up in mid to late October. The audit must be completed and submitted to the state by January 31, 2025.

The business office continues to meet to improve process, procedures and training. We are currently cross training payroll / general accounting processes. In addition, we have strengthened our internal purchase order requisition program to help ensuring the proper encumbering occurs. This will assist us in several key areas, invoicing, forecasting and the year-end close process. As part of this belt tightening, we will also be contacting several key vendors.

The yearend close process is on schedule and we continue to process according to CSDE guidelines. We will be performing and submitting our EFS documentation by Friday August 30. The state has extended the submission date to September 3rd due to the holiday weekend.

Last, I would like to publicly congratulate and thank the business office staff for the effort the entire team has provided to help work through the current deficit. **THANKYOU**, I could not have done it alone.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Town of Groton, Connecticut											
2	Schedule of Assistance to be Provided											
3	Item Number	Audit Area	Items Requested			Assigned To	Auditor's Date Requested		Deadline Date	Auditor's Date Received		
4												
5												
6	1	General Information	Updated listing of all bank and investment accounts (including pension) for confirmations					7/24/2024	N/A	Completed		
7	2	General Information	Listing of attorneys for confirmations					7/24/2024	N/A	Completed		
8	3	General Information	Updated pension documents (electronic versions) - only new or updated					7/24/2024	N/A	Completed		
9	4	General Information	Union agreements (electronic version)- only new or updated					7/24/2024	N/A	Completed		
10	5	General Information	Updated Documented Town policies					7/24/2024	N/A	Completed		
11	6	General Information	Budgets (electronically if possible),					10/2/2024	N/A	Completed		
12	7	General Information	Electronic download of T/B, revenue summary and expenditure summary					10/2/2024	N/A			
13	8	General Information	Listing of any new funds added and a list of which funds are cumulative					10/2/2024	N/A	None noted		
14	9	General Information	Minutes for 2022-2023 fiscal year, through end of audit					N/A	N/A	Reviewed online		
15	10	General Information	Electronic download of open payables report by account (for all funds)					10/2/2024	N/A			
16	11	General Information	Electronic download of open encumbrances at 6/30/24 by Function					10/2/2024	N/A			
17	12	General Information	Electronic download of the transaction detail file					10/2/2024	N/A			
18	13	General Information	Identification of any new financed purchase (capital leases, including lease agreements and payment schedules					10/2/2024	N/A			
19	14	All Funds	Copies of all bank statement and reconciliations					10/2/2024	N/A			
20												
21	15	Board of Education	Intergovernmental receivable listing - Grants					10/2/2024	N/A			
22	16	Board of Education	Accounts receivable listing					10/2/2024	N/A			
23	17	Board of Education	Accrued expenses listing, including accrued payroll					10/2/2024	N/A			
24	18	Board of Education	Deferred revenue listing					10/2/2024	N/A			

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4												
5												
25	19	Board of Education		Expenditures from July 1, 2024 to October 2024				10/2/2024		N/A		
26	20	Board of Education		YTD Final Budget Report				10/2/2024		N/A		
27	21	Board of Education		Accounts payable listing				10/2/2024		N/A		
28	22	Board of Education		BOE Budget to Actual schedule (Schedule A-3 in ACFR)				10/2/2024		11/15/2024		
29	23	Board of Education		Schedule of liquidation of prior year encumbrances				10/2/2024		N/A		
30	24	Board of Education		Detailed listing of open encumbrances at 6/30/24				10/2/2024		N/A		
31	25	Board of Education		Detail of payroll accrual				10/2/2024		N/A		
32												
33	26	Education Grants		Spreadsheet of all grants, receivables and deferrals				10/2/2024		10/15/2024		
34	27	Education Grants		Grant Fund detail from the system				10/2/2024		10/15/2024		
35												
36	28	Cafeteria Fund		Balance Sheet (AP listing, AR listing and support)				10/2/2024		10/15/2024		
37	29	Cafeteria Fund		Income Statement				10/2/2024		10/15/2024		
38												
39	30	Student Activity		Student activities analysis				10/2/2024		10/2/2024		
40	31	Performance		Performance bond fund detail analysis				10/2/2024		10/2/2024		
41				Plan bonds and Planing Bond Balance Sheet Summary files								
42	32	Custodial		Fire District tax fund detail analysis				10/2/2024		10/2/2024		
43												
44	33	Capital Assets		Schedule of additions, deletions, ending balance for governmental funds				10/2/2024		10/31/2024		
45	34	Capital Assets		Depreciation expense, by function				10/2/2024		10/31/2024		
46	35	Capital Assets		Schedule of fixed assets additions by source and function (capital outlay reconciliation)				10/2/2024		10/31/2024		
47	36	Capital Assets		Schedule of donated property with fair value amount				10/2/2024		10/31/2024		
48	37	Capital Assets		Detail capital asset files, listing of all assets, additions in CY, disposals in CY (electronic)				10/2/2024		10/31/2024		
49												
50	38	Debt (BOE)		Compensated absence calculation including short-term versus long-term and payouts during current year (sick & vacation list)				10/2/2024		N/A		
51												

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4												
5												
52	39	Single Audit		Listing of direct federal monies received				10/2/2024		N/A		
53	40	Single Audit		Federal and State Grant expenditures by fund from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 (Ed Grants Summary, FINAST - Town of Groton files from Dee)				10/2/2024		N/A		
	41	Single Audit		Federal and State Grant expenditures by fund from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024				10/2/2024		N/A		
55												
56	42	EFS Data		Supporting information for EFS Data, SEECG State DataFiling, PSIS for October 2023 (when available) and ED141's				10/2/2024		10/2/2024		
57	43	EFS Data		Desk Audit Findings				when available		when available		
58	44	EFS Data		Trending/Analysis Report				10/2/2024		10/2/2024		
59												
60	45	Financial Statements		Construction commitments footnote				10/2/2024		10/31/2024		
61	46	Financial Statements		Operating & financed purchases (previously capital lease) footnote				10/2/2024		10/31/2024		

Groton Public Schools

FY25 Proposed tuition rates for non-Groton resident students

	Approved FY2023-2024 Tuition Rates	Proposed FY2024-2025 Tuition Rates
General Education Tuition Rates		
Pre-K	\$ 6,443	\$ 6,871
Elementary School	\$ 12,885	\$ 13,742
Middle School	\$ 13,008	\$ 13,946
High School	\$ 15,255	\$ 15,382

	Approved FY2023-2024 Tuition Rates	Proposed FY2024-2025 Tuition Rates
ADDITIONAL COSTS		
Special Education Program Costs		
Self-contained (Academy/NBA Program/Transition Academy)	\$ 31,424	\$ 33,664
ABA Program	\$ 29,515	\$ 34,515
Multiple Disabilities Program	\$ 27,266	\$ 31,730
Resource Room	\$ 11,940	\$ 12,418

General Education Program Costs		
International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program	Add \$ 2,725	\$ 2,861
AP Classes	Add Cost of test	Cost of test

Additional Services		
OT/PT	Add	Based on LEARN
Speech	Add	Related Services
Counseling/Social Skills	Add	Hourly Rate
BCBA	Add	Schedule
Evaluations		Based on LEARN
		Student Support
		Services Fee
		Schedule
Paraprofessionals		Based on LEARN
		Student Support
		Services Fee
		Schedule