

# Board of Directors Regular Business

## APPROVED MINUTES



**Meeting Date:** November 14, 2024  
**Draft Posted:** November 22, 2024  
**Approved Posted:** December 12, 2024

**Present:** Eric Bauman, East Lyme; Kate Ericson, LEARN; Jennifer Favalora, Killingworth/Region 17; Elizabeth Fernandes, Westbrook; Nancy Johnston, Essex/Grades K-6; Cindy Luty, Preston; Robert Mitchell, Montville; Beverly Washington, Groton; and Laurie Wolfley, Waterford

**Not Attending and Not Represented:** Sara Baker, Stonington; Steve Beeler, Old Saybrook; Dale Bernardoni, Chester/Grades K-6; W. Scott Brown, Lyme & Old Lyme/Region 18; Mary Ann Connelly, Madison; A. Terri Garrity, East Haddam; Mary Harris, Ledyard; Kristen Peck, Guilford; Gregory Perry, Norwich; Sean Reith, Salem; Christine Wagner, North Stonington; Vacant, Chester, Deep River, Essex Region #4; Vacant, Clinton; Vacant, Deep River/Grades K-6; Vacant, East Hampton; and Vacant, New London

**Guests:** Michael Belden, LEARN Chief Financial Officer; Dr. Ryan Donlon, LEARN Associate Executive Director; Joanne Lund, LEARN Assistant Director of Business; Elizabeth McCaffery, LEARN Director of Human Resources; Patricia McCarthy, CABE Executive Director and General Counsel; Jessica Silvestro, The Friendship School Principal; Diane Felty, The Friendship School Teacher; and Jacqui Endorf (Zoom)

**Meeting began at 9:01 a.m.**

- 1. Call to Order:** Pledge of Allegiance
- 2. Audience and Guests:** Introductions
- 3. Public Comment:** None
- 4. Reading and/or Review of Correspondence:** None
- 5. Superintendents' Perspective:** Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) Executive Director and General Counsel, Patrice McCarthy provided the Board with the following legislative updates:
  - LEARN, the CABE Leadership Fund, CAPSS, and the Rell Center for Public Service contributed to secure Tim Shriver as the 2024 CABE/CAPSS Convention keynote speaker.
  - The Legislative session is set to begin on January 8<sup>th</sup>. Notable updates include Representative Jeff Currey's decision not to seek re-election and Representative Kathleen McCarty's departure from office following the recent election results.
  - This is a Biennial budget year, and significant advocacy efforts are anticipated to secure increased support for education. Additionally, the 119K Commission has released its report on disconnected youth, which includes a series of recommendations, made possible through funding from the Dalio Foundation.
  - The Special Education Task Force is on track to issue recommendations to fully fund the Excess Cost Grant, create a model contract for private providers, have state auditors look at cost differential and profits from private providers, and special education support by January 1.

## **6. Consent Agenda:**

- 6.1 Approval of the DRAFT Minutes, Regular Business Meeting—October 10, 2024
- 6.2 Approval of Budget Summary as of October 31, 2024
- 6.3 Approval of Grant Applications—1.) Title I, funded by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)/ \$314,869 for July 1, 2024-June 30, 2026, funding agency, CT Dept. of Education and 2.) Title II, funded by ESSA/ \$25,878 for July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026, funding agency, CT Dept. of Education; and 3.) Title IV, funded by ESSA/\$22,893 for July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026.

### **Motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.**

- **Presented by Beverly Washington**
- **Second Cindy Luty**
- **Motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

## **7. Information from the Executive Director:**

- 7.1 Hiring—Resignations and new hires, including trend reports: Executive Director Ericson provided an update on the creation of four new Early Childhood Education (ECE) positions for the upcoming infant/toddler program and referred to LEARN Policy 4200, which outlines guidelines for hiring non-certified staff when establishing new programs. Hiring challenges continue for specialized roles.
- 7.2 Distributions—None
- 7.3 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, Regular Business Meeting—October 25, 2024, *Attached in the agenda packet.*
- 7.4 LEARN Building Committee Meeting Minutes—October 25, 2024, *Attached in the agenda packet:* Executive Director Ericson noted that LEARN is currently in the second phase with the architects and schematic designs are being produced. LEARN will submit a demolition permit request in the next four to five months and will issue an Owners Rep RFP soon.
- 7.5 Legislative Updates: Executive Director Ericson recently attended meetings with State Representative Jennifer Leeper on RESCs' functions and Carolyn Olortegui, Legislative Assistant to Representative Joe Courtney, about education across the LEARN region.
- 7.6 LEARN Agency Updates: Executive Director Ericson shared that LEARN has been actively engaged in several impactful events and initiatives, including Dr. Linda Darcy and Gretchen Osodipe representing LEARN at the National Coast Guard Museum Community Update Event; Executive Director Ericson introducing the 2024 Teacher of the Year, Kiana Foster-Mauro, at the Igniting Change conference; Celebrating Marine Science Magnet High School (MSMHS) Aquaculture Teacher Eric Litvinoff's recognition as a semifinalist for the 2024

Connecticut Teacher of the Year award; The Early Childhood Education team, led by Alison Zanardi and Maria Jose Beteta, presenting at the NAEYC Conference on navigating the accreditation process in Spanish; Student Support Services announced the upcoming 2025 disABILITY Summit; LEARN hosted a four-day balanced McREL leadership training series; and LEARN leadership will attend the 2024 AESA Annual Conference.

**8. Old Business:**

- 8.1** New Policy #4118.51/4218.51, Personnel (Certified/Non-Certified), Series 4000; “*Social Media*”, Final Read

**Postponed from October 10<sup>th</sup> board meeting.**

**Motion to approve New Policy 4118.51/4218.51, Social Media as presented.**

- **Presented by Beverly Washington**
- **Second Eric Bauman**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

**9. New Business:**

- 9.1 Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) Grant – Executive Director presented to the Board on the overall purpose of the grant.

**Important Note: No Action Required—Pre-meeting start, Board Chair determined the Executive Director’s OPM board presentation as informational only. No formal motions or votes will be taken on item 9.1 during the meeting. Both motions will be presented at the December meeting.**

First Motion: RESOLVED that the LEARN Board of Directors fully endorse the Regional Shared Service Solutions Project and authorize Katherine Ericson, Executive Director, to submit the 2024 Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) Grant on behalf of LEARN and the participating regional school districts of Bozrah, Ledyard, New London, North Stonington, Preston, Region 17, Thompson, Putnam and any additional regional school districts who voluntarily join the Regional Shared Service Solutions Project in the future.

Second Motion: RESOLVED that not less than 50% of the total cost of the Regional Shared Service Solutions Project shall be funded by the Council of Government (COG) or Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) during the grant award period and that the Council of Government (COG) or Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) shall fund 100% of the costs of the service/ initiative thereafter.

9.2 New Early Childhood Education (ECE) Position, Site Coordinator

**Motion to approve new Early Childhood Education (ECE) position, Site Coordinator, @ a salary range of \$58,000 - \$68,000 as presented.**

- **Presented by Cindy Luty**
- **Second Beverly Washington**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

9.3 New Early Childhood Education (ECE) Position, Head Teacher

**Motion to approve new Early Childhood Education (ECE) position, Head Teacher, @ a salary range of \$42,000 - \$46,000 as presented.**

- **Presented by Beverly Washington**
- **Second Jennifer Favalora**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

9.4 New Early Childhood Education (ECE) Position, Teacher

**Motion to approve new Early Childhood Education (ECE) position, Teacher, @ a salary range of \$38,000 - \$42,000 as presented.**

- **Presented by Jennifer Favalora**
- **Second Beverly Washington**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

9.5 New Early Childhood Education (ECE) Position, Support Staff

**Motion to approve new Early Childhood Education (ECE) position, Support Staff, @ a salary range of \$33,000 - \$37,000 as presented.**

- **Presented by Beverly Washington**
- **Second Cindy Luty**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

- 9.6 Revised Policy #4118.2/4218.2, Personnel (Certified/Non-Certified), Series 4000;  
*“Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, Including Sex-Based Harassment”* First Read

**Important Note: No Action Required—Board Chair clarified item 9.6 is first read only. No formal motions or votes will be taken on item 9.6 during the meeting to allow for revised policy first read. Motion for item 9.6 will be presented at the December meeting.**

Motion to adopt Revised Policy 4118.2/4218.2, Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, Including Sex-Based Harassment, as presented.

- 10.** Educational Perspective: The Friendship School (TFS) Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) Mid-Grant progress report overview was presented by Friendship School Teacher Diane Felty and Principal Jessica Silvestro. The overview involved The Friendship School transition to becoming a museum-theme focused magnet school.
- 11.** Roundtable Discussion: Board members briefly touched upon cell phones, budget, board meeting Protocol, and student representatives’ board meeting participation.
- 12.** Future Roundtable Topics: Centralized/Shared Services.
- 13.** Adjournment:

**Motion adjourned at 11:28 a.m.**

- **Presented by Laurie Wolfley**
- **Second Cindy Luty**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 7 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

**Respectfully submitted by:  
Jamella A. A. Etienne**