



## East Greenwich School Committee

Inaugural Ceremony &  
Joint East Greenwich School Committee and Town Council Meeting

Monday, December 9, 2024  
6:00 pm

Hybrid Meeting: Swift Community Center & Via Zoom

### Minutes

#### Inaugural Ceremony of Incoming Elected Officials

##### Town Council

Mr. Mark Schwager, Mr. Michael P. Donegan, Ms. Renu R. Englehart, Mr. Michael J. Zarrella, Ms. Caryn P. Corenthal

##### School Committee

Mr. Timothy F. Munoz\*, Mr. William J. Hangan, Mr. Kevin D. Wright, Ms. Melissa Larsen  
(\* Will be sworn in at a later date)

*The Joint Meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by Mr. Schwager and Ms. Powell.*

#### Joint East Greenwich School Committee and Town Council Meeting

##### School Committee in attendance

**School Committee:** Ms. Alyson Powell, Chair; Ms. Clare Cecil-Karb; Mr. William Hangan; Ms. Melissa Larsen; Dr. Eugene Quinn; Mr. Kevin Wright

**Absent:** Mr. Tim Munoz

**Additional Attendees:** Dr. Brian G. Ricca, Superintendent; Ms. Sarah Courtemanche-O'Brien, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Amy Healey, School Committee Clerk; Mrs. Maggie Baker Director of Administration

##### Town Council in attendance

**Town Council:** Mr. Mark Schwager, Chair; Mr. Michael Donegan, Vice Chair; Ms. Caryn Corenthal; Ms. Renu Englehart; Mr. Michael Zarella

**Additional Attendees:** Mr. Andrew Nota, Town Manager; Ms. Leigh Carney, Town Clerk; Ms. Trish Sunderland, Town Finance Director

**Statutory pre-budget consultation between East Greenwich School Committee and East Greenwich Town Council for review of revenue and expenditure projections and discussion on issues affecting preparation of the school budget per RIGL 16-2-21.2 (d).**

**Town**

Mr. Nota presented the *Town of East Greenwich 2024-2025 Budget Review*. He began by explaining that this statutory meeting comes at the very beginning of the budget process.

- Budget Calendar
- What is a budget forecast? Why forecast?
- Taxes
  - Where Do your Taxes Go: FY2025
  - 3050 - Tax Levy Cap: FY 2026
- Town and School Budget to include Debt Service
- FY 2025 Projections
  - Revenues
  - Expenditures
  - 2024 Pre-Audit
- FY 2025 Estimated Revenues
- FY 2025 Estimated Expenditures
- Intergovernmental Aid - 2026
- Assumptions & Facts - Expenditures FY 2026
- Tax Levy vs Tax Rate: Understanding the Difference
- Funding Status of OPEB
- 2024 Capital Reserve Funding
- School Capital Reserve Fund
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Debt
- Fund Balances
- Financial Management
- Our Weaknesses and Challenges
- Our Strength and Opportunities
- Cost Unpredictability and Sustainability
- Upcoming Capital Improvements: Municipal & School
- Charges for Shared Services

Ms. Englehart inquired what would be considered a health fund balance. Mr. Nota replied that 17% would be the Town's goal. Mr. Schwager added that the needs of a fund balance changes with the strength of a community.

Ms. Englehart also asked about grant support from the State especially for resilient communities. Mr. Nota replied that there are a number of available grant programs, many of which are federal funds.

The Committee discussed a potential modification of the 4% tax levy increase cap.

## **School**

Dr. Ricca and Mrs. Baker gave the District's presentation.

### Purpose

- To support the continued excellence of the East Greenwich Public Schools and realize our Mission and Vision of EGPS Graduate as defined in our Strategic Plan, "All Means All"
- To discuss the development of our annual operating budget for FY 26 in the coming months
- To collaborate with the Town and Community of East Greenwich in achieving our goals.

### Agenda

- EGPS Budget Process
  - EGPS operates on a fiscal year beginning in July and ending in June
- Key Variables in the Development of EGPS Budget
  - Variables that make forecasting in any budget year challenging include:
    - Collective Bargaining Agreements
    - Health Insurance Costs
    - State Aid to Education
    - Federal Grants/Programs
    - Student Enrollment/Curriculum
    - Special Education Costs
    - Mental Health
    - Charter and Career Tech Schools Costs
    - Transportation Local/Statewide
    - Unfunded Legislative Mandates
    - Legal Fees
    - Fund Balance
    - Town Revenues
    - Staffing

- EGPS FY 25 Budget Projections

	<b>Approved Budget</b>	<b>Year End Projections</b>	<b>Variance Notes</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Town Appropriation	\$41,312,372.00	\$41,312,372.00	
State Aid	\$6,939,344.00	\$6,939,344.00	
Fund Balance	\$842,000.00	\$842,000.00	
All Other	\$888,000.00	\$888,000.00	
Total:	<b>\$49,981,716.00</b>	<b>\$49,981,716.00</b>	
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Salaries	\$28,459,857.32	\$27,965,350.94	
Employee Benefits	\$10,072,577.68	\$9,889,026.07	
Purchased Services	\$2,893,671.00	\$3,204,243.13	Add'l Student Services needed
Purchased Property Services	\$1,259,602.00	\$1,328,353.30	
Other Purchased Services	\$5,027,740.00	\$5,034,719.60	
Supplies	\$1,611,555.00	\$1,621,117.22	
Property and Equipment	\$443,327.00	\$415,467.75	
Debt Service and Miscellaneous	\$213,386.00	\$225,019.78	Add'l Settlement & FY 24 Outstanding Lunch Balances
Total:	<b>\$49,981,716.00</b>	<b>\$49,683,297.79</b>	

- EGPS Strategic Plan

<p><b>Excellence in Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HQIM Implementation</li> <li>● College, Career &amp; Technical Pathways</li> </ul>	<p><b>Distinguished Teaching &amp; Talented Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Multi-Tiered System of Supports</li> <li>● Professional Development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Efficient and Innovative Systems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilities Master Plan</li> <li>● Integrated Social Emotional Wellbeing Plan</li> </ul>	<p><b>Engaged Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Data Dashboard</li> <li>● Facilities Master Plan</li> </ul>

- EGPS FY 26 Budget Story
  - Framing the Future
    - Innovating Implementation
    - Social Emotional Health
    - Community Partnerships
- Appendix: Federal Grants to Supplement Our Education Programs in FY 26

Ms. Englehart asked whether the State recognizes the high cost of special education. Dr. Ricca replied that the State seems to be willing to take money from towns that seem fiscally stable and successful. The funding formula needs to have a better calculation for students who need special education services.

Ms. Corenthal asked how long it takes for a student to receive services. Dr. Ricca responded that once the IEP process has determined a student needs services, they receive services. Ms. Corenthal asked how long that process takes. Dr. Ricca said that it is about a month. Ms. Corenthal responded by saying she found it hard to believe that services are provided within a month.

Ms. Powell explained that the District can only budget for the students that they have at the time and can not budget in anticipation of additional students requiring student services.

Ms. Corenthal asked how many students receive services. Dr. Ricca said that he could get back to her with an answer. He explained that kids continue to come to school with needs stemming from COVID.

Ms. Corenthal asked whether the services could be reimbursed through parents' health insurance. Ms. Baker said that some services do already go through parents' health insurance.

Ms. Corenthal asked what will be the biggest cost driver in next year's budget. Dr. Ricca replied that it is personnel costs.

Ms. Corenthal asked what the plan is to pay for programs previously paid with ESSER funds. Dr. Ricca said that EGPS received very little in ESSER funds.

Ms. Corenthal asked how maintenance is being budgeted in anticipation of school construction. Dr. Ricca replied that a plan was submitted to the Town last winter and is being implemented by the District's facilities department.

#### **IV. Public comments on joint budget session**

#### **V. Adjournment**

*On a motion by Ms. Cecil-Karb, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn the joint session and convene the School Committee meeting at 8:22 pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Amy J. Healey  
School Committee Clerk

*Approved 12-17-24*