

Board of Directors Regular Business

APPROVED MINUTES



Meeting Date: December 12, 2024

Draft Posted: December 17, 2024

Approved Posted: January 9, 2025

Present: Dale Bernardoni, Chester/Grades K-6; W. Scott Brown, Lyme & Old Lyme/Region 18; Mary Ann Connelly, Madison (Zoom); Kate Ericson, LEARN; Jennifer Favalora, Killingworth/Region 17; Elizabeth Fernandes, Westbrook; A. Terri Garrity, East Haddam (Zoom); Mary Harris, Ledyard (Zoom); Nancy Johnston, Essex/Grades K-6 (Zoom); Robert Mitchell, Montville; Beverly Washington, Groton; and Laurie Wolfley, Waterford

Not Attending and Not Represented: Sara Baker, Stonington; Eric Bauman, East Lyme; Steve Beeler, Old Saybrook; Alisah Blake, New London; Cindy Luty, Preston; 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; and Vacant, East Hampton

Guests: Jessica Aniskoff, CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) Principal; Michael Belden, LEARN Chief Financial Officer; Ashley Eichorn, Norwich School District Curriculum Coordinator; Bridgette Gordon-Hickey, LEARN Deputy Executive Director; Susan Lessard, Norwich School District Acting Superintendent; Joanne Lund, LEARN Assistant Director of Business; and Elizabeth McCaffery, LEARN Director of Human Resources (Zoom)

Meeting began at 9:00 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:**
 - 4.1 Workers' Compensation Trust Premium Return of \$70,208.00 for 2024
 - 4.2 Revised Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Approval Status
- 5. Superintendents' Perspective:** Susan Lessard, Norwich Acting Superintendent of Schools and Ashley Eichorn, Curriculum Coordinator, presented to the Board on [strategic planning and important initiatives in Norwich for the 2024-2025 School Year](#) and focused on the fundamentals of education, the District Improvement Plan, student progress, and chronic absenteeism.
- 6. Consent Agenda:**
 - 6.1 Approval of the DRAFT Minutes, Regular Business Meeting—November 14, 2024
 - 6.2 Approval of Budget Summary as of November 30, 2024
 - 6.3 Approval of Grant Applications— None

Motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

- **Presented by Beverly Washington**
- **Second Dale Bernardoni**
- **Motion passed with 11 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 reported on two, new posted positions, including the Mental Health Navigator, to support families with understanding and accessing the resources, and the Regional Magnet Coordinator, written into the LEARN/New London SOARS MSAP Project grant, to support regional marketing and recruitment efforts across LEARN and New London Public Schools (NLPS).
- 7.2 Distributions — Coast Guard Museum Foundation Curriculum Development Draft Support Letter: *Attached in the agenda packet.*
- 7.3 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, Regular Business Meeting—November 22, 2024
- 7.4 LEARN Building Committee Meeting Minutes—November 22, 2024
- 7.5 Legislative Updates: Executive Director Ericson reported on Bipartisan legislative leaders creating a new Select Committee on Special Education; the appointments of State Representatives Maryam Khan as House Chair, Kate Farrar as Chair of Early Childhood Care and Education Fund, and Senator Heather Somers to the Appropriations Committee; the legislature’s creation of the Early Childhood Care and Education Fund in 2024; LEARN will host a legislative breakfast on Friday, January 10; and CABE will also hold legislative breakfasts.
- 7.6 LEARN Agency Updates – Executive Director Ericson attended an Advisory Council meeting with Governor Lamont; The Executive Director was invited to meet with the Commissioner of Education, Beth Bye, and superintendents to discuss challenges and opportunities in expanding affordable childcare across Connecticut; the CABE/CAPPS conference was a notable success; LEARN staff, in collaboration with Dr. Douglas Peterson of the University of Wyoming Research Project, conducted an early learning literacy assessment using the PEARL (Predictive Early Assessment of Reading and Language) tool; and members of LEARN’s Central Office Administration attended the 2024 AESA Annual Conference, Be A Champion, in Orlando, Florida.
- 7.7 Review of Executive Director’s Goals – *Attached in the agenda packet.*

8. Old Business:

- 8.1 Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) Grant: Executive Director Ericson presented on the completion of LEARN's Regional Performance Incentive Program Application under the Office of Policy and Management's grant program, requesting \$1,295,942.00 over three years and aimed at incentivizing regionalism and collaboration among school districts.

First Resolution:

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 current participating school districts and any additional regional school districts who voluntarily join the Regional Shared Service Solutions Project in the future.

Motion to adopt the first resolution as presented.

- **Presented by W. Scott Brown**
- **Second A. Terri Garrity**
- **Motion passed with 10 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

Second Resolution:

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.

Motion to adopt the second resolution as presented.

- **Presented by Beverly Washington**
- **Second W. Scott Brown**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 10 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

- 8.2 Revised Policy #4118.2/4218.2, Personnel (Certified/Non-Certified), Series 4000;
“Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, Including Sex-Based Harassment’ Final Read

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

- **Presented by Laurie Wolfley**
- **Second Beverly Washington**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 10 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

9. New Business:

- 9.1 Review 2023-2024 Draft Audit: CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) Principal, Jessica Aniskoff, presented the 2023-2024 LEARN Draft Audit, including a review of engagement terms, financial highlights, results of state and federal single audits, and upcoming GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) standards.

Motion to approve the 2023-2024 LEARN audit as presented.

- **Presented by Dale Bernardoni**
- **Second Beverly Washington**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 9 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

- 9.2 LEARN Tuition/Service Rates 2025-2026: *Attached in the agenda packet.*

Motion to approve the LEARN Tuition/Service Rates 2025-2026 as presented.

- **Presented by Dale Bernardoni**
- **Second Beverly Washington**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes**

- 9.3 Magnet Tuition Strategy Discussion

Motion to postpone the Magnet Tuition Strategy Discussion to the next meeting.

- **Presented by Laurie Wolfley**
- **Second W. Scott Brown**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

10. Educational Perspective:

11. Roundtable Discussion: Centralized/Shared Services.

12. Future Roundtable Topics:

13. Adjournment:

Motion adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

- **Presented by Laurie Wolfley**
- **Second W. Scott Brown**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

Respectfully submitted by:
Jamella A. A. Etienne

JOIN ZOOM MEETING

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88179290855?pwd=L8ZTZ1TTOmeH7Xj47dwTVfgnSADbGa.1>

Meeting ID: 881 7929 0855

Passcode: 940741

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