

The Organizational Meeting of the New London Board of Education was held on December 9, 2024 in the New London Public Schools' Welcome Center and via Zoom Webinars.

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1. Call to Order

President Elaine Maynard-Adams called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Present for the Board of Education: President – Elaine Maynard-Adams
Secretary – Nathan Caron

Board Members Present: Karen Bergin
Alisha Blake
Susan Hambey

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

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

2. Election of Officers

- a. Appointment of a Temporary Chairperson for the Purpose of Conducting an Election of Board Officers

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake to appoint Nathan Caron as the Temporary Chairperson.

Motion carried, 5-0

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to waive the requirement to reduce the vote to writing unless there is more than one candidate nominated.

Motion carried, 5-0

- b. Election of a President

Motion by Ms. Blake, seconded by Ms. Bergin, to nominate Ms. Maynard-Adams as President.

Mr. Caron called three times for any other nominations.

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to close nominations.

Motion carried, 5-0

Mr. Caron called for a vote for Ms. Maynard-Adams as President.

Motion carried, 5-0

c. Election of a Vice President

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Hambey, to nominate Ms. Alexis-Sylvain as Vice-President.

Mr. Caron called three times for any other nominations.

Motion by Ms. Blake, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, to close nominations.

Motion carried, 5-0

Mr. Caron called for a vote for Ms. Alexis-Sylvain as Vice-President.

Motion carried, 5-0

d. Election of a Secretary

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Bergin, to nominate Mr. Caron as Secretary.

Mr. Caron called three times for any other nominations.

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to close nominations.

Motion carried, 5-0

Mr. Caron called for a vote for Mr. Caron as Secretary

Motion carried, 5-0

3. Remarks of the Chair

Ms. Maynard-Adams thanked her colleagues for their faith in her ability to navigate the Board through one of the toughest years that they have seen. She is confident that there is a good team in place and that they will work together for the students, staff and families. On a personal note, she thanked all for the flowers and phone calls which were greatly appreciated and helped to make her recovery better.

4. Organizational Business

a. Approval of the Calendar of Board of Education Meetings for 2025

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to approve the calendar of Board of Education meetings for 2025.

Motion carried, 5-0

b. Appointment of Board Committees and Board Representatives

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Caron, to keep the committees and representatives the same for 2025.

Motion carried, 5-0

c. Adoption of Policy Manual

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams seconded by Mr. Caron, to adopt the Policy Manual.

Ms. Maynard-Adams clarified that the policy manual is located online on the District website, and that they are revised and updated throughout the year.

Motion carried, 5-0

5. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Caron, that the following items, as set forth on the Consent Agenda for the Business Portion of the Board's Organizational Meeting of December 9, 2024, be approved unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools.

A. Action Items

- I. Approve the November 225, 2024 Business Meeting Minutes
- II. Adopt Policy 5145.15 – Directory Information for its Second and Final Reading
- III. Approve Policy 9160 – Student Representation/Participation for its Second and Final Reading.

Motion carried, 5-0

6. Items Pulled from the Consent Agenda

a. Approve Policy 5145.14 – On Campus Recruiting for its Second and Final Reading

Motion by Ms. Hambey, seconded by Ms. Blake, to approve the policy as amended, by adding the word guardian where appropriate.

Motion carried, 5-0

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to approve the policy as amended.

Motion carried, 5-0

- b. Approve Policy 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression for its Second and Final Reading

Ms. Hambey questioned the terminology at the end of the first paragraph under printed materials, and asked what the meaning was of “or conduct is based on interests other than those of an orderly and efficient educational process and proper school environments.” Ms. Blake shared that she believes that this is referring to the specific materials that are being posted, and the student conduct in response to the material, and that the District does not have any control of how they may react to the materials. The suggestion was made to refer the policy back to committee for further discussion.

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to refer Policy 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression back to the Policy committee for further clarification.

Motion carried, 5-0

7. Executive Session Pursuant to Connecticut State Statutes: Title I, Chapter 114, Section 1-200(5), Connecticut Freedom of Information Act

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Bergin, to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing:

- Candidate for the Possible Appointment of Special Education Supervisor
- Student Placement Petition – Current High School Student Petitioning to Attend New London Adult & Continuing Education.

Motion carried, 5-0

The following people were invited into Executive Session: The Board as a Whole, Superintendent Cynthia Ritchie, Executive Director of Talent and Human Resources – Christine Pemberton (for the first item of discussion), and Executive Director of School and Family Supports, Carrie Rivera (for the second item of discussion).

Time into Executive Session: 6:24 p.m.

Time out of Executive Session: 6:39 p.m.

No votes were taken while in Executive Session

8. Action Following Executive Session

- Motion by Ms. Bergin, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, to approve the appointment of Jennifer Merritt as the Special Education Supervisor.

Ms. Bergin shared that this was a thorough hiring process and the team did a great job. While there were multiple qualified candidates, Ms. Merritt stood out, and she is excited for her to begin.

Motion carried, 5-0

- Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to approve the placement of a current high school student to attend New London Adult and Continuing Education.

Motion carried, 5-0

8. Adjournment

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

Motion carried, 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Caron
Secretary, Board of Education