

The Business Meeting of the New London Board of Education was held on January 13, 2025 in the New London Public Schools' Welcome Center and via Zoom Webinars.

1. Call to Order

President Maynard-Adams called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

Board Members Present: Karen Bergin
Alisha Blake
Danni Cruz (*arrived at 7:03 p.m., attended virtually*)
Susan Hambey

Present for the administration: Dr. Cynthia Ritchie, Superintendent of Schools (*Attended virtually*)

Due to Board members attending virtually, votes were taken by roll call vote.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Reports and Communications

- Board Chairperson's Report

Ms. Maynard-Adams welcomed all to the first regular Business Meeting of 2025, noting that there is a lot of work ahead of the Board this year. She shared that she has sent the Special Education report that will be presented this evening to the Mayor, City Council, Representative Nolan and Senator Marx, inviting all to attend to learn about this important information. Rep. Nolan and Senator Marx unfortunately had previously scheduled appointments and were unable to attend. She stated that City Councilor Hart is the only Councilor who is present, and that Councilor Dominguez responded prior to the meeting stating that he would not be able to attend. She continued to state that only two out of the seven Councilors responded, and that the other five could not even acknowledge the invitation.

Ms. Maynard-Adams reported that she continues to meet to explore different options and opportunities for funding sources for early childhood at B.P. She stated that this coming Wednesday, the City is hosting a session on immigration and what the City is planning to do to help protect undocumented residents. Dr.

Ritchie will be a panelist for this event, and Ms. Maynard-Adams encouraged all to attend if they are available. Lastly, she informed Board members that she intends to attend the school PTO/PTA meetings to help to educate families about the upcoming budget process. She encouraged Board members to also do this, if their schedules allow.

4. Information and Reports

i. Superintendent's Report

▪ Special Education Department Update

- Ms. Carrie Rivera, Executive Director of School and Family Supports, Ms. Kim Fentress, Supervisor of Special Education, and Ms. Carol Paldino, Supervisor of Special Education provided an overview to the Board of the Special Education Department. This presentation included information on the following:
 - Special Education Administration
 - Special Education is a Service, Not a Place
 - Section 504
 - Special Education Staffing
 - Special Education Eligibility Areas
 - Special Education Student Numbers
 - In District
 - Dually Identified
 - Specialized Classes
 - Out of District Placement Costs & Numbers
 - Preschool Student Services
 - Transition Services
 - Diploma vs. Certificate
 - ESY: Summer Program
 - Gifted & Talented
 - Special Education Transportation
 - Special Education Funding
 - Professional Development Goals
 - Supports outside of the IEP
 - Homelessness in NLPS
 - Identification Process
 - Funding Sources and Supports

A copy of this presentation in its entirety is available upon request.

The Board recessed the meeting from 8:36 p.m. – 8:41 p.m.

5. Approval of the Minutes

- December 9, 2024 – Organizational Meeting

Mr. Cruz was temporarily disconnected via sound at the time of this vote, and did not vote on this item.

Motion by Ms. Blake, seconded by Ms. Bergin, to approve the December 9, 2024 – Organizational Meeting.

Motion carried, 6-0

6. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Motion by Ms. Bergin, seconded by Ms. Blake, that the following items, as set forth on the Consent Agenda for the Business Meeting of January 13, 2025 be approved unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools:

- A. Superintendent's Written Report
 - I. Human Resources
 - II. Student & Family Support Services
 - III. Operations – Includes Magnet Pathways, Athletics, Facilities & Technology
- B. Action Items
 - I. Approve the Updated Capital Improvement Plan and Direct the Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director of Operations and Facilities to Disseminate to City Council and the Appropriate City Departments.

Motion carried, 7-0

7. Items Pulled from Consent Agenda

- Superintendent's Written Report – Academics

Motion by Mr. Caron, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, to receive the Superintendent's Written Report – Academics for the record.

Mr. Caron stated that he wanted to pull this item to congratulate Troy for his honors classes and maintaining such a high GPA as an athlete. He also shouted out the generous donation to our families.

Motion carried, 7-0

- Superintendent's Written Report – Business & Finance

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Caron, to receive the Superintendent's Written Report – Business & Finance for the record.

Ms. Maynard-Adams noted for the record that as Mr. Funk shared in the report, there is an expectation for an additional approximate \$600,000 that should be coming to the district from ECS funding. During the budget process, it was noted

by City representatives that if there are additional funds, they would be given back to the District. Ms. Maynard-Adams stated that she would like to send a letter to the Mayor and Council with her signature requesting that those funds be transferred to the District. It was noted that the District relies on the School and State Finance Project for expectations regarding ECS funding, while the City refers to the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM). This is the third year in a row in which the District has been correct about receiving additional ECS Funds.

Motion carried, 7-0

- Action Item – Direct the Superintendent to Communicate with The Williams School Administration Regarding the Responsibility of Nursing Costs

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to direct the Superintendent to communicate with The Williams School administration regarding the responsibility of nursing costs.

Ms. Maynard-Adams clarified that State law requires that a local BOE funds nursing services for private and parochial schools. To that end, the District has paid for the nurse at St. Joseph's and The Williams School, and has for some time. The City receives the reimbursement of the cost of approximately \$110,000 for the cost of a nurse with benefits, though they budget \$70,000 for income from the State. It costs the District approximately \$240,000 for these two positions. She continued that she believes it is hugely unfair that a private school which charges approximately \$35,000 a year to attend is dependent upon a poor City and poorer Board of Education to pay for the services. Last year conversations were had with The Williams School, and they stated that they had not budgeted to pay for these funds. She would like for the Superintendent to have this discussion with their Headmaster again this year.

Motion carried, 7-0

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

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

- Candidate for the Possible Appointment of Principal of C.B. Jennings International Elementary Magnet School
- Lease for Shaw's Cove

Motion carried, 7-0

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, Chief Financial Officer – Rob Funk, Executive Director of Operations and Facilities – Miguel Gautier.

Time into Executive Session: 8:58 p.m.

Time out of Executive Session: 9:16 p.m.

No votes were taken while in Executive Session

9. Action Following Executive Session

- Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to approve the appointment of Janine Sullivan as the Principal of C.B. Jennings International Elementary Magnet School.

Motion carried, 7-0

- Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Blake, to approve the Shaw's Cove Lease.
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Motion carried, 7-0

10. Board Comments, Questions

Ms. Blake stated that her child attends Jennings, and she is quite excited for the new Principal.

Ms. Alexis thanked the staff for the Special Education Department presentation.

Ms. Hambey congratulated all on the accomplishment of every school and program in NLPS having received a state and/or national recognition. She also thanked the generous donor for their gift to our students. She shared that the *Whalers and Lancers* exhibit at the Hygienic opened, and encouraged all to attend to view the artwork of our students.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Blake, seconded by Ms. Alexis - Sylvaine, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, 7-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Caron
Secretary, Board of Education