

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Approved Minutes of Thursday, March 13, 2025
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairperson
Eugene Marchand, Vice-Chairperson
Mary Kortmann, Secretary
Joseph Cleary
Emma Eaton
Courtney Rossignol
Christina Williams (arrived at 7:18)

Board Members Absent:

None

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools
Charmaine Bradshaw-Hill, Director of Finance and Operations

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens

There were none

IV. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Petrone provided several updates for the month, including a meeting with Melissa Iles, Director of VRABE. He explained that the VRABE program supports students who don't fit the traditional school track. He also participated in Read Across America, the GHR Invention Convention, and the spring production of Grease. On March 7th, there was a professional development day and half-day for students. The budget hearing and a meeting with town council also took place, with a Saturday town meeting scheduled for April. There were 47 candidates for the CGS principal position, and the next step is interviews. Dr. Petrone shared an email from the Director of Security at Thompson Public Schools, which commended our students' behavior during a recent visit. A bill is being proposed to incentivize districts with in-house special education programs, with more details to come. Dr. Petrone reviewed the challenges related to potential cuts in federal education funding.

IV.A. Recognition: March – Board of Education Appreciation Month

Dr. Petrone expressed on behalf of the staff, administrators, and students that the extra hours and commitment the Board dedicates to education for the benefit of the students is truly commendable. He acknowledged that the Board provides the necessary tools and resources to carry out their work and praised their strong advocacy for Coventry.

Mr. Blake stated that the students presenting the appreciation gifts were also the creators of the personal note cards.

IV.B. Recognition: CNH Girls Basketball Team, Northeast Middle School Athletic Conference Champions

Dr. Petrone congratulated the CNH Girls Basketball team for being crowned the Northeast Middle School Athletic Conference Champions. Mr. Sward also offered congratulations and shared special words of praise for the athletes.

Board members congratulated the team, noting their impressive performance in the last game, including a blowout victory, and highlighting the program as a strong feeder for future success. As a reward, the Board presented the team with a pizza party.

IV.C. Recognition: Kyle Ferreira van Leer, K-12 Math Specialist – Presenter at National Conference – National Council for Teachers of Math Spring Conference

Kyle Ferreira Van Leer provided a review of the two sessions he led at the National Council for Mathematics Spring Conference. He was also invited to the fall conference.

J. Beausoleil praised his remarkable ability to alleviate the fear of math and commended the national exposure he brought to Coventry.

IV.D. Information: Eureka Math² and Using Math Data to Support Instructional Decision-Making and Improve Student Learning – Mr. Sward and Mr. Ferreira van Leer

Mr. Sward and Mr. Ferreira van Leer presented the Eureka Math² program, which is available on the district's website via the BoardBook portal.

Mr. Sward emphasized that the intentionality of the work is always a priority for the staff and expressed gratitude to Mr. Ferreira van Leer for his contributions.

Ms. Mullaly explained the reason for using two different software programs for different grades. The Eureka Math² program is specifically for 6th and 7th grade math, and will progress to 8th grade.

Mr. Sward provided statistics on students and the math programs they are enrolled in.

E. Eaton gave thanks for making something that can be very confusing more manageable.

IV.E. Information: board of Education Student Representative Report – Lillian O’Neil

No report.

E. Marchand announced that the girls’ basketball team played exceptionally well in the semifinals and will be competing in the state championships at Mohegan Sun. This marks the first time they’ve won in our league, and notably, there is not a senior on the team.

V. Report of the Chairman

J. Beausoleil participated in Read Across America and was impressed by the significant progress in reading expectations across grade levels. Registration for summer programming has opened, and Park and Rec is launching summer programs. With rapid changes in federal programs and funding, updates will be provided at fiscal meetings. Additionally, Pi Day is on March 14th.

VI. Communications

There were none.

VII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

VII.A. Approve Minutes of February 27, 2025

MOTION: To approve the Minutes of February 27, 2025

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

VII.B. Approve Minutes of March 3, 2025

Edits: Item III, second sentence amend to read: The appropriation number for the current year used for the percent difference was wrong.

Page 2, last paragraph, second sentence, amend to read: attended the Town Legislative open door meeting.

MOTION: To approve the Minutes of March 3, 2025, as amended

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: E. Eaton

Result: Motion carries unanimously

VIII. Old Business

VIII. A. Discussion and Possible VOTE: FY2026 Budget

We received two questions from the Town Council, and the follow-up replies are available in the drive, along with Dr. Petrone’s budget presentation. The Town Council will vote on the budget on or before April 7th, after which we will proceed accordingly.

VIII. B. Information and Possible VOTE: Revise the 2025-2026 School Calendar

Dr. Petrone explained that November 4th, Election Day, has traditionally been a full professional development day, with students having the day off. However, since school will

now be in session on this day for the 2025-2026 school year, Dr. Petrone consulted with staff and administrators about making up the lost professional development day. He suggests that November 26th be changed to a half-day for professional development, with a full day off for students. Additionally, March 13th will be changed from a half-day to a full professional development day.

MOTION: To approve the 2025-2026 School Calendar as amended

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries, with one abstention by C. Rossignol

VIII.B. Information and Possible VOTE(s): Approve Policy Revisions

1. 4116.2 Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment – Workplace

MOTION: To approve policy 4116.2 as presented

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

2. 4130 Social Media

MOTION: To approve policy 4130 as presented

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

3. 5125 Confidentiality and Access to Education Records (FERPA)

MOTION: To approve policy 5125 as presented

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

4. 5131 Title IX Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

MOTION: To approve policy 5131 as presented

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

5. 5131.2 –Student Use of the District’s Computer Systems Internet Safety

MOTION: To approve policy 5131.2 as presented

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

6. 5131.4 Use of Private Technological Devices by Students

MOTION: To approve policy 5131.4 as presented

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

7. 6146.1 Weighted Grading and Calculation of Grade Point Averages

MOTION: To approve policy 6146.1 as presented

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

IX. Report of Board Members

IX.A. Information: Fiscal Committee Report, Meeting of March 13, 2025 – M. Kortmann and Ms. Bradshaw-Hill

M. Kortmann reported that we are still facing a deficit due to special education outplacements. She reviewed the recently passed bill regarding special education that provides for additional funding this fiscal year. Several financial reports are experiencing outdated information, but C. Bradshaw-Hill will do her best to use the most current numbers that we have to provide unreconciled reports moving forward. The issue is due to a vacancy in the town hall finance department. The youth building at Patriots Park is experiencing a heating problem. The issue has been fixed temporarily and the recent repair costs will be included in the regular budget. However, the heating system will need to be completely replaced, with an agreement to split the cost 60% (Board) / 40% (Town). Dr. Petrone provided an update on the generator issue, which will come before the Board for resolution at a future meeting.

There was a discussion regarding the building maintenance responsibilities.

M. Kortmann stated that the Food Service report is from November and expressed hope for more up-to-date information. There was also a discussion about other reports managed by the Town for which we don't have current numbers. Town Hall is prioritizing staff resources while there is a vacancy. J. Beausoleil clarified that the delay from the Town is not impacting the daily operating budget.

C Williams suggested that, given the potential upcoming federal changes, we need to think ahead and be proactive rather than reactive, ensuring we have a plan in place. J. Beausoleil acknowledged that there will be many difficult decisions to make.

X. Possible VOTE: Executive Session (Superintendent's Evaluation)

MOTION: Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussion related to superintendent's evaluation at 8:21 p.m.

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: C. Williams

Result: Motion carries unanimously

XI. Open Session

The Board of Education returned to Open Session at 8:28 p.m.

XII. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: E. Eaton

Result: Motion carries unanimously

Respectfully Submitted:

Tricia Dean
Board Clerk

Approved: March 27, 2025