

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Approved Minutes of Thursday, March 27, 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

Board Members Absent:

None

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools

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.

IV.C. Recognition: CHS Girls Basketball Team – State Champions

Dr. Petrone congratulated the CHS Girls' Basketball team for being crowned Class S State Champions. Coach Clancy shared heartfelt praise for the athletes, while Senator Gordon presented a citation on behalf of the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut. Mr. Blake also offered congratulations and shared special sentiments. J. Beausoleil remarked that it was a full-circle moment, highlighting Coach Clancy's contributions to the community and how he's giving back to the sport he once participated in as a student. E. Marchand added that the team had also won the league championship.

III. Audience of Citizens

Peter DePaola, Coventry, expressed concern about the proposed budget increase, suggesting a reduction. He praised the staff for strong test scores, opposed cuts to sports programs, and highlighted issues with elementary student behavior and the rising special education budget.

IV. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Petrone provided several updates for the month, including the high school girls' basketball team winning the state championship, the ongoing CGS principal search, and the CHS senior portfolio night. He also mentioned the well-attended UConn career fair, the recent CIRMA audit, an upcoming tabletop exercise, and an upcoming Family STEAM Night.

IV.A. Information: Board of Education Student Representative Report – Lillian O’Neil

Miss O’Neil provided updates, including that the SATs will be held on April 3rd for juniors, spring sports have started, the pep rally is tomorrow, the 4th quarter is beginning, the Virginia Beach trip for the band is upcoming, and course selections are nearly finalized.

IV.B. Information: Superintendent Initiative Achievement Presentation 2024-2025

Dr. Petrone presented the 2024-2025 Achievements, which is available on the district’s website via the BoardBook portal.

Mr. Blake, Mr. Paciotti, Ms. Trani, Mr. Demko, and students from the Aquaponics, AP/ECE Environment, and dual enrollment Anatomy and Physiology class presented highlights of the Authentic Learning in Science courses, which is available on the district’s website via the BoardBook portal.

Board members expressed their appreciation for the hands-on learning experiences. J. Beausoleil inquired about how many students went on to higher learning for the same subject or careers after taking these courses. While exact data wasn’t available, Ms. Trani noted that she knew of several students who continued in the field in college. E. Marchand asked the exchange student to compare the courses here to those in her home country. She shared that the labs here are highly engaging and allow students to apply their skills in real-world scenarios.

[J. Cleary left the meeting at 8:37 pm.]

Dr. Petrone presented Coventry’s newly redesigned website, which went live today. He reviewed various initiatives, including Wit & Wisdom, Eureka Math Squared, high quality instruction, dual enrollment, the implementation of educator and leader evaluation plan, supporting transition between schools, disaggregating data, Portrait of the Graduate Rubrics, interdisciplinary passage projects, the education plan proposal, Open Choice, increasing educator diversity, outreach for international and other tuition paying students, NEASC, the 10- year comprehensive plan, and promoting high standards. Dr. Petrone also reviewed his “looking forward” statements.

Dr. Petrone confirmed that for the Open Choice program, we only have seats available for kindergarten and first grade, with four Open Choice students currently enrolled. He also mentioned that 15% of students are students of color. Regarding the manufacturing partnership with Goodwin, no students have expressed interest yet, but the partnership remains in place. C. Williams commended the new website, noting that it was well-organized and interactive. She also suggested that the exchange student could provide valuable insights into practices from her hometown that could be adapted here. Looking ahead, C. Williams proposed extending the school year and recommended exploring options for doing so. Additionally, she suggested collaborating with other towns to combine

services, which could help reduce costs, not only in special education but in other areas as well.

V. VOTE: Consent Agenda

V.A. Approve CHS May 2026 Field Experience to Washington DC

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: E. Eaton

Result: Motion carries unanimously

VI. Report of the Chairman

J. Beausoleil shared that she was one of the leaders of Coventry interviewed by the 2nd graders.

VII. Communications

There were none.

VIII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

VIII.A. Approve Minutes of March 13, 2025

Edit: page 5, IX.A. first sentence, correct 'K. Kortmann' to 'M. Kortmann.'

MOTION: To approve the Minutes of March 13, 2025, as amended

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

IX. Old Business

IX. A. Information and Possible VOTE: FY2026 Budget

J. Beausoleil informed that the documents were updated as needed, including the Town Council questions. She pointed out that the administrators' contract options and salaries were presented differently in this budget, which made the salary increase appear larger than it actually was. The next round of budget deliberations will take place on April 10th, where the noted updates will be incorporated into the budget pages. She clarified that there is a 3% placeholder increase for Dr. Petrone's salary, not 12%. On April 10th, they will also ensure annuity and salary details are indicated consistently in the budget for all administrators and Dr. Petrone.

C. Williams expressed that she suspects the budget discussions are not yet complete and feels the Town Council will propose a number that may not be small. For future planning, she suggested considering bus route consolidation and keeping all specials while sharing CGS and GHR specials teachers between the schools. Dr. Petrone has some suggestions for implementing this within the complex, but he noted that it is more challenging between CGS and GHR due to the distance. Additionally, C. Williams recommended reviewing duplicate services between the town and district to identify opportunities for consolidation

and increased efficiency. There was also a discussion about the services that are currently consolidated between the town and the Board of Education.

C. Rossignol asked if there is a cut list being worked on and if it could be provided ahead of time. There was also a discussion on sports boosters and the potential for school consolidations.

X. Report of Board Members

X.A. Information: Technology Liaison Report – E. Eaton

E. Eaton reported that the focus this year continues to be on AI, specifically from the perspective of how educators can use and benefit from it. Each building shares any questions or suggestions from staff. Additionally, STEAM Night will be held on 3/31 from 5:30-7 pm at the complex. The technology plan is also discussed at each meeting.

XI. 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 9:46 p.m.

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: C. Williams

Result: Motion carries unanimously

XII. Open Session

The Board of Education returned to Open Session at 10:23 p.m.

XIII. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:34 p.m.

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: E. Marchand

Result: Motion carries unanimously

Respectfully Submitted:

Tricia Dean
Board Clerk

Approved: April 10, 2025