

The Business Meeting of the New London Board of Education was held on November 25, 2024 in the New London Public Schools' Welcome Center and via Zoom Webinars.

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
Vice-President – Bianca Alexis-Sylvain
Secretary – Nathan Caron

Board Members Present: Karen Bergin
Alisha Blake (*Attended virtually*)
Danni Cruz
Susan Hambey

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

Due to a Board Member attending virtually, all votes were taken by roll call vote.

President Maynard-Adams began the meeting with a moment of silence for our staff member who passed away, Ms. Mara Dumond.

2. Student of the Month and Employee of the Quarter Recognitions

The Board of Education recognized the Students of the Month from each school:

- Early Childhood Center at B.P. Mission
 - Student of the Month: Lian Sanchez Chuva
 - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Hannah Storey
 - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Joe Silva
- Winthrop STEM Elementary Magnet School
 - Student of the Month: Malia Winston
 - Non-Certified Employees of the Quarter: Bridget Caviness, Gillian Lebeau, Angela Slane, and Cynthia Vitorino
 - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Lisa Hellen
- Nathan Hale Arts Magnet School
 - Student of the Month: Vicente Molina Sarmiento
 - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Danielle Bergh
 - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Marisa Zerbarini
- C.B. Jennings International Elementary Magnet School:
 - Student of the Month: Maya Rios
 - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Dominick Brown-Burrell
 - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Sarah Willey

- Bennie Dover Jackson Multi-Magnet Middle School Campus
 - Student of the Month: James Colegrove
 - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Ian Boss
 - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Paul Winston
- New London High School Multi-Magnet Campus
 - Student of the Month: Mohammad Jemmo
 - Non-Certified Employee of the Quarter: Ahkaisha Reyes
 - Certified Employee of the Quarter: Sarah Kadden
- New London Adult Education
 - Student of the Month: Alecia Francis-Henry
- Central Office
 - Employee of the Quarter: Karen Pilecki

3. Public Comment

None

4. Reports and Communications

- Board Chairperson's Report

Ms. Maynard-Adams shared that the first Joint Budget Task Force meeting of the year was held approximately three weeks ago. She shared that the Mayor made his feelings known, and the Board representatives let their feelings be known. She expanded that her overarching message was that this is not simply a discussion about an education budget, but a community budget. Over \$70 million of a budget does much more for the families and young people in New London than just teaching them how to read. The district is providing meals and after school programs, amongst other supports. If all of the programs were eliminated that are not grant funded, there would be many more in the street without activities. She added that her message to Council and to anyone who wants to listen, or doesn't, is that this budget is one that goes beyond the educational needs of our children. A child can't be taught if they are hungry, if they are sick. Over the years, the communities have done less while more has been demanded of the educational system. We are doing with our budget what the community does not. She shared that she believed the next meeting is December 11th. The meetings are held via Zoom, but generally the link is not sent out until that day. She shared she is willing to meet with City Council colleagues, the Mayor, and other City counterparts to see where the discussion goes, with hopes to avoid the angst of last year.

5. Information and Reports

- i. Superintendent's Report
 - Human Resources Update
 - Ms. Christine Pemberton, Executive Director of Talent & Human Resources, gave a presentation to the Board highlighting updates of the Human Resources Department.

This presentation included information on the following topics:

- HR Organizational Chart
- NLPS Demographics
- NLPS Staff Longevity
- Staff Feedback – Exit Interviews

A copy of this presentation is available upon request.

ii. Board Committee and Representative Updates

- Policy Committee
 - Mr. Caron shared that there are some policies on the agenda this evening for approval, and that the discussion continues at the committee level regarding cell phone use.
- Finance & Audit Committee
 - Ms. Maynard-Adams shared that the Finance & Audit Committee met prior to this meeting and that they reviewed the monthly financial report and line item transfers.

6. Approval of the Minutes

- November 12, 2024 – Business Meeting

Motion by Mr. Cruz, seconded by Ms. Alexis, to approve the November 12, 2024 Business Meeting Minutes.

Motion carried, 6-0-1

Abstaining: Ms. Maynard - Adams

7. 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 Meeting of November 25, 2024 be approved unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools:

A. Action Items

- I. Approve Line Item Transfers as Recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee
- II. Adopt Policy 5145.15 – Directory Information for its First Reading as Recommended by the Policy Committee
- III. Approve Policy 5145.14 – On Campus Recruiting for its First Reading as Recommended by the Policy Committee
- IV. Approve Policy 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression for its First Reading as Recommended by the Policy Committee
- V. Approve Policy 9160 – Student Representation/Participation for its First Reading as Recommended by the Policy Committee.

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

- Negotiations – Ratified Contract of the New London Education Association for the Period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028
- Student Placement Petition – Current High School Student Petitioning to Attend New London Adult & Continuing Education
-

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, and Chief Financial Officer – Rob Funk

Time into Executive Session: 8:26 p.m.

Time out of Executive Session: 9:08 p.m.

No votes were taken while in Executive Session

9. Action Following Executive Session

- Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Caron, to approve the ratified contract of the New London Education Association for the period of July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2028.

Motion carried, 7-0

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

Motion carried, 7-0

10. Board Comments, Questions

Ms. Alexis – Sylvain reported that she attended the CABE Convention, and that Dr. Ritchie and Dr. Hills-Papetti did a great presentation. She stated it was lively, and was the only one that was lively throughout the conference, with a high energy! She thanked Dr. Ritchie for all of her hard work, and for her dedication and the dedication of her staff.

Ms. Hambey noted that Thanksgiving is coming up on Thursday, and thanked the Board, administration and staff for all that they do to advocate for the students.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Cruz, seconded by Ms. Alexis-Sylvain, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, 7-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Caron
Secretary, Board of Education