GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 4, 2025 @ 6:30 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11/HYBRID

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beverly Washington – Chairperson, Adrian Johnson – Vice Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman (remote), Dean Antipas, Matthew Shulman (remote), Ian Thomas, Jay Weitlauf (remote), Jennifer White (arrived 6:15 p.m.), Michael Whitney (remote)

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Anne Marie Mancini, Rita Parciak, Laurie LePine, Ray Engle (remote), Lauren Casini, Clint Kennedy, Marc Ramono

I. CALL TO ORDER – Beverly Washington – Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The first order of business was the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Superintendent Austin introduced the new Finance Director, Rita Parciak.

II. ACTION ITEMS

A. Old Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding a second reading of policy P 4115.3 Evaluation of Athletic Coaches (Attachment #1)

MOTION: Shulman, Thomas: To approve policy P 4115.3 Evaluation of Athletic Coaches as a second reading
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

B. New Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding a budget transfer (Attachment #2)

MOTION: Washington, Antipas: To transfer $300000 from object code 321 to object code 640.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

Mrs. White arrived during the vote on this motion.

2. Discussion and possible action regarding a first reading of policy P 5112.2 Admission Requirements (Attachment #3)

MOTION: Antipas, Thomas: To approve policy P 5112.2 Admission Requirements as a first reading as amended.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

II. ACTION ITEMS – cont.

B. New Business – cont.

3. Discussion and possible action regarding a first reading of policy P 5118 Non-resident Attendance (Attachment #4)

MOTION: Shulman, Johnson: To approve policy P 5118 Non-resident Attendance as amended.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

4. Discussion and possible action regarding reducing the BOE FY26 Budget by $2,357,057 to align to the approved TC/RTM education funding of $92,004,575, with the tentative spending reductions as articulated in the May 19, 2025, budget tracker document with revisions discussed at the May 19, 2025 meeting.

MOTION: Washington, White: To amend the motion to read, "To reduce the BOE FY26 budget by $2,357,075 according to individually voted reductions voted on by the Board to align to the approved TC/RTM education funding of $92,004,575.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

Informal vote on proposed reductions:

- To reduce afterschool enrichment in the amount of $17,000 (function code 1260, object code 127).
  YES (5) - Antipas, White, Shulman Weitlauf, Washington
  NO (4) - Thomas, Johnson, Whitney, Ackerman

- To reduce the special education salary in amount of $65,000 (function code 2140, object code 102).
  YES (9) - Antipas, White, Shulman Weitlauf, Washington, Thomas, Johnson, Whitney, Ackerman
  NO (0)

- To reduce the registrar's salary in the amount of $36,050 (function code 2201, object code 114)
  YES (9) - Antipas, White, Shulman Weitlauf, Washington, Thomas, Johnson, Whitney, Ackerman
  NO (0)

- To reduce the Business office in the amount of $43,350 (function code 2313, object code 114)
  YES (2) - Antipas, Whitney
  NO (7) - Thomas, Johnson, White, Shulman, Ackerman, Weitlauf, Washington

- To reduce function code 2510, object code 731 by $75,329 for the purchase of a truck
  YES (8) - Antipas, Johnson, White, Whitney, Weitlauf, Ackerman, Washington, Shulman
  NO (1) - Thomas

- To reconsider the approval of a zero dollar adjustment to electricity (function code 2510, object code 631)
  YES - 0
  NO (8) - Johnson, Weitlauf, Ackerman, Whitney, White, Thomas, Washington, Antipas
  ABSTAINED (1) - Shulman

- To reduce the Software adjustment in the amount of $116,715 (function code 2210, object code 612).
  YES (9) - Antipas, White, Shulman Weitlauf, Washington, Thomas, Johnson, Whitney, Ackerman
  NO (0)

- To reduce Health Insurance in the amount of $1,187,682 (function code 1700, object code 201)
  YES (9) - Antipas, White, Shulman Weitlauf, Washington, Thomas, Johnson, Whitney, Ackerman
  NO (0)

- To reduce the items on lines 16-28 on the tracker sheet dated June 4, 2025 in the amount of $34,224 (function codes 1700, 2312, 2314).
  YES (9) - Antipas, White, Shulman Weitlauf, Washington, Thomas, Johnson, Whitney, Ackerman
  NO (0)

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Policy – There was no report. The next meeting will be June 24, 2025.
B. Curriculum – Mr. Johnson noted that the Curriculum Committee met on May 5, 2025, and discussed Teacher Development Days and dollars spent on professional development. The meeting on June 2, 2025, was cancelled.
C. Finance/Facilities – Mr. Antipas noted that the Finance/Facilities Committee had discussion from Ernie Koschmieder regarding the Community Eligibility Provision, which allows eligible schools to offer free breakfast and lunch to all students. The committee received reports from the Interim Finance Director and the Director of Buildings and Grounds regarding the Treehouse funds, Facilities use schedule, and the EB chargers. The committee also had a meeting on June 3, 2025, and received reports from the Finance Director and the Director of Buildings and Grounds
D. Ad Hoc Budget Procedure – There was no report.
E. AGSA/GEA/BOE – Mrs. Washington noted that the Liaison Committee discussed the need for more teeth in the Electronic Devise and Attendance policies, Chrome Books at FHS, Co Guardian, and Health Insurance.
F. LEARN – (Attachment #5)
G. Athletic Fields – There was no report. The next meeting will be held on June 19, 2025.
H. Trails – There was no report.
I. Library – There was no report.

IV. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

- Mr. Shulman noted the need for an exit survey for seniors and the need to design a questionnaire.
- Mr. Thomas noted:
  - Transplant Map
  - Swim Team communications
  - Referral List re prioritizing and removing
  - Emails
- Mr. Johnson noted:
  - Calls re: emails
  - Lack and use of toilets on the Baseball Field
  - Swimming
  - The lack of and use of toilets on the Baseball fields, and the swimming team.
  - Mr. Johnson read personal statement (Attachment #6) regarding the budget.
- Mr. Whitney noted:
  - He attended the year end activities
  - Email blocking
  - He has a question regarding the FHS auditorium renovation
- Mr. Weitlauf thanked Mr. Johnson for his comments and his concern about email blocking.
- Mrs. Washington noted:
  - That she attended the STEAM activity at CK.
  - Mr. Weitlauf's referral to reward employees for suggestions made to the district. This was referred to the Finance/Facilities Committee

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Weitlauf: To adjourn at 9:55 p.m.
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

P 4115.3

Personnel - Certified

Evaluation

Athletic Coaches

There shall be an annual evaluation of all athletic coaches, to be conducted by the Athletic Director or the athletic coach's immediate supervisor. Each athletic coach shall receive a written copy of the evaluation.

The purposes of evaluation are:

1. To provide a systematic process whereby athletic coaches may increase the effectiveness of their services to the athletic program utilizing the available professional resources.
2. To provide an opportunity for athletic coaches to analyze their strengths and weaknesses, and to discuss objectively the contributions they have made to the athletic program.
3. To provide an opportunity for the administrative staff to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of individual athletic coaches, and to utilize this knowledge to develop supervisory service to assist individuals in developing their competence.
4. To provide an effective means by which administrators may make recommendations concerning the continued employment of personnel, the granting of increments, and/or other recommendations.

The responsibility of all administrators, athletic coaches and other professional staff member is to recognize that Groton Public Schools intend to seek and maintain the best qualified staff to provide quality athletic coaching for student athletes. In keeping with this goal, all personnel are expected to participate fully in the evaluation process.

An integral part of this process is self- evaluation. The self and administrative evaluations include: knowledge of sports area, athletic coaching skills and techniques, attitudes, behavior patterns, values and ethics.

Any athletic coach who has held the same coaching position for three or more years, whom the District terminates or non-renews the contract shall be informed of the decision within ninety (90) days of the completion of the sport season covered by the contract. The athletic coach may request a written statement from the District specifying the reason(s) for its action. The statement shall be provided within thirty (30) days of the request. The decision to terminate or non-renew the athletic coach's contract may be appealed by the coach in a manner prescribed by the District.

The District may terminate the contract of any athletic coach at any time for reasons of moral misconduct, insubordination, violation of Board of Education policies, or because a sport has been cancelled by the District.

Evaluation – cont.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-149 Qualifications for coaches of intramural and interscholastic athletic coaches (as amended by P.A. 13-41)

10-151b Evaluation by superintendent of certain educational personnel

10-220a In-service training

10-222e Policy on evaluation and termination of athletic coaches (as amended by P.A. 13-41)

P.A. 13-41 An Act Concerning Hiring Standards for Athletic Directors

P.A. 02-243 An Act Concerning Notification in Cases of Termination of Coaches

Policy adopted:

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Groton, Connecticut

Budget Amendment Request

Transfer Between Locations

Fiscal Year: 2024-2025

To: Groton Board of Education **Date:** 5/7/2025

Request is hereby submitted for amendment(s) of budget as indicated.

From Location:		Object	Description	Amount
1	1-1101-00	321	WIT AND WISDOM	$ 300,000.00
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
			"FROM" Total:	**$300,000.00**

To Location:		Object	Description	Amount
1	1-1101-00	640	WIT AND WISDOM	300,000.00
2				
3				
4				
5				
			"TO" Total:	**$300,000.00**

No.	*Detailed reason and comments concerning requested budget amendment(s).*
1	BUDGETED WIT AND WISDOM FUNDS TO BE APPLIED TO APPROPRIATE BUDGET LINE.
2	
3	
4	
5	

Buisness Office **May 7, 2025**

Requested by **Date**

At a meeting of the Board of Education held on _____the above request(s) was/were approved in the amount of $_____

Signature of Director of Business and Finance: _____ Date_____

For Business Office Use Only: JE#_____ Date_____ Initials_____

P 5112.2

Students

Admission Requirements for Groton Residents

All children entering Groton Public Schools for the first time must present legal evidence of age and proof of residency. For students to attend school, current health assessments and up-to-date immunizations are required, except for those students classified as homeless in accordance with Federal law. Military families new to Groton have 30 days past enrollment to provide the above-mentioned medical documents. If the parent/guardian of any student is unable to pay for required immunizations or health assessments, the Groton Board of Education (Board) will refer the parent/guardian to the school-based health center.

One of the following documents accepted for proof of child's age (hand-written documents will not be accepted)
Hospital, Physician or Religious Certificate showing date of birth
State, Federal or other Government issued documents
Adoption Record
Birth Certificate
Previously verified school records showing date of birth

The Department of Children and Families and the Judicial Department shall provide to the Superintendent any educational records within their custody of a child seeking to enter, or to return to the District, from a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School, or any other residential placement, prior to the child's entry or return. However, receipt of the educational records shall not delay a child from enrolling in school. The Superintendent shall provide such information to the principal at the school the child will be attending. The principal shall disclose such information to staff members as appropriate.

Residency Requirements

Groton Public Schools provides educational services to students who are residents of Groton and to those out-of-town students for whom the District has entered into an agreement, such as a tuition or other special arrangement, with either their parent(s)/guardian(s) or their home Board of Education. Students who are not residents of Groton, except as mentioned above, may not attend Groton Public Schools. The Board may take legal action to recoup the cost of educating students found to have been illegally attending schools in the District. A student's parents/guardians are required to notify the principal when they are no longer residents of Groton. In exceptional situations, the Superintendent may allow the student to complete the current school year. The student's parent/guardian must present proof of residency upon initial registration in Groton Public Schools and as necessary thereafter.

Admission Requirements for Groton Residents – cont.

Students who reside in Groton and wish to attend an intra-district magnet-themed school other than their attendance zoned school must enter the District's annual school lottery for an opportunity to earn a seat at the school of choice with District transportation.

> ***Intra-district Magnet****: A magnet school that serves only students who reside within the boundaries of Groton and is under the jurisdiction of Groton Public Schools.*

Students who reside in Groton and plan to attend an inter-district magnet school, outside of Groton's boundaries, are required to register with the Groton Public Schools' Central Office Registration Office prior to beginning the inter-district magnet school. A complete, updated registration and proof of residency is required annually.

> ***Inter-district Magnet****: A magnet school that serves students across District lines.*

Proof of Residency

Proof of residency can be verified by submitting:

(a) one document from column A and
(b) one document from column B.

Only those items listed on the *Documents for Proof of Residency* table in this policy will be accepted as proof of residency. Each document submitted must specify the physical address of where the student lives; post office box addresses are not acceptable.

Documents for Proof of Residency One from column A and one from column B	
Column A	Column B

• Current Residential rental or lease agreement
• Current Residential mortgage statement
• Residential purchase or escrow agreement within 180 days
• Residential property tax bill (dated within the past year)
• Notarized Residency Affidavit (*see next page)
• Military Families Only: with 30-day follow-up
  • ~~Letter of Intent~~ Home Offer Letter for residency
  • Military Orders
	• Valid Connecticut driver's license (address labels not accepted)
	
	One of the following dated within the last 30 days
	
	• Utility bill (gas, electric, telephone, cable TV, etc.)
	• Letter from an approved government agency (assisted housing, food stamps, unemployment payment, etc.)
	• Payroll stub
	• Bank or credit card statement
	• Current vehicle registration or insurance bill
	• Medical billing or insurance information

Admission Requirements for Groton Residents – cont.

*If the student's family is living with another family in Groton:

1. the person they are living with must complete a notarized Residency Affidavit at the Groton Public Schools' Central Office stating that the student(s) and parent/guardian live with them at the address, and for what period of time.

2. The person completing the affidavit must also provide the following documents:
   a. a photo ID
   b. one document from column A and one document from column B showing they reside within District and school boundaries.

If the living situation is temporary, once they have moved into their own residence, proof of residency for their new address is required and must be brought to the Central Office Registration Office.

Placement

Children who apply for initial admission to the District's schools by transfer from nonpublic schools, or from schools outside the District, will be placed at the grade they would have reached elsewhere pending observation and evaluation by classroom teachers, guidance personnel, or the school principal. After such observations and evaluations have been completed, the principal will determine the final grade placement of the children.

(cf. 5118 – Non residence attendance)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes:

Sec. 10a-28. (Formerly Sec. 10-329d). Definitions.

10-15c. Discrimination in public schools prohibited.

10-76a. Definitions.

10-76d. Duties and powers of boards of education to provide special education programs and services. Determination of eligibility for Medicaid. State agency placements, apportionment of costs. Relationship of insurance to special education costs.

10-186. Duties of local and regional boards of education re: school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board. (As amended by Public Act 11-115 – An Act Concerning Juvenile Re-Entry and Education)

10-204a. Required immunizations.

10-206. Health assessments.

10-206a. Free health assessments.

10-220. Duties of boards of education.

Admission Requirements for Groton Residents – cont.

10-233a. Definitions.

Policy Adopted: June 23, 2014
Revised: June 24, 2019
November 27, 2023
June 17, 2024

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Groton, Connecticut

P 5118

Students

Non-resident attendance

Definition

A nonresident student is a student who:

1. resides outside of the District; or
2. resides within the District on a temporary basis; or
3. resides within the District on a permanent basis but with pay to the person(s) with whom the student is living; or
4. resides within the District for the sole purpose of obtaining school accommodations; or is
5. a child placed by the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Family Services or by other agencies in a foster, group, or private residential facility. However, under this circumstance, children may attend local schools with tuition paid by the home District unless special education considerations make attendance in local schools and programs inappropriate. Children not requiring special education who live in town as a result of placement by a state agency other than another Board of Education and except as provided otherwise in this paragraph are resident students; those requiring special education may attend local schools with special education cost reimbursements in accordance with statutes unless special education considerations make attendance in local schools and programs inappropriate.

Nonresident Attendance Without Tuition

Nonresident students may be allowed, with the Superintendent's approval, to attend District schools without tuition under one of the following circumstances:

~~Upon written parental request, nonresident students may be allowed by the Superintendent to attend District schools without tuition under one or more of the following~~ ~~conditions~~:

1. Children affected by military transfers from January of their junior year through their senior year will be allowed to remain in the District tuition free until the completion of their senior year.
2. A family moves from the District during or after the Spring Recess ~~January 1st~~ of the school year; however, if parents so request, a child may complete the current school year.
3. A family residing outside of the District has firm plans to move into the District within 30 days of ~~the current school year~~ registration as evidenced by a contract to buy, ~~build,~~ rent, or lease;
4. Twelfth-grade students wishing to complete their education in the District;
5. Children residing temporarily within the District because of family changes or children attending local schools residing temporarily outside of the District because of family circumstances. Approval shall not exceed three (3) calendar months; if subsequent approval is necessary, it shall be considered based upon information available at that time.
6. The Groton Board of Education (Board) may seek reimbursement for children living in temporary shelters located within the Town of Groton from the school districts in which the child would otherwise reside as permitted in 10-253 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Non-resident attendance – cont.

Exchange Students

No tuition is required for foreign students living within the District under the American Field Service Program or under other programs or circumstances approved by the Board. Exchange students will be accorded all the rights and privileges of a resident student during the period of enrollment.

Nonresident Attendance With Tuition

Nonresident students who do not meet one or more criteria under previous sections of this policy, may attend local schools only with tuition payment. The Superintendent may approve nonresident student attendance with tuition if class size, transportation, and other considerations permit, and shall notify the Board of all tuition approvals. Nonresident approval with tuition shall be for one (1) school year or less. Tuition rates shall be established by the Board annually.

Attendance by a nonresident tuition student may be terminated by Board action, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, if the Board deems such termination is in the best interest of the District. An adjustment of tuition on a per diem basis will be made in this instance.

Evidence of Residency

The Superintendent or designee may require documentation from ~~of~~ a family and/or student regarding residency, including affidavits.~~, provided that~~ Prior to a request for evidence of residency, the parent or guardian, relative or non-relative, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older shall be provided with a written statement ~~of~~ explaining why a reason exists to believe such student~~'~~(s) may not be entitled to attend school in the District. If an affidavit ~~may~~ is required, it must include a statement or statements with documentation that a ~~is bona fide~~ student's residence exists in the District, that the resident is intended to be permanent, that it is provided without pay, and that it is not for the sole purpose of obtaining school accommodations.

Removal of Nonresident Student From District Schools

If after a careful review of affidavits and other available evidence, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee believes that a student is not entitled to attend local schools, the parent or guardian, the student if an emancipated minor, or a student eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall be informed in writing that, as of a particular date, the student may no longer attend local schools, and the Superintendent or designee shall notify the Board where the child should attend school (if known). If after review, District residency is established by the evidence, the parent or guardian, the student if an emancipated minor, or a student eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall be so informed.

If a student is removed from a District school for residency reasons the Superintendent or designee shall: 1) inform the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older, of hearing rights before the Board and that the student may continue in local schools pending a hearing before the Board if requested in writing by the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older, 2) that upon request, a transcript of the hearing will be provided, 3) that a Board decision may be appealed to the State Board and that the student/s may continue in local schools pending a hearing before the State Board if requested in writing by the parent, guardian, emancipated

Non-resident attendance – cont.

minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older, 4) that if the appeal to the State Board of Education is lost, a per diem tuition will be assessed for each day a student attended local schools when not eligible to attend.

Board of Education Hearing

Upon written request, the Board shall provide a hearing within ten (10) days after receipt of such request. If a hearing ensues, the Board shall make a recording of the hearing, shall make a decision on student eligibility to attend local schools within ten (10) days after the hearing, and shall notify the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older, of its findings. Hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Sections 4 177 to 4 180 inclusive of Connecticut General Statutes.

The Board shall, within ten (10) days after receipt of notice of an appeal, forward the hearing record to the State Board of Education.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statues

10-4a Educational interests of state defined.

10-33 Tuition in towns in which no high school is maintained.

10-35 Notice of discontinuance of high school service to non-residents.

10-55 Pupils to attend regional school.

10-253 School privileges for children in certain placements, non-resident children, and children in temporary shelters

Policy Adopted: May 24, 1993
Revised: March 12, 2012
Revised: October 23, 2023

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Groton, Connecticut

LEARN Board of Directors met on May 8, 2025. LEARN Associate Executive Director Dr. Ryan Donlon provided an update on the Regional Multicultural Magnet School 3-8 Middle School design and provided a comprehensive overview of LEARN, long-term dialogue vision for its Magnet Schools. Shifting from siloed institutions to a cohesive family of schools' model. We reviewed the budget presented by CFO Michael Belden.

Kate Erickson gave a legislative update; Resc Alliance Executive Directors continue to advocate for increased State funding and support for regional educational services in Southeastern Connecticut.

We had an update on the regional remote learning collaborative of 5 districts, East Lyme, Waterford, New London, Old Saybrook, and LEARN. Four courses met the minimum threshold of 13 students; 3D modeling and Architectures, True Crime Waiting, Emergency Medical Responders, and American Sign Language starting the 2025-2026 school year.

I speak today not only as a Board member, but as a resident of Groton who believes in shared priorities and a commitment to the common good. I have grown increasingly discouraged—not just about the future of our schools, but about the direction of our town as a whole.

Recently, I sat down with the numbers. Over the past decade, the Town's overall spending has increased by 34%. Many departments have seen substantial increases:

• Town Operations: up 48%

• IT and Finance: up 36%

• Public Safety: up 42%

• Public Works: up 21%

• Planning and Development: up 33%

• Parks & Rec: up over 52%

• Shennecossett Golf Course: up 53% (although revenue and fee's fully offset the expenses)

• City of Groton: up 40%

And this is just the budgeted spending and does not include expenses like the Shore Ave seawall or bridge on 215.

But then we look at education: only an 18.5% increase over 10 years—just 1.8% annually. Our schools (and our library) have received the smallest increases across the board.

They say, "If you want to see an organization's true priorities, look at its budget." The data is clear. While public safety, town operations, and recreation are important, education—the foundation of our community's future—has consistently been underfunded.

We're now facing painful cuts that will impact our children and their futures. We know early educational gaps have lifelong consequences—on achievement, opportunity, and earning potential. This affects not only individual students but the economic strength of Groton for generations.

And yet, education continues to be the department under scrutiny. The Board of Ed has been unfairly vilified, and now the town's operational review appears timed for political effect—likely to be completed just before the election, and used to justify further cuts to education, while those same elected officials ignore unchecked growth of other departments.

To the students, especially the swimmers who spoke so passionately last week, thank you. And I'm sorry. I'm sorry the Board of Ed couldn't convince the town of what's at stake. We hear you, and we will continue to fight for you. But for this year, we've fallen short and it will be felt with cuts to student supports.

Groton is my lifelong home, and it pains me to see us walk this path. I urge all of you to reflect—not just on what's been said in headlines or public comments, but on the numbers themselves. We can't afford to let our children, our educators, and our future fail to the bottom of our Town's priorities. We must do better.

Thank You, Adrian Johnson