

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Approved Minutes of Thursday, June 12, 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
Charmaine Bradshaw-Hill, Director of Finance and Operations

Also Present:

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens

Peter DePaola, 82 Wall Street, spoke about a committee being planned to identify efficiencies and improve communication, and suggested that qualified citizens, in addition to elected officials, be included as members.

Mike Wheeler, representing Coventry Basketball Association – announced plans to donate \$750 in partnership with Parks and Recreation. He also addressed the proposed fee restructure, stating that the increase in rental fees would negatively impact the program, and urged the Board to consider the community-building impact it provides.

IV. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Petrone provided several key updates for the month, including the town budget hearing that was held in preparation for the June 17th referendum. He noted that graduation was indoors due to the weather, and both the fifth and eighth grade promotion ceremonies took place. The Hale family picnic was held on Tuesday. He also shared that the district has concluded another successful school year. E. Marchand spoke positively about the

graduation, noting how well the event was organized and carried out. E. Eaton also shared positive feedback about the graduation live stream.

IV.A. Recognition: Deborah Page, CNH Teacher, Presenter at the NEAG Annual Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference

Dr. Petrone shared that Ms. Page presented at the conference, with her presentation titled "Increased productivity and educational engagement with AI tools." Ms. Page also provided an overview of her presentation.

IV.B. Recognition: Cathie Drury, Director of Educational Technology, 2025 CEN Outstanding Leader Award (COLA) recipient

Dr. Petrone recognized Ms. Drury for receiving an award that honors community members who demonstrate extraordinary leadership, energy, ideas, and values. Ms. Drury thanked the superintendent for his support and provided an overview of the program.

IV.C. Information: Technology Plan Progress (Deeper Thinking & Learning; Authentic Work) – Ms. Drury

Ms. Drury presented the progress of the Technology Plan, highlighting key accomplishments and outlining action steps for the 2025-26 school year, which is available on the district's website via the BoardBook portal.

C. Williams expressed interest in having a parent portal for communications across all schools. Ms. Drury explained that she is currently working on implementing this for the upcoming school year. C. Williams also requested adding how to add money to lunch accounts.

J. Cleary inquired about teachers' ability to identify student use of AI. Ms. Drury responded that there are resources and tools available within their platform.

J. Beausoleil spoke positively about code.org and expressed her happiness that it is being integrated.

IV.D. Recognition: CHS Boys Golf Team – CIAC

Dr. Petrone recognized the Coventry High School golf team for winning the CIAC Division III Championship - the first state title in CHS history. The team's coach also shared special words of recognition for his players, praising their hard work and dedication. Board members also offered their congratulations and expressed special praise for the team's outstanding achievement.

V. Report of the Chairman

J. Beausoleil thanked Dr. Giller for stepping up as CGS principal this past year. She noted that graduation was a nice event and expressed that it was an honor to be included in the ceremony. She reminded everyone that the next referendum is scheduled for June 17th and mentioned that if the budget does not pass, a special meeting will need to be scheduled. Dr. Petrone's administrative assistant will reach out to board members to coordinate availability. J. Beausoleil also clarified confusion from the last meeting regarding the CIP item; the remaining \$35,000 had not been completely cut by the town council, but rather reduced.

J. Beausoleil spoke about community feedback regarding shared services, noting that communication has been challenging and insufficient for the community to easily access information. To address this, staff will be encouraged to develop more innovative and collaborative approaches to deliver quality programs. She further explained that in 2014, together with the town council chair, they established a bipartisan initiative to improve communication between the town council and the Board of Education. This included creating a joint fiscal finance subcommittee that convenes quarterly. Both the town council and board agreed on the need to expand and enhance communication efforts. As a result, a standing agenda item will be added to discuss the status and plans related to shared services. Additionally, an email address will be set up to collect community ideas. Meeting agendas and minutes will be made available on both agencies' meeting portals.

C. Williams believes it would add value to include some citizens in the meetings to share their ideas, and suggested inviting a representative from the town to participate.

J. Beausoleil noted that forming a committee would take a few months to get underway. There was further discussion about whether this would change the scope of the existing subcommittee, as well as the level of community involvement.

VI. Communications

There was none

VII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

VII.A. Approve Minutes of May 29, 2025

Edit: Agenda items IX.B.3.A and IX.B.3.B. Williams should be recorded as voting No, not Abstained.

Agenda item IX.A, page 4, last paragraph – clarify that C. Rossignol was responding to Lilly's question regarding how this would impact the regatta.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of May 29, 2025, as amended

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries with one abstention by J. Cleary

VIII. Old Business

VIII.A. Information and Possible VOTE: FY2026 Budget

J. Beausoleil stated that if the referendum fails, the district and town will be required to operate under 30-day budgets. Dr. Petrone is currently seeking clarification on whether this must be formally approved by the Board.

C. Williams called a point of order, referencing two policies she reviewed – one regarding the roles and responsibilities of the chairwoman, and the other concerning the bylaws committee. She stated that, according to these policies, the chair does not have the authority to alter subcommittees. J. Beausoleil denied the point of order as there was no change being made to the role of the Fiscal Committee; rather, the chair was recommending the addition of agenda items to its meetings. C. Williams requested that the matter be reviewed by legal counsel and that the findings be discussed at the next meeting.

IX. New Business

IX.A. Information and Possible VOTE: HEEC Additional Classroom Proposal – Dr. Petrone

Dr. Petrone presented the HEEC additional classroom proposal, which is available on the district's website via the BoardBook portal.

There was discussion regarding enrollment, square footage per student, and associated costs. It was noted that the proposal will have no impact on the operating budget, as it will be funded through the preschool account.

MOTION: To approve the HEEC additional classroom proposal as presented

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: E. Marchand

MOTION AMENDED to include: funding for the project, including staffing, will be housed in the HEEC operating budget account

Result: Motion carries unanimously

IX.B. Discussion: Review of Policy Revision – 1330 Use of School Facilities (To be Warned for a vote at a future meeting)

E. Eaton reviewed the policy updates, which included a revised date for administrator approval and adjustments to the groupings configuration. There was a discussion about groupings versus fees, with clarification that fees are not included in the policy. E. Marchand is opposed to CYBA being included in the grouping with the increased fee structure. J. Beausoleil reiterated that the fee schedule is not up for a vote – only the policy is. She noted that discussions regarding fees can take place within the Fiscal Committee. She also stated that the district cannot differentiate between groups. J. Beausoleil further clarified that there has never been a formal partnership between the district and Coventry Youth Basketball. E. Marchand added that administrative fees have always been handled informally. C. Williams stated that this could create animosity and emphasized the importance of coming to the table to negotiate with community groups. There was discussion regarding the reasoning behind not charging for field usage. E. Eaton noted that moving the policy forward would allow the Fiscal Committee the opportunity to further discuss fees and implementation. There was discussion about postponing the vote in order to allow for further review.

There was not consensus to move the policy forward to a vote

X. Report of Board Members

X.A. Information: Fiscal Committee Report, Meeting of June 12, 2025 – M. Kortmann and Ms. Bradshaw-Hill

M. Kortmann reported that the year-end balance currently stands at \$50,000. However, the final amount is still uncertain, as the district is awaiting the excess cost reimbursement figures and clarification on a few remaining unknowns.

1. Information and Possible VOTE: Approve Budget Transfer

MOTION: To approve the transfer of \$76,000 to account 600 Supplies and \$39,000 to account 400 Purchased Services, for a total of \$115,000 coming from account 100 Salaries.

By: M. Kortmann

Seconded: E. Eaton

