



## Executive Committee

# MEETING SUMMARY

Date: August 22, 2025  
Time: 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.  
Location: LEARN, Room 216/ 44 Hatchedts Hill Road, Old Lyme, CT 06371

**Present:** Robert Mitchell, Chair; Jen Favalora, Fiscal Officer; Beverly Washington, Secretary; and Kate Ericson, LEARN Executive Director

**Not Attending:** Dale Bernardoni, Vice Chair; Dr. Cynthia Ritchie, Superintendent of Schools New London; and Maryann O'Donnell, Superintendent of Schools Clinton

**Meeting began at 8:32 a.m.**

**1.** Review September 2025 Board of Directors' Agenda

The committee reviewed and discussed the September Board Agenda.

**2.** HR Updates

Executive Director Ericson shared hiring updates—LEARN has successfully hired Pre-K teachers, Special Education Teachers, Board Certified Behavior Analysts, a Mathematics Teacher, Bilingual and TESOL Teachers, School nurses, a Social Worker, and a School Psychologist.

The Executive Director expressed enthusiasm about the caliber of staff LEARN has recruited into the agency. Each new team member will be an asset to our schools and programs.

LEARN still has key vacancies with the goal of completing hiring within the next week.

On August 21 and 22, LEARN hosted the New Educator Orientation. More than 30 licensed and certified staff participated in the two-day program.

**3.** Extended School Year Summary

Executive Director Ericson shared details of the very successful Extended School Year (ESY) program. Ocean Avenue LEARNing Academy and the LEARN Transition Academy hosted students from across the region. Every single student was able to have meaningful interactions out in the community with support from the staff. Students participated in programs with New England Science and Sailing, the Waterford Recreation Department, the Sea Unicorns, and the Yellow Farmhouse.

#### **4. Regional Shared Service Solutions (RSSS) Update**

The Executive Committee was informed that the Regional Shared Service Solutions Program was fully implemented this summer. Districts' savings range from \$5,000 to \$87,000 for this fiscal year, depending on the level of services contracted. Executive Director Ericson shared that three new districts have engaged with LEARN for back-office services and are reaping the benefits of the reduced rates.

#### **5. Internal Review Board (IRB)**

Executive Director Ericson shared that LEARN staff has helped construct an Internal Review Board Policy and Regulation for the LEARN Board of Directors review and approval. The new structure will allow LEARN staff to submit research proposals to the IRB for studies conducted within our schools, programs, and partner districts. Once approved and completed, this research can then be published at the national level and shared more broadly.

#### **6. Convocation and Opening of Schools**

The Executive Committee was informed that the 2025 LEARN Convocation would be aired in video format, and shared and viewed simultaneously at each LEARN site. This year's Convocation theme, "Cultivating the Power of We," celebrates the great work from last year, and the exciting opportunities that lie ahead. LEARN innovations and progress are a product of the tremendous staff here at LEARN.

#### **7. AESA Leadership Academy**

Executive Director Ericson reported on the summer conferences attended. AESA's Summer Leadership was an exceptional learning opportunity this year. Educational Service Agencies from across the country shared their practices from training on dyslexia, Human Resource operations, to building data centers. The sharing of ideas is an invaluable tool to expand LEARN's perspective on what is possible when it comes to serving the region. Executive Director Ericson also thanked the Executive Committee for their support of her participation in the AESA Leadership Academy, as she will spend a full year learning with and from Executive Directors from across the country.

**8. Admin Retreat Recap**

LEARN hosted 29 administrators during the 2025 two-day admin retreat in August. Executive Director Ericson shared how fortunate LEARN is to have so many administrators returning, to continue providing LEARN schools and programs with incredible vision and direction. The team read *Trust and Inspire* by Stephen Covey, with the goal of establishing tangible action steps to model the mission/vision of the agency.

**9. Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn at 9:47 a.m.**

- **Presented by Robert Mitchell**
- **Second Beverly Washington**
- **Motion passed unanimously with 3 votes in favor and 0 votes against**

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Respectfully submitted by: Jamella A. A. Etienne