

The Business Meeting of the New London Board of Education was held on September 8, 2025 in the New London Public Schools' Welcome Center and via Zoom Webinars.

1. Call to Order

President Maynard-Adams called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present for the Board of Education: President – Elaine Maynard-Adams  
Secretary – Nathan Caron

Board Members Present: Alisha Blake (*attended virtually*)  
Karen Bergin  
Scott Garbini (*elected as a Board member during item 2*)  
Susan Hambey  
Richard Martin

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.***

2. Board Election of a Board Member to Replace the Resignation of Board Member Bianca Alexis-Sylvain

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Caron, to nominate Scott Garbini to fill the vacancy.

***Motion carried, 6-0***

***Mr. Garbini was sworn-in as a member of the Board of Education by Ms. Kristea Francolino, acting in her capacity as a Notary Public.***

3. Public Comment

Reona Dyess, New London – Ms. Dyess came forward to speak. She is the Executive Director of the Drop-In Learning Center, as well as a city councilor. She congratulated Mr. Garbini and stated that it was a nice treat to see him sworn-in. She spoke regarding some concerns that she has regarding the importance of communication. She shared that in the community, people don't understand that the Board is responsible for their budget. The City Council approves a dollar amount which was the same as the previous year, but they do not say how it is supposed to be spent. The Board makes the decision of how it should be spent. There was no way possible for the Council to cut the crossing guards. She stated with her Drop-In Learning hat on, when things like this happen, it is sad. She was surprised to learn that there were no crossing guards and then was shocked as she listened to the discussion when she asked the Attorney about who is liable. She found out that no

matter what, because the Board is a department of the City, the city is responsible. The reality is that everyone cares about the children. She stated some parents told her they are not coming to the after school program because they were worried about how the kids would get there. She stated she knows that the Board cares about the children, because she has always said and appreciated that the Board has to manage their budget, and it is difficult. She stated that she hopes she never has to come again because of a safety issue, and she hoped to see more people at the Board meeting to speak. She shared that they should be able to communicate and not let anything happen with safety again. She stated she has a lot of respect for the Board, and that all need to work together to ensure safety. She thanked the Board for their participation and for all that they do.

#### 4. Reports and Communications

- Board Chairperson's Report

Ms. Maynard-Adams wished a happy birthday to Board Member Karen Bergin. She also showed a video which was shared at the NLPS Convocation regarding Project Inspire, an art installment project that students at the middle school are participating in. Ms. Maynard-Adams also shared that the United States of Readers program would be kicking off at Winthrop tomorrow during the school day, which is a wonderful opportunity for our elementary students throughout the district.

- Superintendent's Report – Summer Programming Review

- Dr. Hills-Papetti, Assistant Superintendent, gave a presentation to the Board outlining the Summer Programming updates. This presentation included the following highlights:

- Summer School Overview
- Elementary K-5
- Middle School 6-8
- High School Credit Recovery 9-12
- Extended School Year Services

*A copy of this report is available in its entirety upon request.*

#### 5. Approval of the Minutes

- August 25, 2025

Motion by Mr. Caron, seconded by Mr. Martin, to approve the August 25, 2025 Business Meeting minutes.

***Motion carried, 6-0-1***  
***Abstaining: Ms. Blake***

#### 6. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Garbini, that the following items, as set forth on the Consent Agenda for the Business Meeting of September 8, 2025 be approved unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools:

- A. Superintendent's Written Report
  - I. Human Resources
  - II. Student & Family Support Services
  - III. Business & Finance
  - IV. Operations – Includes Magnet Pathways, Athletics, Facilities and Technology
- B. Action Items
  - I. Adopt Policy 6161.12 – Library material Review and Reconsideration for its Second and Final Reading
  - II. Adopt Policy 6161.13 – Library Collection Development and Maintenance for its Second and Final Reading
  - III. Adopt Policy 6161.14 – Library Display and Program for its Second and Final Reading
  - IV. Adopt Policy 6181 – Evaluation of the Special Education Program for its Second and Final Reading
  - V. Approve Policy 1312 – Constituent Service for its Second and Final Reading

7. Items Pulled from Consent Agenda

- Superintendent's Written Report – Academics

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to approve the Superintendent's Written Report – Academics.

Ms. Maynard-Adams stated that she pulled this report to voice her concern that she voices every year regarding the assessment calendar. She asked if everything on the list is required. Dr. Hills-Papetti clarified that as an Alliance District we are required to give a universal assessment in ELA and Math, and that is the iReady test which is done in grades K-10. Last year it was done only twice, but there was feedback from staff that it was helpful to have the mid-year diagnostics as well. The K-3 DIBELS assessment is required as well. She continued to explain the rest of the assessment calendar to the Board.

***Motion carried, 6-0***

- Action Item: Adopt Policy 5144.12 – Challenging Behavior Prevention: Restorative Practices Response for its Second and Final Reading

Motion by Ms. Bergin, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, to adopt Policy 5144.12 – Challenging Behavior Prevention: Restorative Practices Response for its Second and Final Reading

Ms. Bergin asked how the district systemically processes how this is working and if it is working. Dr. Ritchie stated that the District has utilized restorative practices for some years now. The move to restorative practices included the resetting of the code of conduct and having the conversations and trainings with staff that there isn't just a blanket answer to behaviors, and that one shouldn't look for discipline, but also analyze the reasons why a behavior is occurring, and how we can educate while also ensuring accountability.

***Motion carried, 7-0***

- Action Item: Approve Policy 0200 – Statement of Educational Goals for its Second and Final Reading

Motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to approve Policy 0200 – Statement of Educational Goals for its Second and Final Reading.

Mr. Martin stated that this policy seems aspirational whereas the original policy was very specific. Hea asked if there are more goals elsewhere. Dr. Ritchie clarified that this is a high-level definition and framework for the District, but the actual goals and specifics are included yearly in the School Improvement Plans and District Improvement plan with specific actionables and measurables. Mr. Martin also noted that the only reference to civic engagement in Number 13 is global and national, and he would like to see that it mentions local as well.

Motion by Mr. Garbini, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, to amend number 13 in the policy to be “participation in civic engagement in community, local, national and global affairs”.

***Motion carried, 7-0***

***Vote on the main motion as amended: Motion carried, 7-0***

8. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Email Sent to Dr. Ritchie from Mayor Passero Dated September 3, 2025 Regarding School Crossing Guards

Ms. Maynard-Adams stated that she agrees with the public comment of Councilor Dyess that the Board decides how to spend the money, and this was an action to bring the budget down. The overwhelming goal was to keep teachers in the classrooms and everything else was fair game. All of the cuts were difficult. This one in particular is one that Ms. Maynard-Adams shared that she has told the Mayor on numerous occasions that the crossing guards do not belong in the educational budget, as they are a matter of public safety. She stated that she is inclined to take the Mayor up on his offer that he will in good faith come up with the \$67,000 to cover the cost of crossing guards, but that the other side would be that the discussions continue with the Mayor to remove this item from the Board's budget. She does not want to have this fight every year, but would like the City to honor the responsibility to keep kids safe. Mr. Martin added that he did some research, and about 73% of the districts who have crossing guards in the State are paid for from the City side of the budget. Ms. Hambey stated she thought similarly to take up this idea, but that it needs to include the

caveat that the expectation is public safety. Ms. Bergin stated that she appreciates some resolution. Regarding Councilor Dyess' public comments, she stated that we do have an obligation and responsibility to say that if both parties were professionally talking to each other, this situation would not be occurring, and that this is a community budget.

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by , that the Board approves the Mayor's proposal that the City will draft an ordinance and approve it at its meeting on Monday night to fully fund the cost of the crossing guards for the 2025-2026 school year.

***Motion carried, 7-0***

9. 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 Mr. Garbini, to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing:

- 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 School and Family Supports Carrie Rivera (by phone)***

***Time into Executive Session: 8:01 p.m.***

***Time out of Executive Session: 8:08 p.m.***

***No votes were taken while in Executive Session***

10. Action Following Executive Session

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

***Motion carried, 7-0***

11. Board Comments, Questions

Ms. Hambey welcomed Mr. Garbini to the Board. Mr. Caron echoed her welcome. Ms. Blake shared that she was Mr. Garbini's campaign manager for the first time he ran for the board, and she is excited to serve with him for her last couple of months. Mr. Martin welcomed Mr. Garbini. Mr. Martin also thanked Mr. Gautier and his team for assisting in getting the polls set up for the Primary election. Mr. Garbini thanked everyone for asking him to be back, and looks forward to serving the students, teachers and the district.

12. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Caron, to adjourn the meeting.

*Motion carried, 7-0*

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Caron  
Secretary, Board of Education