

The Business Meeting of the New London Board of Education was held on September 22, 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: Karen Bergin
Scott Garbini
Susan Hambey
Richard Martin

Board Members Absent: Alisha Blake

Present for the administration: Dr. Cynthia Ritchie, *Superintendent of Schools*
Dr. Jennifer Hills-Papetti, *Assistant Superintendent of Schools*
Mr. Rob Funk, *Chief Financial Officer*
Ms. Carrie Rivera, *Executive Director of School and Family Supports*
Ms. Christine Pemberton, *Executive Director of Talent & Human Resources*
Mr. Miguel Gautier, Jr. – *Executive Director of Operations*
Ms. Kristea Francolino – *Manager of Executive Support Services*

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to add to the agenda as item 6b, the election of a Vice-President.

Motion carried, 6-0

2. Public Comment

C.J. Parker, New London – Mr. Parker shared that he has come to this meeting to speak about the crossing guards. He expressed his understanding that there was an additional appropriation of \$65,000 to the Board to restore these positions. He also shared that for him he would like to see the district offer these positions first to the people who held them prior. Additionally, he shared that as a community member he has received for a few years phone calls from others asking why Coach Parker's name is not on the basketball court at the high school. He stated that these calls have come from both community members and

other long-time youth coaches. He shared that he was one of seventeen coaches in State history to have over 500 wins, and one of four to have 500 wins and multiple state championships. He stated that he is now retired, but that he expects that the district may hear from others in support of this as well.

Sarah Turner, New London – Ms. Turner shared that she wanted to bring up some items that are on the agenda. She noted that regarding the Community Information Committee, she was in attendance of the Board meeting the night that the committee was created and voted on, and that she volunteered to be a community representative. She expressed that she was told that there was much interest in the committee and that she was not going to be able to participate. She continued that as a Title I school, and even as in the policy, we should want to engage with parents and include them as often as we can. She expressed her disappointment. She stated that she can appreciate that when she came to the meeting she was the only person in the audience attending and Ms. Bergin told her that she would be welcome to hear anything that she would like to share. Ms. Turner stated she called Ms. Bergin and left a message, but did not receive any communication back. She stated that she feels this is a pattern of behavior of people on the Board because all she wants is the best for her kid or other kids. She stated she has submitted complaints for the high school and does not know what the status is. She stated if the Board's duty is to create policies and oversight and that policies are taken seriously and in an ethical fashion, she is not seeing that happen this year. She stated in regards to the DIP this evening, the policy committee recently changed the beliefs, but it looks like the mission statement still reflects the previous one. She would love to have someone respond to, or hear how someone or when someone can respond to any of her complaints.

Nicole Broadus, New London – Ms. Broadus stated that she has come to the meeting to speak on the advocacy of the \$65,000 that will be, or has been, given to the Board from City Council. She believes that the crossing guards are a priority of everyone here, and she would like to suggest that the positions first be offered to those who lost their positions originally. Additionally, Ms. Broadus spoke about the School Governance Councils (SGCs), and stated that she had sent an email to the principal on September 3 to express her interest in participating. She received a response stating that she would get an email the following week but still hadn't received anything back and was wondering about a timeline.

Ms. Maynard-Adams permitted Dr. Ritchie to respond to the comment and she shared that after the Open Houses are completed in early October, she should expect to receive a response with the next steps.

3. Reports and Communications

- Board Chairperson's Report

Ms. Maynard-Adams stated that the City did appropriate \$65,000 to the Board of Education for the purpose of hiring crossing guards. The district has reached out to those who were employed with us until June. She noted that these positions can be difficult to fill because they are not conducive to the schedules of most parents or

those who work during the day, but the district is working to actively fill as quickly as possible. She stated that the next step will be to explain to the City that the cost does belong with the City and not with the Board as it is a safety expense.

Ms. Maynard-Adams addressed the appointments of members to the Community Information Committee, and stated that the Board created the committee, and the Board Chair fills the position. She stated that she accepts full responsibility for it, and if anyone is unhappy with her choice they are welcome to speak with her.

She also deferred to Mr. Caron to speak on his experiences with Open Houses. Mr. Caron shared that he had attended Open Houses, and the school that kicked off the schedule was BDJ. He shared he was able to get there and sent a follow up communication which expressed to Principal Vamvakides that he set an incredible tone in the building and the feeling of positivity was palpable. Mr. Caron shared that he was able to connect with many teachers and parents, and that he was left speechless with what was a beautiful evening.

- Reports of Committees
 - Community Information Committee
 - Ms. Bergin reported that the committee had its inaugural meeting with three staff members, three Board members and a community member. She shared there was a robust discussion about facilitating communications not only in district, but in the community. She shared that people had a lot of good contributions to the discussions. She added that the committee is also developing a flyer with a QR code for a survey which will be shared at the conferences. Ms. Bergin also responded to a public comment sharing that she had responded via email to be in touch with her, and expressed that she does not use her personal phone to conduct Board business, but she does care about what she has to say.
 - Finance & Audit Committee
 - Ms. Maynard-Adams shared that this committee did not meet this evening, but there are some topics on the horizon that will need to be discussed. She noted that the district only received one of the 21st Century Grants that the district applied for, and additionally there are potential changes in magnet funding that will affect the ability of the district to continue to enroll magnet students in the current year.
- Superintendent's Report – NLPS Strategic Operational Plan – Beginning of Year Report
 - Dr. Ritchie, Dr. Jenn Hills-Papetti, Ms. Carrie Rivera, Ms. Christine Pemberton, Mr. Rob Funk, Mr. Miguel Gautier, and Ms. Kristea Francolino presented together the different sections of the NLPS Strategic Operating

Plan's Beginning of Year Report. This presentation included highlights from the following sections of the plan:

- Student Achievement
- Climate & Culture
- A School Community that Creates Welcoming and Empowering Partnerships for Learning
- District Operations
- Recruit, Retain and Recognize Talent

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

4. Approval of the Minutes

- September 8, 2025

Motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to approve the September 8, 2025 Business Meeting minutes.

Motion carried, 6-0

5. Action Items

- Approve Policy 5117.11 – Application, Enrollment, and Placement for its First and Final Reading

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to approve Policy 5117.11 – Application, Enrollment and Placement for its First and Final Reading

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Caron, to amend the policy in number 13 to state that “students are not considered enrolled until all verification documents have been received and recorded”.

Motion carried, 6-0

Vote on the Main Motion as Amended, Motion carried, 6-0

- Election of a Vice-President

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to nominate Ms. Karen Bergin as Vice-President.

Motion carried, 6-0

6. 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, 6-0

7. Board Comments, Questions

Mr. Garbini thanked all of the staff for their work on the District Improvement Plan which was shared this evening.

Ms. Hambey congratulated all on the Open Houses.

Ms. Maynard-Adams shared that she would like to complete a survey of the middle school and high school staff soon regarding the implementation of the cell phone policy.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Bergin, seconded by Mr. Martin, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, 6-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Caron
Secretary, Board of Education