Minutes
Special Meeting of the Region 14 Board of Education
Monday, December 8, 2025; 6:00 p.m.
Flanders Room
Mitchell Elementary School
OFFICIAL MINUTES – BOARD APPROVED – MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026

Present:
Chris Matta, Chairman
Alice Jones, Vice Chairman
Jim Crocker
Carol Ann Brown
Michael Carbonneau
Tikva Rose
Caren Lipinski

Absent:
Chris Griffin

Also Present:
Brian Murphy, Superintendent
Tina Tanguay, Director of Finance and Operations

I. Call to Order
Chairman Matta called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Introductions
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and acquaintances were made

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular Meeting, Monday, November 3, 2025
A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Jim Crocker to accept and approve the minutes with the following amendment:

Section IV. Committee Reports, Item A, Agriscience Funding Committee Update, delete bullet # 2, "State significantly reduced AgriScience funding across Connecticut"

all in favor, none opposed, Caren Lipinski abstained, motion carried.

IV. New Business

A. Agriscience Funding Committee Presentation
- Consultant analysis revealed out-of-district AgriScience students cost the district $1,136,637 annually
- The foundation amount of $11,525 is intended to represent the cost of educating an average student in Connecticut. This number has not been adjusted for rising costs or inflation since 2013

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- Without out-of-district students, Nonnewaug High School could not run 43 classes, 4 varsity sports, 3 JV sports, 13 Agriscience Teams, and 16 clubs due to insufficient participation, which would eliminate critical opportunities for Region 14's own students
- AgriScience Funding Committee formed to advocate for increased state funding

B. 2026 Board of Education Meeting Dates (Action Anticipated)
A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Tikva Rose to accept/approve the 2026 Board of Education Meeting Dates, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

C. Field Trip; Philly Flower Show; Philadelphia, PA; March 5-7, 2026 (Action Anticipated)
- Trip expected to accommodate close to 45 students at approximately $300 per student
- Horticulture program runs trip every other year; last year's trip included 42 students

A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Jim Crocker to accept/approve the field trip as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

D. Field Trip; National Farm Machinery Show; Louisville, KY; February 11-14, 2026 (Action Anticipated)
- National Farm Machinery Show trip to Louisville, Kentucky approved with TBD costs
- Students will spend day viewing vendors, colleges, and educational opportunities at machinery show
- Trip exposes students to large-scale agriculture operations with GPS tractors not available at Nonnewaug High School due to space limitations

A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Jim Crocker to accept/approve the field trip as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Student Representative Report – Report provided by Addison Bushka
Report includes Bethlehem and Mitchell Elementary Schools events:
- Veterans day celebration at Mitchell Elementary School
- Fall/Winter Conferences
- Annual Bookfair
- Scripps National Spelling Bee
- Collections for the "Mitten Tree"
- Nutcracker trip to the Warner Theater in Torrington
- Bethlehem Elementary School Winter Concert

B. Award Presentations (Tara Lanese/Toby Denman)
   - Tara Lanese, Bethlehem Elementary parent, recognized for writing grant enabling all PreK-5 students to attend Nutcracker performance at the Warner Theatre on Friday, December 12, 2025
   - Grant covered performance tickets and bus transportation for both elementary schools
   - Toby Denman, Boys' Soccer Coach, was awarded 2025 Western Connecticut Soccer Officials Association Hall of Fame Award for outstanding service to high school soccer

C. Nonnewaug High School National FFA Presentation
   - Students attended FFA National Convention in Indianapolis representing Region 14 with multiple competitive teams and delegates
   - Students attended leadership workshops, National Service Day, and community service activities during convention
   - The student medal winners were in attendance at the Board meeting and were introduced to the audience

D. Superintendent's District 5-Year Strategic Plan Presentation
   - Superintendent presented third iteration of five-year strategic plan framework for teaching and learning
   - Four primary goals: academic performance, budget, safety, and communication
   - Plan emphasizes coherence and alignment between Board goals, district goals, and individual school goals

   Talking Points:
   - Bethlehem Elementary School is in the top 6% of elementary schools in CT and top 5% of all schools
   - Mitchell Elementary School is in the top 26% of elementary schools in CT
   - Woodbury Middle School is in the top 31% of schools inclusive of grades 6-8
   - Nonnewaug High School is in the top 25% of all high schools in CT
   - Region 14 is in the top 24% of school districts in CT
   - Success is attributed to students, exemplary staff, supportive parents, and Board of Education providing necessary resources

E. Director of Teaching and Learning Development Plan
   - Dr. Fernandez presented professional development plan focused on building faculty capacity to meet individual student needs
   - District fully implemented research-based Vision of a Learner attributes across pre-K through grade 12

- Presentation included Academic Focus Strategies and Indicators, Curriculum Strategies and Indicators, and Evaluation and Support Plan Strategies and Indicators to note a few components

VI. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee Update reported by Tina Tanguay
- Tina recapped the Finance Committee meeting update
- Revenue collected to date: **$18,793,118** (**43.94%** of budget)
- Expenditures to date: **$17,365,373** (**40.6%** of expenditures)
- All financial benchmarks are on target

B. Policy Committee

1. On a recommendation by the Policy Committee to accept/approve the following policies:
   (Second Read, Action Anticipated)
   a. Policy 1312.5/6161.14 Library Display and Program Policy
      A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Michael Carbonneau to accept/approve the policy as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

   b. Policy 5118.2 Educational Opportunities for Military Children
      A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Caren Lipinski to accept/approve the policy as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

2. On a recommendation by the Policy Committee to accept/approve the following policies: (First Read, No Action Anticipated)
   a. Policy 1312.4/6161.13 Library Collection Development and Maintenance
      - State mandated policy
      - Policy calls for the Media Specialist to continually review inventory using professionally accepted standards with a regulation that established procedures for review

   b. Policy 9230 New Board Member Orientation
      - Bylaw has been updated to require first-time board members to complete a prescribed training program at a time determined by the Connecticut State Department of Education, but no later than one year after assuming office.

VII. Board Chair's Comments

There were no additional comments made by Chairman Matta

VIII. Privilege of the floor

Jim Singletary

Watertown
Spoke in support of the Agriscience Program
The program provides opportunities

Helga Lavan
Bethlehem
Spoke in favor of the Agriscience Program
Privilege to see how much the program offers – happy to be a part of the community

Brian Elsmore
Woodbury
Spoke in favor of the Agriscience Program
Highlighted his son's success
Thanked the Region 14 Board of Education

Brittany Tooth
Woodbury
Alumna
Spoke in favor of the Agriscience Program
Amazing to see the program grow

Michelle Pedros
Oxford
Spoke in favor of the Agriscience Program
Opportunities are amazing
Very welcoming school district
Getting experience to succeed

Jennifer Whipple
Naugatuck
Spoke in favor of the Agriscience Program
Academically it is a gift for her children to attend
Spoke to a few moments in her children's lives that have been affected by their acceptance into the program

Joseph Bernardi
Middlebury
Spoke in favor of the Agriscience Program
Of importance, his children are being taught leadership

IX. Old Business

There was no Old Business brought before the board

X. Other Business

Carol Ann Brown recognized Mr. Dominello's recent "Grab-and-Go" lunches for the senior citizens. One hundred and seventy meals were prepared. Nonnewaug High

School students, VoAg students, and Woodbury Middle School students partnered to make the event the huge success that it was.

XI. Adjournment

A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Tikva Rose to adjourn the meeting, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously, meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Patricia Paige
Board Clerk
Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Patricia Paige, Board Clerk
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