



HAMDEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
JANUARY 13, 2026
MEETING MINUTES

Peter Downhour, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

Peter Downhour, Board Chair, designated Christopher Piscitelli as Acting Secretary.

Board Members: Peter Downhour, David Asbery, Marcia Brown, Mario Ciccarini, Crystal Dailey, Nancy Hill(Virtual), and Christopher Piscitelli(Virtual)

Staff: Gary Highsmith, Tom Ariola, Erin Bailey, and Susan Smey

Student Representative: Matilda Ryder and Kalu Ogbaa

SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD RECOGNITION

The Superintendent introduced Ridge Hill School Principal Stacie D'Antonio, who honored Hamden Heroes:

Vincent Ramirez Gonzalez- Ridge Hill Student

Rachel DaCunto- Ridge Hill Art Teacher

Ronald Riley- First Student Driver

Karen Giblin- Ridge Hill PTA President

The Superintendent introduced West Woods School Principal Dan Levy, who honored Hamden Heroes:

Aoife Murtagh- West Woods Student

Susan Sosna- West Woods Building Substitute Teacher

Amber Castiline- West Woods PTA After School Programming Coordinator

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Board Chair, Peter Downhour, added information item b Information on Sickle Cell, removed approval of minutes, executive session and approval of the Superintendent's evaluation tool and possible contract extension.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

The following people spoke during Public Comments on Agenda Items:

Rajeev Pahuja and Shikina Charpa

INFORMATION ITEMS

Richard Lemons made a presentation on the PEL Capacity and Coherence Review.

Gary Smart, the interim director of the Sickle Cell Association of America, made a presentation.

The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent presented the 2026-2027 Calendar.

The Superintendent asked the Board for their recommendations for the budget priorities.

Christopher Piscitelli, Marcia Brown, David Asbery, Crystal Dailey, Peter Downhour, all gave some suggestions.

CORRESPONDENCE

Peter Downhour stated there were several correspondences received since the last meeting

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Kalu stated midterms start next week.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

The Superintendent stated NEASC visit coming March. The high school needs to get accredited every 10 years.

The Superintendent shared the results of the AP School Honor Road Progress Report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACES/Wintergreen - Board Representative, Nancy Hill, stated she wasn't able to make the meeting.

Curriculum Committee - Committee Member, Marcia Brown, reported on the activities of the committee.

Finance Committee - Committee Chair, Christopher Piscitelli, reported on the activities of the committee.

Operations Committee - Committee Chair, David Asbery, reported on the activities of the committee.

Personnel Committee - Nothing to report at this time.

Policy Committee - Committee Chair, Nancy Hill, stated there would be a meeting coming up.

ACTION ITEMS

PENDING ACTIONS

1. Move to approve of the 2026-2027 District Calendar.

Downhour

Seconded by: Dailey

In Favor: Downhour, Asbery, Brown, Ciccarini, Dailey, Hill, and Piscitelli

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

CONSENT AGENDA

2. Move to Consent Agenda

Downhour

i. Approval of HMS media center discard items (Curriculum Committee, December 2025)

ii. Approval of budget transfers (Finance Committee, January 2026)

In Favor: Downhour, Asbery, Brown, Ciccarini, Dailey, Hill, and Piscitelli

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

3. Move to adjourn at 9:21 P.M.

Ciccarini

Seconded by: Brown

In Favor: Downhour, Asbery, Brown, Ciccarini, Dailey, Hill, and Piscitelli

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Piscitelli, Acting Board Secretary