



Executive Committee

MEETING SUMMARY

Date: March 27, 2026
Time: 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Location: LEARN, Room 216/ 44 Hatchedts Hill Road, Old Lyme, CT 06371

Present: Robert Mitchell, Chair; Dale Bernardoni, Vice Chair; Jennifer Favalora, Fiscal Officer; Beverly Washington, Secretary; Maryann O'Donnell, Superintendent of Schools Clinton; and Kate Ericson, LEARN Executive Director

Not Attending: Dr. Cynthia Ritchie, Superintendent of Schools New London

Guests: Michael Belden, LEARN Chief Financial & Operations Officer; and Joanne Lund, LEARN Assistant Director of Business

Meeting began at 8:45 a.m.

1. Review April 2026 Board of Directors' Agenda

The Executive Director reviewed the components of the budget with the reminder that the Board Chair, Robert Mitchell, and Executive Director Ericson will not be in attendance. Vice Chair, Dale Bernardoni, and Associate Executive Director, Dr. Ryan Donlon will be filling in for their respective roles.

2. Budget Process Overview

Executive Director Ericson informed the Executive Committee that this year's budget has been extremely challenging due to frozen state funding, a decrease in interest rate revenue, as well as the loan payment for the first building project at the Ocean Avenue LEARNing Academy (OALA). LEARN is waiting to see where legislation lands on funding before finalizing any significant decision regarding staffing.

3. M&T/CHEFA Bond Closing

LEARN's Chief Finance and Operations Officer, Michael Belden, and Assistant Business Director, Joanne Lund, provided the Executive Committee with a high-level overview of LEARN's bonding practices: LEARN will be securing a Revolving Taxable Loan which is a Line of Credit \$30,000,000 with a secured interest rate of 6.65%. Upon completion of the project LEARN will then take on a tax-exempt Long-Term Bond (Maximum \$15,000,000) with an interest rate that will be set at project conclusion. The formal closing date for this financial transaction will be Tuesday, March 31, 2026.

4. EASTCONN/LEARN Partnership in Practice Conference Recap

Committee members briefly discussed key highlights and takeaways from the conference.

5. Bid Waiver Request: Pentera Software

Motion to approve the bid waiver pursuant to LEARN Purchasing Policy 3323 to retain Pentera Software as LEARN’s continued provider of security software in the amount of \$40,000.00.

- **Presented by Robert Mitchell**
- **Second by Beverly Washington**
- **Motion Passed, unanimously**

6. Legislative Update

LEARN continues to monitor the legislation process. The Education Committee has finalized its list of proposed bills and now work is being done in the Appropriations Committee. Executive Director Ericson shared with the Executive Committee that this will be a roller coaster until May 6, 2026 when the session ends.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:52 a.m.

- **Presented by Robert Mitchell**
- **Second by Beverly Washington**
- **Motion Passed, unanimously**

Respectfully submitted by: Jamella A. A. Etienne