BETHANY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting Minutes
BOE Meeting Room and via Zoom
May 13, 2026

Present
Angelo Amato, Chair
Susan Bradford
Joseph Cafasso
Johanna Fernandez
Matthew Erickson
Shannon Lane
Allyson Wuerth

Administration
Kai Byrd
Cheryl Kiesel
Tom Reed- Swale

Absent
Amy Lestinsky, Vice Chair
Melissa Zaldo

Call to Order

Mr. Amato called the meeting to order at 6.30 p.m.

PTO Report

Jeanette Savo provided a PTO update.

Public Comment

Brooke Hemperly, 422 Downs Road, Bethany, commented on the Town's use of the supplemental education aid to lower the mil rate. Her full statement is on file in the BOE office.

Minutes

Motion by Lane, seconded by Cafasso to accept the April 8, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes and the March 23, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes as presented. *The motion carries 6 yes (Amato, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Wuerth), 1 abstain (Bradford), 2 absent (Lestinsky, Zaldo).*

Committee Reports

Curriculum:

The committee met on May 6, 2026. Mr. Amato deferred to Ms. Kiesel's Director's report.

Facilities:

The committee met on May 12, 2026 and Mr. Cafasso provided an update.

Finance:

The committee met on May 12, 2026 and Mrs. Fernandez provided an update.

Motion by Cafasso, seconded by Lane to accept the report of expenditures and adjustments to the 2025-2026 operating budget through April 30, 2026. *The motion carries 7 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Wuerth), 2 absent (Lestinsky, Zaldo).*

Transportation:

The committee met earlier on May 13, 2026 and Mrs. Wuerth provided an update.

Unfinished Business

Motion by Angelo, seconded by Erickson to adopt the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan as presented. *The motion carries 7 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Wuerth), 2 absent (Lestinsky, Zaldo).*

APPROVED

New Business

Motion by Cafasso, seconded by Fernandez to approve No Changes to Bylaws 9010, 9020, and 9030 and Policies 5118 and 5118.11. *The motion carries 7 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Wuerth), 2 absent (Lestinsky, Zaldo).*

Motion by Lane, seconded by Cafasso to approve the Recommended Revision to Policy 3542.22. *The motion carries 7 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Wuerth), 2 absent (Lestinsky, Zaldo).*

Mrs. Byrd presented Jacqueline Nathman for appointment as the Principal of Bethany Community School.

Mrs. Byrd thanked the Principal Search Committee members for their participation and commitment to the process.

Motion by Amato, seconded by Wuerth, to approve the appointment of Jacqueline Nathman to the position of Principal at Bethany Community School effective July 1, 2026. *The motion carries 7 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Wuerth), 2 absent (Lestinsky, Zaldo).*

Motion by Amato, seconded by Cafasso, to grant a Child Care Leave of Absence to Megan Banker through the 2026 holiday break following her maternity leave, with a return in January 2027. *The motion carries 7 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Wuerth), 2 absent (Lestinsky, Zaldo).*

Superintendent Report

Mrs. Byrd reported that as of April 30, 2026, PK-6 enrollment was 435 students.

Mrs. Byrd provided a personnel update.

Director Report

Ms. Kiesel reported on Curriculum and Special Education updates.

Principal Report

Mr. Reed-Swale reported on BCS's recent events and said that the Board will be provided a list of events and dates through the end of school.

Chairman Report

Mr. Amato reiterated the timeline of the 26/27 budget process with the Board.

Mr. Amato reviewed the information he has received regarding the supplemental education aid.

Mr. Amato shared that the Town voted not to distribute the money to the school, but to keep it to lower the mil rate.

Mr. Amato also shared that the Town has consulted with an attorney on the proper use of these funds and the hope is to hear back soon.

Communications

None

Public Comment

Carol Goldberg, 5 North Humiston Drive, Bethany, CT, shared that the Town is using the supplemental education aid as it does ECS funds. It will be treated as revenue and must go toward education.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm

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Visitors in Attendance

In Person: 6

On Zoom: 20

Donna Ricciardi

Donna Ricciardi
Recording Secretary
Approved: June 10, 2026

APPROVED