

The Business Meeting of the New London Board of Education was held on June 8, 2026 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

Board Members Present: Rebecca Amanti
Karen Bergin
Nanci DeRobbio
Scott Garbini
Susan Hambey
Richard Martin

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*

2. Recognitions

Ms. Christine Pemberton, Executive Director of Talent and Human Resources recognized multiple staff members for various achievements. These included:

- Newly Certified Educators
- Class of 2026: Sacred Heart University Graduates
- Teachers of the Year
- Paraeducators of the Year
- Length of Service Recognitions
- Retirees

The presentation of recognitions is available upon request or by clicking [here](#).

3. Public Comment

Sarah Turner, New London – Ms. Turner expressed her disagreement with the proposed changes to the start and end times of schools. She passed out information to Board members which included research on the recommended times for school aged children. She shared that she was involved in district when the times were intentionally changed previously. Ms. Turner also shared that appears there are only 5 minutes for supervision time at the middle school campus which does not seem sufficient. Ms. Turner also shared that she has been active with starting the School Governance Council at the high school campus, and that it is a State requirement which requires the support, oversight and implementation of the Board. She shared that she had sent emails and it took over a week to receive a response from an administrator. She expressed her frustration of the amount of time it has taken to work on this. She shared that when she was at the state she was told that the magnet funding was not approved, and asked for clarification.

Bianca Sinclair, New London – Ms. Sinclair stated that she feels that things are changing but that no one is being told. She shared that she did her own research in regards to school start times, and Johns Hopkins has reported that many students have sleep deprivation and that teenagers have a natural shift in circadian rhythm due to a delayed release of melatonin. She also has read that teenagers need 9-9.5 hours of sleep per night, which is more than the average 10-year-old. She does not understand why the high school would change to begin at 7:25 a.m. She shared a story of a friend who works evenings and has a very early bus stop time now, and that will only be earlier if the time is shifted to be earlier next year. She shared that even now many students miss first period because they do not wake up in time and she doesn't believe that making the day start earlier will help. She also believes that this is not a friendly start time when considering out of district students. She expressed her confusion with the decision to make the start time earlier.

4. Reports and Communications

- Board Chairperson's Report
 - Ms. Maynard-Adams reported that she attended the New London Rotary Student of the Year celebration. This celebration included representative students from each school in NLPS along with their families and staff. She clarified that at previous meetings and through communications it has been shared that the magnet office rejected the 'hail mary' for full funding. She shared that it has been a busy time of attending City Council meetings, including one which held the third and final reading of the budget. This evening the Board will review the proposed amendments to the budget to meet the number approved by Council.
- Reports of Committees
 - School Facilities & Program Design Committee – Ms. Hambey reported that Mr. Gautier provided multiple updates to the committee which included: parking lot lights on the STEM side of the high school campus have been fixed, the lighting on the Jefferson Avenue side is still awaiting repairs. There is a consideration for solar panels at Nathan Hale, and the panels at Winthrop need to undergo repairs. Landscaping is occurring with joint cooperation between the district and the city. The construction at BP

is paused as steps are being taken to meet the requirements of the grant which was championed by Joe Courtney.

5. Approval of the Minutes

- May 26, 2026 – Business Meeting

Motion by Ms. Bergin, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to approve the May 26, 2026 Business Meeting minutes.

Motion carried, 7-0

6. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Garbini, that the following items, as set forth on the Consent Agenda for the Business Meeting of June 8, 2026 be approved unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools:

- A. Superintendent's Written Report
 - I. Academics
 - II. Student & Family Support Services
 - III. Business & Finance

Motion carried, 7-0

7. Items Pulled from Consent Agenda

- Superintendent's Written Report – Human Resources

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Martin, to accept the Superintendent's Written Report – Human Resources.

Ms. Maynard-Adams asked for an update on the Marketing Manager position that is posted. Ms. Pemberton shared that the position is live and the district is actively recruiting. She added that there are approximately eight candidates who have applied, and the hope is to interview soon. Ms. Maynard-Adams asked if HR is reaching out to area colleges which offer marketing degree programs, and Ms. Pemberton confirmed that they are.

Motion carried, 7-0

- Superintendent's Written Report – Operations

Motion by Ms. Hambey, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, to accept the Superintendent's Written Report – Operations.

Mr. Martin shared that he is concerned about the proposed start times at the schools. He understands the times logistically, but wanted to discuss. Dr. Hills-Papetti shared that one of the reasons the district had changed the times originally was to work on chronic absenteeism. That being said, the district has not seen a change at all at the high school level. To do this the correct way, the high school would need to start between 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., but this is not logistically possible with the students who take advantage of attending college courses in the afternoon, or the student athletes who need to travel for their sporting events. Dr. Hills-Papetti also noted that the proposal for the change is in part due to the elementary level, as those students who take advantage of the after school programming under the 21C Grant need to be at school until approximately 6:15p.m. each day. Mr. Martin expressed his concerns that such an early time is more difficult for students to learn. Ms. DeRobbio asked if the district had considered having the elementary students come in earlier. Dr. Hills-Papetti shared that the decision was made through a logistic and fiscal lens. Mr. Martin also asked if these times will affect out of district students attending due to the time they would need to leave their hometowns to be in district on time. Mr. Garbini shared that this discussion has been occurring during the LEARN Board meetings that he attends. He stated that based on that discussion, Greenwich is currently the only district which has the 8:30 a.m. start time. It was also discussed that the only way that can be done with fidelity in the area is for it to be a regional decision – the need for the conversation is definitely there. Ms. Amanti also shared that even from when she was previously employed as an administrator and this conversation was had, it was determined that the only way for this to be done in practical terms is for all the area schools to adopt the same times. Ms. Maynard-Adams shared that she feels the pain of this conversation as there is no decision which will make everyone happy. The Board requested that administration review the different options again, and come back to the Board with recommendations and if a change might be possible.

Ms. Hambey asked that Mr. Gautier explain the pause on the BP construction. Mr. Gautier shared that when Representative Courtney had visited, he had received the green light to start the work. He had gotten a contractor lined up and began the visits by the building inspector as well. Since this occurred, he learned that the grant cannot yet be accessed. There has not been a grant manager assigned by the state for these funds, so they cannot yet be accessed by the city. As of right now, it is not likely that the construction can be completed by September. Mr. Gautier had asked if the bonding money for Jennings could be transferred for this purpose in the meantime, but was told that was not possible. Councilor Satti, Chair of the School Maintenance and Building Committee, told Ms. Hambey and other district administrators that he would speak to the Mayor to see if there are any other options which are possible.

Motion carried, 7-0

- Approve the Proposed 2026-2027 Budget Amendments

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Ms. Bergin, to approve the proposed 2026-2027 budget amendments.

Mr. Funk came forward and reviewed the proposed amendments with the Board.

Motion carried, 7-0

8. Executive Session Pursuant to Connecticut State Statutes: Title I, Chapter 114, Section 1-200(5), Connecticut Freedom of Information Act

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Garbini to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing:

- The possible appointment of a candidate to the position of Supervisor of Special Education

Motion carried, 7-0

The following people were invited into Executive Session: The Board as a Whole, Superintendent Dr. Cynthia Ritchie, Executive Director of Talent & Human Resources Christine Pemberton

Time into Executive Session: 8:19 p.m.

Time out of Executive Session: 8:28 p.m.

No votes were taken while in Executive Session

9. Action Following Executive Session

- Motion by Ms. Hambey, seconded by Ms. Bergin, to approve the appointment of Ms. Janine Sullivan as Supervisor of Special Education.

Motion carried, 7-0

The Board congratulated Ms. Sullivan on her appointment. Ms. Sullivan shared that she is happy to remain in New London and thanked the Board.

10. Board Comments, Questions

None.

11. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, 7-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Scott S. Garbini
Secretary, N.L. Board of Education