GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 26, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE ROOM 11, HYBRID

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beverly Washington – Chairperson, Adrian Johnson – Vice Chairperson (remote), Andrea Ackerman (remote), Mitch Shinbrot, Ian Thomas (remote), Jay Weitlauf (remote), Jennifer White, Michael Whitney

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sean Corcoran

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Anne Marie Mancini, Rita Parciak, Sam Kilpatrick, Clint Kennedy (remote), Lauren Casini (remote), Jacob Salazar, Evan Vetter

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mrs. Beverly Washington, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance – The first order of business was the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

II. RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATION OF VISITORS AND DELEGATIONS

NONE

III. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

Ms. Ellen Sefransky, Sandy Hollow Road, shared her concern with the front door buzzer at FHS.

IV. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

Mike Whitney stated that he agrees with the citizen's comment regarding the front door buzzer at FHS.

Mr. Thomas stated that he agrees with the citizens' comments regarding the front door buzzer at FHS.

Mr. Johnson stated that he agrees with the citizens' comments regarding the front door buzzer at FHS.

V. STUDENT LIAISON REPORT

The Student Representatives reported:

- Evan Vetter noted that he was amazed at how active and involved the community is re:
  - Completed AP and IB testing, Music/Choir/Orchestra, the end of the year awards, underclassmen, Athletes, Senior, culminated with graduation and how students are recognized for their hard work and accomplishments
- Jacob Salazar noted:
  - 5/27 Seniors will begin to pick up their cap and gowns

V. STUDENT LIAISON REPORT – cont.

- 6/1 Senior Trip
- 6/2 Underclassmen awards
- 6/4 Senior Class trip
- 6/5 Field Day and senior exams will begin
- 6/17 Bar-B-Que
- 6/18 Graduation
- Attendance was at 98%
- Proud of those involved with the National Honor Society
- NJRTC Leadership Program

MOTION: Whitney, Shinbrot: To suspend the rules to add discussion and possible action re: the funding and priority list proposed by the Superintendent.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

MOTION: Whitney, Shinbrot: To approve the funding and priority list (Attachment #1)
YES – Ackerman, Whitney, White, Weitlauf, Washington
NO – Shinbrot
ABSTAINED – Johnson, Thomas
PASSED

VI. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

A. Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Report
1. Summer Programs – Superintendent Austin noted the following summer programs and projects:
   - 7/2-9 STEM Camp
   - 7/6-9 GMS STEM Camp
   - Robotics and Drone at GMS
   - 7/6-30 ESY special education at MRMS
   - Camp Button
   - City Rec at TRMS
   - Roof Project at CB
   - MM addition – windows and painting

MOTION: White, Shinbrot: To move C3 under New Business up on the agenda.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSELY

A. New Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding FY26 budget transfer between functions in the amount of $4,011,184.

MOTION: White, Shinbrot: To approve the FY26 budget transfers in the amount of $4,011,184.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

B. Reports and Information from Staff

1. Director of Finance – Mrs. Parciak gave an overview of the current Financial Statement dated May 3, 2026, showing a balance of $180,195.10 as well as the budget transfers.
2. Director of Facilities – Mr. Kilpatrick reported on:
    - Update re: School Facilities:
        - His department is working on the MM Early Childhood Center
        - Movers have taken obsolete items away
        - Play Scape ramp
        - Egress windows have been ordered
        - Staircases for those rooms.
        - NEA Entry problem has been corrected
        - FHS entry item is on order
        - "Sound
        - Staff have mobilized for graduations
        - Robotics – there are 3 plans for outside the wood shop

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Policy Committee – There was no report.
2. Curriculum – There was no report.
3. Finance/Facilities – Mrs. White noted that the Finance/Facilities Committee met on May 5, 2026, and received the financial report and the Director of Facilities report. The next meeting will be June 2, 2026.
4. Communications – There was no report.
5. LEARN – Mrs. Washington gave report of the LEARN Board meeting that met on April 9, 2026, (Attachment #2)
6. Athletic Fields – Mr. Shinbrot and Mr. Whitney noted that the Athletic Fields Committee met last week and that the June meeting will be canceled.
7. Library – There was no report.
8. Military Superintendent Liaison – Superintendent Austin reported that the Military Superintendent held their last meeting and discussed the Compact and shared information between districts.

VIII. <u>ACTION ITEMS</u>

A. Consent Agenda

MOTION: Whitney, Shinbrot: To approve the Consent Agenda
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

B. Old Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding a second reading of policy P 0521 Nondiscrimination (Attachment #3)

   MOTION: Whitney, White: To approve policy P 0521 Nondiscrimination
   PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

2. Discussion and possible action regarding a second reading of policy P 5118 Non-resident Attendance (Attachment #4)

   MOTION: White, Shinbrot: To approve policy P5118 Non-resident Attendance.
   YES – Washington, Ackerman, Shinbrot, White, Whitney, Weitlauf
   ABSTAINED – Johnson, Thomas
   PASSED

B. New Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the approval of Fitch High School's Music Department's field trip request to Orlando, Florida rescheduled for April 22, 2027, through April 25, 2027.

   MOTION: Weitlauf, Whitney: To approve the Fitch High School's Music Department's field trip request to Orlando, Florida rescheduled for April 22, 2027, through April 25, 2027.
   PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

2. Discussion and possible action regarding approval of a resolution to enter into a solar panel power purchase agreement at Robert E. Fitch High School (Attachment #5)

   MOTION: Shinbrot, Whitney:

   WHEREAS, the Board intends to enter into an Offtake Agreement (as defined below) with CEFIA Solar Services Inc., or any other subsidiary of the Connecticut Green Band (collectively, the "Seller"), pursuant to which Seller will install renewable energy systems at the following property or properties which properties are owned or are under the care and control of the Board.

A. New Business

1. Robert E. Fitch Senior High School: 101 Groton Long Point Rd., Groton, CT 06340

WHEREAS, Seller will sell the electricity generated by such systems to the Board over twenty (20) years, as more particularly described in that certain Power Purchase and License Agreement by and between Seller and the Board (the "Offtake Agreement"), the substantive form of which is attached hereto and made part hereof subject to final modification and negotiation.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board be and hereby is authorized and empowered, acting through the Superintendent, in accordance with the requirements of any applicable charter, bylaws, ordinance, or ode, to take on any obligations contained in the Offtake Agreement;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of the Board, acting alone, be and hereby is authorized and empowered and directed to do all things that may be necessary or appropriate to obtained and consummate the transaction contemplated above, including execute the Offtake Agreement(s), and all such other agreements, instruments, documents associated with Offtake Agreement (s), as Seller shall reasonably require, with all such additional terms and conditions as such Board shall determine to be necessary, useful or required in furtherance of or in order to give effect to the purpose or intent of the resolutions set forth herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any acts of the Superintendent of the Board, acting alone, on behalf of the Board taken prior to the date hereof which would have been authorized by the foregoing resolutions, be, and they hereby are, individually and collectively ratified, confirmed, adopted and approved.

YES – Washington, Johnson, Weitlauf, Shinbrot, Thomas, White, Whitney
NO – Ackerman
PASSED

4. Discussion and possible action regarding Juneteenth observation for 12-month employees.

MOTION: White, Shinbrot: To approve the observation of Juneteenth on June 19, 2026, for 12-month employees.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

IX. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

A. Letters, communications, and comments by Board members on meeting items and any other items in the jurisdiction.

- Mr. Thomas encouraged the Board to watch the Town Council meeting.
- Mr. Johnson noted his support for the needs of younger students.
- Mrs. Washington noted that she and Mrs. White went to visit CB.

X. ADVANCE PLANNING

A. Future Meeting Dates and Calendar Items for Board Attention

As noted in the agenda.

B. Suggested Agenda Items

- Mr. Whitney made a referral to the Finance/Facilities Committee to explore strategizes to economize fuel usage in the buildings and on busses.

XI.. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Weitlauf: The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

Recommended Funding Priorities

1. Accelerate Student Learning	Cost
K-8 Math & ELA Curriculum	$300,000
2. Safety & Security	Cost
PA System	$233,000
Radios	$50,000
3. DREAM Pathway Robotics	Cost
Robotics Field	$250,000
4. District Maintenance Vehicles	Cost
Two Maintenance Vehicles (due to salt) Public Work/Not Road Worthy	$120,000
5. FHS/CO Entryway	Cost
Salt & weather damage repair	$60,000
6. Anticipated Cost Increases	Cost
Utilities	$300,000
7. Special Education Cost Increases	Cost
Underfunded ESY based on needs (Camp Button Paras)	$62,000
Paraeducators	$239,000
8. Fitch High School	Cost
Auditorium Phase II - Sound System & Projection	$75,000
9. Digital Communication Signs	Cost
CK, NEA, MM, CB (35 x 4)	$140,000
10. HVAC Testing & Remediation	Cost
FHS	$200,000

TOTAL **$2,029,000**

LEARN meeting on May14, 2026

Michael Belden, LEARN's Chief Financial Operators Office, proposed the FY 26-27 LEARN budget to the board. The presentation included an overview of budget development, key assumptions, major expense drivers, fund balance, usage, capital projects, and strategic financial planning across LEARN programs and services. LEARN's budget process differs from a transitional district budget due to the agency's reliance in fluctuating enrollment, State funding allocations, grants, contracts and tuition-based revenues. The school agencywide budget is projected at approximately $146 million. The RESC magnet schools and Goodwin University programs received 12 million in additional State funding and LEARN will receive approximately 1 million out of that. LEARN's growing regional services model includes payroll, HR, business office, IT, and food services support to multiple regional school districts and they provides high quality services.

Executive Director, Kate Ericerson talked about her recent leadership pending trip to Portugal and Spain. She noted the upcoming LEARN State of Agency event held on June 11, 2026,, from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., from LEARN members and regional superintendents.

P 0521

Mission – Goals – Objectives

Nondiscrimination

The District shall promote nondiscrimination and an environment free of harassment based on an individuals' race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status or age or because of the race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status, or the age of any other persons with whom ~~the individual~~ they associate~~s~~.

In keeping with requirements of federal and state law, the District strives to remove any vestige of discrimination in employment, assignment, and promotion of personnel; in educational opportunities and services offered to students; in student assignment to schools and classes; in student discipline; in location and use of facilities; in educational offerings and materials; and in accommodating the public at public meetings.

The Board of Education (Board) encourages staff to improve human relationships within the schools and to establish channels through which citizens can communicate their concerns to the administration and the Board.

The Superintendent shall appoint and make known the individuals to contact on issues concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX and other civil rights or discrimination issues. The Board will adopt and the District will publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints.

Federal Civil Rights laws prohibit discrimination against ~~an~~ individual(s) because ~~he/she~~ they have ~~has~~ opposed any discrimination act or practice or because ~~that person has~~ they have filed a charge, testified, assisted or participated in an investigation, proceeding or hearing. ADA further prohibits anyone from coercing, intimidating, threatening or interfering with ~~an~~ individual(s) for exercising the rights guaranteed under the Act.

Legal Reference: Title VII, Civil Rights Act, 41 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq.

29 CFR 1604.11, EEOC Guidelines on Sex Discrimination.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.

Title IX Final Rule, May 6, 2020

Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act

34 CFR Section 106.8(b), OCR Guidelines for Title IX.

Definitions, OCR Guidelines on Sexual Harassment, Fed. Reg. Vol 62, #49, 29 CFR Sec. 1606.8 (a0 61 Fed. Reg. 12033 (March 13, 1997) and 66 Fed. Reg. 5512 (January 19, 2001)

The Americans with Disabilities Act as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008

Meritor Savings Bank FSB v. Vinson 477 U.S. 57 (1986)

Faragher v. City of Boca Raton, No. 97-282 (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26, 1998)

Nondiscrimination – cont.

Gebbser v. Lago Vista Indiana School District, No. 99-1866, (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26, 1998)

Davis v. Monro County Board of Education, No. 97-843, (U.S. Supreme Court, May 24, 1999)

The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Act of 1974, as amended, 38U.S.C. §4212

Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008

Connecticut General Statutes

46a-51 Definitions (as amended by PA 17-127, PA 21-2 and PA 22-82)

46a-58 Deprivation of rights. Desecration of property. Placing of burning cross or noose on property. Penalty. (as amended by PA 17-127 and PA 22-82)

46a-60 Discriminatory employment practices prohibited.

10-15c Discrimination in public schools prohibited. School attendance By five-year olds. (Amended by P.A. 97-247 to include "sexual orientation")

10-153 Discrimination on account of marital status.

17a-101 Protection of children from abuse.

Meacham v. Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory 128 S.Ct. 2395, 76 U.S.L.W. 4488 (2008)

Federal Express Corporation v. Holowecki 128 S.Ct. 1147, 76 U.S.L.W. 4110 (2008)

Kentucky Retirement Systems v. EEOC 128 S.Ct. 2361, 76 U.S.L.W. 4503 (2008)

Sprint/United Management Co. v. Mendelsohn 128 S.Ct. 1140, 76 U.S.L.W. 4107 (2008)

Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia, 140 S.Ct. 1731, 2020 WL3146686 (June 15, 2020)

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

P.O. Box K, Groton, Connecticut 06340 • 1300 Flanders Road, Mystic, Connecticut 06355
PHONE (860) 572-2100 • FAX (860) 572-2107

REPORT FORM FOR COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION

Complainant: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

School building: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Alleged harassment was based on: (Check all that apply.)

☐ Race ☐ Color ☐ National Origin ☐ Gender Identity or Expression

☐ Gender ☐ Disability ☐ Religion ☐ Status as a Veteran ☐ Ancestry

☐ Age ☐ Sexual Orientation ☐ Status as a Victim of Domestic Violence ☐ Other _____

Name of person you believe violated the District's nondiscrimination policy:

_____

If the alleged discrimination was directed against another person, identify the other person:

_____

Describe the incident as clearly as possible, including any verbal statements (i.e., threats, derogatory remarks, demands, etc.) and any actions or activities. Attach additional pages if necessary:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

When and where incident occurred: _____

List any witnesses to the incident: _____

_____

This complaint is based on my honest belief that _____ has discriminated against me or another person. I certify that the information provided in this complaint is true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

_____ _____

Complainant's Signature Date

_____ _____

Received By Date

P 5118

Students

Non-resident attendance

Definition

In accordance with State Law, a nonresident student is a student who:

1. resides outside of the District~~; or~~
2. resides within the District on a temporary basis~~; or~~
3. resides within the District on a permanent basis but with pay to the person(s) with whom the student is living~~; or~~
4. resides within the District for the sole purpose of obtaining school accommodations~~; or is~~
5. resides within the District as a child placed by the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Family Services or by other agencies in a foster, group, or private residential facility. ~~However,~~ Under this circumstance, however, children may attend local schools with tuition paid by the home District unless special education considerations make attendance in local schools and programs inappropriate. Children not requiring special education who live in town as a result of placement by a state agency other than another Board of Education and except as provided otherwise in this paragraph are resident students; those requiring special education may attend local schools with special education cost reimbursements in accordance with statutes unless special education considerations make attendance in local schools and programs inappropriate.

Nonresident Attendance Without Tuition

Nonresident students may be allowed, with the Superintendent's approval, to attend District schools without tuition under one of the following circumstances:

1. Children affected by military transfers may remain in the District until the end of the current school year if the service member relocates on orders and remains in the armed forces. If they are enrolled in grade 11, they may continue to be enrolled in the District for an additional school year so long as the service member remains in the armed forces.
2. A family moves from the District during or after the Spring Recess of the school year; however, if parents so request, a child may complete the current school year.
3. A family residing outside of the District has firm plans to move into the District within 30 days of registration as evidenced by a contract to buy, rent, or lease;
4. Twelfth-grade students wishing to complete their education in the District;
5. Children residing temporarily within the District because of family changes or children attending local schools residing temporarily outside of the District because of family circumstances. Approval shall not exceed three (3) calendar months; if subsequent approval is necessary, it shall be considered based upon information available at that time.
6. The Groton Board of Education (Board) may seek reimbursement for children living in temporary shelters located within the Town of Groton from the school districts in which the child would otherwise reside as permitted in 10-253 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Non-resident attendance – cont.

Exchange Students

No tuition is required for foreign students living within the District under the American Field Service Program or under other programs or circumstances approved by the Board. Exchange students will be accorded all the rights and privileges of a resident student during the period of enrollment.

Nonresident Attendance With Tuition

Nonresident students who do not meet one or more criteria under previous sections of this policy, may attend local schools only with tuition payment. The Superintendent may approve nonresident student attendance with tuition if class size, transportation, and other considerations permit, and shall notify the Board of all tuition approvals. Nonresident approval with tuition shall be for one (1) school year or less and may be renewed annually by the Superintendent or designee. Tuition rates shall be established by the Board annually.

Attendance by a nonresident tuition student may be terminated by Board action, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, if the Board deems such termination is in the best interest of the District. An adjustment of tuition on a per diem basis will be made in this instance.

Evidence of Residency

The Superintendent or designee may require documentation from a family and/or student regarding residency, including affidavits. Prior to a request for evidence of residency, the parent or guardian, relative or non-relative, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older shall be provided with a written statement explaining why a reason exists to believe such student(s) may not be entitled to attend school in the District. If an affidavit is required, it must include a statement or statements with documentation that a student's residence exists in the District, that the resident is intended to be permanent, that it is provided without pay, and that it is not for the sole purpose of obtaining school accommodations.

Removal of Nonresident Student From District Schools

If after a careful review of affidavits and other available evidence, the Superintendent ~~of Schools~~ or ~~his/her~~ designee believes that a student is not entitled to attend local schools, the parent or guardian, the student if an emancipated minor, or a student eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall be informed in writing that, as of a particular date, the student may no longer attend District ~~local~~ schools, and the Superintendent or designee shall notify the Board of the decision ~~where the child should attend school (if known)~~. If after review, District residency is established by the evidence, the parent or guardian, the student if an emancipated minor, or a student eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall be so informed.

Non-resident attendance – cont.

If a student is removed from a District school for residency reasons the Superintendent or designee shall: 1) inform the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older, of hearing rights before the Board and that the student may continue in local schools pending a hearing before the Board if requested in writing by the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older, 2) that upon request, a transcript of the hearing will be provided, 3) that a Board decision may be appealed to the State Board and that the student/s may continue in local schools pending a hearing before the State Board if requested in writing by the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older, 4) that if the appeal to the State Board of Education is lost, a per diem tuition will be assessed for each day a student attended local schools when not eligible to attend.

Board of Education Hearing

Upon written request, the Board shall provide a hearing within ten (10) days after receipt of such request. If a hearing ensues, the Board shall make a recording of the hearing, shall make a decision on student eligibility to attend local schools within ten (10) days after the hearing, and shall notify the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student eighteen (18) years of age or older, of its findings. Hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Sections 4 177 to 4 180 inclusive of Connecticut General Statutes.

The Board shall, within ten (10) days after receipt of notice of an appeal, forward the hearing record to the State Board of Education.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statues

10-4a Educational interests of state defined.

10-33 Tuition in towns in which no high school is maintained.

10-35 Notice of discontinuance of high school service to non-residents.

10-55 Pupils to attend regional school.

10-253 School privileges for children in certain placements, non-resident children, and children in temporary shelters

PA 25-15, §§ 7 & 8

Policy Adopted: May 24, 1993
Revised: March 12, 2012
Revised: October 23, 2023
Revised: June 23, 2025

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Groton, Connecticut

CERTIFIED COPY OF RESOLUTION
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
TOWN OF GROTON

Date: May 26, 2026

The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is the duly elected, qualified and acting Secretary of the Board of Education of the Town of Groton, which is duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Connecticut (the "Board"). The undersigned further certifies that the following is a true and accurate copy of a resolution adopted at a meeting of the Board duly called and held at its offices on May 26, 2026, at which meeting a quorum was present and voting throughout.

"WHEREAS the Board intends to enter into an Offtake Agreement (as defined below) with CEFIA Solar Services, Inc., or any other subsidiary of the Connecticut Green Bank (collectively, the "Seller"), pursuant to which Seller will install renewable energy systems at the following property or properties which properties are owned or are under the care and control of the Board:

1. Robert E. Fitch Senior High School: 101 Groton Long Point Rd, Groton, CT 06340

WHEREAS Seller will sell the electricity generated by such systems to the Board over twenty (20) years, as more particularly described in that certain Power Purchase and License Agreement] by and between Seller and the Board (the "Offtake Agreement"), the substantive form of which is attached hereto and made part hereof, subject to final modification and negotiation.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Board be and hereby is authorized and empowered, acting through the Superintendent, in accordance with the requirements of any applicable charter, bylaws, ordinance, or code, to take on any obligations contained in the Offtake Agreement;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the Superintendent of the Board, acting alone, be and hereby is authorized and empowered and directed to do all things that may be necessary or appropriate to obtain and consummate the transaction contemplated above, including execute the Offtake Agreement(s), and all such other agreements, instruments, documents associated with the Offtake Agreement(s), as Seller shall reasonably require, with all such additional terms and conditions as such Board shall determine to be necessary, useful or required in furtherance of or in order to give effect to the purpose or intent of the resolutions set forth herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that any acts of the Superintendent of the Board, acting alone, on behalf of the Board taken prior to the date hereof which would have been authorized by the foregoing resolutions, be, and they hereby are, individually and collectively ratified, confirmed, adopted and approved.**"**

Given under my hand as Secretary of said Board.

Signature: _____

Print Name: Adrian Johnson

Title: Vice Chairperson/Secretary

Date: May 26, 2026