

BETHANY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting Minutes
BOE Meeting Room and via Zoom
June 10, 2026

Present

Angelo Amato, Chair
Susan Bradford
Joseph Cafasso
Johanna Fernandez
Matthew Erickson
Shannon Lane
Amy Lestinsky, Vice Chair
Allyson Wuerth
Melissa Zaldo

Administration

Kai Byrd
Cheryl Kiesel
Tom Reed- Swale

Absent

Call to Order

Mr. Amato called the meeting to order at 6.33 p.m.

PTO Report

None.

Public Comment

Donna Ricciardi read a public comment submitted by Andre Puleo, 36 Knollwood Road, Bethany. Andre would like the district to review and justify an open position before filling it to ensure the position is needed.

Andre Puleo, 36 Knollwood Road, Bethany expressed the desire of the district to be fiscally responsible, efficiently organized, and have administrative role structure align with the size and needs of the school.

The following BCS staff members expressed their gratitude to Tom Reed-Swale and shared highlights of their experiences with Tom during his tenure as Principal:

- Jackie Nathman, Assistant Principal
- Catherine Vayda, TESOL Teacher
- Jaime Bowen, Special Education Teacher

Donna Ricciardi read public comments from the following BCS staff members expressing their gratitude to Tom Reed-Swale and some highlights of their experiences with Tom during his tenure as Principal:

- Katherine Albert, 2nd Grade Teacher
- Nikki Katt, Special Education Behavioral Interventionist
- The Fifth Grade Team
- Brandy Spargo, Human Resources Director
- Donna Ricciardi, Business Manager
- Lauren Pilon, 2nd Grade Teacher

Principal Recognition

Mrs. Byrd recognized Tom Reed-Swale for his 7 years of dedicated service to students, families, and staff of Bethany Community School.

Mrs. Bryd presented Tom Reed-Swale with a gift.

Mr. Amato, on behalf of the Bethany BOE, expressed gratitude to Tom Reed-Swale and emphasized Mr. Reed-Swale's ability to connect with students and families.

Minutes	Motion by Amato seconded by Cafasso to accept the May 12, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. <i>The motion carries 7 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Wuerth), 2 abstain (Lestinsky, Zaldo).</i>
Committee Reports	
Curriculum:	The committee met on June 3, 2026, and Mr. Amato provided an update.
Policy:	The committee met earlier in the evening, and Mr. Erickson provided an update.
Finance:	The committee met on June 9, 2026, and Mrs. Lestinsky provided an update. Motion by Lane, seconded by Zaldo to accept the report of expenditures and adjustments to the 2025-2026 operating budget through May 31, 2026. <i>The motion carries 9 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Lestinsky, Wuerth, Zaldo).</i> Motion by Cafasso, seconded by Lestinsky to approve the request to transfer the anticipated 2025-2026 operating surplus to the BOE 10-248a account. <i>The motion carries 9 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Lestinsky, Wuerth, Zaldo).</i>
Unfinished Business	None
New Business	None
Superintendent Report	Mrs. Byrd reported that as of May 31, 2026, PK-6 enrollment was 434 students. Mrs. Byrd provided a personnel update. Motion by Cafasso, that stated prior to hiring the soon to be vacant Vice Principal position, the Superintendent shall present the BOE with at least one alternate proposal that eliminates the Vice Principal position and redistributes its duties among existing administration or staff. This motion was not seconded. Mr. Amato acknowledged Mr. Cafasso's request and there was some discussion amongst the Board members.
Director Report	Ms. Kiesel reported on Curriculum and Special Education updates.
Principal Report	Mr. Reed-Swale recognized the PTO and reported on BCS's recent events.
Chairman Report	Mr. Amato shared an update with the BOE Members regarding the Supplemental Educational Funding, stating that the Town was permitted to use the funds like ECS funds to lower the Town's mil rate. Mr. Amato asked the BOE Members about having a BOE Open Forum in the Fall. The Board Members agreed to hold it after the October BOE meeting in a hybrid format.
Communications	None

Public Comment

None

Executive Session

Motion by Amato, seconded by Zaldo, to enter into Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent's Evaluation and Paraeducator Negotiations. Kai Byrd is invited to attend. *The motion carries 9 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Lestinsky, Wuerth, Zaldo)*

Present

Angelo Amato
Susan Bradford
Joseph Cafasso
Matthew Erickson
Johanna Fernandez
Shannon Lane
Amy Lestinsky
Allyson Wuerth
Melissa Zaldo

Other

Kai Byrd

Reconvene

Moved from Executive Session and the regular meeting reconvened at 9:04 pm

Motion by Lesinsky, seconded by Wuerth, to approve the Superintendent's 2026-227 salary agreement to include a one-year contract extension to 2029, a 4% base salary increase, and 11 carryover vacation days. *The motion carries 9 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Lestinsky, Wuerth, Zaldo)*

Motion by Cafasso, seconded by Lane, to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Bethany Board of Education and CSEA, SEUI Local 2001 July 1, 2026-June 30, 2029. *The motion carries 9 yes (Amato, Bradford, Cafasso, Erickson, Fernandez, Lane, Lestinsky, Wuerth, Zaldo)*

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm

Visitors in Attendance

In Person: 9

On Zoom: 4

Donna Ricciardi

Donna Ricciardi
Recording Secretary
Approved September 9, 2026