

Please Notes: These minutes are pending Board approval.
Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on July 11, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street.

D. Zukowski, Chair	C. Melillo
J. Vouros, Vice Chair	A. Uberti
D. Ramsey, Secretary	T. Vadas
D. Cruson	1 Staff
A. Plante	2 Public
T. Higgins	1 Press
S. Tomai	

MOTION: Ms. Plante moved that the Board of Education go into executive session regarding a personnel request and invite Mr. Melillo. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously

Item 1 – Executive Session

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Item 2 – Public Session for Possible Vote on Executive Session Item

MOTION: Ms. Plante moved that the Board of Education approve Mr. Melillo carrying over 5 vacation days from the 2022-2023 school year. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 4 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Ms. Plante moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the donation to Hawley School and the correspondence report. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 5 – Public Participation

Item 6 – Reports

Chair Report: Ms. Zukowski reported that she felt the school year ended successfully and hopes that our students, staff, families and the Board are all enjoying their summer.

Superintendent Report: Mr. Melillo provided an update on the Hawley project. He said that they were able to find parts to complete the switch gear from a local manufacturer and will be installed by July 21st. The install would require Eversource to turn off electricity which may impact the teachers moving back into the building, therefore, we may need to change the dates. He said he will talk to Mr. Moretti about plans for moving back in. He also reported that he visited Ben's Lighthouse Camp. This program helps children and teens develop empathy, self-awareness and social connection. Many of our students are both counselors and campers. Through music, puppetry and mentorship, they encourage students to find their own light. It was a great visit.

Committee Reports:

Mr. Cruson reported that the Policy Committee met on June 28th. He said that the committee continued and hopefully completed the conversation about the Administering Medicine policy. Newtown's Medical Advisor is currently reviewing the edits and will hopefully come to the Board for approval at our next meeting. The committee also continued discussion on the Employee Safety policy and the FMLA policy draft that Ms. D'Eramo is working on.

Item 7 – Presentations

Discussion of the Capital Improvement Plan:

Mr. Barlow and Ms. Vadas presented the first draft of the Capital Improvement Plan.

Ms. Zukowski asked if they planned on doing the engineering study for the Middle School HVAC project next year.

Mr. Barlow answered that it would take a majority of the school year. He continued by saying that when the Board reviews the Capital Improvement Plan next July/August, the Board can make adjustments of cost based on the engineering plan.

Mr. Cruson is concerned that the Middle School HVAC project is moved to 2027/2028. He understands getting the exact pricing; however, pushing it out that far gives the impression that we will wait three years to start this project.

Mr. Barlow reminded the Board that any year after the current year, which is a non-bonding year, is not set in stone. Moving it out to that year four slot, gives Newtown the opportunity to really develop the engineering plan and get accurate pricing.

Mr. Cruson agreed with Mr. Barlow but recommends putting it in an earlier year now because they have had issues in the past when other Boards have questioned why they pushed extensive projects up a year.

Ms. Vadas agrees but expressed her concern about the cost and where all the students will go. Ms. Vadas continued by stating that she agrees it is easier to push the project back than it is to move the project forward a year.

Mr. Vouros asked what the next steps are after the engineers present their findings.

Mr. Barlow said that if they receive the findings early enough, there would be time to receive grant funding from the State because the deadline is June 30th. There is also money available in the HVAC grant that has not been allocated yet.

Mr. Vouros said that it is time for the Middle School to get improvements. It has been too long.

Ms. Vadas brought up the concern about if it is better to do this project all at once or in phases.

Mr. Barlow said that it could possibly take a year if this project is done at once. If it is done in phases, which he does not suggest, the project could last a couple of years.

Mr. Higgins asked the lifespan of a new chiller at Reed.

Mr. Barlow said that it would be about 20-25 years.

Mr. Higgins said that he does not find it to be a compelling case for repair vs. replace because of what it will actually cost in 10 years.

Mr. Barlow answered that the Town of Newtown has a budget that they have to work within and would be hard to add in multiple 'big ticket' projects in the early years of the capital improvement plan.

Ms. Vadas added that the chiller could last beyond the 10 year warranty lifespan.

Ms. Zukowski recommended that Mr. Barlow and Ms. Vadas have a conversation with Mr. Tait, the Finance Director from the Town.

Mr. Barlow continued outlining the minor changes in the capital improvement plan which included improvements to the high school swimming pool. The original price was \$400,000 but needed to be changed to \$930,000. He received that estimate from a well trusted company he previously worked with. He also reported that he sent out three custodians to become commercial pool operators so they will be able to handle and manage the water quality and water chemistry of the pool.

Ms. Tomai asked if there was a requirement to get a certain number of bids for any of the line items.

Mr. Barlow answered that he only provided the estimate on the capital improvement plan. After it is approved, it would go to a sealed bid.

Ms. Zukowski added that bids are typically in the year one projects and estimates are in the year two and on.

Mr. Ramsey asked if the swimming pool was used for community use.

Mr. Melillo said that he does not believe it is being used as a community pool since the community center opened.

Ms. Plante asked about the re-roofing project in year two and if the repairs would cover the full area where we had issues last year.

Mr. Barlow said yes because the warranty runs out in year four because they were re-coded in 2014 and given a 10 year warranty.

Mr. Higgins asked Mr. Barlow if he thought Newtown needed a pool given the community center has one for the community. He wondered how much value Newtown is getting out of having a pool.

Mr. Barlow believes it is being used often. There is a program that uses the pool in the summer and then the swim program starts. He also believes that the special education students are using the pool at various times. He said he would be an advocate to keep the pool and start the repairs.

Ms. Uberti said it is her understanding the pool is being used every single day and not only for the swim team.

Ms. Zukowski asked if the cost of F-Wing chiller increased.

Mr. Barlow said that it did and needs some major repairs. The current price is a place holder because there is some engineering that needs to be done.

Mr. Barlow explained that he went to the middle school to look at the generator. They moved this project from year ten because it is almost at the end of its usable life with its run hours. He feels it should be replaced in year four and it is a fairly simple job.

Mr. Barlow visited each school's parking lot to assess if they needed to be repaved. He did not think they were in bad shape and probably just need some maintenance. He reached out to a company that came up with a plan that includes seal coating, crack filling and portion replacing. This maintenance plan came under the \$200,000 mark. However, he does believe HOM needs to be resurfaced and repaved.

Item 8 – Old Business

Discussion and Possible Action on Tuition:

Ms. Vadas presented her recommendation for the 2023-2024 out of district tuition rate. She said she researched other towns and found that Newtown was in line. The recommended rate is \$21,500 with an employee discount at \$5,375.

MOTION: Ms. Plante moved that the Board of Education set the tuition for the 2023-2024 school year at \$21,500. Mr. Cruson seconded.

Mr. Ramsey asked how many teachers are currently paying for tuition.

Ms. Vadas did not know how many is teachers vs. how many are staff.

Mr. Ramsey said he was an advocate for them to pay a less amount. He believes that having their children attend our schools could very well have an impact on the number of absentees due to conflicts or child care concerns.

Ms. Vadas said that is a possibility; however it is in our Board policy so that would require a policy change.

Ms. Tomai asked if the Board could change the discount without changing the policy.

Ms. Vadas said that they could not.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 9 New Business

First Read of Policy 4118.239 – Required COVID 19 Vaccination to be rescinded:

Mr. Cruson said that the policy committee is recommending that the Board rescinds this policy because the executive order has expired. The committee included language in another policy that states Newtown will follow health recommendations.

Ms. Plante asked if Newtown had any other policies that refer to specific vaccinations.

Mr. Cruson said there are no policies that require staff to get vaccinated.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: Ms. Plante moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of June 26, 2023.

Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Plante moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of June 27, 2023.

Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 10 – Public Participation

MOTION: Mr. Vouros moved to adjourn. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 11 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary

Newtown Education FOUNDATION

March 27, 2023

Dear Ms. Erika Carlson and Ms. Carla Tischio,

Congratulations! The Newtown Education Foundation (NEF) is excited to announce that we have approved your grant request in the amount of **\$3,757.88 for a Hawley MakerSpace**. Your proposal clearly aligns with our mission to enrich the learning experience for Newtown students.

As a recipient of this award you agree to the following:

1. Use the grant funds only as specified in the approved grant proposal.
2. Maintain your records to show and account for the use of the grant funds.
3. Allow NEF access to records to verify grant expenditures and activities.
4. Provide written acknowledgment of receipt of payments of grant funds.
5. Repay any portion of the funds not used for the specified purposes.
6. Refrain from the use of the funds for any purpose prohibited by law.
7. Cooperate with any efforts of NEF to publicize the grant award.
8. Complete the Grant Award Report by: **December 2023**.

If you agree to these terms, please sign and return one copy of this letter.

We appreciate being able to assist you with your efforts to continue to support the success of our students!

Respectfully,

Jamie Pacuk

Jamie Pacuk
NEF Chairperson

*Please confirm acc

The Newtown Education Foundation Inc
PO Box 3524
Newtown, CT 06470

LOOK FOR:
3D hologram foil across top
Heat-sensitive circle in upper-right corner

234
51-7229/2211

6/16/23 Date

Pay to the Order of Hawley School

three thousand seven hundred fifty seven and 88/100 \$ 3,757.88
Newtown Savings Bank Dollars

For NEF grant - makerspace all

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Security Features Details on Back

Security Check

Signature

Date

NEWTOWN BOARD OF EDUCATION SUMMARY - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023/24 TO 2027/28

DRAFT 7/6/2023

INITIAL FIVE YEARS

CIP Item #	Location	Description of Project	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	TOTALS
			2023/24	NO BONDING Year 2 2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
	Hawley Elem.	Ventilation, HVAC Renovations	\$ 4,000,000					
		Re-roof 1997 wing (BUR, 18500sf) Roof Sections B,C,D,&H					\$ 500,000	\$ 4,000,000
	Middle Gate Elem.	Window replacement				\$ 1,100,000		\$ -
		Bathroom renovations (2 staff, 2 student)				\$ 220,000		\$ 1,320,000
	Head O'Meadow	Replace Condensing Units, Piping, Coils	\$ 600,000					\$ 600,000
		Repave entire parking lot, curbing, sidewalks (90000sf)					\$ 225,000	\$ 825,000
	Reed Intermediate	Rebuild Chillers, Upgrade BMS controls/VAVs, Fence			\$ 400,000			\$ 400,000
	Middle School	Engineering for HVAC Improvements (incl CM)	\$ 450,000					\$ 450,000
		HVAC Improvements					\$ 12,000,000	\$ 12,000,000
		Replace Generator and Transfer Switch					\$ 250,000	\$ 12,700,000
	High School	HVAC Replacements B-wing (incl VAV upgrades)	\$ 1,200,000					\$ 1,200,000
		Restore Swimming Pool / Replace HVAC			\$ 930,000			\$ 930,000
		Re-roof BUR areas (C-wing, B-wing, Pool, Gym, 47000sf)			\$ 875,000			\$ 875,000
		Replace F-wing chiller				\$ 800,000		\$ 3,805,000
	TOTAL COSTS OF ALL PROJECTS		\$ 6,250,000	\$ -	\$ 2,205,000	\$ 2,120,000	\$ 12,975,000	\$ 23,550,000
	TOTAL TO BE BONDED		\$ 6,250,000	\$ -	\$ 2,205,000	\$ 2,120,000	\$ 12,975,000	\$ 23,550,000

\$ 4,000,000
\$ 500,000
\$ 1,100,000
\$ 220,000
\$ 600,000
\$ 225,000
\$ 400,000
\$ 450,000
\$ 12,000,000
\$ 250,000
\$ 1,200,000
\$ 930,000
\$ 875,000
\$ 800,000

Eligibility for project inclusion on the CIP is that the cost must exceed \$200,000.

NEWTOWN BOARD OF EDUCATION SUMMARY - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2028/29 TO 2032/33

Approved by BOE - 9/6/2022

SECOND FIVE YEARS

CIP Item #	Location	Description of Project	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	TOTALS
			2028/29	NO BONDING Year 7 2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	
	Hawley Elem	Repave entire parking lot, curbing, sidewalks (80000sf)	\$ 275,000					\$ 275,000

\$275,000

Sandy Hook Elem.								
Middle Gate Elem.	HVAC design	\$ 200,000						\$200,000
	HVAC Improvements				\$ 2,000,000			\$2,000,000
							\$ 2,200,000	
Head O'Meadow	Roof restoration (66500sf)				\$ 400,000			\$400,000
							\$ 400,000	
Reed Intermediate	Replace HVAC Equipment				\$ 800,000			\$800,000
	Replace Chillers, Upgrade BMS controls/VAVs, Fence					\$ 900,000	\$ 1,700,000	\$900,000
Middle School	Repave entire parking lot, curbing, sidewalks (174000sf)				\$ 575,000			\$575,000
							\$ 575,000	
High School	Replace Windows (B-wing)	\$ 450,000					\$ 450,000	\$450,000
District-Wide	Security Camera Upgrade (501 cameras)	\$ 700,000					\$ 700,000	
TOTAL COSTS OF ALL PROJECTS		\$ 1,625,000	\$ -	\$ 2,800,000	\$ 975,000	\$ 900,000	\$ 6,300,000	
TOTAL TO BE BONDED		\$ 1,625,000	\$ -	\$ 2,800,000	\$ 975,000	\$ 900,000	\$ 6,300,000	

DRAFT - 7/6/2023

Notes:

- 1) Hawley numbers are carried from approved 2022 CIP
- 2) Middle School HVAC design includes an allowance for CM preconstruction to assist with scope, phasing, and budget
- 3) Middle School HVAC budget is using Hawley HVAC as a benchmark
- 4) Middle Gate Window budget includes design
- 5) High School Windows (B-wing) budget includes design
- 6) Paving budgets are based on milling of existing asphalt, 3" of new asphalt, and line striping
- 7) High School HVAC Replacements includes upgrades to VAV and BMS controls

Newtown Public Schools

Existing BOE Policy No. 5118 (c)

...tuition is to be determined annually by the BOE....

Non-Resident Tuition Rate

2023-2043

	Calculated 2014-15	Calculated 2015-16	Calculated 2016-17	Calculated 2017-18	Calculated 2018-19	Calculated 2019-20	Calculated 2020-21	Calculated 2021-22	Calculated 2022-23	Recommended 2023-24
Board of Education Approved Operating Budget	\$71,345,305	\$71,587,946	\$73,665,065	\$72,995,957	\$76,054,231	\$78,104,410	\$78,651,776	\$78,651,776	\$82,134,639	\$85,069,651
Board of Education Approved Debt Service*	\$5,448,870	\$5,136,338	\$3,990,255	\$4,416,701	\$4,516,073	\$4,109,495	\$4,009,580	\$4,009,580	\$3,638,703	\$4,287,217
Total Approved Operations & Debt Service	\$76,794,175	\$76,724,284	\$77,655,320	\$77,412,658	\$80,570,304	\$82,213,905	\$82,661,356	\$82,661,356	\$85,773,342	\$89,356,868
Projected Enrollment for School Year (in-district)	4,786	4,543	4,404	4,270	4,263	4,185	4,086	4,011	4,025	3,912
Calculated Tuition = Operations & Debt divided by Enrollment	\$16,046	\$16,888	\$17,656	\$18,129	\$18,900	\$19,645	\$20,230	\$20,609	\$21,310	\$22,842
BoE Approved Tuition Rate (Rounded)	\$16,900	\$16,900	\$17,600	\$18,100	\$18,900	\$19,600	\$20,200	\$20,200	\$20,900	
# Students for full-tuition										
Recommended Tuition Rate (Rounded)										\$21,500

*From End of Year ED001 Report, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 from the Town Finance Office.

Tuition Income Received	\$44,000	\$29,775	\$32,916	\$34,390	\$38,745	\$32,340	\$43,430	\$51,510	\$37,986	\$37,620
Non-Employee Receipts	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Budget						\$32,340	\$32,340	\$32,340	\$32,340	\$37,620
Over/Under Budget						\$0	\$11,090	\$19,170	\$5,646	\$0

Employee Rate @ 25%	\$4,000	\$4,225	\$4,400	\$4,525	\$4,725	\$4,900	\$5,050	\$5,050	\$5,225	\$5,375
Additional Child Rate @ 15%			\$2,640	\$2,715	\$2,835	\$2,940	\$3,030	\$3,030	\$3,136	\$3,225
discount for 2nd			\$1,760	\$1,810	\$1,890	\$1,960	\$2,020	\$2,020	\$2,090	\$2,150

Personnel - Certified/Non-Certified

Required COVID-19 Vaccinations

The Newtown Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes the importance of protecting the health and safety of students, staff and the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, in accordance with the Governor’s Executive Order, the Board authorizes the administration to develop a regulation concerning vaccination against COVID-19.

Legal Reference	Connecticut General Statutes 10-145 Certificate necessary to employment. Forfeiture for noncompliance. Substitute teachers. Governor’s Executive Order No. 13G, September 10, 2021 Governor’s Executive Order No. 14, September 28, 2021 Governor’s Executive Order No. 14a, September 30, 2021
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Policy adopted: January, 18, 2022

Personnel - Certified/Non-Certified

Required COVID-19 Vaccinations

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

“Fully vaccinated” means at least 14 days have elapsed since a person has received the final dose of a vaccine approved for use against COVID-19 by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or as otherwise defined by the Centers for Disease Control.

“Contract Worker” means any person who provides service to the Board requiring such person to make regular and frequent visits to district schools or to have regular or frequent contact with students or staff, but who is not employed by the Board, excluding any person who visits a Board school only to provide one-time or limited-duration repairs, services, or construction, or a volunteer.

“Covered Worker” refers to all employees, both full and part-time, contract workers, contractors, providers, assistants, substitutes, and other individuals working in a district school including individuals providing operational or custodial services or administrative support or any person whose job duties require them to make regular or frequent visits to any district schools or to have regular or frequent contact with students or staff.

Covered Worker does not include a contractor or employee of an outside vendor who visits a district school only to provide one-time or limited-duration repairs, services, or construction, or a volunteer.

“Contractor” refers to any person or business entity, including a vendor of support services or subcontractor, that provides the personnel who function as contract workers, or covered workers for the Board.

COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements

Vaccines shall be required as provided below.

Personnel - Certified/Non-Certified

Required COVID-19 Vaccinations

COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements (continued)

On and after September 27, 2021, the Board shall not employ, or maintain a contract for the provision of in-person services of, any covered worker or an entity that employs a covered worker, unless such covered worker:

1. is fully vaccinated against COVID-19,
2. has received the first dose and has either received a second dose or has an appointment for the second dose in a two-dose series vaccination, such as Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or has received a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine, or
3. is exempt from this requirement because a physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse determined that the administration of COVID-19 vaccine is likely to be detrimental to the covered worker's health, or the individual objects to vaccination on the basis of a sincerely held religious or spiritual belief, and the covered worker is able to perform their essential job functions with a reasonable accommodation that is not an undue burden on the school board or child care facility; provided that any school board or childcare facility employee claiming such exemption shall apply for an exemption due to medical conditions or sincerely held religious or spiritual beliefs.

Each request for an exemption will be considered on an individualized, case by case basis. Employees who have applied for an exemption must provide appropriate supporting documentation upon request.

4. A covered worker who is hired before September 27, 2021 may, as an alternative to vaccination, and regardless of whether such worker has a medical or religious exemption, comply with the testing requirements contained within this policy.
5. The Board will not employ, or contract for the provision of services from, any covered worker or entity that employs a covered worker subject to the conditions above and is not exempt who has received the first dose of a two-dose series vaccination but fails to receive the second dose on the appropriate date as recommended by CDC or at the scheduled appointment without good cause.

Vaccination Verification and Testing for Covered Workers

The school board shall authenticate, or where applicable require that the contractor providing the services of a covered worker authenticate, the vaccination status of covered workers, maintain documentation of vaccination or exemption of such covered workers and report compliance with this order, in a form and manner directed by the Department of Public Health.

Beginning September 27, 2021, covered workers who have not demonstrated proof of full vaccination are required to submit to COVID-19 testing one time per week on an ongoing basis until fully vaccinated. Adequate proof of the test results on a weekly basis shall be presented to the Board in a form prescribed by the Board.

Personnel - Certified/Non-Certified

Required COVID-19 Vaccinations (continued)

Vaccination Verification and Testing for Volunteers

While we appreciate and recognize community members who want to volunteer in our schools, we also want to keep our staff and students safe. As of January 15, we will be asking volunteers to present proof of COVID-19 vaccination OR a negative COVID test result within the previous 72 hours of the time a volunteer will be working in the school. If a volunteer will be present in the school beyond one week (5 school days) from the date of the negative test, he or she would be asked to test again for each subsequent week.

Acceptable Proof of Vaccination

Covered workers may demonstrate proof of vaccination by providing one of the following:

1. A valid CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card or photo of the Vaccination Record Card;
2. Documentation from a health care provider or electronic health care records;
3. A certificate from the Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS), if the individual received vaccination through the VAMS system; or
4. A copy of the individual's official immunization record from the Connecticut Immunization Information System, CT WiZ.

Covered workers must also complete and sign a Declaration Attesting to the Authenticity of an Individual's COVID-19 Vaccination Record, provided by the Board. Proof of vaccination will not be deemed valid unless accompanied by the individual's signed declaration. The District reserves the right to authenticate a Vaccination Record Card in a manner consistent with any binding standards issues by the Commissioner of Public Health for such authentication.

Personal attestation will not be accepted as an acceptable form of proof of a COVID-19 vaccination. (*The Commissioner of Public Health may promulgate binding standards for authentication of a Vaccination Record Card.*)

All proof of vaccination must contain the name and date of birth of the individual, the manufacturer of the COVID-19 vaccine that was administered, and the date(s) on which the vaccine was administered. Employees must not include any additional medical or genetic information with proof of vaccination.

Violations and Enforcement

Any covered worker who fails to comply with this policy shall not be allowed on the premises of the school board until the individual provides adequate proof of compliance or without prior written authorization of the school board.

Personnel - Certified/Non-Certified

Required COVID-19 Vaccinations (continued)

The school board recognizes that it will be in violation of this policy, based on the Governor's Executive Order, when it permits a covered worker who has not complied with this policy to be in a pre-K through grade 12 school, to make regular or frequent visits to any such school facility, or to have regular or frequent contact with children in child care, students, or staff.

The school board also commits a violation if it fails to authenticate the vaccination status of a covered worker or contract worker, maintain documentation of vaccination, testing, or allowable exemptions as required.

The Board recognizes that if the State Department of Education (SDE) determines that the Board is not in compliance with the requirements of this policy, the SDE may require Board to forfeit a portion of the total sum which is paid to the school board from the State Treasury in an amount to be determined by the Commissioner of Education, which amount shall be not less than one thousand dollars nor more than ten thousand dollars.

Any forfeited amount shall be withheld from a grant payment, as determined by the Commissioner, during the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which noncompliance is determined. (The Commissioner of Education may waive such forfeiture if the Commissioner determines that the failure of a school board to comply with such a provision was due to circumstances beyond its control.)

Policy Duration

This policy shall remain in effect through February 15, 2022 unless earlier modified or terminated by the Board.

Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.

**Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the special Board of Education meeting held on June 26, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street.

D. Zukowski, Chair
J. Vouros, Vice Chair
D. Ramsey, Secretary
D. Cruson
A. Plante

C. Melillo

Item 1 – Call to Order

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Item 2 – Vote to Fill Board of Education Vacancies

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved that the Board of Education appoint **Todd Higgins** as a new member of the Board of Education. Ms. Zukowski seconded. Mr. Cruson, Ms. Plante, and Mr. Vouros recused themselves from the vote, as the recent Charter revision only allows for members of the same party as those who previously filed the seats to vote on the new members. Motion passes 2-0.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved that the Board of Education appoint **Shannon Tomai** as a new member of the Board of Education. Ms. Zukowski seconded. Mr. Cruson, Ms. Plante, and Mr. Vouros recused themselves from the vote for the reason above. Motion passes 2-0.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved that the Board of Education go into executive session for the evaluation of the Superintendent and invite Mr. Melillo. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes 5-0.

Item 3 – Executive Session

The Board exited executive session at 8:10 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes 5-0.

Item 4 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary

**Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.
Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on June 27, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street.

D. Zukowski, Chair	C. Melillo
J. Vouros, Vice Chair	A. Uberti
D. Ramsey, Secretary	T. Vadas
D. Cruson	3 Staff
A. Plante	3 Public
T. Higgins	1 Press
S. Tomai	

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the correspondence report. Mrs. Plante seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Public Participation - none

Item 4 – Reports

Chair Report: Ms. Zukowski spoke about graduation and welcomed Shannon Tomai and Todd Higgins, the two new Board members, who appreciated the opportunity to serve.

Superintendent's Report: Mr. Melillo spoke about the move back to Hawley School. A two-day program was conducted at the Community Center for Hawley students and he thanked Matt Ariniello and the district staff for help with bus duty. We are applying for a grant through the Primary Mental Health Program from the State Board of Education for \$20,000 each year for two years. This would be for a paraprofessional who will receive specialized training to address mental health needs of our students. We received funds from a Perkins Grant and purchased a food truck for the high school for automotive students to learn how to design and retrofit the truck.

Mr. Melillo noted that the switch gear for the Hawley HVAC project was delayed until August 14 so we will use alternative equipment to have the building up and running with 2/3 of the school being air conditioned. This is a result of issues regarding the supply chain.

Mr. Higgins questioned if there was any collaboration from industry for the food truck. Mr. Melillo said he was going to be collaborating with our food service vendors. This work will incorporate many courses in the high school.

Mrs. Tomai asked who would be paying for any needed equipment for Hawley School. Mr. Melillo stated there was money set aside if this were to happen so we have a \$50,000 contingency for the Hawley project.

Committee Reports:

Mrs. Plante reported that the CFF committee met last night and reviewed the financial report. We will start work on the CIP and give a full presentation to the Board in August.

Financial Report and Transfers:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the financial report and transfers for the month ending May 31, 2023. Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Mrs. Vadas presented the financial report and answered questions from the Board.
Motion passes unanimously.

Item 5 – Presentations

Social Emotional Supports:

Anne Dalton spoke about social emotional health and well-being in the schools. She provided information on programs in the schools and data on various surveys conducted.

Mr. Higgins said in looking at the survey trends asked if the district has help regarding this information.

Mrs. Dalton reported that we work with the consultant on the survey results to present it in a meaningful way.

Mr. Melillo said that regarding the number of incidents in the schools, we have faculty and staff who will look at the data points and see how we can support our students. We have a set protocol on what we have to do but each child is different.

Mrs. Uberti said regarding the incident log, it also includes a record of a disciplinary event such as pushing another student. The categories are dictated by the state. It's been difficult to know how each administrator labels a disciplinary event.

Chartwells Update:

Mrs. Vadas introduced Jamie Davies, Chartwells district manager, John Morris, director of dining services, and support managers Bill Devoe and Judit Hajba. Mr. Davies gave an update on their food service. She noted that she witnessed the Reed School mood boost in action where they discussed how the food affected their brain. Every child participated. We are also going to look into the recycling program and there is a learning component with grants available.

Item 6 – Old Business

Second Read of Gr. 7 and 8 Kitchen Science Curriculum:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the Grade 7 and Grade 8 Kitchen Science Curriculum. Mrs. Plante seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 7 – New Business

Action on Potential Standing Committee Assignments:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the revised Standing Committee Assignments. Mrs. Plante seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Action on Connecticut Primary Mental Health Grant:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve applying for the Connecticut Primary Mental Health Grant. Mrs. Plante seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Discussion Regarding Tuition:

MOTION: Mrs. Plante moved to table the tuition discussion. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 6 – Old Business continued

Strategic Plan Update and Possible Action:

Richard Lemons gave an overview of the process for the strategic plan and portrait of a graduate and spoke about the four district priorities and strategic actions and also how the plan will be used by the Board, the district, and school leadership teams, and how the Communications Committee will publish the plans.

Mr. Higgins referred to a graphic around social and emotional learning and was trying to track putting students on the path and how it translated into the strategic plan. He asked what the collaboration was on the plan in this area.

Mr. Lemons reported that there is evidence that points to the importance of social emotional development and skills necessary to thrive in the world and the core components of being academically successful in school. The planning committee recognized that this work was important. This was a strong set of assets for Newtown. It didn't need to be a fourth goal because of the progress that has been made.

Mr. Melillo said we acknowledge the social emotional component was important. This component needs to be woven into the curriculum pieces and we have been doing that. We have looked at data points and we have processes in place looking at data to ensure student needs are being met. We looked at where our needs were and where we had to improve to move our students to the next level.

Mrs. Uberti said it has been an intense focus the past decade. We try to build competencies in students to be able to do the things in the plan.

Ms. Zukowski stated that we have the strategic plan but we have to ensure that it will be successful.

Mr. Lemons agreed with Ms. Zukowski. All schools will be asked to look at the plan and build their school community tied to the data of the schools priorities. Schools will share their strategic plan and compare with other schools.

Mr. Melillo met with Mr. Lemons about having leadership teams regarding what goals will be made. At our administrators retreat we will discuss this and develop school improvement plans. Hopefully, the schools will have a working plan in place at the start of the school year.

Mr. Higgins said there is a reference to annual performance and asked if the benchmarks have been identified and goals to say this is where we are, this is where we want to be, and to assess where we are in the development of this plan.

Mr. Melillo noted that we aren't there right now. We had to have the Board approve the plan first. We want to have preliminaries around structures when we pull data and who will be on the teams.

Mrs. Tomai proposed to add a reference in priority #2 so it doesn't get lost in the portrait of the graduate.

Mr. Melillo said we've taken feedback from a multitude of people but we can approve the plan as is and come back with that in it. There's a nod to the DEI plan and we can add the Casel standards as a reference to the work we are doing.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the Newtown Public Schools Strategic Plan. Mrs. Plante seconded.

MOTION: Mrs. Tomai moved to amend the motion to add a reference to social emotional learning, specifically Casel and add a reference to social emotional learning, specifically Casel, in Priority 2, portrait of the graduate. Mr. Higgins seconded.

Mr. Cruson appreciated the amendment but feels this is such a foundational piece to the district it doesn't need to be spelled out in the plan. The Board does feel it's a priority but he was not in favor of adding the Casel framework as a bullet in the strategic plan.

Mrs. Uberti said it was important to not think of this as a checklist. The school teams come together to reflect the needs of their school. They should build action steps in their building. There may be other parts of the plans their goals are connected to. She liked to add the social emotional piece. There is funding for mental health and social emotional learning so it makes sense to put it in there.

MOTION: Mrs. Tomai moved to remove her amendment. Mr. Higgins seconded.

MOTION: Mrs. Tomai moved to amend the motion to add under Priority 2, Section 3, create a comprehensive plan to help all students achieve the portrait of the graduate, including an assessment process. The new language would be consistent with the social emotional learning standards of the Newtown Public School District. Mr. Vouros seconded.

Vote on amendment: 6 ayes, 1 nay (Mr. Cruson) Motion passes.

Vote on main motion: 7 ayes Motion passes unanimously.

Item 7 – New Business continued

Tuition Discussion:

Mr. Cruson said policy 5118 Nonresident or Tuition Students prescribes the percentage we charge for staff. If we want to change the percentage, it has to go to the Policy Committee.

Action on Minutes:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the board of Education approve the minutes of June 1, 2023. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Vote: 5 ayes, 2 abstained (Mr. Higgins, Mrs. Tomai) Motion passes.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of June 6, 2023. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Vote: 5 ayes, 2 abstained (Mr. Higgins, Mrs. Tomai) Motion passes.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of June 8, 2023. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Vote: 5 ayes, 2 abstained (Mr. Higgins, Mrs. Tomai) Motion passes.

Item 8 – Public Participation - none

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education go into executive session regarding the contract extensions for the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Business and the evaluation of the Superintendent and invite Mr. Melillo. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 9 – Executive Session

The Board entered executive session at 9:45 p.m. and returned to public session at 10:35 p.m.

Item 10 – Public Session

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the one-year contract extension for the Director of Business. Ms. Plante seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the one-year contract extension, 2.5% raise and \$1,500 Annuity Payment for the Assistant Superintendent, and move further that the Board Chairperson be authorized to finalize and execute the employment contract with Mr. Melillo for the period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026. Ms. Plante seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education extend the employment contract of Christopher Melillo as Superintendent of Schools, through and including June 30, 2026, and raise of 2.5%, and move further that the Board Chairperson be authorized to finalize and execute the employment contract with Mr. Melillo for the period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026. Ms. Plante seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to adjourn. Mr. Higgins seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 11 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary