

**MINUTES OF CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING  
HELD IN TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON NOVEMBER 6, 2025 AT 7:30 PM**

---

Board Members Present: Samantha Rosenberg, Chair; Anne Harrigan, Vice Chair; Adam Grippio, Secretary; Anne Marie Cullinan; Mark Ecke; Anthony Perugini; Timothy White

Board Members Absent: None

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Emily Taylor, Chief Operating Officer; Vincent Masciana, Chief Project Officer

---

**1. CALL TO ORDER – 8:42 P.M.**

- A. Roll for Quorum. The roll was called and a quorum determined.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.  
Ms. Rosenberg led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
- C. Student Representatives. Matalyn Tabor and Connor Rayball, student representatives for the 2025/2026 school year, reported on recent events at Cheshire High School including fall sports, Peer Health Student Leadership class is hosting their first event, an Elementary School Leadership Summit where they bring 6th graders who attended last year's 5th grade program back and they have the opportunity to hear from a panel of high school leaders, work with some peers from different schools, take part in a lot of fun activities, with the goal of developing them as student leaders. On Veterans Day, the Brave Club will invite students to bring their family members who are veterans to the high school to take part in our Veterans Day presentation. This weekend, CHS will be hosting its annual raking day where students volunteer to rake leaves for senior citizens.

**2. AUDIENCE**

None.

**3. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**A. CURRICULUM**

**I. Report on Meeting Held October 20, 2025.**

Ms. Cullinan asked Assistant Superintendent Silano to report on this meeting. Assistant Superintendent Marlene Silano shared that Monroe Public Schools requested to meet with our CPS team to discuss math bright spots and share best practices that have led to significant improvements in student growth and achievement in mathematics. During the visit, Cheshire Public Schools met with Monroe's Pupil Personnel Services Director, Middle School Principal, Math Coach, and Curriculum Director to review math programming, curriculum design, and special education structures that support student success.

Educator Growth Plans (EGPs) are in progress, with strong collaboration between teachers and administrators and continued alignment to district goals and professional learning priorities. The New Teacher Induction Program continued this month with new teacher meetings to support those in TEAM (Year 1 or Year 2) and those new to the district. Sessions focused on school goals, individual growth goals, HQI, and the support available in the district.

Budget meetings were held with Superintendent Solan, Assistant Superintendent Silano, Emily Taylor, and each of the principals. In-depth discussions were held on a variety of needs, including support services evaluations, Dodd maintenance, STEM coordination, athletics, unified arts and ML needs.

Assistant Superintendent Silano reported she met with this year's subject area/department leaders who will engage in the 5-year curriculum review cycle. Library Media, World Language, School Counseling and Health & PE will begin the evaluation cycle this year.

The committee also reviewed current multilingual learner (ML) needs. The district serves 171 multilingual students—142 in elementary school, 14 in middle school, and 15 in high school—receiving both push-in and pull-out support. Identification occurs through the LAS Links assessment, with newcomers generally in the country for less than 10 months. Level 1 students receive approximately 30–45 minutes of support four times per week. The team revisited the requirement for implementing a bilingual program if 20 ML students with the same native language are enrolled in one school, noting that Highland was close to this threshold, but that redistricting may ease this concern next year. The top languages in the district are Albanian, Mandarin, Spanish, Urdu, and Arabic/Korean.

Assistant Superintendent Silano shared that the PASS Parent Letter was sent to families. This is the third year of administering the survey for grades 3–12. No questions or concerns have been raised.

In addition, the Safe School Climate Survey was administered the following responses had been received as of 10/20/25:

Families: 385 responses

Staff: 215 out of 517 certified staff, and 102 non-certified staff

Students: 295 out of 4,430

## **B. FINANCE**

### **I. Finance Report**

Dr. Harrigan reported that the approved budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 is \$93,124,314. As of October 31, \$72,451,147 (78%) has been

encumbered and expended, which includes expenses from our largest accounts, including payroll and transportation. At this time, no variances of concern have been identified.

Ms. Taylor noted there is a 40% expenditure cap right now, which has helped us stay within the bounds of our budget. She reported our five-year capital expenditure plan was approved and went to referendum, so it's in its final state. As a reminder, the Board approved this in February, our first year, at \$5,040,000 that ultimately went to the Town Council, who approved \$3,300,000 in October of this year. After the referendum, \$1.7 million was approved for year-one. Of the proposed projects, three were approved by Town Council and did not need to go to referendum, playground equipment for Highland and Doolittle, the fire sprinkler system replacements district wide, and some electrical service replacement at Highland for a generator. Another project that was approved at referendum, was the fire alarm control system at Cheshire High School for \$1.1 million. Two projects did not pass referendum: the south parking lot configuration at Cheshire High School and then the synthetic turf field replacement. Both of those items failed. The district will also continue to explore opportunities under the District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) Program. Cheshire is eligible to apply for a total grant of \$180,583. While the grants are expected to be issued annually by June 30, the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) has not yet provided clear guidance regarding the application process.

Board Members discussed the referendum projects and disappointment that the loading dock and turf replacement did not pass. They discussed strategies to get the word out to the public in the future. Mr. Grippo said seeing as he will no longer be on the Board and will have more free time, he will work on getting the replacement turf field passed. Mr. Perugini noted there was misinformation about the turf project in social media and he is pretty confident that it will pass in the future if the voters understand. He said this was not one of the projects that the Board approved and the Town Council still put it out for referendum and that was not right, it was mixed in with a number of other projects. Mr. White said he is not as confident because the voters have said no.

Mr. White asked for an update on the Energy Performance Contract. Mr. Masciana said that work continues to progress. On November 22 we're shutting down power back in Cheshire High School so that we can have the electrician come in to do a review for the fuel cell, which is part of the performance contract. We also provided some additional information on operational cost and maintenance so that work is progressing. They have submitted the school construction grants. We did receive some pushback from the State. We have a meeting scheduled for Monday. We are

working on it and expect for it to get approved, but it's not going to be approved as quickly as we want it to be this month.

Mr. Ecke added, regarding the turf, that he was part of the original conversation. He said it is 14 years old, beyond its limit, and if it doesn't pass inspection, there is no place for our athletes to participate in interscholastic athletics. He said this is a priority and has to be replaced.

Mr. Grippo said it should be a priority that once this gets replaced, we should make it a reality to save money for the next replacement. Mr. Masciana noted that when it was approved to add a surcharge to ticket sales, there was a provision by the Town Council that we could not use operating funds for the turf replacement. Mr. Perugini said maybe the next Board could change that provision.

## II. Medical Benefits Update

For this year, the Medical Benefits Fund budget is \$15,958,339. There is a monthly contribution of \$1,234,813 to fund the reserve account, an increase from \$1,100,000 monthly last fiscal year. The beginning balance (as of 7/1/25) for the Reserve Fund is \$2,822,465. As of September 30, 2025, the Medical Benefits Reserve Fund balance is in a strong position with a balance of \$2,476,354. Claims totaled \$1,441,295, representing a 33% increase (\$355,964) compared to September 2024, when claims were \$1,085,331. She said we have not received any stop-loss refunds for 2025-26 yet.

Ms. Rosenberg said there was talk of looking at our insurance plan. Ms. Taylor said there is no plan for that right now. We are self-funded so there is a limit to how much changing a plan is going to change our costs. Our costs are driven by the claims we receive.

Dr. Solan said recently the Town had pitched the idea of a group to evaluate our insurance and this includes not just representative politicians but also members of the community to evaluate the insurance for both the Town and Board of Education.

## C. PLANNING

### I. Acceptance of ADA Project Completion at CHS.

Dr. Solan reported that in August of 2015 the Cheshire Town Council approved a capital appropriation of \$1,383,000 to be used to make code compliance improvements at Cheshire High School centered primarily around American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The appropriation was subsequently approved by Cheshire voters as a referendum question in November of that year. The funding and project responsibilities were assigned to the Public Building Commission (PBC).

In 2018 the design firm of Silver Petrucelli was hired to make prioritized recommendations for the work to be completed. Silver Petrucelli identified and the PBC approved a project to make approximately 125 interior doors, doorways and locksets ADA and building code compliant. The school district applied for a grant through the Office of School Construction Grants (SCG) and following their various requirements, SCG approved the project for grant reimbursement. The project was subsequently put out to a public bid as required. In March of 2021, Nosal Builders was awarded the bid by the PBC, and the bulk of the work was successfully completed over the Summer of 2021 with the typical punch-list items completed shortly thereafter. The PBC unanimously approved a motion at their meeting on May 25, 2022, to submit the required closeout report to the Town Council as the project was fully completed. The final project cost was \$910,305.44 and the expected amount of the construction grant reimbursement at a 45% rate is approximately \$409k.

Our initial application for payment of the school construction grant was submitted in 2022 and obviously has been pending for an extended period of time despite our continued follow-up efforts. On October 6, 2025, Dr. Solan received an email from SCG advising him that the payment application was being denied and that it had to be resubmitted with a number of additional documentation requirements including Board of Education minutes accepting the project as complete. Accordingly, the Board of Education is asked to approve the below motion at this time:

**MOTION** by Mr. Ecke and seconded by Dr. Harrigan.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education confirms that State Project Number 025-0101 CV for Code Compliance Improvements - Door Accessibility Upgrades at Cheshire High School was completed successfully and further that the project has been closed out as fully completed by the Town of Cheshire's Public Building Commission that was assigned as the building committee for the project.*

**VOTE:** The Motion passed unanimously 7-0.

**D. POLICY**

**I. Report on Meeting Held November 3, 2025.**

Mr. Ecke reported that the Committee reviewed a number of policies and regulations that need to be updated due to changes in legislation. He said they also discussed a couple of Bylaws that were previously shared with the Board. Dr. Solan added that aside from the By Laws, the Suicide Prevention and Intervention Policy was an update to regulations upon the

advisement of counsel, everything else is a legislative update. The Bylaw changes are from the Board retreat from this summer.

Mr. Grippo added per Library Collection Development, the policy gives the impression that the Library Media Specialist has sole discretion, but Dr. Solan confirmed that there is a hierarchy and a process that the district goes through to select our texts.

II. **First Reading of Policies**

Mr. Ecke gave a first reading to:

- 1312.4/6161.13 Library Collection Development & Maintenance
- 1312.5/6161.14 Library Display and Program Policy
- 5141.5 Suicide Prevention and Intervention Policy New Regulation
- 9040 Board Related Responsibilities
- 9400 Monitoring Products and Processes

III. **Second Reading of Policies**

Mr. Ecke gave a second reading to:

- 5114 Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process
- 6171 Special Education
- 6159 Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- 5118.1 Educational Opportunities for Military Children

E. **OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES**

Ms. Rosenberg asked about a Legislative Committee meeting. Dr. Solan noted we are in the process of planning a CABE Legislative Breakfast for Area Superintendents in addition to a Legislative Committee meeting.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Mr. Grippo and seconded by Dr. Harrigan.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education approve the Minutes from meetings held on October 9 and October 15, 2025.*

**VOTE:** The Motion passed unanimously by those present.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Solan said in accordance with PA 12-173 it is the Superintendent's responsibility to provide the Board, on an annual basis, the special education programming contracted by the districts. The report required that he cite our worksite partnerships and attrition rates for staff. That information is included in tonight's packet.

For the New Schools report, he said he was excited to be able to offer the opportunity this evening to tour our Barnum and new Norton with members of the Next Gen, Town Council and Board.

He said District Performance Results are out. He said we had the best performance in our history. We ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in Connecticut. This will be reviewed at a future Board meeting.

In addition, they joined the Science of Reading Cohort facilitated by the CT Association of Public Schools, Superintendents and the CT DOE. The guest speaker was Margie Gillis, who is a nationally renowned expert in reading with an intent focus on K through 3 reading.

Dr. Solan announce the district is teaming up with the United Way for a candy fundraiser.

Mr. White said his normally advocates for students who may want to take an alternate route after graduation and wish to join the trades or military. He expressed his concern for the possibility of a war with Venezuela and urged our students to keep this in mind should they be considering a military career. Dr. Solan reported that on November 14<sup>th</sup>, a trades field trip is planned for 8<sup>th</sup> graders to visit our trades partners.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Chairperson's Update**

Ms. Rosenberg reported on upcoming meetings including a Finance Committee meeting and redistricting meeting, on November 10 at Cheshire High School. The next Organizational/Business meeting will be held on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Rosenberg congratulated new Board members, Mr. Colehour and Ms. Fitzgerald. She read a heartfelt thank you to Mr. Grippo and Mr. Perugini for their service to the Board, leadership and support.

Mr. Perugini said he has had the pleasure of working with incredible people. He said he has grown a lot on this Board. One regret he carries is that he did not vote for Ms. Silano's appointment because of other issues with other Board members at that time, not Ms. Silano. He said he has apologized to Ms. Silano privately but wanted to do so publicly. He said she is incredible, and she has made a tremendous improvement to the community.

Mr. Grippo said he also will apologize to Ms. Silano. He said these 8 years have been incredible. It has been rewarding to help make the schools a better place. He has been great working with Dr. Solan and his administrators.

Dr. Solan thanked Mr. Grippo and Mr. Perugini for their service.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mr. Perugini, and seconded by Mr. Grippo, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Samantha Rosenberg, Board Chair

Attest:

---

Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: 12/3/2025.