

Cheshire Public Schools



Board of Education Curriculum Committee

Thursday, October 8, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.

Humiston Board Room

Live viewing will be available at: <http://www.youtube.com/cheshirepublicschools>

Public questions and comments may be made via email to BOEcontact@cheshire.k12.ct.us

MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Ms. Anne Marie Cullinan (Chair), Dr. Anne Harrigan, Heather Fitzgerald and Tim White

Cheshire Public Schools Staff Present

Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent; Azra Redzic, Curriculum Coordinator; Christina Sherwood, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Community Members Present

None

7:00 PM call to order

1. Public Comment- None

2. [Review Minutes of September 17, 2026 Meeting](#)

Dr. Harrigan made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 17, 2026 Board of Education Curriculum Committee meeting. Ms. Cullinan seconded the motion. Dr. Harrigan and Ms. Cullinan voted to approve September 17, 2026 minutes. Mrs. Fitzgerald abstained. The motion passed.

3. Informational Items

The Cheshire High School field trip to the Grand Canyon, originally scheduled for April 10–14, 2027, has been canceled due to insufficient student enrollment.

An out-of-state overnight field trip request was presented for Cheshire High School student-athletes to participate in the New England Cross Country Championships in Belfast, Maine, on November 13–14,

2026. The request was submitted proactively in anticipation of potential student qualification. As the season is still underway, it is too early to determine whether any Cheshire High School athletes will qualify to compete.

a. Report on Bureau of Special Education General Supervision - Integrated Monitoring

Mrs. Christina Sherwood, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, provided an overview of the Connecticut Bureau of Special Education's (BSE) routine monitoring process conducted during the 2025–2026 school year. The review included a compliance audit of 14 student IEPs, classroom observations, staff and parent interviews, and verification of student services and schedules across four district schools.

Overall, the findings were positive, with BSE representatives recognizing strong teacher-student relationships, high-quality instruction, and asset-based IEP documentation. Areas identified for continued improvement included balancing quantitative and qualitative data in IEPs, reviewing Extended School Year (ESY) recommendations, and ensuring appropriate levels of student support. One required corrective action related to a missing document was subsequently addressed.

Mrs. Sherwood also highlighted positive staff feedback regarding district support, collaboration, and professional learning opportunities. The district continues to strengthen special education practices through targeted professional development, ongoing review of service delivery, and updates to staff schedules.

b. Standards Based Grading - 7th & 8th Grade Math

Ms. Silano provided an update on the implementation of Standards-Based Grading in mathematics at Dodd Middle School. Four parent information sessions have been held to explain the grading approach and address questions. Families also received a comprehensive FAQ and an informational video featuring Principal Kelly Grillo and Mathematics Division Leader Tom Toscano, distributed through ParentSquare.

The Committee viewed the video, which was developed as a communication tool for families, and reviewed the draft report card and student progress tracker. Discussion focused on the philosophy of Standards-Based Grading, emphasizing mastery, demonstrated proficiency, and a “not yet” approach to learning.

A parent handbook will be distributed prior to the December 16 report card release. Two additional parent information sessions are also scheduled before that date to further support families in understanding the new grading and reporting practices.

c. Assistant Superintendent's Update

The team has been actively engaged in curriculum alignment and professional learning initiatives. The team met with Geometry educators to develop rigorous learning tasks. Additionally, Department Heads, Division Leaders, and Jess Atnes are collaborating monthly with PEL (Partnership for Educational Leadership) to focus on designing rigorous tasks and norming around High-Quality Instruction (HQI) practices across classrooms.

Ms. Silano provided an update on ongoing curriculum alignment and professional learning initiatives. Ms. Silano, Azra Redzic, and collaborating staff members have been leading efforts to strengthen instructional practices, including working with Geometry teachers to develop rigorous learning tasks. Additionally, the Math Department Head, Math Division Leader, and the District K-6 Math Coach are participating in monthly sessions with the Partnership for Educational Leadership (PEL) focused on designing rigorous tasks and developing a shared understanding of High-Quality Instruction (HQI) across math classrooms.

Ms. Silano shared that 13 district educators attended the EdAdvance AI Conference in Litchfield, including four Cheshire High School Business Department teachers whose participation aligned with recommendations from the five-year curriculum review, particularly regarding the use of AI in business and industry. Additionally, the district's AI Learning Collaborative met to review and refine the district-developed AI literacy curriculum. The team is also exploring newly released AI literacy resources from Common Sense Media to inform and enhance its ongoing work.

4. Adjourn

Dr. Harrigan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Fitzgerald seconded the motion. Dr. Harrigan, Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mr. White and Ms. Cullinan voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Azra Redzic

Azra Redzic PK-8 Curriculum Coordinator