

Superintendent's Report: April 2025

Highlight of the Month: This month I had the opportunity to observe our Preschool class during their Physical Education time with Nick Cody. It was a welcome break from working on policies and finances. Thanks, Nick, for arranging a “three ring circus” of engaging activities for the students. Their feelings of delight in tossing about colorful scarves were contagious and a definite smile maker.

News and Notes

Educational Leadership:

- To remain current with Title I legislation and funding, I proactively scheduled a meeting with the State Title I liaison.
- I maintain regular contact with the liaison for the After School Grant program. Although grant applications are not yet being accepted, our liaison feels positive that funds will be available. Given our funding ends this year, we will need to apply for funding to continue our program. This grant funding opportunity is competitive and there is no guarantee we will continue to be funded. Without this funding, we will not be able to provide free after school opportunities for all K-8 children.
- Carole McCombe and I have also been investigating other models for after school programming that may strengthen our program.
- The Policy Committee met to review the changes in state and federal regulations and their impact on local policies. As you will see below, they are making several recommendations for policy changes.

Facilities:

- PV update –We are still having some issues with new PV system. We also have a damaged panel. Paul Torcellini has maintained a positive relationship with the contractor and is working with J.E. Shea Electric to resolve our issues.
- The need for an HVAC survey, which could cost up to \$20,000 +, was discussed at the BOS meeting. It was suggested that the BOE develop and post an RFP this summer for this service, requesting that it be done by August 2026.
- The school's generator was inspected, and repairs are being scheduled.

Finances:

- Steve Bowen and I attended the BOS meeting on March 20, 2025. We made a brief presentation of our newly revised 2025-26 BOE approved budget which reduced our increase to 3.99%. The BOS expressed appreciation for the BOE's responsive efforts. Currently, we have not received any additional communication from the BOS.

Collaboration:

- Charles Kernan has been working with the Superintendent of Andover/Scotland regarding a partnership for ESY programming.
- I continue to meet with Eric Protulis from Eastconn and other superintendents to discuss possible collaborative efforts as well as new models for the provision of special education programming.
- Carole McCombe has been working with staff from Eastconn and other districts regarding a collaborative approach to Readiness leadership.

Comments on selected agenda items:

Unfinished Business

A. High School Discussion

If the BOE wishes to discuss any items regarding the continuation/ change of our designated high school, they can do so at this time.

I recommend that the BOE, prior to the end of the year, consider establishing a direction and a timeline regarding our designated high school. Even if the BOE has decided not to make any changes next year, prior to a final decision as to date of a possible changeover, the BOE will need to gather information. I recommend that if a possible change of designated high school is being considered, a plan for phase out of current students be established while we are still under contract with WA. The change of school and the phase out plan will have implications for transportation. It would be best if this information was gathered while we are still under contract with Eastconn, and prior to going out to bid for a multi-year transportation contract.

New Business

A. Annual Healthy Food Certification

The BOE must vote annually that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. If the BOE votes “yes”, they can also vote to allow the sale of exempted food and beverages under certain circumstances outside of the school day.

B. Policy 5131.911, Bullying Prevention and Intervention

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE repeal policy 5131.911 effective July 1, 2025. (In 2023, the General Assembly passed legislation, now codified at Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-222aa et seq., making significant changes to the statutory provisions related to bullying. They also mandated that by July 1, BOE’s must adopt the new Connecticut School Climate Policy (the next two items). Therefore, boards of education are advised to repeal their existing Bullying Prevention and Intervention policy, which will effectively be replaced by the Connecticut School Climate Policy).

C. New CABA Climate Plan Policy, first reading

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE adopt the CABA Climate Plan policy. (See B. above-Boards of education must adopt the [Connecticut School Climate Policy](#) by July 1, 2025 for implementation during the 2025-2026 school year and each year thereafter).

D. New Shipman & Goodwin Climate Plan Regulations, first reading

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE adopt the Shipman & Goodwin School Climate Regulations. (See B. above).

E. New Shipman & Goodwin Restorative Practices Policy, first reading

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE adopt the Shipman & Goodwin Restorative Practices policy. (In 2023, the General Assembly passed legislation, now codified at Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-222jj, requiring each board of education to adopt a restorative practices response policy to be implemented by school employees for incidents of challenging behavior or student conflict that is nonviolent and does not constitute a crime. Boards of education are required to adopt such policy by July 1, 2025. The policy directs the district’s administration to develop “a continuum of strategies to prevent, identify, and responding challenging behavior, including but not limited to bullying and harassment”).

F. Policy 5116, Student Discipline, first reading

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE replace the current 5116 Student Discipline policy with the 2024 Shipman & Goodwin model policy.

G. Policy 5152, Prohibition of Sex Discrimination Including Sex-Based Harassment (Students), first reading

Considering recent Federal mandates with respect to Title IX legislation, the Policy Committee recommends that the BOE replace the current Policy 5152, Prohibition of Sex Discrimination Including Sex-Based Harassment (Students) with the 2020 Shipman & Goodwin model policy.

H. Policy 4126 4226, Prohibition of Sex Discrimination Including Sex-Based Harassment (Personnel), first reading

Considering recent Federal mandates regarding Title IX legislation, the Policy Committee recommends that the BOE replace the current Policy 4126 4226, Prohibition of Sex Discrimination Including Sex-Based Harassment (Personnel) with the 2020 Shipman & Goodwin model policy.

I. Policy 1610, Pesticide Application on School Property, first reading

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE replace the current Policy 1600 and regulations, Pesticide Application on School Property, with the 2020 Shipman & Goodwin model policy and regulations. As part of our requirement to review and post our pest management survey, we worked with Jim Houghton who reviewed our policy and without cost updated our IPM plan.

J. Pest Management Plan 2024

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE adopt the updated Pest Management Plan 2024.

K. Policy 1250 Visitors and Observations in Schools, first reading

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE replace the current 1250 Visitors and Observations in Schools policy and regulations with the 2025 Shipman & Goodwin model policy.

(On March 3, 2025, Governor Lamont signed into law Public Act 25-1 which, among other things, addresses immigration enforcement activity at schools and establishes new responsibilities for superintendents and boards of education regarding the development of procedures for interacting with federal immigration authorities).

L. Policy 1700 School Safety and Security Plan, first reading

The Policy Committee recommends that the BOE replace the current 1700 School Safety and Security Plan policy and regulations with the 2025 Shipman & Goodwin model policy.

(As noted above, Governor Lamont recently signed into law Public Act 25-1 which, among other things, addresses immigration enforcement activity at schools).

M. Set the last day of school

Given we closed school for two days for inclement weather and given we post a 182-day school calendar with the State upon which all our State reports for instructional time as well as special education service hours are based, the last day of school will be Monday, June 16, 2025.

N. Set date of Grade 8 graduation

The administration is recommending that the date for graduation be set as June 13, 2025.

Financial Reports

If there are any questions regarding any items mentioned in the administrative reports and/or financial documents please, if possible, send your questions or concerns in advance of the meeting so we can be prepared to discuss. At this time, we will not be requesting any budget transfers.