

Board of Education Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, March 11, 2025 6:30 PM Eastern  
<https://www.youtube.com/@MiddletownStream>

Beman Middle School  
1 Wilderman's Way  
Middletown, CT 06457

Liz Crooks:	Absent
Sheila Daniels:	Present
Rakim Grant:	Absent
Callie Grippo:	Absent
Debra Guss:	Absent
Adam Hayn:	Present
Deborah Kleckowski:	Present
Susan Owens:	Present
Harold Panciera:	Present

Present: 5, Absent: 4.

#### I. Call to Order

Ms. Daniels called the meeting to order at 6:37 PM.

#### II. Salute to the Flag

Ms. Owens led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### III. Adoption of Agenda

A motion to Adopt the Agenda was made. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Adam Hayn, Carried.

Liz Crooks: Absent, Rakim Grant: Absent, Callie Grippo: Absent, Debra Guss: Absent, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Adam Hayn: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4

A motion to remove Item X.D. Approval of Ed Specs for Macdonough was made. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Harold Panciera, Carried.

Liz Crooks: Absent, Rakim Grant: Absent, Callie Grippo: Absent, Debra Guss: Absent, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Adam Hayn: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4

#### IV. District Highlights

##### IV.A. Beman Food Critics Student Menu and Advocacy Group

Dr. Vazquez Matos discussed the Beman Food Critics Student Group and introduced Randall Mel. Mr. Mel introduced the students that testified and the staff that supports the group. Ester, the founding student member of the group, told the origin of the group. On March 20, 2025 11 of the Food Critics testified before the state legislature on the Education Committee and to the Joint Committee on Finance, Bonding Revenue. These students spoke to the importance of the need for funding to support the continuation of free school meals for districts as well as grant opportunities to better connect students to where their food comes

from. The students prepared Mango Chicken and cookies for the Board Members in honor of Board Appreciation Month.

#### IV.B. Music in our Schools Month and Youth Art Month

Mr. Gaylord discussed the Beman Middle School Musical, Aladdin. All four performances were sold out and over 100 students performed. Middletown High School performed High School Musical. Mr. Gaylord spoke of the great job by all students. The K-12 Art Show opened March 8th at the Zilkha Art Gallery. Over 1030 students' artwork from across the district was represented in the show. The New England Music Festival is March 13-16. Three MHS students will be performing.

#### IV.C. Upcoming District Events

All 9 of the Beman Robotics Teams qualified for the Connecticut State Robotic Championship. 6 of those teams made it to the elimination round. The Family Climate and Culture Survey is now open. Kindergarten Registration and Kindergarten Preparatory Academy for the 2025-2026 school year is now open.

#### V. Public Session

Chair Daniels explained the rules of Public Session. There were no public comments.

#### VI. Communications

##### VI.A. Report of Student Representative

Ms. Rabah was not available to report. Ms. Kleckowski congratulated DECA students that participated and won awards at the State Competition. Ms. Owens shared that GIFTS will have their 2nd annual Luncheon on Friday, March 14th.

#### VII. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Harold Panciera, Carried.

Liz Crooks: Absent, Rakim Grant: Absent, Callie Grippo: Absent, Debra Guss: Absent, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Adam Hayn: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4

##### VII.A. Minutes of February 11, 2025

##### VII.B. Minutes of January 16, 2025 Special Meeting

##### VII.C. Out of State Field Trip MHS Indoor Track to Nationals

##### VII.D. Out of State Field Trip Beman Robotics to Worlds Championship

##### VII.E. Out of State Field Trip MPAC to NY

##### VII.F. Out of State Field Trip MHS HBCU and DC Sites

##### VII.G. Grants Status Report

##### VII.H. Policy #3110 Board Budget Procedures and Line Item Transfers - Second Reading

##### VII.I. Policy # 5131.81 Student Use of the District's Computer Systems and Internet Safety - Second Reading

#### VII.J. Budget Committee

#### VII.K. Curriculum Committee

#### VII.L. Facilities Committee

#### VII.M. Policy Committee

### VIII. Department Reports

#### VIII.A. Financial Report

Ms. Forbes shared that the March statement shows a small surplus. Mr. Pancieria shared that any concerns were covered at the Budget Committee meeting on March 10.

##### VIII.A.1. Action on Line Item Transfer Report

Ms. Forbes shared that the transfers were in Facilities (HVAC and gasoline), and the remainder of the transfers were for educational needs across the schools.

A motion was made to approve the Line Item Transfer Report. This motion, made by Harold Panciera and seconded by Adam Hayn, Carried.

Liz Crooks: Absent, Rakim Grant: Absent, Callie Grippo: Absent, Debra Guss: Absent, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Adam Hayn: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4

#### VIII.B. Facilities Department

Mr. Gaylord shared that the security audit is finishing up. Improvement suggestions from the audit will be made. Trees at Wesley and Central Office have been damaged due to wind storms and will be removed. Beman science tables will be fixed shortly. There is a leak in the roof at Central Office that will be addressed. Storage spaces at Keigwin are being emptied in anticipation of renovations to the building.

#### VIII.C. Personnel Report

Mr. Snyder shared that a Science position has been filled through Proximity Learning. HR will be meeting with education students at Quinnipiac for recruitment. The department is preparing for Spring and Summer hiring. Mr. Snyder elaborated on the HR staff hiring structure. He also discussed the process of an application to hire date.

#### VIII.D. Transportation Report

Mr. Langton shared that there has been a drop in the conduct report. There was one minor accident with no injuries and minor damage last month. There will be over 300 field trips this year with the majority starting next month. Mr. Langton reviewed the number of conduct reports by school and plans for improvement

### IX. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Vazquez Matos thanked the Board Members for their work in recognition of Board appreciation month.

#### IX.A. HR Annual Exit and Stay Interview Report

Dr. Vazquez Matos shared the overview of the exit interview process. Mr. Snyder reviewed the staff that were offered an exit interview. Exclusions include temporary, seasonal staff and change of assignments. There is a 62% completion rate of exit interviews with online

submissions being the most popular. Both exit and stay interviews are anonymous. He explained the top reasons that people gave for leaving the district. The top choice was for career change. Mr. Snyder reviewed workplace improvements and exit interview insights, next steps and commitment to improvement.

Highlights of the stay interviews showed positive onboarding experiences, working with students and other staff, supported by staff and supervisor. Most staff feel valued and recognized at work and stated that they would recommend working at Middletown Public Schools. Mr. Snyder reviewed the next steps.

#### IX.B. Overview of Ed Specs of Macdonough

Dr. Vazquez Matos gave an introduction of Educational Specs and the state requirements when planning a new school. Mr. Gaylord shared that an enrollment study will be completed before sending it to the state. Ms. Forbes shared that the Common Council will have 3 resolutions to approve before sending it to the state for approval. Dr. Vazquez Matos shared that the project is moving quickly and he welcomes their comments and questions. Ms. Forbes shared the timeline process for the application process.

#### IX.C. Legislative Updates

Dr. Vazquez Matos shared that he visited Middletown High School to address the cell phone issue at the school. He introduced Dr. Brooks to share stories and challenges at the school. Dr. Brooks clarified the consequences for students that are caught with a cell phone or beats. She shared that the students are more focused in classes.

Dr. Vazquez Matos shared that entitlement grants (Title 1, 2, 3 and 4) allocations have not been discussed with him yet. The Educational Cost Sharing Grant could sunset at the end of this year. Dr. Vazquez Matos, Mr. Mel and the students have advocated for the free lunch program. The universal PreK bill has moved forward and would allow for KPA funding for the district.

#### X. Action Items

X.A. Required vote for participation in healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification  
MOTION: Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Middletown Board of Education certifies 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. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Harold Panciera, Carried.

Liz Crooks: Absent, Rakim Grant: Absent, Callie Grippo: Absent, Debra Guss: Absent, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Adam Hayn: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4

X.B. Required vote for food exemptions for BOEs choosing healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification

MOTION: The Middletown Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food sales. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Harold Panciera, Carried.

Liz Crooks: Absent, Rakim Grant: Absent, Callie Grippo: Absent, Debra Guss: Absent, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Adam Hayn: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4

X.C. Optional vote for beverage exemptions for all BOEs

MOTION: The Middletown Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. The "school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the beverage sales. This motion, made by Adam Hayn and seconded by Harold Panciera, Carried.

Liz Crooks: Absent, Rakim Grant: Absent, Callie Grippo: Absent, Debra Guss: Absent, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Adam Hayn: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4

X.D. Approval of Ed Specs for Macdonough

This item was removed under Item III. Adoption of the Agenda.

## XI. Future Agenda Items

Ms. Daniels requested a report on KPA with data. Ms. Kleckowski asked for an overview of Keigwin. Dates for the Budget Presentation meetings were discussed.

## XII. Adjournment

Move at 9:04 PM to adjourn. This motion, made by Sheila Daniels and seconded by Deborah Kleckowski, Carried.

Liz Crooks: Absent, Rakim Grant: Absent, Callie Grippo: Absent, Debra Guss: Absent, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Adam Hayn: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4