

*The minutes presented within this document summarize the discussion of the Regular Board of Education meeting. To view the meeting in its entirety and hear full reports, please click the following link - [October 1, 2025 - Regular BoE meeting](#) Passcode: 1@qqYfrB*

**BRISTOL BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bristol, Connecticut**  
**Wednesday, October 1, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

The Bristol Board of Education regular meeting was held on Wednesday, October 1, 2025 at 7:00pm in the Bristol Board of Education Auditorium located at 129 Church Street and via Zoom Meeting Platform.

**PRESENT:** Chair Shelby Pons, Commissioners: Russell Anderson, Eric Carlson, Jill-Fitzsimons-Bula, Kristen Giantonio, Lorianne Osenkowski, Maria Simmons, Dante Tagariello, and Jennifer Van Gorder

**ABSENT:**

**ALSO, PRESENT:** Iris White, Superintendent and Mary Hawk, Deputy Superintendent

**CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Chair Pons called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and asked the audience to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance

**STAFF AND STUDENT RECOGNITION**

Superintendent White Recognition's are

1. Dr. Karlene Richardson is health occupations teacher at Bristol Central and Bristol Eastern High School and now a published author; *Bridging the Gap: Jaw-Dropping Approach Maintaining Engagement*.
2. Jacoby Fry was chosen to be part of the CIAC, Student Athlete Advisory Board and CIAC sportsmanship committee.
3. Ed Mongeon, 40 years of service to Bristol Public Schools as an educator.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**September 18, 2025 - Special Meeting Minutes**

The Board of Education voted to approve the September 18, 2025- Special Meeting Minutes as written.

***Motion made by Shelby Pons. Motion Passed Unanimously with all five ( 5 ) Commissioners.***

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Policy Committee** – Commissioner Fitzsimmons – Bula reported that the committee met on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Two policies were moved forward to the full board for consideration and approval and will further be discussed in the agenda.

**Student Achievement** - Commissioner Fitzsimmons -Bula reported that the committee met on September 17. The decision on minor curriculum revisions in humanities will move forward to the full board for consideration and approval and will further be discussed in the agenda.

**Finance and Operations Committee** - Commissioner Carlson reported that the committee met on September 10<sup>th</sup> .

**Safety Committee** - There was no safety committee report

**School, Family, and Community Partnership** – Commissioner Simmons reported that the committee met on September 24. Starting with an active well-being activity, a choice between a favorable summer memory or fall tradition. For the community partnership report, two people from the Salvation Army provided details about camp programs, volunteer and employee opportunities for students. School community school shout-out highlighted Lindsey DiPietro at BAIMS and ending off with SFCP goal and plan marking its one-year review.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS**

### **Bristol Central**

Bristol Central Senior Representative Amelia Browne was absent.

### **Bristol Eastern**

Bristol Eastern Senior Representative Paige Ansah presented the monthly Bristol Eastern Student Representative report. Highlights of Paige's report of upcoming events for this month. Seniors are encouraged to apply to FAFSA which is officially open for financial aid. Crochet Club had their first meeting on Sept 26<sup>th</sup> , Diversity club has an upcoming meeting on Oct 14<sup>th</sup>. In addition, Honor Societies have started up and will begin holding meetings soon, with the expectation of National Honor and Science National Honor society, which have already held their first meetings. Artwork photographers will be at Bristol Eastern for Picture Day on October 6<sup>th</sup> to photograph in grades 9 through 11<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile, the yearbook committee has started taking pictures and accepting senior quotes as they start working on the BEHS 2025-26 yearbook. PSAT testing is coming up and will be on Oct 15<sup>th</sup>. During this period, senior workshops will be offered with Guidance Counselors and English teachers. Seniors are encouraged to take this advantage of this time to work on common applications, essays or scholarships. Seniors may also choose to attend a college visit that day or shadow a job. The Eastern Science National Honor

### **Bristol Eastern Report- cont'd**

Society will be hosting a blood drive on October 6<sup>th</sup>. The Red Cross will be coming to collect blood, students and teachers can choose to donate. The Student Council has been working hard to prepare this year's homecoming. The theme this year is Rhythms of Rio. The cost of tickets is \$20, and will be on sale for all grade levels. Homecoming will be Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 9pm.

### **CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Pons presented an Education Funding Overview. Highlighting the understanding and transparency of a deficit in the Education Funding. The chair explained that learning about the state's Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) law was a major learning experience, since she had never dealt with it before becoming chair. The law basically prevents cities from giving schools less money than the year before. It sets a floor so funding can't drop, which makes sense when you think about things like contracts, inflation, transportation, and special education costs that always go up. She shared that Bristol receives about \$41.6 million each year from the state through the Education Cost Share Grant, which helps offset city expenses. That money is meant to add to what the city provides, not replace it.

In 2024, the state notified Bristol that it failed to meet the MBR for the first time, shorting the schools by about \$1.37 million. The city chose to make up that amount to avoid a much larger penalty the following year. Over the past few years, the state has had to step in with extra appropriations \$1.3 million, \$3.4 million, and \$5.9 million to make up for underfunding. She also explained another law that allows school boards to set aside up to 2% of unspent funds in a non-lapsing account for future one-time needs. However, the city used about \$3.9 million from that account over three years to lower its own share of school funding, which the state later said is not allowed. Those funds are supposed to supplement education, not replace city dollars. Even though it looks like school funding went up by about \$15 million over the last few years, most of that came from state-mandated corrections and the district's own reserve funds. In reality, the schools were never fully funded from the start, which led to ongoing shortfalls. Meanwhile, costs have continued to rise, insurance went up by over \$3 million, transportation by \$2.7 million, and special education by \$2.6 million while the overall budget has only grown about 5%. An independent audit confirmed that these gaps have put serious pressure on the district, especially in special education. She also gave updates on facility projects. The city approved \$8.8 million to fully replace the roof at Bristol Central High School, after already spending \$168,000 on a patch that will now be removed. Bristol Eastern High School's roof is still leaking and waiting on approval for funding. And the board unanimously supported the Edgewood School renovation, which goes before the Board of Finance on October 28, 2025. She closed by saying that education needs to be treated as a top priority in the city's budget, because putting things off or underfunding schools only leads to bigger problems and higher costs down the road.

## **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Superintendent White provides some updates on Superintendent 25-26 Priorities. Superintendent white has her First Coffee with the Superintendent on September 26 at Bristol Board of Education. This session was about families looking for specific community resources based on family situations. Conversations followed about how to add resources with community partnerships. Working with School, Family, and Community Partnership to have some feedback and ideas, as well on how we can accomplish that together.

Superintendent White also talks about the Bristol Opportunity Collective. This was driven by a community activist named Melina Floyd, who's a resident of Bristol and graduate of Bristol Eastern. Melina Floyd is passionate about teaching students and families about nutritious meals. She was able to form a partnership with Bristol Eastern. Superintendent White and Ms. Floyd had conversations applying for state grants.

Superintendent White provided an update on a meeting with United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut to partner with Bristol Public Schools. She met with Manny Martinez regarding prevention of student homelessness. The superintendent provided a fiscal reasonability update. The 2025-26 superintendent proposed budget request as well as the approved 25-26 budget are now posted on the Bristol Public School websites. Also making sure to have quarterly reports and fiscal reports to also be posted on the website to be transparent about the budget. Conversations followed about a budget dashboard to be also published, it's in development working with Jeff Telke and City of Bristol. As well receiving feedback from the Board of Finance and the Board of Education to meet the standards

The Superintendent gave us an update on Redistricting. She has been contracted with MP Planning Group, visiting Chippens Hill Middle School and scheduled for a visit to West Bristol and Greene Hill School on Tuesday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025. An opportunity to see the space. MP planning will be using enrollment numbers as to their visits to the two schools to develop three options that they want to present to the next Board of Education meeting. Deputy Hawk and Superintendent White are working with stakeholders to have an opportunity to provide feedback on those three options.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Giantonio called for a motion to pull 8.1.a Teacher Retirement from the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Kristen Giantonio and seconded by Russell Anderson. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Kristen Giantonio called for a motion to approve from the consent agenda, which include items from 8.1.b through 8.1d.

Motion made by Kristen Giantonio and seconded by Russel Anderson. Motion passed unanimously.

## **8.1 PERSONNEL**

### **8.1.b New Teacher Hires**

Engle, Casie – MTV – Grade 2 Teacher effective September 22, 2025

Guerin, Joseph – WB – Special Education Teacher effective September 25, 2025

Negron, Lia – BCHS – World Language (Spanish) Teacher effective TBD\*\*

Rodney, Susan – BCHS – Family Consumer Science Teacher effective September 29, 2025

Sooko, Dana – SSS/Edge PreK – CW Art Teacher effective September 8, 25

Trudeau, Emily – EDGE PreK – PreK Special Education Teacher effective September 22, 2025

***The Board of Education voted to accept the New Teacher Hires.***

***Motion made by Kristen Giantonio and seconded by Russell Ross . Motion passed unanimously.***

### **8.1.c A-2 Teacher Hires Stipend**

Jacques, Sharon – BEHS – STEM Department Head effective September 8, 2025

Nugent, Alyssa – BEHS – Humanities Department Head effective September 8, 2025

Plourde, Jennifer – BCHS – Humanities Department Head effective September 3, 2025

Reichler, Jason – BCHS – STEM Department Head effective September 3, 2025

***The Board of Education voted to accept the Teacher Hires Stipend***

***Motion made by Kristen Giantonio and seconded by Jennifer Van Gorder. Motion passed unanimously.***

### **8.1.d Sixth Year Salary Credit- Effective 09/01/2025**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Assignment</u></b>
Bedlack, Karen	TESOL Teacher, BCHS
Cawley, Megan	Grade 8 ELA Teacher, WB
Fisher, Ryan	Mathematics Teacher, BCHS
Ireland, Kara	Grade 6 Language Arts Teacher, NEMS
Nocera, Shelly	English Teacher, BEHS

Parsons, Rebecca  
Perrotti, Maria

Grade 6 Science Teacher, NEMS  
World Language Teacher, Spanish, BEHS

***The Board of Education voted to accept the Sixth Year Salary Credit – Effective 09/01/2025***

***Motion made by Kristen Giantonio and seconded by Jennifer Van Gorder. Motion passed unanimously.***

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no Public Comments to the board.

## **DELIBERATED ITEMS/DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS**

### **Information Technology Task Force MOU**

The Superintendent presented the Information Technology Task Force MOU. This has been an initiative between the Bristol Public Schools and the City of Bristol. Conversations followed understanding regarding IT and Networking working together. Jodi Bond, Jeff Telke and Superintendent White have met with Eric Evans, Mayor Jeff Caggiano and Diane Waldron in the City of Bristol about brainstorming and share resourcing on how we can share networking.

Jeff Telke talks about more information about the IT Task Force.

***Motion made by Dante Tagariello and seconded by Jennifer Van Gorder. Motion passed unanimously***

### **BAIMS Theater trip to London England in April 2027**

Kenneth Bagley is seeking approval for our BAIMS theater students to take a trip to the London Theater District. Ms. Lisa Carroll, the theater teacher at BAIMS, provided the details of the London trip, including the itinerary and educational rationale for each day of their one-week trip.

Questions and discussions followed regarding fundraising and global protection (insurance) for the London, England BAIMS Trip in April 2027.

***Motion made by Commissioner Tagariello and Seconded by Commissioner Carlson. Motion passed unanimously.***

## **POLICY REVISION**

### **Policy and Regulation 1324 – Fundraising**

Deputy Superintendent Hawk presented the Policy and Regulation 1324 – Fundraising. All student fundraising must be part of a school-approved project and must be approved in writing

by the superintendent. Fundraising should have a clear learning or money benefit and should not cause extra work for staff or risk for the school. The superintendent may allow information from trusted groups to be shared, but schools will only pass it along. Students cannot be asked to raise money from people in other countries. We are also looking at self-guided options.

***Motion made by Dante Tagariello and Seconded by Russell Anderson . Motion passed unanimously.***

#### **Policy 6140 – Curriculum Design/Development/Revisions**

Carly Fortin, Chief of Academics presents Policy 6140 – Curriculum Design / Development /Revisions. This policy outlines how curriculum is developed and approved for teachers. That's why we often present the curriculum to the board—it's part of the required process. Currently, once the board approves a curriculum, our team works with teachers to implement it. But as teachers use it, changes are sometimes needed. The current policy doesn't allow for quick updates. We're proposing a change: major revisions (like new courses, new standards, or big content changes) would still go through the full board. But minor revisions could be reviewed and approved by the Student Achievement Committee, either yearly or as needed. The committee could still choose to send any changes to the full board.

Questions and Discussion followed by regarding minor revisions to the student achievement committee and the full board for approval.

***Motion made by Jennifer Van Gorder and seconded by Kristen Giantonio. Motion passed unanimously.***

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Giantonio recognized Mrs. Kelly Monahan Benoit for her upcoming retirement after 38 years of teaching high school Latin. Highlights of her career include multiple teaching awards, organizing 24 student trips to Europe, and founding the Interact Club at Bristol Central. She is known for her creative, engaging teaching style and lasting impact on students. The Board expressed appreciation for her years of service and dedication to education.

Commissioner Giantonio makes a motion to pass 8.1.a Teacher Retirement

***Motion made by Commissioner Giantonio and Seconded by Commissioner Tagariello. Motion passed unanimously.***

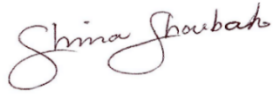
#### **INFORMATION/LIAISON REPORTS**

Commissioner Simmons recognized Principal Abraham at Southside Elementary School.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned. ( 9:02 p.m.)

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, reading "Shina Shoubate". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Recording Secretary  
Bristol Board of Education