

Ashford Board of Education
Ashford, Connecticut
Meeting Agenda
March 5, 2020
7:00 pm
Ashford School
Library/Media Center

1. Call To Order
2. Communications
3. Opportunity for Public Comment
4. Approval of Minutes: 02/06/2020 (special and regular)
5. Old Business
 - a. FY 19 Audit Update
 - b. FY 21 Budget Revision Work Session
 - c. Approval of FY 21 Ashford School Budget
 - d. Financial Office Advisory Committee Update
6. New Business
 - a. Approval of Family and Medical Leave Requests
 - b. First Reading of Board Policies as Revised by Counsel
7. Second Opportunity for Public Comment
8. Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items
9. Adjournment

Ashford Board of Education Goals

Curriculum – Ensure a Kindergarten to 8th grade curriculum that challenges students to use methods of inquiry to solve problems, think critically, and to express themselves creatively and effectively.

Financial - Develop a budget that ensures the best possible education while being fiscally responsible to taxpayers.

Culture - Foster an environment of physical and emotional health and wellness for all. Support a community that recognizes professional expertise and provides diverse opportunities that enhance teaching and learning.

Community Relations and Facilities - Provide opportunities for enhanced community engagement and serve as a leader for Ashford in enhancing energy efficiency, developing a maintenance and restoration plan that extends the school's useful life and demonstrates environmental responsibility.

All meetings, conferences, programs and activities at Ashford School are available, without discrimination, to individuals with disabilities as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or Title II of the American with Disabilities Act. Individuals with disabilities requesting relocation of this meeting should call the Superintendent at 429-1927 or e-mail a request to jplongo@ashfordct.org not later than 2 working days prior to the meeting. Hearing impaired individuals may communicate their request for accommodations by using the e-mail address above, or calling the State of CT TDD relay service (800) 842-2880 or the national relay service number (800) 855-2880.

Dear School Administrators and Board of Education Members:

I am writing to you today because I believe we have a very common goal which is to keep all kids in school regardless of their nationality, color, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background. This legislative session, there is a bill that will discriminate against children based on their religious beliefs and strip parents of their rights. This bill, [HB 5044](#) will be heard in public hearing in the Public Health Committee next Wednesday, February 19th at 10:30 a.m. at the Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Ave, Hartford in Room 2E.

This bill has the potential to remove thousands of healthy children from attending public school, private school, colleges, and daycares in Connecticut. As a state constitutional right, all children are entitled to public education without discrimination. This bill would go into effect in **July 2020**.

The bill, HB-5044:

- Aims to remove the religious exemption to vaccination completely for **all public and private K-12 schools, child care, institutions of higher education (college and trade schools) and child group care homes**.
- Gives children/students who previously used the religious exemption until the start of the 2020 school year, or Sept 1, 2020 for child care, to get the initial dose of any missed, age-appropriate vaccines and to create a catch-up schedule for any additional required doses.
- Requires children/students who are medically exempt from one or more of the vaccines on CT's vaccination schedule to submit a new certificate, to be created by the Department of Public Health.
- Establishes an advisory committee with the authority to review whether children/students using the medical exemption should be required to meet other criteria and if the DPH should have any oversight on the usage of exemptions. **(This means the state can overrule the medical decisions of the parents and their children's doctors.)**
- **Requires any ADULT**, born after 1956, enrolling in higher education classes held on the campus of colleges, universities, academies, tech and vocational schools and seminaries, to receive or have proof of receiving:
 - two doses of MMR,
 - two doses of chickenpox,
 - two doses of the meningitis vaccine, only for students living on campus unless they have a certificate from their medical provider that they have had a confirmed case of measles, mumps, rubella or chickenpox or their medical provider uses the new DPH certificate to state that it would not be advised to get those vaccines because of the student's health.

The religious exemption has been in place in Connecticut for 60 years without issue. Forty-five states currently maintain religious exemptions, and many have philosophical exemptions as well. CT maintains a very high vaccine uptake at 96.1% overall. We have NO emergency and the state has no compelling reason to make this change.

Most recently, the State of New York legislature voted to remove the religious exemption. As a result, 26,000 students were excluded from public and private schools, and 90% of those continue to remain without educational services. This included special needs students, whose education and support services are federally protected by IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), and English Language Learners, protected by the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA).

If the religious exemption is repealed, how will the state provide educational services to Connecticut's students? Will individual districts be responsible for providing services? What is the potential for opening your school district to lawsuits? Multiple lawsuits have been filed in states where the religious exemption has been repealed.

How else would a repeal impact the students, families and staff in your school or district?

Are you concerned that this bill would force you to discriminate against and segregate students in your school? Are you prepared to expel healthy, thriving students from your school for no reason?

Now is the time to act and keep all of Connecticut's students in school. Ensure that the civil liberties of all our citizens remain in place. Be a voice for your students. No child should be discriminated against based on religion or personal medical choices. Please act now. Please attend the public hearing on Wednesday, February 19th or send in written testimony to: phtestimony@cga.ct.gov Simply state that you OPPOSE 5044 in the subject line and in the body of your email, feel free to add your own reasons. Make sure to include your name and title. These must be sent by Feb 18th midnight.

Please send this letter to your local representative pat.wilsonpheanious@cga.ct.gov, state senator dan.champagne@cga.ct.gov, and fellow superintendents. All children belong in school!

Thank you,
Shannon Gamache

Ashford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes – February 6, 2020
6:30 pm
Ashford School District Office Conference Room

Note: Per CGS 10-218, Board of Education Meeting Minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exceptions of motions and votes recorded, the minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote by the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and so voted upon.

Call to Order

Chair John Lippert called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. Present were Tess Grous, Shannon Gamache, Marian Matthews and Jane Urban. Unable to attend were members Al Maccarone and Tina Fradette.

Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session)

Motion to enter into executive session (6:34 pm) for the purpose of Superintendent evaluation made by Marian Matthews, seconded by Shannon Gamache and carried unanimously.

Present: Shannon Gamache, John Lippert, Tess Grous, Marian Matthews and Jane Urban.

Board members exited executive session at 7:08 pm.

Motion made by Jane Urban to approve the evaluation of the Superintendent, as edited, and distribute said evaluation to Dr. Longo for review. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the special meeting (7:10pm) made by Tess Grous, seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

John Lippert, Chair

Ashford Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes – February 6, 2020
7:00 pm
Ashford School Library/Media Center

Note: Per CGS 10-218, Board of Education Meeting Minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exceptions of motions and votes recorded, the minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote by the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and so voted upon.

Call to Order

Chair John Lippert called the meeting to order at 7:13 PM. Present were Marian Matthews, Jane Urban, Shannon Gamache, Tess Grous, Tina Fradette (7:35pm) and Al Maccarone. Also present were Superintendent Dr. James Longo, Interim Business Manager Karen Munroe and recording secretary Jen Barsaleau.

Present in the audience: Cathryn Silver-Smith, Jason Horn and Jennifer Lesczynski.

Communications

No written communications were received. Chair John Lippert took a moment to encourage members of the board to speak at meetings concerning their thoughts and opinions. They may differ from that of other members, but that it is okay; members should be comfortable in speaking freely and in support of their views.

a. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Longo reviewed his report that was included in the BOE agenda packet. Discussion followed concerning the CT Academic Performance Report, differentiated instruction, standardized testing and the efforts put forth by students at E.O. Smith. Other items of discussion included the FY 19 BOE audit and extension to 2/28/2020. John Lippert will communicate with the BOF if there are any concerns related to the FY 19 audit. Employment posting for a business manager is on the Ashford School website and the following educational employment websites: CT REAP, CASBO and CEA. Plans to enter into agreement with EASTCONN for business services have not come to fruition. EASTCONN does not have any candidates available at this time.

Opportunity for Public Comment

- Member Tess Grous noted that she had posted positive comment on the Ashford Community page concerning her child's successful high school and college educational experiences since relocating to Ashford.
- Shannon Gamache noted she had sent an email with the location of a forum concerning public school vaccination requirements to be held on February 13th.

Approval of Minutes: 01/02/2020; 01/16/2020

Motion made by Jane Urban to approve the minutes of 01/02/2020, motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously with the following amendments:

- Call to Order:
"Present were..." Add Dr. Longo to the list of attendees.
- Approval of Minutes:
In the motion to approve the Regular meeting minutes, strike "to approve the" from the final sentence.
- New Business:
*The title for 7b should just be "b. Capital..." and should be indented.
In the second paragraph to 7b, replace "Cheryl Baker and Chuck Funk." with "the town. John Lippert will follow up with the BOF Chair."*
- Agenda for January 16 meeting:
Remove "an Executive Meeting at 6:00 P.M.,"
- Adjournment:
In the last sentence, replace "by" with "at".

Motion made by Tina Fradette to approve the special meeting minutes of 01/16/2020. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

Motion made by Marian Matthews to approve the minutes of 01/16/2020. Motion seconded by Shannon Gamache and carried unanimously with the following amendments:

School Based Mental Health Presentation

- Correct spelling of the name “*Alissa Tetreault*” to Alyssa Tatro

Old Business

b. Audit and Business Office Update

Edit first paragraph to read as follows:

- “*John Lippert clarified that there are two financial reviews currently underway. King and King is the audit firm that is working on the FY 19 audit of the Town of Ashford and the BOE, and, if necessary, will be requesting a filing extension on or before 2/28 to allow for the school to complete its submission of material. Stephen Pedneault of Forensic Accounting, LLC, is conducting the second. He is reviewing the current budget and business office practices and will be reporting his findings, if any, to the Board of Education.*”

Committee Break Out Sessions: (Finance/Personnel/Transportation) (Building & Grounds/Cafeteria/Long Term Planning)

Building & Grounds/Cafeteria/Long Term Planning (7:59 pm – 8:47pm)

Marian Matthews, Shannon Gamache and Tina Fradette met in the professional development room in the library media center and will share the content of their discussion to the full board when the meeting resumes. There was no audience.

- *Marian Matthews reported that the committee discussed the need to have the maintenance supervisor review the Friar & Assoc. report and the most recent energy audit and report to the BOE in March. The Board and maintenance supervisor will develop a list what has been completed and what can be completed.*
- *The committee noted that the salad bar for the Cafeteria has not yet arrived. Metal eating utensils are now being used instead of plastic ones. Ghost Farm was discussed; has the cafeteria manager reached out to Mansfield’s director as previously discussed? The committee would like to have the Food Service Manager attend a BOE meeting in March.*
- *It was noted that our exchange teacher from Germany has expressed interest in the school greenhouse. Further discussion followed concerning relationship to curriculum, growing vegetables for school use, composting and raised garden beds.*

Finance/Personnel/Transportation (7:59pm – 8:47 pm)

Jane Urban, Al Maccarone and Tess Grous met in the library media center. The committee announced it would be discussing the FY 21 budget with Dr. Longo and Mrs. Munroe. Present in the audience were John Lippert (ex-officio), Cathryn Silver-Smith, Jason Horn and Jennifer Lesczynski.

- *Discussion followed of the second draft of the FY 21 budget and 7 proposed budget options, dated 02/06/2020. This draft reflects a 6.19% increase over the current budget. Dr. Longo and Mrs. Munroe responded to questions, reviewed budget options and their effects on the proposed budget. Specific details concerning staff could not be discussed in open session without identifying persons or positions.*

Motion made by Jane Urban to enter into executive session (8:31 pm) for the purpose of discussing potential budget reductions that would include identifiable persons or positions; and to invite Dr. Longo, Karen Munroe and John Lippert (ex-officio) to the session. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.

Present: Al Maccarone, Tess Grous, Jane Urban, Dr. Longo, Karen Munroe and John Lippert.
The committee and invitees exited executive session at 8:44 pm. No action was taken.

- When the full board reconvened, Jane Urban reported that the committee discussed FY 21 budget, increases, decreases and staffing levels based on information provided by Dr. Longo and Mrs. Munroe. The committee wishes to see the 2018-2019 actuals even if the

- audit is not complete. The committee recommends an FY 21 budget of \$8,016,765, which represents a 4.4% increase over the current budget.
- The posting of a special meeting on Feb. 13 was discussed to finalize the FY 21 Budget Narrative document for presentation to the BOF on Feb. 20th. The BOE does not plan to hold its regular meeting on Feb. 20th.

Old Business

a. FY 21 Budget Work Session

Discussed by the finance committee in break out session and reported to the full board upon close of the committee session.

Motion made by John Lippert to direct Dr. Longo to develop an FY 21 Ashford Board of Education budget for presentation to the Ashford Board of Finance in the amount of \$8,016,765, a 4.4% increase over the current budget. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.

b. School Based Behavioral Services

Chair John Lippert suggested the board re-vote on this item following receipt of clarifications that had been requested by members concerning school based behavioral services.

Shannon Gamache stated that in her opinion, services of this nature should not be provided in a public building such as the school.

Motion made by Marian Matthews to approve the agreement with Community Health Services to provide school based behavioral health services in Ashford School. Motion seconded by Jane Urban and carried 5-1.

Yes: Jane Urban, Tess Grous, Al Maccarone, Marian Matthews, Tina Fradette

No: Shannon Gamache

New Business

None

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

- Jennifer Lesczynski introduced herself as the parent of 2nd and 6th grade students. She encouraged the use of pie charts in the budget narrative as they are helpful for the public and to identify contractual obligations and increases; identify and explain fixed costs that cannot be changed. Point out major changes and only show the areas of the budget that the BOE can reduce. Mrs. Lesczynski expressed her support for behavioral services in Ashford School.
- Shannon Gamache spoke of her concern about what she feels are questionable Teen Club book titles for children. These books are in the “young adult” category for ages 12-24. She wondered if our library media specialist reviews young adult books for content prior to purchase?

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

2/13 Special meeting for budget narrative work session, no meeting on 2/20, and members are to attend the Board of Finance meeting.

Adjournment

Motion made by Marian Matthews to adjourn the meeting (9:36 pm). Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau, Recording Secretary



**MODEL POLICY CLIENTS
SUMMARY OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
SEPTEMBER 2019**

Introduction

This memorandum serves as a collective summary of the suggested revisions to local and regional board policies, regulations and accompanying documents that we have recommended as a result of the 2019 legislative session, as well as changes based on legal trends or best practices. We include in this memorandum any changes that have been made since October of 2018. The bases for our recommended changes to existing policies for each respective series are discussed below. *Please note that we sent out a preliminary batch of policy revisions for 2019 in September; additional policy revisions since that first notification are included on this summary and highlighted in yellow.* For access to these policies, regulations and accompanying documents, please visit our client portal and use the login and password with which you have been provided. If you need any assistance with your login and/or password, please contact Jade Tarca, jtarca@goodwin.com. If you have any questions about the policy revisions, feel free to contact Peter J. Maher, at pmaher@goodwin.com, or Gwen J. Zittoun, at gzittoun@goodwin.com.

Series 1000: Community/Board Operation

Non-Discrimination (Community)

The non-discrimination policy has been revised to clarify that discrimination based on alienage, or citizenship status, is prohibited by law.

Smoking

We have updated the smoking model policy to prohibit smoking on school grounds, as provided by PA 19-13. Previously, the policy only prohibited smoking within indoor facilities.

Series 3000: Business

Budget Procedures and Line Item Transfers

This policy has been revised to clarify the process for line item transfers between budgetary categories of the itemized estimate of the budget of local boards of education. There are no revisions to the regional school district version of this model policy.

Series 4000: Personnel

Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug-Free Workplace

The Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug-Free Workplace policy was revised to conform to the changes to the 1000 series smoking policy, and now also prohibits smoking on property owned, leased, contracted for, or utilized by the Board.

Child Abuse, Neglect, Sexual Assault Reporting

We have revised the Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Assault Reporting policy for organizational clarity. We have also updated various operational definitions of abuse and neglect in the appendices of the policy.

Employment and Student Teacher Checks

This policy, formerly titled Employment Checks, has been revised in accordance with Public Act 19-91, which makes various changes to the requirements for conducting criminal background checks. The Act, among other things, now requires schools to conduct national and state criminal background checks for student teachers and requires that all prospective employees explain, in writing, whether they have been convicted of a crime and, if charges are pending, what the charges are and in what court they are pending. The Act further clarifies that fees for criminal background checks for student teachers are waived.

Non-Discrimination

The non-discrimination policy has been revised to clarify that discrimination based on alienage, or citizenship status, is prohibited by law.

Sex Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace

The Sex Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace policy was revised based on Public Acts 19-16 and 19-93 to update the mandatory training requirements. Additionally, the amended

policy updates the required notice, which must now be emailed to employees within three months of hire with the subject line “Sexual Harassment Policy.” Lastly, the policy updates information related to potential remedies for victims of sexual harassment.

Series 5000: Students

Attendance, Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism

We have revised the Attendance, Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism Policy to include a sample withdrawal form for students age seventeen.

Bullying and Safe School Climate Plan

The Bullying and Safe School Climate model policy was revised to include reference to the new administrator training required by Section 5 of Public Act 19-166. The Act requires each board, in collaboration with the Connecticut State Department of Education, to post on its website training materials to school administrators regarding the prevention of and intervention in discrimination against and targeted harassment of students based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics.

*We are currently developing the targeted harassment training and this will be provided soon.

Homeless Children and Youth

The Homeless Children and Youth model policy has been revised in accordance with Public Act 19-179 to incorporate changes concerning the hearing and appeal process afforded to school-age homeless children and youth who are denied access to school accommodations, under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-186. The policy was further revised to clarify the rights of unaccompanied youth.

Food Allergies and/or Glycogen Storage Disease

This policy was revised in accordance with feedback provided by the Office for Civil Rights. The revisions include adding students with diabetes to the protections provided to students with life-threatening food allergies and glycogen storage disease. The revisions also clarify that students with life-threatening food allergies and diabetes are virtually always students with disabilities and should be referred to a Section 504 team.

Non-Discrimination

The non-discrimination policy has been revised to clarify that discrimination based on alienage, or citizenship status, is prohibited by law.

Physical Activity and Student Discipline

This policy was revised based on Public Act 19-173 to include provisions related to the devotion of time to undirected play for elementary students in addition to the twenty minutes of required time for physical exercise. The policy also addresses the prevention of students from participating in the entire time devoted to physical exercise and undirected play as a form of discipline.

Section 504/ADA

We have updated the complaint procedures in the administrative regulations associated with this policy in accordance with feedback provided by the Office for Civil Rights.

Student Discipline

The Student Discipline model policy was revised, pursuant to PA 19-91, to narrow the authority of boards to expel students for conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity to situations in which the conduct either (1) violates a publicized policy of such board *and* is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or (2) endangers persons or property. In addition, the definitions for “electronic nicotine delivery system” and “vapor product” have also been revised.

Sunscreen Application in School (NEW)

We have added a new policy concerning sunscreen application in school, in accordance with Public Act 19-60. Students six (6) years of age and older may now self-apply sunscreen in school prior to outdoor activities, with the signed permission of the parent or guardian. This model policy also includes a sample permission form.

Transportation

The model transportation policy for students was revised to clarify that it is not a hazardous condition for a student whose residence abuts a public street, road, or highway to either (1) wait

on the private property for the bus to arrive, or (2) exit a school bus on the public street, road, or highway so that the student can access the private property where he or she resides.

Notifications/Forms – Federal

Sex Discrimination/Harassment in the Workplace

The sex discrimination and harassment notice updated the required notice, which must now also be emailed to employees within three months of hire with the subject line “Sexual Harassment Policy.”

Notifications/Forms - State

Bullying/Sample Forms

This notice was revised to include reference to the new administrator training required by Section 5 of Public Act 19-166.

Student Expulsion Hearing Notice

The expulsion hearing notice was revised to clarify, pursuant to the new law, that a Board may expel a student for conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity if the conduct either (1) violates a publicized policy of such board *and* is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or (2) endangers persons or property.

Required Annual Notices

Required Annual Notices

The required annual notices were updated to include changes in the law regarding sexual harassment; the safe school climate plan; the management plan and guidelines for students with food allergies, glycogen storage disease, or diabetes; non-discrimination; student discipline; and smoking on school property.