

Minutes of the Bethel Board of Education Special Meeting held on Thursday, August 24, 2023, in Board of Education Conference Room E, 1 School Street, Bethel, CT 06801.

Attendance: None

Administrative Attendance: C. Carver, K. Brooks, J. Variale, C. Sipala

M. O'Brien, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Board Members Attendance:**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Present
Mr. Scott Clayton:	<i>Absent</i>
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Present
Mr. Bill Foster:	<i>Absent</i>
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Present
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Present
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Present
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Present
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Present

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TOWN CLERK  
BETHEL, CT.

**1. Call to Order**

- 1.A. Roll Call for Quorum
- 1.B. Pledge of Allegiance

**2. Board Recognition/A Salute to Excellence**

None.

**2.A. Gifts, Grants, & Bequests**

None.

**3. Consent Calendar**

**3.A. Approval of Minutes**

**3.A.1. June 15, 2023 - Regular Meeting**

Move to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2023 - Regular Meeting as corrected. Passed with a motion by Ms. Melanie O'Brien and a second by Mr. Daniel Nostin.

Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Abstain
Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Yea

Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea

### **3.A.2. June 19, 2023 - Special Meeting**

**Move to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2023 - Special Meeting. Passed with a motion by Ms. Melanie O'Brien and a second by Mrs. Kara DiBartolo.**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Abstain
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Abstain
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Yea
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea

### **3.A.3. July 18, 2023 - Special Meeting**

**Move to approve the minutes of July 18, 2023 - Special Meeting Passed with a motion by Ms. Melanie O'Brien and a second by Mrs. Cathy Schaefer.**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Abstain
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Abstain
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Yea
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Yea

### **3.A.4. August 5, 2023 - Special Meeting**

**Move to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2023 - Special Meeting. Passed with a motion by Ms. Melanie O'Brien and a second by Mrs. Jen Larsen.**

Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Abstain
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Abstain
Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Yea
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea

### **3.B. Approval of CABE Board Leadership Application**

**Move to approve applying for the CABE Board of Distinction Award. Passed with a motion by**

**Ms. Melanie O'Brien and a second by Mrs. Courtney Martin.**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Yea
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Yea

**4. Correspondence**

- Email regarding the change in Kindergarten attendance cut-off age.

**5. Public Comment**

None.

**6. Administrative/Board Member Update**

**6.A. Board Chairperson Update**

Ms. O'Brien reviewed the changes in the Superintendent's evaluation format made at the August Board meeting. She also reviewed the discussion about live-streaming the Board meetings. This will go through the policy committee shortly. Parent and community engagement will also be in committee shortly. Ms. O'Brien complimented the convocation and energy level of staff that was held on August 23, 2023.

**6.B. Administrative Update**

Dr. Carver informed the Board the district is in great shape to open school on August 28th. Dr. Carver also noted that the convocation was fun and the administration was able to layout the goals for the year and the school's SIP info. Dr. Carver will be sending a letter to parents to prevent traffic congestion on campus reminding them of the drop-off and pick-off procedures. Dr. Carver reminded the Board of the 2023 CABE/CAPSS Convention Early Registration Deadline of August 25, 2023.

**6.B.1. Change in the Kindergarten Mandatory Attendance - Options for the 2024-2025 School Year.**

Dr. Carver informed the Board of the change in the law changing the Kindergarten starting age. Current law requires children to be at least five years old on or before January 1 of the school year in order to enroll in kindergarten in public schools. Beginning July 1, 2024, Section 3

of Public Act 23-159, as amended by Section 1 of Public Act 23-208, amends Connecticut General Statutes § 10-15c to require that children turn five years old on or before September 1 of the school year in order to enroll in Kindergarten.

The new law also revises the process by which a child who does not meet the law's age requirements can be admitted to Kindergarten. Under current law, boards of education may, by vote at a duly called meeting, admit children under five years of age. Effective July 1, 2024, a child who is not five years old on or before September 1 of the school year may be admitted (1) upon written request by the child's parent or guardian to the school principal and (2) after the principal and an appropriate certified staff member conduct an assessment of the child to ensure that admitting the child to Kindergarten is developmentally appropriate.

Dr. Carver informed the Board there are about 50-70 students in Kindergarten who are 4 years old. For one year there will be a gap and it will have an effect on staffing. The impact on PreK students will be an additional year of PreK prior to Kindergarten. May look at a full-day PreK program on a tuition basis using the staff effected by the gap for the one year only.

## **7. Reports to the Board**

### **7.A. Resource Management & Business Operations**

#### **7.A.1. Personnel**

##### **7.A.1.a. New Hires and Resignations 2023-2024**

The Board was provided the new hires and resignations for 2023-2024.

#### **7.A.2. Finance**

##### **7.A.2.a. Transportation Update**

Jen Variale informed the Board that First Student has made multiple improvements for the coming school year. They are currently staffed with exactly enough bus drivers to run all scheduled bus routes. Optimal staffing would include 2 or 3 spare drivers. Multiple drivers are in the candidate pipeline and hiring will continue to be prioritized. Also, the bus routes have been redesigned to be more efficient and the new bus depot manager is great at communicating with parents.

##### **7.A.2.b. Bid Waiver - Copier Lease**

**Move to renew our relationship with Base Technologies and entering a new five-year lease agreement for copier equipment and managed print services and to waive the bid procedure as this transaction is in the best interest of the Bethel Board of Education and The Town of Bethel. Passed with a motion by Mr. Daniel Nostin and a second by Mrs. Courtney Martin.**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman: Yea

Mrs. Kara DiBartolo: Yea

Mrs. Jen Larsen: Yea

Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Yea

### 7.A.2.c. Budget Transfers

Jen Variale reviewed the budget transfers with the Board. All transfers were aligned with the memo to the Board of Education in June and subsequently voted on in the regular meeting in June.

### 7.A.2.d. Budget Update

Jen Variale, informed the Board that the finance team is working to close out all remaining items from the 2022 - 2023 school year. Going into the 2023 - 2024 school year they are monitoring Special Education and Facilities spending closely as these are the areas anticipated to be the most risk to our budget. The 2023 - 2024 operating budget includes an \$850,000 reimbursement for excess cost. Based on the updated funding guidelines from CSDE and the current student enrollment, it is projected that the district will receive funding of \$1,100,000. The administration would like to use the \$245,000 in additional funds to pay for 1 special education teacher and 5 para educators that were funded by grants last year. The district has a long-term need for these resources and recommend that they be incorporated into the Board of Education Operating Budget. Ms. O'Brien noted that the Board will not be able to return funds to the Town this year as has been done in the past.

**Move that 1 special education teacher and 5 paraeducators be added to the 2023 - 2024 operating budget. Passed with a motion by Ms. Melanie O'Brien and a second by Mrs. Courtney Martin.**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Yea
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Yea

### 7.A.3. Facilities

#### 7.A.3.a. Opening Update

(See Admin Update)

## 8. Recommended Executive Session

Administrative Attendance: C. Carver, K. Brooks, J. Variale, C. Troetti (left at 7:53 PM, Item #1 only)

### Board Members Attendance:

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman: Present  
Mr. Scott Clayton: *Absent*  
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo: Present  
Mr. Bill Foster: *Absent*  
Mrs. Jen Larsen: Present  
Mrs. Courtney Martin: Present  
Mr. Daniel Nostin: Present  
Ms. Melanie O'Brien: Present  
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer: Present

**Move to enter into Executive Session at 7:36 PM, Passed with a motion by Ms. Melanie O'Brien and a second by Mr. Daniel Nostin.**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman: Yea  
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo: Yea  
Mrs. Jen Larsen: Yea  
Mrs. Courtney Martin: Yea  
Mr. Daniel Nostin: Yea  
Ms. Melanie O'Brien: Yea  
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer: Yea

### 8.A. CT General Statues 1-210(b)(9) Personnel - Negotiations

#### 8.A.1. Bethel Education Association

#### 8.A.2. Bethel Administrators' Association

**Move to come out of Executive Session at 8:03 PM. Passed with a motion by Mr. Daniel Nostin and a second by Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman.**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman: Yea  
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo: Yea  
Mrs. Jen Larsen: Yea  
Mrs. Courtney Martin: Yea  
Mr. Daniel Nostin: Yea  
Ms. Melanie O'Brien: Yea  
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer: Yea

**Move to approve tentative agreement with Bethel Administrators' Association. Passed with a**

**motion by Mrs. Courtney Martin and a second by Mr. Daniel Nostin.**

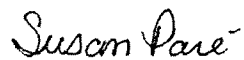
Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Yea
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Yea

## **9. Adjourn**

**Move to adjourn at 8:06 PM. Passed with a motion by Ms. Melanie O'Brien and a second by Mrs. Courtney Martin.**

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Yea
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Yea
Mr. Daniel Nostin:	Yea
Ms. Melanie O'Brien:	Yea
Mrs. Cathy Schaefer:	Yea

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Pare  
Board Recorder