

Minutes of the Bethel Board of Education Regular Meeting - Annual Meeting held on Thursday, December 19, 2024, in Board of Education Conference Room E, 1 School Street, PO Box 253, Bethel, CT 06801 and via live stream.

Attendance: Michael Croft

Administrative Attendance: C. Carver, J. Variale, M. Rutledge, C. Sipala, M. Stabile, D. Burns

S. Clayton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

Board Members Attendance:

Mrs. Jennifer Ackerman:	Absent
Anthony Cassio:	Present
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Present
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Present
Mr. Bill Foster:	Present
Mrs. Jen Larsen:	Absent
Mrs. Courtney Martin:	Absent
Ms. Pat Rist:	Present
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Present
Mr. Dan Carter, Ex. Officio:	Present

1. Call to Order

1.A. Roll Call for Quorum

1.B. Pledge of Allegiance

2. BOARD REPORTS - PROGRESS TOWARDS DISTRICT INITIATIVES

2.A. Enrollment Projections Update

Patrick from the MP Planning Group presented the enrollment projections update. The study aimed to determine if the district/Town needs to do any feasibility planning, given the new development within the community. He reviewed the enrollment drivers, demographics, housing, enrollment trends/analysis, and enrollment projections. He spoke about population trends, birth trends and projections, home sale trends, single-family home sales trends, housing permit activity, recent and future housing, enrollment trends, student migration, historic enrollment, SPED, and ELL trends.

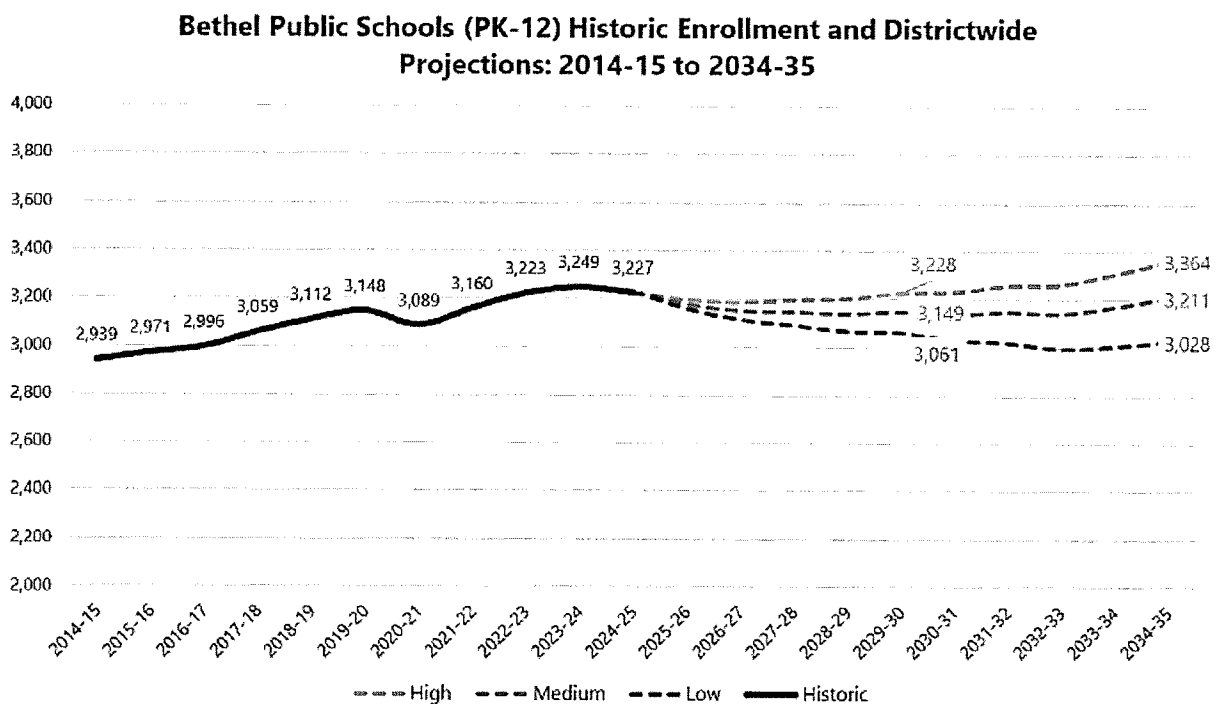
Overall district projections:

- Over the first five years, the high model shows stable enrollment while the low and medium models show declining trends. Overall range of 3,061 to 3,228 at the projection

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midpoint.

- Much of the near-term decrease is being driven by the graduation of two large cohorts currently in 11th and 12th grades.
- Over the second five years of the projections, enrollment is projected to rebound under the medium model, while the high model shows continued sustained growth and the low model shows stable enrollment.
- Under the medium model, enrollment is projected to be 3,211 students in 2034-35, which is a similar level to this school year.



2.B. Issues Affecting the 2025-2026 Proposed Board of Education Budget (Budget Presentation Part I)

Dr. Carver spoke to the Board about the issues affecting the 2025-2026 education budget in preparation for the presentation of the proposed 2025-2026 education budget. She reviewed the budget goals and drivers - contractual salary obligations, health insurance, reduction in state funding (excess cost), and special education. She reviewed the increase in enrollment, students with disabilities with high needs. There are more complex students that are more resource-intensive. She spoke about the impact on the budget due to the decrease in excess costs grant funding over the years and, an increase in multilingual learners in all grade levels, many with

complex needs with large academic gaps due to education in their country of origin.

Dr. Carver summarized the budget increase will reflect maintaining existing curricular and extra-curricular programs with one (1) increase in requested staffing:

- 1.0 FTE school psychologist

Dr. Carver will present her proposed 2025-2026 education budget to the Board at its meeting on January 30, 2024.

3. Board Recognition/A Salute to Excellence

3.A. Gifts, Grants, & Bequests

Gifts

Rockwell School

Three boxed book sets of "Popcorn Thanks" with gratitude activity, stuffy, and a case of individual popcorn bags for staff, \$75, Lesser Evil Snacks, Danbury, CT

4. Selection of Temporary Chairperson

Move to nominate Dr. Christine Carver as temporary Chairman Passed with a motion by Mr. Scott Clayton and a second by Anthony Cassio.

Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

5. Annual Meeting

5.A. Election of Officers

5.A.1. Nominations for Chairman of the Board

Move to nominate Scott Clayton for Chairman of the Board of Education for 2025. Passed with a motion by Mr. Bill Foster and a second by Ms. Pat Rist.

Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

5.A.2. Nominations for Vice Chairman of the Board

Move to nominate Kara DiBartolo for Vice Chairman of the Board of Education for 2025. Passed with a motion by Mr. Scott Clayton and a second by Mr. Bill Foster.

Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

5.A.3. Nominations for Secretary of the Board

Move to nominate Jen Larsen for Secretary of the Board of Education for 2025. Passed with a motion by Mr. Scott Clayton and a second by Mr. Bill Foster.

Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

5.B. 2025 Board of Education Meeting Dates

Move to approve the 2025 Board of Education Meeting Dates. Passed with a motion by Mr. Scott Clayton and a second by Mrs. Kara DiBartolo.

Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

5.C. 2025 Proposed Standing Committees Assignments

Move to approve the 2025 Proposed Standing Committee Assignments. Passed with a motion by Mr. Scott Clayton and a second by Mrs. Kara DiBartolo.

Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea

Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea
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5.D. Code of Ethics

Mr. Clayton spoke to the Board about how the success of the school system depends on an effective working relationship between the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools. This code incorporates those standards and responsibilities most critical to productive Board and Superintendent relations. Board members signed the Code of Ethics for 2025.

6. Consent Calendar

6.A. Approval of Minutes

6.A.1. November 21, 2024

Move to approve the minutes of November 21, 2024. Passed with a motion by Mr. Scott Clayton and a second by Anthony Cassio.
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Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

7. Correspondence

None.

8. Public Comment

Nick Ellis, 13 Fawn Road, thanked the Board for their time and hard work as Board members on the Board.

9. Administrative/Board Member Update

9.A. Board Chairperson Update

Mr. Clayton spoke about the 23/24 accountability scores. For the first time ever Bethel is at the top of the DRG.

9.B. Administrative Update

Dr. Carver reminded the Board of the Board's joint meeting with the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen on January 2, 2025.

The Board was also provided a copy of UCONN Today Article - Neag School Alum Christine Carver Honored as Connecticut's 2025 Superintendent of the Year.

9.B.1. 2024-2025 BOE District Data Sheet

Dr. Carver provided the Board the monthly 2024-2025 district data sheet.

10. Reports to the Board

10.A. Curriculum, Assessment, & Professional Practices

10.A.1. Modern World History I Honors

10.A.2. Intro to Psychology

10.A.3. Conflict Resolution

Move to approve the Modern World History I Honors, Intro to Psychology, and Conflict Resolution curriculum. Passed with a motion by Ms. Pat Rist and a second by Mr. Bill Foster.

Anthony Cassio: Yea

Mr. Scott Clayton: Yea

Mrs. Kara DiBartolo: Yea

Mr. Bill Foster: Yea

Ms. Pat Rist: Yea

Mr. Jeffrey Spies: Yea

10.B. Resource Management & Business Operations

10.B.1. Finance

10.B.1.a. Budget Transfers

Move to approve the budget transfers as presented. Passed with a motion by Ms. Pat Rist and a second by Mr. Scott Clayton.

Anthony Cassio: Yea

Mr. Scott Clayton: Yea

Mrs. Kara DiBartolo: Yea

Mr. Bill Foster: Yea

Ms. Pat Rist: Yea

Mr. Jeffrey Spies: Yea

10.B.1.b. Quarterly Spending Report

Move to approve Quarterly Spending Report. Passed with a motion by Ms. Pat Rist and a second by Anthony Cassio.

Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

10.B.1.c. 2025-2026 Budget Discussion - Pay-to-Participate

Move to table item to be included as part of the overall proposed budget presentation. Withdrawn with a motion by Anthony Cassio and a second by Mr. Jeffrey Spies.

Move that Dr. Carver be prepared to present during the budget workshops both a 20% and 33% reduction in pay-to-participate. Passed with a motion by Anthony Cassio and a second by Mr. Bill Foster.

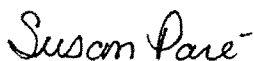
Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

11. Adjourn

Move to adjourn at 9:07 PM. Passed with a motion by Ms. Pat Rist and a second by Anthony Cassio.

Anthony Cassio:	Yea
Mr. Scott Clayton:	Yea
Mrs. Kara DiBartolo:	Yea
Mr. Bill Foster:	Yea
Ms. Pat Rist:	Yea
Mr. Jeffrey Spies:	Yea

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Pare
Board Recorder