

Minutes of the Bethel Board of Education Regular Meeting - Budget Workshop - Budget Workshop - IT, Curriculum, SPED held on Thursday, February 6, 2025, in Board of Education Conference Room E, 1 School Street, PO Box 253, Bethel, CT 06801 and via Live Stream.

Attendance: Chris Mustakas, Emanuelle Martelari, Maya Jackman, Libby Resendez, Kara Rondamo, Rani Rondano, Lily Friedland, Meghan Friedland, Melissa Hannequiu, Amy Hannequin, Denise Howe, Nicole Avallone, Gabe Barboza, Chris Baker, Maureen DeBlois

Administrative Attendance: C. Carver, K. Brooks, J. Variale, M. Stabile, C. Sipala, L. DiBiase, M. Rutledge, B. Watson, J. Taranovich, B. Hrieco, D. Burns, I. Veleze

S. Clayton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Board Members Attendance:**

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

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TOWN CLERK  
BETHEL, CT.

**1. Call to Order**

**1.A. Roll Call for Quorum**

**1.B. Pledge of Allegiance**

**2. Budget Workshop - IT, Curriculum, SPED**

Dr. Carver and her administrative team answered questions submitted by the Board on IT, Curriculum, and Special Education. Dr. Carver informed the Board that the Governor has released his budget and the Town of Bethel is expected to receive \$1,159,485 in revenue for ECS. Dr. Carver stated the administration is trying to find a way to have the least impact on the 1:1 program next year. Dr. Carver reviewed the current 1:1 program and reviewed some options for BYOT. Beginning in 2025/2026 the Board will need to decide what model can be maintained. Dr. Carver and Mrs. Burns, the Director of Instructional Technology, informed the Board that the model will not experience any major changes next year. They spoke about the models and the need for security during testing. Dr. Carver answered questions about library/media paraeducators, BYOT, internet safety, Circle of Friends class size in a half-day program, special education out-of-state placement at being at zero, additional psychologist (district) for evaluations, special education caseloads and staffing, the impact of the possible loss of federal grant funding, through presidential executive orders, of \$1.6 million, 5th-grade sections and

class sizes, curriculum writing, tutors, FTE cuts and impacts on student programming and reduction in force.

Dr. Carver presented a 2025/2026 Reductions Summary outlining the reductions already taken to decrease the proposed budget from a 10.43% increase to the proposed 9.83%. She reviewed potential greater reductions to reduce the proposed increase and informed the Board the administration is developing an early retirement offering.

### 3. Correspondence

None.

### 4. Public Comment

- Chris Baker, 3 N. Hearthstone Dr., spoke in support of keeping the elementary music program.
- Kara Rondano, 12 Grandview Terrace, spoke in support of keeping the music program.
- Nick Ellis, 13 Fawn Rd., spoke about not getting information from social media and getting the correct facts about the education budget. Stated there has been no discussion about cutting the music program. He encouraged those present to stay engaged in the process.
- Mia Jackson, 9 Grand St., spoke in support of the music program.
- Lily Friedland, 12 Greenwood Ave. spoke in support of the music program.
- Maureen DeBlois, of 20 Green Pasture Rd., expressed her support for the music program and requested that, if the Board is considering a rotation, they review staff scheduling to ensure that one teacher can effectively accommodate the number of students.

### 5. Adjourn

**Move to adjourn at 8:07 PM. Passed with a motion by Mr. Scott Clayton and a second by Ms. Pat Rist.**

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

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Pare  
Board Recorder