



MINUTES

THOMASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

Monday, November 13, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Thomaston High School Auditorium Entrance – Door #2

*This meeting can be attended in person by the public ([see requirements](#)) or viewed live/recorded on the [Board of Education YouTube Channel](#).
([Bylaws of the Board 9322 – Public and Executive Sessions and Bylaws of the Board 9326.1 – Taping/Recording Board Meetings](#))*

Mission Statement:

In a partnership of family, school and community, our mission is to **educate**, **challenge** and **inspire** each individual to excel and become a contributing member of society.

2023-2024 Board of Education Goals:

1. The Board will evaluate the Superintendent based on the effectiveness of her leadership in implementation and achievement of the district goals.
2. The Board will participate in biannual professional development provided by CAFE to improve the collaborative leadership team with the Superintendent to focus on priorities around high achievement for all students in the district.

Members:

Roxy Fainer, Chairperson
Heather Patchell, Secretary
Beth Campbell
[VACANT]

Francine Coss, Superintendent
Marie Eldridge
Megan Campbell, Student Representative
Landen Galpin, Student Representative

David Colavecchio, Vice Chairperson
Steven Carr, Treasurer
Sarah Ethier
Matthew VanOrmer

1. Establishment of a Quorum and Call to Order

(Bylaws of the Board 9325.1 – Quorum)

- 1.1. **Chairperson Roxy Fainer** called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.
- 1.2. Board Members in Attendance: **Chairperson Roxy Fainer, Vice Chairperson David Colavecchio, Secretary Heather Patchell, Treasurer Steven Carr, Marie Eldridge, Sarah Ethier, Beth Campbell, Matthew VanOrmer, Superintendent Francine Coss**
- 1.3. Student Representatives in Attendance: **Megan Campbell, Landen Galpin**
- 1.4. Administrators in Attendance: Kristin Bernier, Cristina Kingsbury, Jonathan Kozlak
- 1.5. Others in Attendance: Olivia Blasko, Hannah Bigos, Attorney Zachary Schurin, Attorney Mark Sommaruga, Attorney Melinda Kaufmann, Attorney Kyle McClain, Attorney Nicholas Grello, Attorney Jessica Ritter, Attorney Peter Maher, Tanya Galpin, Nathan Vieira, Jessyca Tucker, Susan Heiland, Holly Hernandez

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Agenda ▲

(Bylaws of the Board 9325.2 – Order of Business and Policy 1205 Community Relations – Participation by the Public – Agenda Format/Preparation and Dissemination)

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to accept/approve the agenda of the Board of Education Meeting dated November 13, 2023 as presented.

Discussion: **Beth Campbell motioned and Marie Eldridge seconded to amend the agenda to add a discussion under the chairperson's report (9.3) regarding the recent board vacancy.**

Opposed: **Steven Carr, David Colavecchio, Roxy Fainer, Matthew VanOrmer**

Abstain: None

Motion Failed: 4-4-0

Since the motion failed the board approved the agenda as presented and as was stated in **Steven Carr's** initial motion.

Opposed: **Beth Campbell, Sarah Ethier**

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 6-2-0

4. Public Participation ▲▲▲ NONE

(Bylaws of the Board 9325 – Meeting Conduct)

The Board welcomes public participation in accordance with the rules of common courtesy and the Bylaws of the Board 9325 – Meeting Conduct:

- Five minutes may be allotted to each speaker and a maximum of twenty minutes to each subject matter.
- No boisterous conduct shall be permitted; persistence in boisterous conduct shall be grounds for termination of that person's privilege to address the Board. The Chairperson may clear the room so that Board members may continue the meeting.
- No oral presentation shall include charges/complaints against any employee of the Board of Education, regardless of whether or not the employee is identified by name.

5. Approval of Minutes ▲

(Bylaws of the Board 0326 – Minutes)

5.1. [Thomaston Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes – October 16, 2023](#)

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to accept/approve the Thomaston Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes dated October 16, 2023 as presented.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-0-0

5.2. [Thomaston Board of Education Residency Hearing Minutes – October 25, 2023](#)

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to accept/approve the Thomaston Board of Education Residency Hearing Minutes dated October 25, 2023 as presented.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: **Beth Campbell**

Motion Carried: 7-0-1

6. Recognitions ▲

(Policy 1170 – Community Relations/Recognitions of Students, Citizens, Staff Members, and Members of the Board of Education and Bylaws of the Board 0420 – Recognition of Accomplishments by Citizens, Students, Staff Members or Member of the Board)

6.1. [November 2023 Rotary Student of the Month – Jenna Johnson](#)

6.2. [November 2023 Staff Spotlight – Holly Hernandez – Reading Interventionist – Black Rock School](#)

6.3. ASAP! – Celebration of Young Photographers

6.3.1. [Haley Bethin, Thomaston High School, Grade 12: "Authorized Personnel Only"](#)

6.3.2. [Olivia Blasko, Thomaston High School, Grade 12: "Behind Closed Doors"](#)

6.4. [Thomaston's 150th Anniversary Logo Winner, Jenna Johnson, Grade 12](#)

7. Presentations ▲▲▲

(Bylaws of the Board 0410 – Public Announcement of Accomplishments)

7.1. [Center School Handicap Accessibility Ramp – Senior Capstone Presentation – Hannah Bigos – Grade 12](#)

7.2. Biennial Appointment of Board Attorney

(Bylaws of the Board 0125 – Attorney)

7.2.1. Nicholas Grello – Zangari Cohn Cuthbertson Duhl & Grello, P.C. (Attorney Kyle McClain joined the presentation with Attorney Nicholas Grello to speak on Special Education)

7.2.2. [Anne Littlefield and Julia Wilde – Shipman & Goodwin](#) (Attorney Jessica Ritter and Attorney Peter Maher presented on behalf of Attorney Anne Littlefield and Attorney Julia Wilde)

7.2.3. Mark Sommaruga – Pullman & Comley (Attorney Melinda Kaufmann and Attorney Zachary Schurin joined the presentation from Pullman & Comley)

Steven Carr motioned and Beth Campbell seconded to table the motion to appoint the Board of Education Attorney from [firm] for the next biennial period.

Discussion: This will be added as an agenda item to the November 27, 2023 Special Meeting of the Board of Education.

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-0-0

Steven Carr motioned and Beth Campbell seconded to table the motion to appoint the Special Education Attorney from [firm] for the next biennial period.

Discussion: This will be added as an agenda item to the November 27, 2023 Special Meeting of the Board of Education.

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-0-0

8. Student Representatives Report ▲▲▲

(Bylaws of the Board 0160 – Student Representation on the Board of Education)

9. Chairperson's Report ▲▲▲

(Bylaws of the Board 0121 – Office of the Chairperson)

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- 9.1. [Progress Report on 2023-2024 Goals for the Thomaston Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools](#)
 - 9.2. Recognition of Outgoing Board of Education Members
 - 9.2.1. [David Colavecchio – November 22, 2017 – November 21, 2023](#)
 - 9.2.2. [Marie Eldridge – December 14, 2021 – November 21, 2023](#)
 - 9.2.3. [Heather Patchell – November 22, 2017 – November 21, 2023](#)

10. Superintendent's Report ▲▲▲

(Policy 2131 – Administration – Superintendent of Schools)

10.1. Correspondence

10.1.1. Superintendent

- 10.1.1.1. [Thank You Letter from Superintendent Coss to Aaron Bunel, District Emergency Management Coordinator, for Presentation at the October 16, 2023 Regular Board of Education Meeting](#)
- 10.1.1.2. [Thank You Letter from Superintendent Coss to Jennifer Irazabal, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, for Presentation at the October 16, 2023 Regular Board of Education Meeting](#)
- 10.1.1.3. [Thank You Letter from Superintendent Coss to Pamela Nascimento, Literacy Instructional Coach, Instruction and Assessment, for Presentation at the October 16, 2023 Regular Board of Education Meeting](#)
- 10.1.1.4. [Invitation Letter to Attorney Christine Chinni to present at the Board of Education Meeting on November 13, 2023](#)
- 10.1.1.5. [Invitation Letter to Attorney Nicholas Grello to present at the Board of Education Meeting on November 13, 2023](#)
- 10.1.1.6. [Invitation Letter to Attorney Anne Littlefield to present at the Board of Education Meeting on November 13, 2023](#)
- 10.1.1.7. [Invitation Letter to Attorney Mark Sommaruga to present at the Board of Education Meeting on November 13, 2023](#)
- 10.1.1.8. [Effective School Solutions – MINDBEAT – Celebrate World Mental Health Day](#)
- 10.1.1.9. [Effective School Solutions – MINDBEAT – Chronic Absenteeism and School Refusal](#)
- 10.1.1.10. [Memorandum from Superintendent Coss to Rich Sileo, Board of Finance Chairperson RE: Request for Agenda Item on November 14, 2023 Meeting Agenda](#)

10.1.2. Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)

- 10.1.2.1. [CABE Delegate Assembly Registration Form – November 16, 2023](#)
- 10.1.2.2. [2024 Proposed Resolutions](#)

10.1.3. Connecticut Association of Public Schools Superintendents (CAPSS) - None

10.1.4. United States Department of Education (USDE) - None

10.1.5. Department of Public Health (DPH) - None

10.1.6. Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)

- 10.1.6.1. [Student Assessment News – October 2023](#)
- 10.1.6.2. [Notice of Intention to Issue Declaratory Rulings](#)

10.2. Reports

10.2.1. General Reports

- 10.2.1.1. [Thomaston Center School Gymnasium Floor Project Update](#)
- 10.2.1.2. [Black Rock School Air Handler Project Report](#)

10.2.2. Administrator Reports

- 10.2.2.1. [November 2023](#)

10.2.3. Residency Report

(Policy 5118 – Students – Nonresident Attendance/Tuition Students)

- 10.2.3.1. Residency Determination Letter – Student A
- 10.2.3.2. Residency Hearing Request and Notice – Student A
- 10.2.3.3. Results of Residency Hearing – Student A
- 10.2.3.4. Residency Determination Letter – Student B
- 10.2.3.5. Residency Hearing Request – Student B
- 10.2.3.6. Acknowledgement of Residency Hearing Request – Student B
- 10.2.3.7. Expulsion Hearing Notice from Superintendent Coss

10.2.4. Student Discipline Report – Expulsions

(Policy 5144 Students – Discipline)

- 10.2.4.1. Letter from Superintendent Coss to Shawn Simpson, Wolcott Public Schools Superintendent, acknowledging the Cancellation of Expulsion Hearing

10.2.5. Enrollment Report

(Policy 5112 Students – Age of Attendance)

10.2.5.1. [November 1, 2023](#)

10.3. Contracts (*Please refer to the [October 2023 Business Manager's Report](#)*)

10.4. Grants (*Please refer to the [October 2023 Business Manager's Report](#)*)

10.5. General Information

10.5.1. Fundraisers (*Please refer to the [October 2023 Business Manager's Report](#)*)

10.6. Personnel (**Denotes Effective Date*)

(*Policy 4112/4212 – Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified Appointment and Conditions of Employment*)

10.6.1. New Hires

10.6.1.1. R. Nancy Pesce, Full-Time Paraprofessional, Black Rock School*October 30, 2023

10.6.1.2. Joyce Norton, Part-Time Cafeteria Worker, Black Rock School*November 1, 2023

10.6.2. Reassignment - None

10.6.3. Transfer/New Assignments

10.6.3.1. Debra Blackwell from Substitute Cafeteria Worker to Cafeteria Worker, Part-Time, Thomaston High School*October 9, 2023

10.6.3.2. Margaret Prahm, Kitchen Worker (location change) from Black Rock School to Thomaston High School*October 9, 2023

10.6.3.3. Allison Hart, from Lunch Monitor to Building Substitute Teacher (Temporary, Per Diem) - Thomaston Center School*October 23, 2023

10.6.4. Resignations

10.6.4.1. Melanie Jones, Paraprofessional, Black Rock School*October 31, 2023

10.6.4.2. Samantha Brostek, Paraprofessional, Thomaston Center School*November 10, 2023

10.6.5. Retirement - None

10.6.6. Termination - None

10.6.7. Non-Renewals - None

10.6.8. Stipends

10.6.8.1. Doreen Jaskewicz - New Hire Mentor for David Oravetz, Science Teacher, Thomaston High School

10.6.8.2. Megan Kellogg, TEAM Mentor for Erin Fainer, Math Teacher, Thomaston High School

10.6.8.3. Keri Rozzi - Web Page Coordinator, Thomaston Center School

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to acknowledge the Superintendent's notification of Personnel, specifically, New Hires/Transfers/Retirements/Resignations/ Renewals/Stipends per Policy 4112/4212 Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified Appointment and Conditions of Employment as presented.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: **Beth Campbell**

Motion Carried: 8-0-1

10.6.9. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

(*Policy 4152.6/4252.6 – Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified Personal Leaves Family and Medical Leave Act*)

10.6.9.1. [Employee C](#)

10.6.9.2. [Employee D](#)

10.6.10. Interns and Student Teachers - None

(*Policy 1212 – Community Relations – School Volunteers*)

10.7. Field Trips - None

(*Policy 6153 – Instruction Field Trips – Secondary Schools*)

10.8. Sales and Disposal of Books, Equipment and Supplies

(*Policy 3260 Business/Non-Instructional Operations Sales & Disposal of Books, Equipment & Supplies*)

10.8.1. [Response Letter from Superintendent Coss to Jennifer Irazabal, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for Disposal of Books](#)

10.8.2. [Response Letter from Superintendent Coss to Spencer Luthy, District Lead Custodian, Thomaston Public Schools for Disposal of Two Air Purifiers](#)

11. Committee Reports ▲

(*Bylaws of the Board 0132 – Standing Committees and Bylaws of the Board 0133 – Special Committees/Advisory Committees*)

11.1. [Budget Audit Committee](#)

11.1.1. [October 2023 Business Manager's Report](#)

11.1.1.1. Expenditures for the Month: \$1,828,135.47

David Colavecchio motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to accept/approve Business and Finance Report and Expenditures per Policy 3432/3433 Business/Non-Instructional Operations – Budget & Expense Report/Annual Financial Statement as presented for October 2023.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-0-0

11.1.2. Action Item

11.1.2.1. Action Items: Building Committee and Connecticut Department of Administrative Services HVAC Indoor Air Quality Grant Program for Public Schools (HVAC IAQ Grant)

[*\(Bylaws of the Board 9133 –Special Committees/Advisory Committee\)*](#)

11.1.2.1.1. As approved on January 30, 2023, the purpose of the Building Committee is to oversee the 2, 5, and 10 Year Plan development and to convene as needed to support the implementation and revision of the 2, 5 and 10 Year Plan and/or to address other building matters as determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to reaffirm the January 30, 2023 Building Committee resolution, specifically, that the Building Committee consists of all members of the Thomaston Board of Education and was established as the Building Committee with regard to the oil tank removal at (a) Thomaston High School and (b) Thomaston Center School.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-0-0

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to authorize the Board of Education Chairperson as the authorized signatory for the Building Committee.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-0-0

11.1.2.1.2. Presentation of drawings, project manuals (including the table of contents) and all other documents related to the oil tank removal at (a) Thomaston High School and (b) Thomaston Center School - Christopher Debuque, Tighe & Bond

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to approve and sign off on all drawings, project manuals (including the table of contents) and all other documents requiring such signature with regard to the oil tank removal at (a) Thomaston High School and (b) Thomaston Center School.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-0-0

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to authorize the Building Committee to take action, specifically:

RESOLVED that the Building Committee is hereby established as the building committee about the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services HVAC Indoor Air Quality Grant Program for Public Schools (HVAC IAQ Grant), also known as DASM1-SCP0000086 at Black Rock School.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-0-0

11.1.2.1.3. As required by the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services HVAC Indoor Air Quality Grant Program for Public Schools, also known as DASM1-SCP0000086, the Thomaston board of Education requests authorization from the Board of Selectmen to establish a building committee, to apply for a school construction grant, and to prepare schematic drawings and outline specifications.

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to request that the Board of Selectmen approve the following three (3) resolutions:

RESOLVED that the Building Committee established by the Board of Education is hereby established as the building committee about the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services HVAC Indoor Air Quality Grant Program for Public Schools (HVAC IAQ Grant), also known as DASM1-SCP0000086 at Black Rock School.

RESOLVED that the Board of Selectmen authorizes the Thomaston Board of Education to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services HVAC Indoor Air Quality Grant Program for Public Schools (HVAC IAQ Grant), also known as DASM1-SCP0000086 at the Black Rock School.

RESOLVED that the Board of Selectmen authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services HVAC Indoor Air Quality Grant Program for Public Schools (HVAC IAQ Grant), also known as DASM1-SCP0000086 at Black Rock School.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-o-o

11.1.2.1.4. [Review/Approve the Educational Specifications for Thomaston Public Schools – Black Rock School – Rooftop Air Handling Unit \(AHU\) Replacement Project.](#)

David Colavecchio motioned and Marie Eldridge seconded to accept/approve the Educational Specifications for Thomaston Public Schools – Black Rock School – Rooftop Air Handling Unit (AHU) Replacement Project.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-o-o

12. [Policy Committee](#)

(Policy 2231—Administration/Policy and Regulation Systems)

The tabled motions regarding the appointment of the Board of Education attorney and the Special Education attorney were revisited at this point in the meeting.

Steven Carr motioned and Sarah Ethier seconded to appoint Shipman and Goodwin as the Special Education attorney for the next biennial period.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 8-o-o

Steven Carr motioned and Matthew VanOrmer seconded to appoint Nicholas Grello from Zangari Cohn Cuthbertson & Grello, PC as the Board of Education attorney for the next biennial period.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstain : None

Motion Carried: 8-o-o

13. Adjournment

David Colavecchio motioned and Marie Eldridge seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Chairperson Roxy Fainer adjourned the meeting at 9:26pm.