



North Canaan Board of Education
MEETING MINUTES
90 Pease Street, North Canaan, CT 06018 www.nceschool.org

*The North Canaan Board of Education met in the library
at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, September 9, 2025.*

A meeting was held: Lindsey Crane, Amy Dodge, Stephannie Grant, Amy Helminiak, Christopher Jacques, and Brooke Riva.

Others present: Beth Johnson, Principal; Melony Brady-Shanley, Superintendent; Jeanine Rose, Assistant Superintendent

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Mrs. Dodge.

II. Consent Agenda

Mr. Jacques made a motion to approve the June 10, 2025, meeting minutes and the July 23, 2025, Special meeting minutes, as written. Mrs. Riva seconded. Vote: 6-yes Mrs. Crane, Mrs. Dodge, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Helminiak, Mr. Jacques, and Mrs. Riva.

III. Public Comment - None

IV. Communications - None

V. Region One Report -

We didn't have a Board member at the Region One Board of Education meeting. The minutes and video are available on their website.

VI. All Boards Chair (ABC) Report

There has been no ABC meeting to report on this school year.

VII. Board of Education Retreat presentation

Amy Helminiak, Chris Jacques and Lindsey Crane attended the Board of Education retreat on July 16, 2025. They reported that an Instructional Belief Statement had been agreed upon by all Boards. The next step is to review the Proposed Goals with the whole Board. All Board members will review and send notes to Kerry, NCES Secretary,

VIII. Transportation required by North Canaan Board of Education as per The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

This no longer applies to North Canaan Elementary School. It was deleted from the agenda.

IX. Discussion regarding bus routes

Mrs. Johnson stated the rules of changing stops on the bus routes. She reported that North Canaan Elementary School only has 3 buses which are full in capacity. Each student is offered transportation to and from school with one bus stop unless you want to stop at a

different stop on the same bus route as your original bus. This is due to the fact that there would not be enough seats on a bus if students were to switch back and forth on different buses. This is also a safety concern due to all the numerous changes to bus routes, human error would ultimately come into play which would result in a student being on the wrong bus and route. If another bus were to be hired for students to change bus routes it would be \$78,393 per year.

X. Board Policies (first reading) -

A. Board Policies -

Superintendent Melanie Brady-Shanley reported to the Board that the following first reads need to be updated or added to our policy list as per CT Legislation.

5131.911(a) Connecticut School Climate Regulations; 5131.601(a) Medical (Palliative) Use of Marijuana; 5141.25(a) Students with Special Health Care Needs; 5142(a) School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action; 6161.12(a) 1312.3 Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy; 6161.13 1312.4 Library Collection Development and Maintenance Policy; and 6161.14 1312.5 Library Display and Program Policy. There will be a vote in October to add the policies.

XI. Action Items

A. Close Up Contract for Washington, DC 8th Grade Trip [Action Anticipated]

Mrs. Dodge recommended to the full Board to approve the Superintendent of Schools to sign the Close Up Contract for the Washington, DC, 8th Grade Trip from May 18-21, 2026. Mrs. Grant seconded. Vote: 6-yes Mrs. Crane, Mrs. Dodge, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Helminiak, Mr. Jacques, and Mrs. Riva.

B. EdAdvance Social Worker Position [Discussion and Potential Action]

Mrs. Dodge recommended to the full Board the approval for The North Canaan Elementary School Board of Education to allocate \$16,215.00 to fund the .5 social work position from January 1, 2026 to June 30, 2026. The federal grant funding that supported North Canaan Elementary School's 0.5 FTE social worker position through EdAdvance has been terminated. Currently, this position is funded through December 31, 2025. After this date, there will no longer be grant funding available to support these roles. The Board agreed that this is a vital role at the school that should not be terminated. Mrs. Johnson reported that there is a position that has not been filled and she could use those funds to support the Social workers position from January 1, 2026 to June 30, 2026. Mrs. Grant seconded. Vote: 6-yes Mrs. Crane, Mrs. Dodge, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Helminiak, Mr. Jacques, and Mrs. Riva.

C. Policies - Action Anticipated:

To recommend to the full Board the approval of the following policies: 0050 Code of Ethics, 0100 Mission Statement, 0200 Goals, 0521 Nondiscrimination, 0521R Nondiscrimination - Grievance Procedure for Section 504. Title IX. and Title VII Regulations, 0521.2 Commitment to Religious Neutrality, 0524 Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents in Schools, 0524R Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents, 1110.1 Communications with the Public, 1112.5 Media Access to Students, 1120 Public Participation at Board Meetings, 1250 School Visitors, 1312 Public Complaints, 1322 Student Contests, 1324 Soliciting Funds from and by Students, 1325 Advertising and Promotion, 1330 Use of School Facilities, 1331 Smoke Free Environment, 1411 Law Enforcement Officials, 1441R Regulation - Relations with Law Enforcement

Agencies, 1700 Otherwise Lawful Possession of Firearms on School Property. Mrs. Grant seconded. Vote: 6-yes Mrs. Crane, Mrs. Dodge, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Helminiak, Mr. Jacques, and Mrs. Riva.

XI. Administrative Reports

Principal's Report: (A copy is available through the links on the September agenda.)

Mrs. Johnson provided a brief overview of her report. Some of the items she reported are listed below:

- Over the summer, NCES completed several improvements to the playgrounds. The primary playground received new rockers, play walls, and a slide. The elementary playground was updated with a large multi-feature structure that includes several slides and climbing elements. At the middle school level, students returned to find a new exercise-focused playground. The gymnasium and stage floors were refinished by Carlson's during the summer.
- This year, NCES will be implementing CharacterStrong across all grade levels. This evidence-based program is designed to build social-emotional skills and character development in students, while also fostering stronger school communities. Each month, students and staff will focus on a different theme, with corresponding activities and discussions taking place in classrooms.
- This fall, 8 boys and 5 girls are playing soccer. In addition, 3 students are participating in alternative activities such as baking and drawstring bag making.
- Thanks to the efforts of Sharon Kelly-Levesque, our North Canaan social worker, and the generous support of the Canaan United Methodist Church, we were able to provide more than 20 families with backpacks, lunchboxes, and school supplies for the upcoming year.

Assistant Superintendent's Report: (A copy is available through the links on the September agenda.) Dr. Rose provided a brief overview of her report. Some of the items she reported are listed below:

- The K-8 program welcomed 40-60 students each morning for four weeks for extra practice in reading and math. Thanks to Berkshire Taconic Fund for the NorthWest Corner we were once again able to offer busing to families.
- The Summer Mountaineer Program returned for its 4th summer. The coordinating team of Barbara Hockstader, Anne MacNeil, and Jill Pace made this an outstanding experience for our students to be able to make friends, get to know students from other schools and enjoy the resources and amenities that Region One has to offer.
- Just after school got out in June, a large contingent of pre-K-4 teachers met to make grade-level decisions regarding their work with the Benchmark curriculum and its unit assessments. A small group of ELA teachers met to plan the piloting the ELA portion of the Humanities curriculum for grades 7 and 8. And the PE/Health teachers met for 2 days to plan the entire K-8 Health curriculum with 3 units each year focusing on Nutrition, Drugs and Alcohol, and Safety and Injury Prevention or Human Growth and Development (age dependent)

Superintendent's Report: (A copy is available through the links on the September agenda.) Superintendent Brady-Shanley provided a brief overview of her report. Some of the items she reported are listed below:

- Federal government funding has been fully restored for all Title and IDEA programs. This restoration allows our previously planned budgets to proceed as intended.
- On August 25th, there was the annual Back-to-School Convocation at the high school—a day to celebrate the start of a new school year together. This year, there was the largest staff raffle yet!
- This year, Region 1 Schools will focus on two key areas of growth to ensure we are meeting the professional needs of our staff and the academic and social-emotional needs of our students.
- Throughout the year, Region 1 will offer a variety of training for staff, students, and families on restorative practices and how they will be implemented in our schools.

XIII. Public Comment - None

XIV. Adjournment

Mrs. Dodge made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 pm. Mrs. Crane seconded. Vote: 6-yes Mrs. Crane, Mrs. Dodge, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Helminiak, Mr. Jacques, and Mrs. Riva.

Respectfully submitted,
Kerry Rooney

Approved: October 14, 2025