



**MINUTES OF THE February 24th, 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
FULL ZOOM MEETING**

Roll Call of Board Members:

Katherine Paulhus, Mansfield
Lindsay Spielman, Sprague
Kathleen Sposato, Pomfret
Mike Morrill, Putnam
Shana Boland, Stafford
Justin Phaiah, Brooklyn
Nancy Neff, Eastford
Samantha Derenthal, Plainfield

EASTCONN STAFF PRESENT:

Eric Protulis, Carol Klemyk, Melanie Marcaccio, Amy Margelony, Ravit Stein, Shawn Brodeur, Laura Lybarger, Brian Greenleaf, Kim Mansfield

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm by Board Chair, Justin Phaiah

Pledge of Allegiance

Audience with Citizens – None

Additions to the Agenda – None

Approve the Minutes from the January 2026 Board of Directors' meeting

Motion: Samantha Derenthal motioned to approve the minutes from the January 2026 Board of Directors' meeting as presented

Second: Katherine Paulhus

Vote: All in Favor

Abstentions: None

Motion Passed

Committee Reports:

Policy Committee:

Presentation of First Read of the following policies:

- 1001.1.1 School Security and Safety
- 5010.1.1 Food Allergies, Glycogen Storage, Disease and/or Diabetes
- 5015.1.1 Immunizations

Facilities:

Property transactions are in motion – Westcott Road to purchase which currently houses Head Start and Adult and Community Programs – Head Start will take over the entire building to expand services

1303 was approved as holdover money for the Westcott Road purchase

The Community Investment Fund – this is the preferred method for purchase of the building

Commerce Drive is up for sale

Looking at options to purchase the Tyler Square building in Willimantic – this would generate savings to community partners in ACP

Meeting with Senator Cathy Osten’s Office for these property transactions and to gain her support.

Finance:

FY26 Updates:

Review of the monthly finance document

No big changes compared to last month

Still meeting and working with program directors – trending in a better direction – numbers are becoming more solidified

Tracking Operational budgets

Looking at turnover of staffing to see if that will generate more revenue

FY27 updates:

Targeting date for presentation of the FY27 budget – Annual Meeting in May

Waiting to see what the legislators decide and how this will affect our budget

Working with superintendents in the area on student rates

Reviewed the updates around Magnet School funding

The “base formula” needs to be revised

Waiting to see the opposition to the Governor’s proposal

Audit:

Continuing to work on the last pieces of the Audit

Had to resubmit some documents

When the final version is ready – the Auditors will come to EASTCONN to present

Updates from Head Start – Kim Mansfield

Received the new notice of award (NOA) – 2/1/26 thru 1/31/27

Hired a consultant to assist with the grant process

Guidelines in place to make sure that Head Start is meeting the needs of the community
Organizing focus groups with parents from EASTCONN and Windham – stakeholder interviews
Enrollment numbers actually resemble the 97% threshold
Enrollment selection criteria is a priority for the head start grant
Applications for enrollment are blind selections – this criteria determines the types of services we have in place

New Business:

Enrollment Report:

Counts are holding steady compared to last month
Wait list in place at Bridges and CDT
Need to hire more certified teachers
Enrollment will increase as the year goes on

Division Directors' Reports:

Review of Eric's Summary document
Magnet schools are recruiting at this time
Social media views have significantly increased – the pages for ACT and QMC are always in the top 10
Adult Education had a bump in numbers
PDEC Committee did a full PD Day for all staff across the Agency

Executive Directors' Updates:

Positive statements from many employees on the new CT state partnership insurance plan
Significant savings on out-of-pocket expenses
Traveling often to the LOB testify at the sessions to raise the voice of Northeastern CT for our districts and our need to receive our funding to keep our rates to our districts low
Review of article on communications on finding a fix for CES
Update on the ECHIP program and financial services that we provide to them – will have more information later in the year

Human Resources Report:

The January report shows that staffing is holding steady at 526 employees – significant gain that we are not losing staff at rates as in the past
Sourcing of candidates is still our best approach to filling vacancies
A shortage of certified teachers throughout the state

Grant Report:

Presented at Agency Professional Development Day

Consent Agenda:

Approve the following policy as presented (first read was done in January 2026):

5003.1.2 CT School Climate Policy

MOTION: Katherine Paulhus motioned to approve the policy as presented
SECOND: Samantha Derenthal
VOTE: Unanimous
ABSTENTIONS: None

Motion Passed

Approve the Enrollment Selection Criteria for Head Start

MOTION: Katherine Paulhus motioned to approve the Enrollment Selection
Criteria for Head Start
SECOND: Samantha Derenthal
VOTE: Unanimous
ABSTENTIONS: None

Motion Passed

Motion to Adjourn at 6:24 pm.

MOTION: Katherine Paulhus motioned to adjourn the meeting
SECOND: Samantha Derenthal
VOTE: Unanimous
ABSTENTIONS: None

Motion Passed