

Board of Education Special Meeting
June 3, 2026 5:30 PM
Snow School, 299 Wadsworth Street. Middletown, CT 06457
DRAFT

Board Members Present: Kelly Bee, Sheila Daniels, Rakim Grant, Deborah Kleckowski, Dean Krupa, Harold Panciera, and Kimberly Riordan

I. Call to Order

Ms. Daniels called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

II Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Kleckowski led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION: Motion to amend the agenda to move Item V Possible Action: Memorandum of Understanding to be Item III. Motion made by Ms. Kleckowski and seconded by Mr. Panciera-unanimous vote.

III. Memorandum of Understanding

Ms. Kleckowski explained the Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Education and the City of Middletown. The \$505,000 will now be funded by the City of Middletown to maintain the school buildings.

Ms. Cannata thanked the Board and the City for their efforts to fund the budget. Ms. Forbes clarified that the Board of Education's facilities budget will be reduced by \$505,000, with the funding to be replaced through a combination of the City 21st C Infrastructure bond funds and Capital Non-Recurring (CNR) funds for fiscal year 2026-27.

Mr. Grant asked for clarification that this will eliminate the need to close Spencer School.

MOTION: A motion to accept the memorandum as it is outlined was made. Motion made by Ms. Kleckowski and seconded by Kelly Bee.

Deborah Kleckowski- yay

Kim Riordan - yay

Kelly Bee - yay

Rakim Grant - yay

Sheila Daniels - yay

Harold Panciera- yay

Dean Krupa - Yay

III. Public Comment

Chair Daniels reviewed the rules for public comment.

Marlon Milner, 1 Long Lane. Mr. Milner discussed the budget failures.

Christina Mitchell, 80 Barbara Rd. Ms. Mitchell discussed the importance of education, the people, and the resources in the schools. She sees the positive outcomes from the staff and programs in her own daughter.

Erica Howe, 341 Farm Hill Road. Ms. Howe asked the board to prioritize staffing and supports for students within the schools. She also discussed the classroom and school environment.

Cherelle Solomon, 39 Meech Rd. Ms. Soloman spoke of her time with the PTA, staffing, and those who directly work with students.

Mark Durbak, 133 East Ridge Rd. Mr. Derback discussed the budget request and staff cuts. He questioned why the original budget started with cuts.

Jim Gaudreau, MSAA President and Principal, Lawrence School. Mr. Gaudreau asked the Board to finalize the budget as soon as possible. Not having a final budget is affecting the planning for the schools. He discussed the open positions within the MSAA Union and the staff within the union facing displacement. He also asked for funding regarding behavior management with the schools.

John Tucker, 288 Ridge Road. Mr. Tucker thanked the board for their honesty during the budget process. Mr. Tucker asked the board to be explicit with the funding that the district needs.

Roberta Downer, MFT President. Ms. Downer questioned why the board is not asking for the full funding needed for the upcoming school year. She discussed the staffing cuts and the lack of union partnership for budget decisions. She asked the Board to advocate for full funding and bring the unions to the budget process.

Sidgrid Atherton, 116 Brenton Road. Ms. Atherton discussed the Common Council and Board of Education Budget Workshop. She discussed that the Council had the opportunity to leave the workshop before Public Session.

Brooke Carta, AFSCME Local 1467. Ms. Carta discussed the work of the staff that works directly with staff and families. She discussed that employees doing the work in the schools every day were not consulted about the budget and cutbacks. She addressed that the position

cuts will go to remaining staff and that decisions should be made together by the administrators and unions.

Erin Carey, 35 West Street. Ms. Carey discussed her fears with the budget and staffing cuts.

Aaron Jones, 165 Lincoln St. Mr. Jones discussed the IB program and STEM Academy. He also discussed the TAG program. He discussed staff cuts and shifting job responsibilities.

Ms. Daniels proposed a recess. Kleckowski moved, and Mr. Grant seconded.

IV. Budget Discussion

Ms. Daniels called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM. Ms. Cannata explained the Board of Education FY 2027 Budget. The Board faced a \$4,054,013, or 3.93%, decrease.

MOTION: Mr. Panciera made a motion to relook at the budget and try to reduce costs in other places.

Mr. Kleckowski asked for clarification on the increase in Workers' Compensation costs. Mr. Snyder explained the MOD rate and the rates that the board is paying for the insurance.

Mr. Grant thanked the public for their comments. He explained that there was a budget with no cuts, and the council would not entertain it. He spoke of the additional state funding that was meant to be in addition to the funding from the city; however, the City of Middletown included it in the city's funding.

Mr. Krupa discussed the communication between the City Council and the Board of Education.

Motion: A motion was made to accept the proposal as outlined by Mr. Grant and a second by Mr. Krupa.

Deborah Kleckowski - yay

Kim Riordan - yay

Kelly Bee - yay

Rakim Grant - yay

Sheila Daniels- yay

Harold Panciera - no

Dean Krupa - yay

Motion carries.

Ms. Cannata thanked the community members and staff for advocating. She thanked the finance team for their hard work on this budget.

Ms. Daniels explained that the budget process began in the fall and had several budget meetings and workshops. She explained the meetings that have been both public and private with City leadership. She thanked the public for attending the meetings.

V. Possible Action: Memorandum of Understanding

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

VI. Possible Action: 2026-2027 Budget

Motion: A motion was made to accept the proposal as outlined by Mr. Grant and a second by Mr. Krupa.

Deborah Kleckowski - yay

Kim Riordan - yay

Kelly Bee - yay

Rakim Grant - yay

Sheila Daniels- yay

Harold Panceira - no

Dean Krupa - yay

Motion carries.

Ms. Cannata thanked the community members and staff for advocating. She thanked the finance team for their hard work on this budget.

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VII. Adjournment

MOTION: Motion to adjourn at 7:00 PM made by Ms. Kleckowski and seconded by Mr. Panciera.