

East Haddam Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes
Municipal Office Complex, Meeting Room 2
April 2, 2026, 6:00 PM

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Keira Thompson, Chairman
Jessica Hatfield, Secretary
Jim Francese
Terri Garrity (Arrived 6:16 PM)
Thea Jansky
Sean Morrissey
Dan Flack
Melissa Ziobron
Steve Trojan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Flack

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. DeBrito, Superintendent of Schools
Christine Bourne, Business Manager
Wendy McCabe, Pupil Services Director
Megan Peterson, Elementary School Principal
Chris Eckert, High School Principal

I. CALL TO ORDER

a. Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

III. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION 2026-2027 BUDGET

The board members discussed the 2026-2027 School Year budget that was approved on February 26, 2026. On March 21, 2026, the Board of Finance approved an increase of only \$32,796 over the previous year and provided no allocation for capital funding. Due to the removal of certain funding assumptions (including the Ray Board contribution), the BOE is facing a total shortfall of approximately \$929,999. A Public Hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, at 7:00 p.m. at the High School. A Budget Referendum is set for May 5, 2026. The BOE intends to formally re-adopt a budget on either April 8 or May 13, once firmer numbers are available. The administration presented

several potential scenarios to address the \$929,999 gap including cuts to Purchased Services, passing fees on costs associated with field trips, Pay to Play as well as AP & college courses as well as the \$205,000 budgeted into the budget for the Ray Board account.

IV. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING POLICY 9314, SUSPENSIONS OF POLICIES, BYLAWS, AND REGULATIONS

Ms. Thompson read the policy 9314, "Policies, bylaws and Board of Education adopted regulations shall be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time by majority vote of all members of the Board of Education at a meeting in the call for which the proposed suspension has been described in writing, or upon a two-thirds vote of all members of the Board of Education when no such written notice has been given."

Motion: A motion was made to suspend policy 9314 so the board can vote on Policy 3171.11, The Non-Lapsing Education Fund policy. Mr. Morrissey made the motion and Ms. Jansky seconded.

FAVOR: (7)
OPPOSED: (0)
ABSENT: (1)
ABSTENTIONS:(0)

V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING POLICY 3171.11, NON-LAPSING FUND

The board discussed allowing the limited use of funds to cover operational deficits resulting from budget reductions.

Motion: A motion was made to change policy 3171.11, Non-Lapsing Education Fund, to reflect the changes proposed by Ms. Garrity was made by Ms. Jansky and seconded by Ms. Hatfield.

FAVOR: (5)
OPPOSED: (1)
ABSENT: (1)
ABSTENTIONS:(1)

VI. DISCUSSION REGARDING CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS

The Board of Education reviewed the status of capital reserve funds, noting approximately \$575,000 in unallocated surplus from recent fiscal years that must be requested from the Board of Finance for specific projects. Given a "zero capital" budget for the 2026-2027 cycle, the Board discussed exhausting these reserves to fund roughly \$601,000 in priority maintenance and security needs, including a district-wide camera lease, high school roof insulation, and an emergency access road for the elementary school.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 PM by Ms. Jansky and seconded by Mr. Francese.

FAVOR: (7)
OPPOSED: (0)
ABSENT: (1)
ABSTENTIONS:(0)

Meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Hatfield
Board of Education Secretary