## Essex Westford School District Board Meeting

**Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 6:30pm**
**Essex High School Library**

### MINUTES

**Board Members:** Martha Heath, Kim Gleason, Al Bombardier, Patrick Murray, Brendan Kinney, Andre Roy, Diane Clemens, Liz Subin, Laura Printon (Student Representative), Tilly Krishna (Student Representative)

**Staff:** Beth Cobb (Superintendent), Brian Donahue (COO), Deb Anderson (HR Director), Bob Travers (CTE Director)

**Public:** Tracy Centracchio, Mike Beckett, Colin Beckett, Zachary Centracchio

**Other:** RETN Tech

**Absent:** Keeley Schell, Todd Odit

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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| I    | Call to Order  
Martha called the meeting to order at 6:32pm. |
| II   | Comments from the public on items not on the agenda  
There were no public comments. |
| III  | Consent Items  
- School Board Meeting Minutes: 1/21/20, 1/28/20  
- Approve Warrants  
- Approval of Professional Appointments  

**Action:** Al motioned to accept the consent agenda consisting of Approval of Minutes, Warrants, Professional Appointment (Alexis Kelly), and Leave (Chana Sieffert); vote 7-0.

| IV   | School Board Business  
- **Statewide Health Care Settlement Information Session** - Deb Anderson [shared slides](#) overviewing the arbitrator award for school employee health care benefits. Implementation of the statewide benefit will go into effect January 1, 2021. The biggest changes are to the eligibility threshold which will now be 17.5 hours per week. HRA first dollar responsibility has been flipped with employers paying first and employees paying their portion of expenses at the end. Districts will also now need to extend coverage to domestic partners.  
- Overall, the implementation of the new statewide health plan is expected to significantly increase costs for school districts throughout the state.

| V    | Learning/Information/Updates  
- **FY21 Budget: Center for Technology, Essex** - Brian [presented slides](#) on the proposed spending plan for CTE in FY21 and highlighted progress on the budget so far.  
- The public is encouraged to access all the information on the budget at [www.ewsd.org/budget](https://www.ewsd.org/budget).  
- Bob Travers spoke about the programs that CTE offers. The opportunities for students toward preparing for college and career are tremendous. Teachers recently worked on aligning student's CTE program requirements with the sending high school proficiencies.  
- Brian explained the updates in the tax rate forecast. We know that many in our community receive reductions in their school property tax bills based on income sensitivity.  
- The Board asked to include information on how we are delivering on the promise of merger for as long as we have tax incentives. Beyond just savings, we need to demonstrate what we are gaining by merger.  

*RETN films every regular board meeting and broadcasts them live.*

*Watch LIVE EWSD School Board Meetings at [https://www.facebook.com/retnvt](https://www.facebook.com/retnvt)*
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<th>VI</th>
<th>School Board Business (Continued)</th>
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<td>● <strong>Student Report</strong> - Laura spoke about the work of engaging middle school students on the topic of student voice. Tilly shared some of the desired outcomes and activities planned.</td>
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<td>● <strong>Task Team Updates</strong> - The Communication Task Team provided an update on voter engagement efforts. Negotiations will be continuing with exchange of proposals for both the teachers and the support staff.</td>
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<td>● <strong>Local and Statewide Updates</strong> - The Senate Education Committee has solicited input from our district on potential legislation related to the election of school board members in unified union school districts. Beth recently gave testimony on what we are doing to support literacy in EWSD.</td>
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| VII | Next Meeting Agenda |
|     | ● Next Regular Board Meeting Agenda for February 11th |
|     | ● Meeting Evaluation |

| VIII | Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 8:51pm. |

Upcoming Meetings:
- **Budget Work Session**: February 11, 2020 at Essex High School Library, 6:30-8:30pm
- **Regular Board Meeting**: February 18, 2020 at Essex High School Library, 6:30-9:30pm