

HAMPTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER
380 MAIN STREET
HAMPTON, CT 06247

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 28, 2026
7:00 PM

HAMPTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Mark Becker called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm

Those in attendance were Dennis Timberman, Mark Becker, Stephanie Bora, Laura Barrow, Juan Arriola, and Tim Studer. Also in attendance were Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski, Principal Victoria Smith, Director of Special Education Mary Jo Chretien, and Business, Coordinator Sally Lehoux. Not Present: Maryellen Donnelly and Elizabeth Lindorff.

Chair Mark Becker took a moment to congratulate the school on being named a School of Distinction for growth in Mathematics. Board members applauded in celebration.

2. Board Training: Science of Reading, HES School Principal Victoria Smith

Principal Victoria Smith gave a presentation about the Science of Reading and how it's implemented at HES. Board members applauded her presentation.

3. Audience For Citizens

Danielle McIver asked a question pertaining to class sizes for next year and highlighted the need for a librarian.

4. Correspondence to the Board

None

5. Approval of Minutes from Board Meeting 12/17/26

Motion: Juan Arriola moved to approve the minutes of December 17, 2025. Laura Barrow seconded the motion.

Voting yes were Laura Barrow, Juan Arriola, Tim Studer, Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, and Stephanie Bora.

The motion passed unanimously.

6. Principal's Report

School Principal Victoria Smith shared that the Cuddle Up and Read event was successful event. The latest Pack the Piggies fundraiser was another success, raising over \$1400 for Field Day. Principal Smith highlighted the next Community Table meeting will take place February 12, 2026. Principal Smith also thanked Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski for honoring the idea of The Whole Child while referencing the recent sledding day outside with staff and students.

Director of Special Education Mary Jo Chretien also thanked all teachers for building relationships with families and sharing reports with parents.

7. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Skarzynski began his report highlighting a book, Unreasonable Hospitality by restaurateur Will Guidara and mentioned that there's a concept in this book called "make it legendary," and shared how HES embodies this through creating unique experiences for the students, how students engage with each other outside, etc. He highlighted seeing the sheer joy on students' faces during recess, 5th graders helping 2nd graders, students making up games with rules to follow, and how Kindergarten and 1st graders were sharing paint bottles to draw in the snow. Superintendent Skarzynski also highlighted the idea of a regional (Hampton, Scotland, Chaplin) art show to showcase the art work of students in our region's four schools. He said planning that event is still in the works. All four schools are on board to do this. Superintendent Skarzynski also briefly spoke of the FY26 Budget being worked on.

8. Business Coordinator's Report

Sally Lehoux gave report.

9. Committee and Liaison Reports

a. Finance and Operations

Mark Becker reported that a contractor did come in to finish up the work on the Library sunroom. There is a plan being developed for the oil tank enclosure. And there was a discussion about the budget at their meeting.

b. EASTCONN

No report.

c. Policy Committee

The Policy Committee did not meet.

d. Minority Recruitment and Retention Ad Hoc Committee

Mark Becker reported that this committee did meet and began developing actions required to complete the charge of the committee.

e. Superintendent Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee

Juan Arriola reported that they reviewed the charge of this committee and are working on creating an evaluation tool. This committee is exploring the evaluation tools of surrounding schools to create our own tool to use going forward.

f. Communications Committee

The Communications Committee did not meet.

10. Discussion of 2026-2027 Budget

Superintendent Skarzynski presented 2 draft budgets and specified that the major drivers are special education, transportation, and teacher salaries. He indicated that there is a need for a second Special Education teacher due to the depth, breadth, and range of meeting the needs of students across all grades PreK-6th. Superintendent Skarzynski also discussed other factors of what went into creating these two draft budgets. The board asked several questions and provided Superintendent Skarzynski several areas to review for reductions as well as researching a potential library / media position.

11. Discussion: Participation in Regional Insurance Group

Superintendent Skarzynski said they received a no bid rate of 6.9% with Anthem, while also saying surrounding schools have been quoted higher rates. Chair Mark Becker recommended that we move this discussion to line 14 on our agenda.

12. Discussion and Possible Action: 2026-2027 Calendar Approval

Superintendent Skarzynski shared the draft calendar and said that it was aligned with the calendars of Chaplin, Scotland, and RD 11 schools. Board members reviewed the calendar and will revisit it at our next meeting.

13. Discussion and Possible Action: Board Retreat Revised Date

Chair Mark Becker shared that there is some difficulty finding a facilitator to commit to our original date of March 6, 2026 from 4 pm - 7 pm. Superintendent Skarzynski said he will reach out to facilitators to compile possible dates for Board Retreat and will get back to Board members about it. Possible date that Board members explored was March 12, 2026.

14. Additions to the Agenda

Motion: Tim Studer motioned to approve possible action for participation in Regional Insurance Group.

Juan Arriola seconded the motion.

Voting yes were Tim Studer, Juan Arriola, Laura Barrow, Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, and Stephanie Bora.

The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Laura Barrow motioned to approve participation in the Regional Insurance Group.

Stephanie Bora seconded the motion.

Voting yes were Tim Studer, Laura Barrow, Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, and Stephanie Bora. Those abstained: Juan Arriola.

Motion passed.

15. Next Agenda Planning

Budget Discussion

Calendar

Edsight School

Accountability Systems

16. Second Audience For Citizens

Kathy Donahue said she will email questions to Superintendent Skarzynski, Sally Lahoux and Mark Becker due to the length of the meeting.

Selectman Alan Cahill asked for the reason for school being cancelled Tuesday, January 27, 2026.

17. Possible Executive Session: Discussion of Privileged Attorney-Client Communications

Motion: Dennis Timberman moved to approve entering Executive Session for the discussion of privileged attorney-client communication.

Stephanie Bora seconded the motion.

Voting yes were Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, Stephanie Bora, Laura Barrow, Tim Studer, and Juan Arriola.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Dennis Timberman moved to invite Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski to the Executive Session to give testimony.

Stephanie Bora seconded the motion.

Voting yes were Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, Stephanie Bora, Laura Barrow, Tim Studer, and Juan Arriola.

Motion passed unanimously.

Exited Executive Session at 8:42 pm

18. Adjournment

Motion: Juan Arriola moved to adjourn.

Dennis Timberman seconded the motion.

Voting yes were Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, Stephanie Bora, Laura Barrow, Tim Studer, and Juan Arriola.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Bora