



**ACES GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**THURSDAY, May 14, 2026**  
**SDA Building, 205 Skiff Street, Hamden, CT**

**Governing Board:** Shawn Tiernan, Branford; Ann Marie Cullinan, Cheshire; Nickimmy Hayes, Meriden; James Scully, Naugatuck; Martin Rudnick, North Haven; Susan Riccio, Orange; Carol Oladele, RSD #5 Amity; Michael J. Votto, Wallingford; Thomas Van Stone, Waterbury; Roberta Leonard, Wolcott

**ACES:** Thomas Danehy, Timothy Howes, William Rice, Rebecca Cuevas, Michelle Coogan, Dee Colson

**Not Present:** Ansonia, Bethany, Derby, East Haven, Hamden, Middletown, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, RSD #13, RSD #16, Seymour, West Haven, Wolcott, Woodbridge

**I. Welcome/Call to Order** - Ms. Susan Riccio

**II. Pledge of Allegiance** – Ms. Susan Riccio

**III. Public Participation**

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

**a.** Approval of minutes of the regular Board Meeting held on April 9, 2026.

Ms. Robert Leonard motioned to approve the regular board meeting minutes held on April 19, 2026.

Mr. James Scully seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously

Opposed: None

Abstention: Mr. Martin Rudnick

**V. Executive Director's Report** - Dr. Thomas M. Danehy

**a.** FY 2026-2027 Budget Proposals. – Tim Howes

1. The Bridge at ACES

2. Regions: Hartford

3. Regions: Plainville

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4. Brightwell Academy
  5. Network Services
  6. Governing Board
  7. Executive Director
  8. Fiscal Management
  9. Human Capital Department
  10. Marketing
- b. ACES Marketing received Honorable Mention in the 2025 Bonnie B. Carney Awards of Excellence for Educational Communications, presented by CAFE, in recognition of its social media program.
  - c. 88 Bassett Street School Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.
  - d. ACES Foundation Update.
  - e. 2026-2027 Board Member Leadership Nomination Process.
  - f. ELC Terms of Employment.
  - g. 370 James Street update.

**VI. Filing of the Fiscal Report (subject to audit) – Thomas Van Stone**

The May Fiscal Report indicates that ACES remains in a positive surplus position as of the close of the fiscal year. Efforts are underway to complete final billing, adjust encumbrances, enroll students for the upcoming school year, and finalize service contracts. I move that the Governing Board accept the Fiscal Report as presented, subject to the annual audit.

Mr. Thomas Van Stone moved to approve the May 14, 2026, financial report as presented, subject to audit.

Mr. James Scully seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously

Opposed: None

Abstention: None

**VII. Approval of Human Capital Development Report – Ms. Rebecca Cuevas**

Ms. Rebecca Cuevas presented the HCD report, which showed 12 new hires across various positions, 12 resignations, 1 termination, 3 transfers/position changes, and 16 leaves. She also announced the recipients of the Executive Director's Recognition Award (EDRA) and the Rookie of the Year Awards for 2025.

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**EDRA Recipients:**

- Madeline Torres – Central Administration/Operations
- Shaquana Cobbs – Whitney Academy
- John Silveira – Village
- Liz Bissell – SDA/Services

**Rookies of the Year:**

- Hayley Dudley – Clinical Services
- Tammia Williams – Whitney Academy

Ms. Roberta Leonard motioned to approve the Human Capital Development Report.  
Mr. James Scully seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously  
Opposed: None  
Abstention: None

**VIII. Operations and Early Head Start Report - Mr. William Rice**

Dr. William Rice presented updates on ACES construction projects at CHASE Academy, 670 Wintergreen Avenue, and 88 Bassett Road. He also provided comprehensive updates on Capital Improvement Projects, Operations, Facilities, Maintenance, and Internal Transportation, Security, Data Privacy, ACCESS, Magnet School Lottery, Open Choice Program, Community Engagement initiatives, Nutrition Services, Network Services, and the Early Head Start.

Dr. William Rice requests approval for the Early Head Start monthly reports, contracts, and summaries.

Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to approve the Early Head Start monthly reports, contracts, and summaries.

Ms. Roberta Leonard seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously  
Opposed: None  
Abstention: None

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**IX. Schools and Programs Report – Ms. Michelle Coogan**

Ms. Michelle Coogan highlighted Leadership Engagement and Collaboration, Curriculum and Assessment, Professional Learning Opportunities, and Community and Schools Connections.

**X. New Business**

- a. Possible action regarding Executive Leadership Council terms of employment, including the Executive Office Manager and Assistant Director of the Human Capital Department.

Ms. Roberta Leonard motioned to approve the Executive Leadership Council's updated terms and conditions of employment and for designated non-union administrative personnel, including the Executive Office Manager and Assistant Director of Human Capital. Approved adjustments included a 2.9% salary increase, continuation of current health insurance coverage with RX preauthorization provisions, a four-year employment term, a \$240 monthly mileage stipend, a \$1,000 increase in annuity contribution, and additional compensation (\$15,000) restructuring related to executive leadership responsibilities, including the transition from an automobile benefit to alternative compensation in the amount of \$15,000.

Mr. Martin Rudnick seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously  
Opposed: None  
Abstention: James Scully

- b. Possible action to establish a nominating committee for Board Officers from July 1, 2026, through June 2027, and to appoint a Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Fiscal Chair, and two Executive Committee Members.

Mr. James Scully motioned to approve establishing a nominating committee for Board Officers from July 1, 2026, through June 2027, and to appoint a Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Fiscal Chair, and two Executive Committee Members.

Ms. Roberta Leonard seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously  
Opposed: None  
Abstention: None



**c. Granting of Signing Authority**

“That Dr. William Rice, Executive Director, and in his absence or incapacity, Timothy Howes, Deputy Executive Director, be authorized to make, sign, execute, and approve on behalf of the ACES Governing Board all grants/contracts with the State of Connecticut and

its agencies, school districts, and municipalities. “This authorization shall remain in force until rescinded by the action of the ACES Governing Board. “

Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to approve that Dr. William Rice, Executive Director, and, in his absence or incapacity, Timothy Howes, Deputy Executive Director, be authorized to make, sign, execute, and approve on behalf of the ACES Governing Board all grants/contracts with the State of Connecticut and its agencies, school districts, and municipalities. “This authorization shall remain in force until rescinded by the action of the ACES Governing Board. “

Ms. Roberta Leonard seconded.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously  
Opposed: None  
Abstention: James Scully

**d. Possible action to accept magnet funds from the recently enacted Senate Bill 1, with funds to be deposited into separate accounts for magnet school expenditures only.**

Mr. Martin Rudnick moved to approve the allocation of magnet funds received under the recently enacted Senate Bill 1, to be deposited into separate accounts designated solely for magnet school expenditures.

James Scully seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously  
Opposed: None  
Abstention: None

**e. Possible action to accept the FY2026-2027 Budgets.**

1. The Bridge at ACES
2. Regions: Hartford
3. Regions: Plainville
4. Regions: Hamden
5. Brightwell Academy
6. Network Services

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7. Governing Board
8. Executive Director
9. Fiscal Management
10. Human Capital Department
11. Marketing

Ms. Susan Riccio moved to vote collectively on FY 2026-2027 Budgets.  
Mr. Michael Votto motioned to approve the FY 2026-2027 Budgets.  
Mr. Martin Rudnick seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously  
Opposed: None  
Abstention: None

**XI. Possible Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a Stipulated Agreement in Lieu of Student Expulsion**

Ms. Roberta Leonard motioned to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a Stipulated Agreement in Lieu of Student Expulsion at 1:03 pm.  
Mr. Martin Rudnick seconded the motion.

The Executive Session concluded, and the ACES Regular Board Meeting reconvened at 1:22 p.m.

**XII. Adjournment:**

Mr. Martin Rudnick Motion to adjourn at 1:24 p.m.  
Mr. Shawn Tiernan seconded the motion.

Ms. Susan Riccio motioned to re-enter the regular board meeting at 1:28 p.m.  
The Board acknowledges that a scheduled vote on the Stipulated Agreement in Lieu of Student Expulsion was inadvertently omitted prior to adjournment.  
Mr. Martin Rudnick seconded the motion.

Ms. Roberta Leonard motioned to approve the Stipulated Agreement in Lieu of Student Expulsion.  
Mr. Martin Rudnick seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously  
Opposed: None  
Abstention: None

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**XIII. Final Adjournment:**

A final motion to adjourn was made by Martin Rudnick at 1:29 p.m.  
Michael Votto seconded the motion.

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