



ACES GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES
THURSDAY, May 8, 2025
SDA Building, 205 Skiff Street, Hamden, CT

Governing Board: Ellen Michaels, Branford, Ann Marie Cullinan, Cheshire, Laura Harris, Derby, Ethel Grant, Naugatuck, Martin Rudnick, North Haven, Susan Riccio, Orange, Lindsay Dahlheimer, RSD #13

ACES: Dr. Thomas Danehy, Timothy Howes, Dr. William Rice, Rebecca Cuevas, Dee Colson

Not Present: Ansonia, Bethany, East Haven, Hamden, Meriden, Middletown, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, Oxford, RSD #5 Amity RSD #5, RSD #16, Seymour, Wallingford, Waterbury, West Haven, Wolcott, Woodbridge

Guests: Bill Jacobs, AEA, Heather Granja, ACES Early Head Start

I. Welcome/Call to Order

Ms. Susan Riccio called the ACES Governing Board meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. after determining that a quorum was present.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Susan Riccio

III. Public Participation/Communications

Laura Harris will be relocating to Southbury, and this meeting marked her final participation with the ACES Governing Board. Dr. Danehy and Susan Riccio thanked Laura for her years of service with the ACES Governing Board.

Ms. Ethel Grant shared that her daughter recently attended an event featuring Tony Orlando and had the opportunity to speak with him.

Dr. Thomas Danehy announced that Dr. William Rice has been honored with the 2025 Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award by the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Ms. Lindsey Dahlheimer reported that Regional School District #13's budget has been successfully approved.

Ms. Susan Riccio also announced the approval of Amity's budget.

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IV. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes held on April 10, 2025.

Ms. Ellen Michaels seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously

Opposed: None

Abstention: Ellen Michaels

VOTE

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

- a. 2025-2026 Board Members Leadership Nomination Process
- b. Susan Riccio announced the need for a nominating committee for Board Officers from July 1, 2025, through June 2026, and to appoint a Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Fiscal Chair, and two Executive Committee Members.
- c. Academic Achievement and Growth. Dr. Danehy shared information regarding students' academic achievement and will send a full report shortly.
- d. 2025 – 2026 Budget Proposals. Mr. Howes presented the following school and program budgets.
 1. Transportation
 2. Pupil Services (External)
 3. ETS
 4. Behavioral Services
 5. Pupil Services (Internal)
 6. PDSI
 7. International
 8. Preschool Woodbury
 9. Preschool Newtown

VI. Filing of the Fiscal Report (subject to audit) – Ms. Laura Harris

Ms. Laura Harris moved that the ACES Governing Board accept the May Fiscal Report as presented. The report indicates a projected surplus of approximately \$6.1 million across all funds, attributed to strong revenue performance and diligent cost management. Staff continue to closely monitor encumbrances and expenditures to ensure fiscal responsibility throughout the remainder of the fiscal year. The motion to approve the report was made, subject to audit.

Ms. Laura Harris motioned to accept the filing of the fiscal report.

Ms. Ethel Grant seconded the motion.

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All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously
Opposed: None
Abstention: None

VOTE

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

Ms. Cuevas presented the HR report, which reported 15 new hires in various positions, two transfers/position changes, nine resignations, 14 leaves, two terminations, and one retirement. she also announced the recipients of the Executive Director’s Recognition Award (EDRA) and the Rookie of the Year Awards for 2025.

EDRA Recipients:

- Allison Simeone
- Missy St. Peter
- Isiah Miller
- Andrew Carr

Rookies of the Year:

- Cristina Goncalves
- Jason Terryn
- Khalilah Hinton

Ms. Ethel Grant moved to accept the Human Capital Development Report.
Ms. Laura Harris seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously
Opposed: None
Abstention: None

VOTE

VIII. Operations and Early Head Start Report - Dr. William Rice

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

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

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Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to accept the Early Head Start monthly reports and summaries.

Ms. Ellen Michaels seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously

Opposed: None

Abstention: None

VOTE

IX. Possible Executive Session

Possible Executive Session to evaluate the Executive Director.

Ms. Susan Riccio moved to enter into Executive Session at 12:57 p.m. to evaluate the Executive Director, with participation from the Governing Board and Dr. Thomas Danehy.

Ms. Laura Harris moved to enter Executive Session with Dr. Thomas Danehy.

Ms. Ellen Michaels seconded the motion.

At 1:29 p.m., Ms. Susan motioned to enter into regular session.

X. New Business

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

Ms. Ethel Grant motioned to accept the Executive Leadership Council's terms of employment, including the Assistant Director of Human Capital Development and the Executive Office Manager. Salary and annuity increase of 3%, and benefits package as proposed.

Mr. Martin seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously

Opposed: None

Abstention: None

VOTE

- b. Possible action to approve the Executive Director's FY 2025-2026 contract with a salary increase of 1.44%, post-retirement insurance benefits, auto allowance, and paid time off benefits as proposed.

Ms. Ellen Michaels motioned to approve the Executive Director's contract for the 2025-2026 term.

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Ms. Laura Harris seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously

Opposed: None

Abstention: None

VOTE

- c. Possible action to engage a real estate broker regarding 26 Old Post Rd, Northford, and 261 Skiff Street, Hamden.

Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to engage a real estate broker regarding 26 Old Post Rd, Northford, and 261 Skiff Street, Hamden.

Ms. Ellen Michaels seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously

Opposed: None

Abstention: None

VOTE

- d. Possible action to approve continued negotiations for the purchase and closing of 124 Pomperaug Ave. Woodbury CT.

Ms. Ethel Grant motioned to approve continued negotiations for 124 Pomperaug Ave. Woodbury, CT.

Ms. Laura Harris seconded.

All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously

Opposed: None

Abstention: None

VOTE

- e. Possible action to create the 2025-2026 Board Members Leadership Nomination Committee for Board Officers from July 1, 2025, through June 2026, and to appoint a Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Fiscal Chair, and two Executive Committee Members.

Ms. Ethel Grant motioned to approve the establishment of a 2025-2026 Board Members Leadership Nomination Committee for Board Officers from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, and to appoint a Board Chair, Vice Chair, Fiscal Chair, and two Executive Committee Members.

Ms. Laura Harris seconded.

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All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously
Opposed: None
Abstention: None

VOTE

- g. Possible action to approve budgets for FY 2025-2026.
1. Transportation
 2. Pupil Services (External)
 3. ETS
 4. Behavioral Services
 5. Pupil Services (Internal)
 6. PDSI
 7. International
 8. Preschool Woodbury
 9. Preschool Newton

Ms. Susan Riccio has moved to approve the above budgets collectively.
Ms. Ellen Michaels motioned to approve the above budgets.
Mr. Martin Rudnick seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion Passed Unanimously
Opposed: None
Abstention: None

VOTE

XI. Other

- a. Finance Committee Meeting, June 5, 2025
- b. Regular Board Meeting, June 5, 2025

XII. Adjournment

Ms. Susan Riccio motioned to adjourn at 1:40 p.m.
Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to adjourn.
Ms. Laura Harris Seconded.

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