ACES GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES
THURSDAY, September 10, 2026
In-person Attendees: SDA Building, 205 Skiff Street, Hamden, CT
Virtual Attendees
https://aces-org.zoom.us/j/89093135058?pwd=aavFaO3pAvmsgWwmbUzdCgUoHHPGui.1

Governing Board: Shawn Tiernan, Branford; Ann Marie Cullinan, Cheshire; Nickimmy Hayes, Meriden; Nicole Wilhelm, Milford; James Scully, Naugatuck; Martin Rudnick, North Haven; Susan Riccio, Orange; Robert Moore, RSD #13; Michael J. Votto, Wallingford; Roberta Leonard, Wolcott

ACES: William Rice, Timothy Howes, Rebecca Cuevas, Michelle Coogan, William Grimm, Dee Colson, Madeline Torres

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

I. **Welcome/Call to Order** - Ms. Susan Riccio
Ms. Susan Riccio called the ACES Governing Board Meeting to order at 12:14 pm

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

III. **Public Participation**
N/A

IV. **Approval of Minutes**

a. Approval of minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held on June 4, 2026
Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to approve the Regular Board Meeting minutes held on June 4, 2026.
Michael J. Votto seconded the motion.

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

b. Approval of minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on June 18, 2026
Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to approve the minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on June 18, 2026.

Robert Moore seconded the motion.

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

c. Approval of minutes of the Special Governing Board Meeting held on August 6, 2026
Mr. Shawn Tiernan motioned to approve the Special Board Meeting minutes held on August 6, 2026.
Mr. Martin Rudnick seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously
Opposed: None
Abstention: Mr. Robert Moore

V. **Executive Director's Report** - Dr. William Rice

a. **Opening of the 2026-2027 School Year, Convocation, and Attendance Awareness Month**

1. Brief reflection on the opening of the school year.
2. Recognition of September as Attendance Awareness Month and National Workforce Development Month, the importance of consistent attendance, and a save-the-date for the ACES BAC Recognition Dinner to be held on October 21, 2026.
3. Brief reflection on the August 26 Celebration of Us Convocation and Dr. Rice 2.0.
4. Recognition of Rebecca Cuevas, Elaine Sein, Human Capital Development, Marketing, and the staff who planned and supported Convocation.
5. Mission Moment

b. Executive Director Summer Update
c. Follow-Up from Summer Special Governing Board Meetings
d. Policy Review and Governing Board Policy Committee
e. External Engagement and Strategic Partnerships
f. Executive Office and Governing Board Support Transition
g. Design Plan 4.0

VI. **Approval of the Fiscal Report (Subject to Audit)** – Ms. Susan Riccio

The September Fiscal Report indicates that ACES is beginning the school year with a positive surplus. Service contracts continue to come in, and enrollment activity remains

strong across our programs. I move that the Governing Board accept the Fiscal Report as presented, subject to the annual audit.

Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to approve the September Fiscal Report presented to the governing board, subject to the annual audit.
Ms. Roberta Leonard 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 79 new hires across various positions, 71 resignations, 10 terminations, 61 transfers/position changes, 44 leaves, and 11 retirements (includes counts from June 30-August 31). Ms. Cuevas also highlighted the ACES 2026 Convocation and provided an update on the Insurance Collaborative audit, which is reviewing claims from the previous year. She also reported on union negotiations, noting that an agreement with the ACES Non-Certified Civil Service Employees Affiliates (CESA) has not yet been reached.

Ms. Roberta Leonard motioned to approve the Human Capital Development Report.
Mr. Robert Moore seconded the motion.

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

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

Mr. William Grimm 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, Internal Transportation, Security, Data Privacy, ACCESS, Magnet School Lottery, Open Choice Program, Community Engagement initiatives, Nutrition Services, Network Services, and Early Head Start.

Mr. William Grimm requested 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.

Mr. Shawn Tiernan seconded the motion.

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

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

Ms. Michelle Coogan reported that ACES schools and programs had a productive summer focused on leadership development, continued student learning, and preparation for the 2026–27 school year. Highlights included a leadership retreat, the Summer Math Institute, Extended School Year programming, and the successful opening of ACES Bassett Road School. Staff also participated in professional learning focused on instruction, student support, school climate, and building positive learning environments. ACES schools welcomed students back prepared for a successful start to the new school year.

X. **ACES Services & Strategic Development Report –** Mr. Timothy Howes

Mr. Timothy Howes reported that ACES Services had a productive summer focused on expanding programs, strengthening district partnerships, pursuing new revenue opportunities, and responding to the evolving needs of districts and communities. Growth continued through Pupil Services, clinical support, professional development, World Languages, transportation, and facility rentals, while new initiatives such as the ACES Center for AI and ACES UP continued to develop as regional resources. Looking ahead, ACES Services will focus on sustainable growth, expanding specialized services, strengthening partnerships, maximizing agency resources, and creating opportunities for students, educators, and districts.

XI. **New Business**

a. Possible Action to Approve the ACES Early Head Start Continuing Grant Application.

Mr. Robert Moore motioned to approve the ACES Early Head Start Continuing Grant Application.
Mr. Shawn Tiernan seconded the motion.

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

b. Possible Action to Establish an ACES Governing Board Policy Committee and Appoint Committee Members.

The Board determined that no action was necessary, as the Policy Committee had already been established. No motion was made.

c. Possible Action Regarding Voluntary Donation of Accumulated Sick Leave by PDSI Educational Specialists.

Mr. Martin Rudnick motioned to approve Voluntary Donation of Accumulated Sick Leave by PDSI Educational Specialists.
Mr. Shawn Tiernan seconded the motion.

All in favor: Motion passed unanimously
Opposed: None
Abstention: Mr. Michael J. Votto

XII. Old Business

a. Possible Action to elect Vice Chair, Fiscal Agent, and Executive Committee Members.

Ms. Susan Riccio motioned to approve the following Governing Board officers and Executive Committee members: Anne Marie Cullinan as Vice Chair; Martin Rudnick as Fiscal Agent; and Nickimmy Hayes and Roberta Leonard as Executive Committee members.
Mr. Robert Moore seconded the motion.

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

XIII. Announcements

a. Finance Committee Meeting, October 8, 2026
b. Regular Board Meeting, October 8, 2026, will begin at 12:30 p.m.

Prior to adjournment, Ms. Susan Riccio asked the Board to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of the victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks.

XIV. Adjournment:

Ms. Susan Riccio adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.

XV. Attachments

a. Plan 4.0
b. Guidelines for Voluntary Donation of Sick Leave
c. 370 James Street Networking Event Flyer