HAMDEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
APRIL 7, 2026
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Peter Downhour, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

Board Members: Peter Downhour, Melissa Kaplan, David Asbery (Virtual), Marcia Brown, Mario Ciccarini, Nancy Hill, and Christopher Piscitelli
Staff: Gary Highsmith, Tom Ariola, Erin Bailey, and Susan Smey
Student Representative: Matilda Ryder

SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD RECOGNITION

The Superintendent introduced Principal of Alice Peck Learning Center, Amy Shaver, who honored Hamden Heroes:

Joy Wali- Para Educator
Partheina Martin- First Student Bus Aid

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEM

There were no Public Comments on Agenda Items this evening.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence received since the last meeting

MINUTES

1. Move to accept the amended minutes from the Board of Education Meeting on March 10, 2026, noting Nancy Hill had abstained from voting.
   Downhour
   Seconded by: Piscitelli
   In Favor: Downhour, Kaplan, Asbery, Brown, Ciccarini, Hill, and Piscitelli

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Board Chair, Peter Downhour, stated he went to the Hamden High School musical and enjoyed the show. Mario Ciccarini stated he went to the Townwide Concert.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Matilda stated today was the last day of the third marking period. Everything is going smoothly and there are some upcoming End of the Year activities.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

The Superintendent stated that they were applying for a school-based diversion initiative grant for middle and high school age students.

The Superintendent stated there was some new legislation proposed for this year. Some legislation concerning teacher tenure, kindergarten entrance age, homeschooling.

The Superintendent stated there was no movement on the ECS funding increase, as of yet.

The Superintendent reported that Matilda was graduating this year and the process needs to begin to find a new representative.

The Superintendent stated that there was a soft opening of the Family Welcome Center.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

2. Move to Executive Session at 7:20 P.M. to have a discussion concerning attorney-client communication related to confidential student matter. Besides the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and legal counsel, Natalia Sieira Millan, was invited to the meeting.
   Downhour
   Seconded by: Hill
   In Favor: Downhour, Kaplan, Asbery, Brown, Ciccarini, Hill, and Piscitelli

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Return to Public Session at 8:05 P.M.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACES/Wintergreen - Board Representative, Nancy Hill, mentioned the new Executive Director would start on July 1, 2026 and there is an upcoming meeting next week.
Curriculum Committee - Committee Chair, Melissa Kaplan, reported on the activities of the committee.
Finance Committee - Committee Chair, Christopher Piscitelli, reported on the activities of the committee.
Goals and Evaluation Committee - Committee Chair, Mario Ciccarini, stated there was no meeting.
Operations Committee - Committee Chair, David Asbery, stated there was no meeting.
Personnel Committee - Board Chair, Peter Downhour, stated there was no meeting.
Policy Committee - Committee Chair, Nancy Hill, stated there will be a meeting on April 21, 2026.

ACTION ITEMS
PENDING ACTIONS

3. Move to approve of the building use by New Haven Alumnae Delta Sigma Theta Sorority to use the auditorium and classrooms at Hamden Middle School on May 2, 2026 from 9am-3pm for a Youth Symposium
   Downhour
   Seconded by: Kaplan

In Favor: Downhour, Kaplan, Asbery, Brown, Ciccarini, Hill, and Piscitelli
MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

CONSENT AGENDA

4. Move to Consent Agenda
   Downhour

   i. Approval of the DECA trip to Atlanta, GA for the ICDC April 25-29, 2026 (Curriculum Committee, March 2026)
   ii. Approval of the Hamden High School Sophomore English class trip to Harlem, NY for the Harlem Literary Tour on May 2, 2026 (Curriculum Committee, March 2026)
   iii. Approval of Media Course (Curriculum Committee, March 2026)
   iv. Approval of Helen Street book discards (Curriculum Committee, March 2026)
   v. Approval of budget transfers (Special Finance Committee, April 2026

   In Favor: Downhour, Kaplan, Asbery, Brown, Ciccarini, Hill, and Piscitelli
MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

5. Move to adjourn at 8:13 P.M.
   Downhour
   Seconded by: Hill
   In Favor:Downhour, Kaplan, Asbery, Brown, Ciccarini, Hill, and Piscitelli

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully Submitted,
Melissa Kaplan, Board Secretary