

**BOE Regular Meeting**  
February 9, 2026 7:00 PM

**1. Call to Order**

Courtney Ennis, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01PM. Other Members present: Nicole Serra, Kelly McNamara, Andrew Koniecko, Heather Helwig (arrived late) and Charles Raymond. Dan Harris was excused. Also present: Dr. Roy Seitsinger; Superintendent, Cindy Varricchio; Director of Finance, and Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Public Comment**

Matt Aubin, Community Member, sent in an email which Ms. Ennis summarized. She also stated that she reached out to Mr. Aubin prior to the meeting.

Jill Keith, Community Member, also sent in an email which Ms. Ennis summarized.

Both emails are attached to these minutes.

Johanna Thibdeau, Community Member, attended almost every BOE Finance Committee Workshop. She thanked Courtney and Kelly for the questions they are asking and she stated that she knows they have some very tough decisions to make with regard to the budget.

Bill Holmes, Community Member, asked if we lose funding if we go under MBR. It is his understanding that we pay a fine but do not lose funding. He asked for confirmation on this.

**4. Consent Agenda**

**Moved, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Serra/Koniecko. Unanimous. Motion Carries.**

**5. Old Business: Public Comment**

Courtney Ennis read a statement summarizing the concerns and resolutions the BOE have been working on for the last few months emphasizing no crime was committed and the Superintendent followed established past protocol. Her statement is attached to these minutes. Dr. Seitsinger's clarification of budget authorization and expenditure procedures is also attached.

**6. Superintendent's Update**

Govenror Lamont is proposing that all students receive free breakfast at school. This has not passed yet, but we will keep the Board updated.

Congress also approved the appropriation of federal funds, but we have not received any information from the state yet.

Dr. Seitsinger thanked Diane Hansen for working with Town Hall to display student artwork throughout the year. Town Hall visitors have expressed how much they enjoy viewing student work.

2026-2027 School Calendar: Dr. Seitsinger asked that the Board review the calendar and share any thoughts or concerns they might have before the next meeting.

Andrew Koniecko suggested that all 5 PD days are placed in August.

Dr. Seitsinger stated that we could add or take away snow days. He and the team will develop a few options to examine at the next meeting.

Moved, to table the calendar until the March 9, 2026 BOE Meeting.  
McNamara/Koniecko. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Healthy Food Certification:

The Board voted to participate in the healthy food option:

**Vote 1: Required vote for participation in healthy food option of HFC:**

Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Preston Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. McNamara/Serra. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

**Required motion language for combined food and beverage exemptions:**

The Preston Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or

extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales. Serra/Koniecko. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Dr. Seitsinger shared an inventory of state mandates and school personnel trainings that pertain to CT school districts from Shipman and Goodwin LLP.

Policies at 2<sup>nd</sup> Read: Policy 6142.102: Social and Emotional Learning and Policy 5145.42: Racial Harassment of Students, were reviewed by Charles Raymond who is on the Policy Committee. He reviewed the language offered by CAFE and selected that which was more adaptable to Preston.

Policy 6142.102: Social and Emotional Learning:  
Moved, to adopt this new policy 6142.102 as recommend by CAFE.  
McNamara/Serra. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Policy 5145.42: Racial Harassment of Students  
Moved, to amend Policy 5145.42 as recommended by the Board by adding "Race, Color, and National Origin" to the title. Serra/Koniecko.  
Unanimous. Motion Carries.

#### 7. Preston PTO

Kayla Thompson stated that the PVMS PTO hosted the Daughter and a Date Dance last Friday. It was a huge success. Kayla thanked Johanna Thibdeau for all her hard work preparing for the event. She also shared that the PVMS PTO is exploring the idea of purchasing additional playground equipment that can be accessible and enjoyed by all students. They assisted grade 1 by purchasing classrooms headphones and they are assisting PK with money for a field trip. On 3-19 they will host an Art Show. Spirit Week is March 16th thru March 20<sup>th</sup>. They are also working on planning a Science Night for Earth Day and field day events for the end of the school year. They will have a popcorn fundraiser and will sell tickets to another Sea Unicorn game this summer.

#### 7. Principals/Director of Student Services Reports/Other Reports as Needed

Ray Bernier reported on behalf of PVMS and also for Chris Pickett at PPMS. (Mr. Pickett was not in attendance as he was at the Middle School Basketball Finals at NFA). Mr. Bernier stated that OLSAT and STAR testing are both complete. Parent/Teacher conferences are March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. PD is March 6<sup>th</sup>. The team conducted a Learning Walk at Preston Plains on 1/21/26. One will be conducted at Preston Veterans' on 2/11/26. The PDEC Committee met with the Teacher's Union to determine the best way to revise teacher evaluations. On Ground Hog Day students at NFA aspiring to be teachers shadowed teachers at PVMS. PVMS has been hosting monthly Senior

Lunches. PVMS celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school on 2/5/2026. Students dressed as 100 year old elderly people. Mr. Bernier stated that high school selection is underway for grade 8 students at PPMS. So far 6 students have been accepted to Technical Schools. Last year only 2 students were accepted through the lottery system. On 2/11/2026 8<sup>th</sup> graders are visiting the Mashantucket Pequot Museum with North Stonington 8<sup>th</sup> graders. On 2/12/2026 the band will perform at PVMS at 6PM.

Craig King; Director of Student Services, stated that the OLSAT Testing is ready to go out to be scored. He stated that there is a Special Education Expansion Grant which we must apply for by 2/20/2026. He also handed out a summary of special education throughout history for informational purposes.

#### 8. Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Kelly McNamara; chair, stated that two Budget workshops were held on 1/22 and 1/29. A regular BOE Finance Committee Meeting was held on 2/5. She explained that the Superintendent brings information to the committee so that the decision making becomes a transparent and collaborative process. This benefits the Board because they are able to have a full understanding of all needs. The next Budget workshop will be held on 2/12. At that time the committee will determine what recommendations will be brought to the full board at a later meeting. Kelly thanked Dr. Seitsinger and Mrs. Varricchio for all they do.

Curriculum Committee: Andrew Koniacko stated that an overview meeting was held last month. He got a better understanding of the positive experience the students are having with HMH Math. He determined that social studies may require a needs assessment. He learned that many of our Preston students are quite advanced and are placed in higher achieving classes at the high school level. The group will meet again on 2/17/26 to review areas of possible improvement.

Communication Committee: No meeting

LEARN: No representative

CABE: No representative

Building Needs Assessment Committee: Dan Harris is absent.

#### 9. Financial/Capital Report

Cindy Varricchio reported that the FY25 Audit is not yet complete. The auditors are currently asking follow up questions. As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, less than ½ of all towns had filed.

Mrs. Varricchio reviewed her finance memo and data for the period ending 12/31/2025. Overall things are tracking well. There have been some changes in Health Insurance needs and contracted services. In comparing one budget year to the next, variations occur due to the timing of payments. The business office is much more committed to ensuring that encumbrances are made.

**Moved, to accept the financial report for the period ending 12/31/2025 as presented. McNamara/Koniacko. Unanimous. Motion Carries.**

Mrs. Varricchio and Dr. Seitsinger reviewed a repair that needs to be made to a steam pipe at PPMS. A portion of the pipe is eroded. We received an estimate of 8900.00 for the repair. We are requesting to use money from the non-lapsing account not to exceed 20,000.00. The request for up to 20K is due to the fact that the vendor is not certain how much pipe will need to be replaced. (Per policy 3323 we can waive the competitive bidding process for repairs over 12K).

**Moved, to approve the repair of the steam pipe in the amount not to exceed 20,000.00 coming from the Non-Lapsing Fund. Serra/McNamara. Unanimous. Motion Carries.**

Mrs. Varricchio and Dr. Seitsinger also reviewed the need to move forward on the HVAC Capital Project. The estimated cost of this project is 3.1 million dollars. We would like to hire a reputable Engineering/Architectural firm that we have used in the past to review the project and determine if 3.1 million dollars is accurate. The cost for this survey would be 20,000.00 and could also be paid with money from the Non-Lapsing Account. We would like to ensure we have a tight number for the referendum when the time comes.

**Moved, to approve the expense of 20,000.00 from the Non-Lapsing Account for the HVAC Engineering Survey. Raymond/McNamara.**

Discussion followed.

Heather Helwig asked why we were not receiving prices from other engineers. Mrs. Varricchio said we could request additional prices without requiring a formal bid (RFP).

The Board decided to table the HVAC vote until the March meeting. They would like additional pricing at that meeting.

#### 10. Public Comment

Kayla Thompson; community member, noted that the school calendar should have 4 days in August, not 3. Gloria Homiski noted the information and will make the correction for next month.

Bill Holmes; Community Member, commented on Old Business. He believes things are unacceptable and suggested the Board seeks a new legal firm that will thoroughly review the situation. He stated that the District is not benefiting the children at all.

#### 11. Adjournment

**Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45PM. Serra/McNamara. Unanimous. Motion Carries.**





Gloria Homiski <homiskig@prestonschools.org>

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## BOE Topic

1 message

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Matt Aubin <jojobecool@hotmail.com>

Thu, Jan 22, 2026 at 10:07 AM

To: "homiskig@prestonschools.org" <homiskig@prestonschools.org>

To whom it may concern,

I will keep it this as short and concise as I can.

Is there an actual need for 2 schools? Two separate buildings? We are too small of a town (population wise) to necessitate 2 separate schools.

Why is the current superintendent not on a suspension? Pending an outside investigation by law enforcement? The amount of \$\$\$ in question is without a doubt carries felony level crimes.

Why do we need two principals and a superintendent? Seems a little top heavy....we could do just fine with one principal sharing both schools. No need for a superintendent at all. The current one certainly doesn't have the best interests of the students, the schools, or the town in mind.

Lastly....it would be wise of the citizens of this town to hire a 3<sup>rd</sup> party independent audit of what has happened here...up to and including the entire municipality. In order for the citizens to start with a clean slate and be transparent about what is actually going on.

Just my two cents and opinion,  
Matt Aubin

Get Outlook for Android



Gloria Homiski <homiskig@prestonschools.org>

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## Fwd: Please see below

1 message

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**Gloria Homiski** <homiskig@prestonschools.org>  
To: Roy Seitsinger <seitsingerr@prestonschools.org>

Mon, Feb 9, 2026 at 1:44 PM

Gloria Homiski  
Executive Administrative Assistant  
Preston BOE  
1 Route 164  
Preston, CT 06365

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gloria Homiski** <homiskig@prestonschools.org>  
Date: Fri, Feb 6, 2026 at 12:01 PM  
Subject: Please see below  
To: Nicholas Grello <ngrello@zccclawfirm.com>  
Cc: Roy Seitsinger <seitsingerr@prestonschools.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jill Keith** <jillskeith@gmail.com>  
Date: Thu, Feb 5, 2026 at 5:29 PM  
Subject: Public Comment for tonight's BOE Workshop (and/or Monday's, 2/9/26 Regular BOE Meeting)  
To: Courtney Ennis, Preston BOE <ennisc@prestonschools.org>, Nicole Serra - Preston BOE <serran@prestonschools.org>, Dan Harris - Preston BOE <harrisd@prestonschools.org>, Mr. Charles Raymond - Preston BOE <raymondch@prestonschools.org>, <helwigh@prestonschools.org>, <konieckoa@prestonschools.org>, <mcnamarak@prestonschools.org>  
Cc: Gloria Homiski <homiskig@prestonschools.org>, Dan Drainville - NL Day Reporter <d.drainville@theday.com>, Thomas Wright <tnwright@att.net>, Jill Keith <jillskeith@gmail.com>

Good afternoon, Preston Board of Education:

I've not yet seen an agenda posted for the BOE Finance Committee (3rd school budget workshop) tonight at 6pm.

The following is my Public Comment for tonight's meeting (if received in time) - and/or for Monday night's Regular Monthly BOE Meeting:

Many things concerned me at the January 22nd and January 29th BOE budget workshops, which are available to view online:

<https://youtube.com/@jillkeith3109?si=X6tctjJ7QQCm43Za>

## 1) Delayed meeting summaries:

\* There are no 2026 BOE meeting summaries posted on the town website yet, and only the January 12th regular BOE meeting summary is posted on the school website. Similar concerns have been raised by many in the past. Can something be done to rectify this discrepancy and reduce the gap in future?

\* The BOE Finance Committee Chair, Kelly McNamara, described during the January 29th meeting how difficult it has been to Chair that meeting and create/publish the meeting summaries - especially (in my opinion) with how piecemeal the budget details have been given to that committee and with such limited administrator rationale and details, requiring countless questions being asked and reasked on 1/22 and 1/29.

Would the Board of Education consider assisting by audio recording those meetings (perhaps all Committees) and creating a transcript summary from the audio recording?

Or consider abolishing the BOE Finance Committee all together and reviewing the entire budget with all Board of Education members (and the BOF Liaison, Thomas Wright) present?

Most full BOEs in Connecticut receive all budget line item details, expenditure trends/history, and administrator rationale by November/December so that by January, the entire BOE has generated questions, reviewed their BOE goals, ensured the budget proposal reflects the BOE's priorities, and communicated about these on multiple occasions using various formats with all residents.

While the superintendent and finance director stated on January 29th that their school budget development process is ahead of schedule, it is my opinion and experience that Preston's current school budget schedule and process demonstrate considerable room for improvement when compared to other towns.

## 2) Superintendent comments:

\* At the January 22nd budget workshop, the superintendent stated there was a "...mythology of a half a million dollars over expended."

I found that statement to be disrespectful and condescending to Preston's Board of Education Members past and current, our Board of Finance, The New London Day, and the Preston community.

I also regarded that statement (and others like it) as contradictory to the Superintendent's own words, which are documented in various BOE meeting summaries.

The Superintendent has confirmed more than once that the May/June 2025 spending decisions outlined in the October 2025 BOF letter to the BOE were made without public discussion (many over BOE policy of \$10,000) during a BOE Meeting, without obtaining prior BOE approval.

Further, he has admitted he 'needs to regain community trust' and 'would follow BOE policies moving forward.'

Stating there is a "mythology" about the matter- or that the controversy was generated by a newspaper article - demonstrates broken promises, habitual deflection, and perpetuated misinformation.

Another example was revealed through BOE Chair Courtney Ennis's questioning that a Teacher Contract MOU was signed (unknown to her and still not seen by the BOE or community) that added teacher "extracurricular" pay and positions this year for 'social media' staff, despite the elimination of so much classroom instruction and support.

Another example is the Superintendent interrupting the BOE Chair during the January 12th Regular Monthly Meeting when Public Comment was requested. Indeed, the meeting summary doesn't accurately depict what happened during Agenda items 1-3. Additionally, the Superintendent didn't ensure BOE members had properly exited from the prior Executive Session, had an opportunity to recess before having to haphazardly assemble, nor ensure virtual attendees were online before signaling the Chair to call the meeting to order.

I encourage all BOE Members to watch the budget workshop videos, redirect the Superintendent when such comments are made in meetings, and consider ways to improve the BOE's Mission as "a partnership of schools, family, and community, ..."

Thank you,

*Jill*

Jill S Keith

26 Tanglewood Dr  
Gloria Homiski  
Executive Administrative Assistant  
Preston BOE  
1 Route 164  
Preston, CT 06365

## Statement Regarding End of the Year Spending

In October, the Board of Education received a request from the Board of Finance to investigate concerns regarding spending during the last months of the FY25 budget.

Initially, the Board took preliminary steps to look at the policies pertaining to spending and limitations. In November, several Board members left the and several new members were elected. Due to the timing, the Board of Education attorney had been contacted but advised us to wait to address the issue until the new Board was established. The new Board started in December and that is when I was named chair.

In December, we immediately started looking into the spending as requested by the Board of Finance. We held two executive session meetings in December and January to review exactly what actions took place with regards to spending and review Board of Education policy. Present at both executive sessions were the Board of Education attorney as well as the Superintendent's personal attorney. It is important to note that Dr. Seitsinger retained his own counsel and tax dollars did not pay for his attorney.

As this was happening, receipts, invoices and all documentation were requested to determine exactly where this money was spent. The Board has spent a great deal of time going through volumes of materials and reviewing spending.

It was also brought to the Board's attention that earlier Boards had agreed to waive Policy 3160 and give the Superintendent more discretion about how budget funds were spent. In addition, previous Boards agreed that they were not interested in seeing every receipt, invoice and line-item transfer. This policy and corresponding procedures were waived for many years. Due to these past practices, it was determined by the Board and the Board's attorney the Superintendent acted in accordance with these practices.

As a result of our meeting in executive session, the Board determined a new path moving forward and has established new expectations around the implementation of policy. While a few specific purchases are still being reviewed, it has been determined that all budgetary funds were spent on the school. There was overspending in some of the major categories, but the overall approved budget was not overspent. It is important to note that we were able to place \$92,000 into the Board's non-lapsing fund. We want the public to be assured that the money in question was not stolen and no crimes were committed.

On January 15<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Education Chair submitted a directive to the Superintendent to go into effect immediately. The directive stated the following:

1. Policy 3160 will be followed. Expenditures over \$10,000 not previously identified and approved will come to the Board. These expenditures will be discussed and approved by a vote.
2. Policy 3160 allows the Superintendent to transfer funds over \$10,000 among line items under emergency conditions. It was reiterated that the Superintendent is to make every effort to schedule an emergency Board meeting to allow the Board to discuss and approve urgent spending needs.
3. All requests to move funds between major budget areas will be brought to the Board for approval / authorization.
4. Movement of funds **within** specific budget areas will continue to follow past practice with the expectation that such movements will be brought to the Board's attention by the next Board of Education meeting.

As an additional safeguard, the Finance Committee will receive a printout of all checks written for the previous month to review. This will give us a chance to review spending and bring any questions or concerns to the Superintendent, Finance Director or the full Board of Education.

While the Board understands the frustration, the only remedy for us is to enforce policy and implement new procedures to allow us to monitor what is being spent. We assure the public that we are taking this seriously and will continue to monitor expenditures and ask questions.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent remain committed to maintaining an ethical and collaborative relationship among themselves and with the community in order to support student success.



## PRESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent  
1 Route 164  
Preston, Connecticut 06365



Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr., Ph. D.  
Superintendent  
[seitsingerr@prestonschools.org](mailto:seitsingerr@prestonschools.org)

(860)889-6098  
FAX (860)889-8685

January 15, 2026

### Topic: **Clarification of Budget Authorization and Expenditure Procedures**

Director of Finance, Finance Office Team, and Leadership Team

Dear Colleagues,

Recently, the Board of Education engaged in discussions regarding policy implementation and budget management practices. Following thoughtful review and reflection, the Board of Education and I are directing several clarifications and reaffirmations of existing procedures and expectations. These expectations are outlined below, with key points emphasized for clarity.

#### **Policy 3160 Must Be Implemented as Adopted**

The Board of Education expects that **Board of Education Policy 3160 (Approval/Authorization)** under Business and Non-Instructional Operations will be implemented exactly as written and formally adopted.

#### **Board Approval Required for Certain Expenditures**

The Board shall explicitly authorize or vote any expenditure, or related group of expenditures, exceeding \$10,000 that was not previously identified in the approved budget. This requirement does not apply to budgeted major expenditure categories (e.g., salaries, special education, secondary tuition), which the Superintendent may authorize.

The Superintendent and the Director of Finance shall present all such items requiring Board approval.

#### **Invoice Splitting Is Prohibited**

This authorization requirement applies to all invoices and payment requests, including those from vendors, providers, technicians, and consultants. Any prior practice of splitting invoices or payment requests to avoid authorization thresholds shall be discontinued immediately.

#### **Financial Reporting to the Finance Committee**

A complete listing of all expenditures and issued checks shall be provided to the Board of Education Finance Committee no later than 48 hours prior to each Finance Committee meeting.

*Preston Public Schools is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.*

### Emergency Transfers Under \$10,000

The Superintendent is authorized to transfer funds from any line item under \$10,000 in emergency situations when urgent need prevents the Board from convening in a timely manner.

All such transfers shall be

- Announced at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting; and
- Communicated to the Board of Selectmen, accompanied by a written report

### Emergency Meetings Are Expected When Feasible

The Board of Education expects that reasonable attempts will be made to schedule emergency Board meetings when urgent spending needs arise.

### Transfers Between Budget Areas Require Board Approval

When funds must be moved between budget areas (e.g., Utilities, Transportation, Plant Operations, Administration, Technology), to address line-item needs or shifting district priorities, the Superintendent shall make a recommendation, and Board approval is required.

All such inter-area transfer requests must be brought to the Board for authorization.

### Quarterly Revisi -Based Adjustments

Based on recommendations from the Superintendent, the Board may approve transfers between line items to address projected shortfalls that are anticipated to be under-expended after the first and third quarters of the fiscal year.

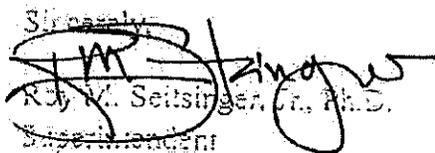
### Transfers Within a Budget Area

Requests to move funds within a single budget area (e.g., within Transportation or within Salaries) shall continue to follow past practice. The Superintendent may authorize such transfers with the expectation that all such activity is reported to the Board at the next regular meeting.

### Communication Expectations

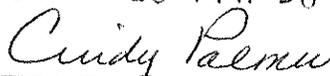
I expect that the Director of Finance will promptly communicate any process or performance concerns to the Superintendent and the Board of Education.

Thank you for your continued attention to sound fiscal governance and adherence to Board policy.

Signature:  
  
Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr., Ph.D.  
Superintendent

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PRESTON TOWN CLERK

Asst.