

**ANDOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ANDOVER, CT
Board of Education Meeting
Wednesday, October 14, 2026
7:00 pm
Virtual Meeting/School Library**

Members Present: Dr. Caitlin Greenhouse (Chairperson), Gerard Cremé, Brianne Lanzieri, Alicia Lee, Shannon Loudon, Marcie Miner, Sharon St. Rock

Administration: Dr. Valerie Bruneau, Superintendent
Taylor Parker, Principal
Dr. Jodiann Tenney, Finance

Others: In-Person: Anne Cremé, Kirstina Frazier
Virtual Attendees: Tegan Ruschmeier, Jamie Tilden-Bailey, Amy Knox, Grace Wlodarczyk

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Statement

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson Greenhouse, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Comments from the Public – None.

3. Communications – No communication that won't be addressed in other sections of the meeting.

4. Student/Other Celebrations

Mrs. Frazier presented a few different events that have happened or will be happening. Math Jam happened in Mrs. Dixon's room and Mrs. Frazier's 5th/6th grade Enrichment class. It is a Jeopardy style monthly math challenge. Mrs. Dixon's class placed as the top 4th grade class in Connecticut. AES received a Future City Grant, which included a representative coming to do a presentation about fields of engineering and a team will compete in January in an engineering competition. The Bake for Good event with King Arthur Baking Company will be happening again this year for 5th and 6th grade. Students learn how to bake a loaf of bread and then receive supplies to bake the loaves at home and bring one to the Community Center to share with the seniors of Andover. The Innovate and Create Grant will be happening for 6th grade with EastConn and provides opportunities for our 6th graders to learn about the manufacturing field and broaden their horizons on career paths. This will occur in partnership with Scotland, Coventry, and Lebanon. After School Clubs are up and running including a library visit to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, Archery, Math Games, Storytime Explorers, Science with Mrs. Hazen, Pumpkin Carving, All About Bats, Book Publishing, and Tennis. S. St. Rock shared she is appreciative that STEAM, enrichment and hands-on projects are still happening despite budget cuts. Students are still receiving STEAM and Library check-out with Mrs. Frazier. The 5/6 enrichment classes were discussed as well, including STEAM, Art, Music, PE and Passion Projects.

5. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from Regular Meeting of September 9, 2026

S. Louden made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2026, Regular Board of Education Meeting, seconded by G. Cremé. No discussion.

6-0-1 (PASSED) (C. Greenhouse abstained)

6. Opportunity to Add or Delete Agenda Items

S. Louden made a motion to delete the board policy section and move to next month's agenda seconded by G. Cremé. No discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

7. Reports

A. Chairperson's Oral Report

Chairperson Greenhouse shared updates of what has been happening outside of the regular meetings. The first update was on funding and how the school receives money. There will be a meeting on October 22nd with the State BOE and the Town. A recap was given on the history of the situation: On June 23rd, First Selectman sent an email to Chairperson Greenhouse and the Chair of the Board of Finance and suggested a new policy of how BOE will receive money that was approved through the budget, Chairperson Greenhouse said she would bring it to the Board but was likely not interested in changing the policy. On July 1st, Mr. Maguire (First Selectman) sent an email that said he was implementing the new policy; no meeting occurred in the Town to approve this.

On July 9th, the BOE requested the full July payment and it was denied by the Treasurer as she did not have permission to do so. On September 3rd, the BOS had a special meeting to formally change the funding policy; the First Selectman stated that it was a BOF issue but they didn't want to address it and didn't want to change the policy, so the BOS was addressing it. The head of the BOF had responded to initial communication stating they weren't interested in changing the current policy.

On October 9th, an additional \$150,000 was requested and denied by the Treasurer citing she did not have permission to approve. Chairperson Greenhouse shared that the BOE doesn't want the changes, they already have an approved budget and don't need to show proof of why the money is needed or have approval for expenditures. It's illegal to ask for it as criteria for giving the school its approved allotment, and includes additional work for the Finance Director and Superintendent. We have checks and balances in place through the Superintendent, Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The BOS may potentially be able to change the number of

payments or the amount of each payment into weekly payments instead of a monthly payment, but that is not what they are doing. The issue is with them asking for proof of why we need the money, controlling what the school buys and pays.

Both S. St. Rock and S. Loudon asked if a reason was given why the request for funding on October 9th was denied. M. Miner asked why we needed the extra money? Chairperson Greenhouse clarified that it wasn't extra money, we just need the allocation that is required for our expenses - it should be 10 equal payments but now they are asking for proof of why we need the money. We are in a holding pattern until the State BOE meeting. By the end of October, we will have received \$259,000 less than what we were expecting to have received thus far.

The First Selectman also submitted FOI requests. He signed for information received in a FOI request about food service and accounting on June 2nd. A second request for the superintendent evaluation, which was then posted on the school website two days after his request, was also emailed to him directly by the Chairperson. On June 15th, he sent an appeal to FOI that the BOE was not complying with his requests. On June 18th, Chairperson Greenhouse sent him the superintendent's evaluation and supporting documents. He also has a packet that he has not picked up since June 18th and acknowledged it was available in an email to the Chair. On August 9th, the BOE reached out to ask if he was still looking for information that would require redacting financial information, which would be a cost, and he has not responded. There was a hearing request submitted to the State on behalf of the Board on October 13th. M. Miner asked if you could send the information requested electronically and it was explained you can't send redacted check information electronically, as over 600 checks have to be hand redacted and then copied.

B. Superintendent's Report

Grants

No new grants have become available since the last meeting. SOAR needs are being addressed through the grant received. For clarification, for most of the grants, spending is done first and then reimbursed after. The SEED grant that we have for 2 years pays for ½ the salary for an additional para we hired last year; more grants may come out this fall that we will keep our eyes out on.

Facilities

For repair and maintenance, the following projects have been completed: Encore sprinkler inspection; USA hot water pipe repairs to ready for the wrapping of the pipes; preschool fencing was completed; a radiator leak was fixed in the art room, service tank inspections, the exhaust fans in the tunnel were fixed; the drain for the washing machine needed to be snaked and the snow rail was completed to help prevent ice dams in the winter.

Budget

After Christmas, we will get back to budget information for next year.

C. Principal's Report

Professional Development

Principal Parker and Mrs. Frazier attended a training in Hartford for the state SCALE initiative to look at assessments and how they are used in the classroom. We had professional development this past Friday. We discussed self and peer assessment based off of the SCALE initiative work. Teachers of 4th-6th grade also worked on developing their Science and Social Studies units; for 6th grade Science, Mrs. Webber is working with Marlborough and Hebron to align the units to prepare for RHAM. We worked on Math fluency for grades 1-6 to look more into what the research says about best practices.

Curriculum Updates

We are implementing the UFLI phonics program this year, so we had Barb Golub come in as our literacy consultant. She observed and coached teachers in implementation and met with teachers to review DIBELS scores. On November 3rd, certified staff is going to Foxwoods for a training held by CEA. The State will host paraeducator training in Bristol on that same day and preschool paras are going to Lebanon for training. The SOAR program is up and running; staff is working on the classroom environment. Dividers are coming in to create focused spaces for students. Staff is working on setting up life skills opportunities (baking, shopping, etc.) and successful inclusion opportunities. Additional opportunities for SOAR include an outdoor learning space, and increase in BCBA training to increase staff's ability to collect data and give direct skill instruction. Dr. Hersh, our Special Education Director, has been getting to know the program as well. Staff did a program visit to understand how other schools run the program and gain insight into best practices. As an update to testing information presented last month, Principal Parker explained that the Accountability Index is not out yet, so hopefully at the next meeting, we will have information to share.

D. Financial Report

There is a change in reports going forward for the grants; the report will show grants that are anticipated revenue so that you can see it more accurately. You will continue to receive the information with a draw down report as well. We don't report the grant info as part of the general budget because we can't assume we are getting the grant each year. The Title IV Grant does need to be updated, it is for .2 Art not Spanish.

M. Miner asked if we spend more than what the Town gives us each month, do we have reserved funds? Dr. Bruneau explained that no, we don't have the funding - we haven't paid all the bills yet because we don't have all the funding from the Town. M. Miner stated that the whole Board should know what is in each account. Chairperson Greenhouse said there is lots of private information in there. Dr. Bruneau said you can come in at any time to take a look, S. St. Rock did it last month and appreciated the transparency.

E. Liaison Reports & Updates

CIP – S. Loudon – No meeting.

LGP – T. Parker – The LGP met last month and discussed that there are Quality Enhancement funds that have come but there is a new process to request funding and the team is working on that, along with planning family engagement events.

8. Items for Discussion & Actions

A. Item: Bathroom Project Final Update

Action: Discussion & Possible Action

Bathrooms are up and running! Final numbers are not in yet but we do know the additional cost on top of the original contract. Additional cost is almost \$266,000 including contractor fees of \$247,000, \$5000 legal fees to get a good contract, \$3500 for testing clearance after asbestos, \$6000 for Erik Sanderson to provide oversight, \$1150 to Fuss & O'Neill for change orders regarding concrete slab in boys' bathroom. The total cost is estimated at \$325,000. If anyone wants to see the spreadsheet of all checks, you can ask Jodi. The only caveat is that the First Selectman has denied signing three different checks, two of which were for Fuss & O'Neill and had been approved by the BOF, the BOE had voted on those costs; the third was also for Fuss & O'Neill for approximately \$1000 for the change order. All three bills were paid by the school, we will talk with BOF about getting reimbursement.

G. Cremé made a motion giving Chairperson Greenhouse permission to write a letter to request full payment by Board of Finance from capital account, seconded by S. St. Rock.

S. St. Rock stated her frustration with the process and it was clarified that this is the procedure we need to follow since we are requesting additional funds. M. Miner asked about the previous contract, which has been paid in full (roughly \$40,000).

7-0-0 (PASSED)

B. Item: Board Policies (7000s and 9000s)

Action: Discussion & Possible Action – Removed from agenda for tonight.

9. Comments from the Public on Agenda Items – None.

10. Other Action Items – None.

11. Upcoming Meetings

- Regular Board Meeting – November 11, 2026, 7:00 p.m. – Will move policies discussion to December, S. Loudon will send by November 11th to members for commenting; Policy work for 1000s, 7000s and remaining 9000s.
- Items for Next Meeting – None.

12. Adjournment

S. Louden made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m., seconded by S. St Rock. No discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

Respectfully submitted,

Jen McGoldrick, Clerk