

**ANDOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ANDOVER, CT
Board of Education
Meeting Wednesday, February 11, 2026
7:00 pm
Virtual Meeting/School Library**

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

Members Absent:

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

Others: In-Person: Jeff Maguire/First Selectman, Anne Cremé, Kirstina Frazier
Virtual Attendees: Kathy Hartnett, Amy Godwin, Jodi Knight, Kimberly Person, Jeff Murray, Holly Maiorano, Maureen Sullivan, Jennie Morrell, Amber Pritchard, Jaime Webber, Liz Lokiec, Jen McGoldrick, Jaime Tilden-Bailey, Lisa Hopkins, Scott Person, Charlene DelMastro, Katie Dixon, Joanne Hebert, Melissa Loteczka, Jenn LaRosee, Carol Lee, Grace Wlodarczyk, Kara Ormsby, Elizabeth Partridge, Carrie Gilbert, Amanda Beloin, Cristina Catarino, Louise Goodwin, Kaitlyn Dalby, Krysta Cariboni, Heather Van Cara, Tegan Ruschmeier, Scott Sauyet, Doris Maldonado, Erik Sanderson

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Greenhouse, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Comments from the Public

L. Hopkins – Recognized the BOE for the time and effort to better the school. Been at AES over 20 years, indicated the current class size makes it difficult to meet students' needs. Quality education and differentiation requires smaller class sizes, asks BOE to move forward with smaller class sizes.

Principal Parker read comment from Dr. Sullivan – Noted the benefits of two classes in fifth grade.

H. Maiorano – Size of class is critical for special education students to meet needs, support moving forward with smaller class sizes.

A. Pritchard – Appreciates the hard work on the budget; eager to see how meeting goes.

J. Webber – Thanked Supt. Bruneau and BOE for work on the budget; has 29 sixth graders this year, which is a challenge to ensure children learn and grow as well as be seen, heard, and valued.

J. Morrell – Supports Superintendent's proposed budget; feels Supt. Bruneau puts students' needs first, has concern about students' success and the staff morale and encourages support for smaller class size and putting students' needs first. Thanked BOE for work on budget.

D. Maldonado – Moral obligation to provide what is in best interest of the children.

J. McGoldrick – Here in support of budget.

J. Tilden-Bailey – Asked for support of budget.

C. DelMastro – Teacher in AES for 23 years, thanked Supt. Bruneau & BOE in work on budget; asked BOE to support budget for best needs of children.

K. Dixon – Thanked BOE for time and care in creating budget.

J. Hebert – Hopes BOE will go back to original Fuss & O'Neill contract and an open RFP process.

M. Loteczka – Thanked BOE and administration for work on budget, supports proposed budget to meet the needs of the students.

J. LaRosee – Thanked BOE and Supt. Bruneau for work on the budget to keep children's needs at forefront.

G. Wlodarczyk – Thanked the BOE & Supt. Bruneau for support of students, would like to see students benefit from smaller class sizes and budget that provides for a supportive staff.

K. Ormsby – School Psychologist, echoes J. Morrell's statements, the social, emotional, and behavioral needs are important to address, in support of the proposed budget which allows for students' needs to be met.

E. Partridge – 11% increase is unrealistic in the current economic environment, taxpayers cannot support this budget.

C. Gilbert – Thanked Supt. Bruneau & BOE for all they do, enrollment is increasing, needs increase, hopes this budget is supported.

A. Beloin – Thanked Supt. Bruneau & BOE for their hard work and dedication.

C. Catarino – Thanked BOE for hard work and here in support of the budget.

L. Goodwin - Here to listen in preparation for budget planning.

K. Dalby – Here to support budget.

K. Cariboni – Reading Specialist, agrees with need for smaller class sizes, fully supports budget.

T. Ruschmeier – Thanked BOE & administration for working to provide best for students and school.

K. Hartnett – Teacher and resident, strongly supports proposed budget, investment in children's future and strength & vitality of the entire community.

A. Godwin – Thanked everyone for hard work on budget, resident and teacher, sees hard work put into meeting students' needs, strongly supports budget to see school as asset to the town.

J. Knight – SLP, thanked Supt. Bruneau & BOE for hard work.

A. Cremé – Thanked BOE and Supt. Bruneau for great budget, strongly supports budget.

L. Lokiec – Noted a lot to talk about and lot to learn, wished BOE good luck.

3. Communications

Chairperson Greenhouse noted Town meeting was moved to April 9, 2026, so it does not conflict with BOE meeting. BOE received letters from two residents, which will be addressed during Executive Session.

4. Student/Other Celebrations

In Principal's Report.

5. Approval of Minutes

Special Bathroom Committee Meeting Minutes from January 5, 2026.

S. Louden made a motion to approve the minutes from the Special Bathroom Committee Meeting from January 5, 2026, seconded by G. Cremé. Discussion about minutes, changes include adding J. Maguire in attendance and incorporating changes as noted at bottom of minutes. Alicia Lee abstained.

6-0-1 (PASSED)

Minutes from January 14, 2026 Regular Board of Education Meeting

S. Louden made a motion to approve the minutes from January 14, 2026, Regular Board of Education Meeting, seconded by G. Cremé, with changes as follows: change "statues" to "statutes" at the bottom of page 2. No further discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

Minutes from January 26, 2026 Special Budget Meeting

S. Louden made a motion to approve the minutes from January 26, 2026, Special Budget Meeting, seconded by G. Cremé. No discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

6. Opportunity to Add or Delete Agenda Items

C. Greenhouse made a motion to add an agenda item before Item 8.A. to discuss COOL's use of the school during the summer, seconded by S. Louden. No discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

7. Reports

- A. Chairperson's Oral Report** – No oral report, all items will be addressed under other agenda items.
- B. Superintendent's Report** – Supt. Bruneau reported annual fire panel and visual inspection; one issue with cafeteria door lock, keypad on that door is not working, part needs to be fixed, may be obsolete. Getting a quote, if this door is not usable with keypad, will replace keypad and move new one to gym door and put on gym door keypad so the whole rest of building is on the same system. Regular pest control. No new grants pending, still waiting for SEED money from the Town, Jodi following up on that. Attended BOS meeting Monday night, apologized for noise coming from her computer, spoke to BOS about changing protocol for general fund checks for dual signatures. Policy 3326, Superintendent approves, and checks signed by Chairperson and Superintendent. Will bring Policy 3326 to the BOE to review since it is 2009, to include 2nd alternate signor as the vice-chair. Discussion about this process, further discussion tabled for a future BOS/BOE meeting.
- C. Principal's Report** – Principal Parker brought forth celebrations of Invention Convention and the Spelling Bee. This year 59 inventors participated in Invention Convention. Different structure this year, 12 finalists going to RHAM in a "semi-final" round with Hebron & Marlborough for another round of judging. Winners from this round (at least 3 from AES) will go to the State competition. Spelling Bee went very well, Everly Loteczka won for the second year and will go to the State Spelling Bee 1st week of March. Reviewed PD – one will be held on Friday, Feb. 13th, led by Ms. Ormsby, the School Psychologist. This year, students are completing monthly check-ins through student surveys and staff are adapting action strategies to address what kids are reporting. Kids are reporting they like the surveys and are feeling heard. Hosted Regional Math PLC, over 20 educators from Andover, Hebron, Marlborough & RHAM on how to strengthen individual and group math. Illustrative Mathematics is the curriculum this year and using Building Thinking Classrooms for classroom strategies. Reviewed what this curriculum looks like in practice in the classroom. K. Frazier led the BOE members through a sample of a group activity. Principal Parker reviewed mid-year data points collected regarding math and reading skills.
- D. Financial Report** – Jodiann reviewed and reported on the financial reports as presented. Working with Terri on projections for the end of the year. Expended 55% which is right on target. Audit should be within the next month. Answered questions from BOE members regarding the budget. Discussion regarding previous budget transfers and current budget drivers.
- E. Liaison Reports**
- LGP – Principal Parker indicated no report at this time.
PTA – B. Lanzieri – no report.
CIP – S. Loudon indicated no report.

8. Items for Discussion & Actions

A. COOL use of building for summer camp

Action: Discussion and Possible Action

This item added in Agenda Item 4 Add/Delete Agenda Items above

C. Greenhouse made a motion to allow Principal and Superintendent to review the requirements of COOL building use request and allow Principal and Superintendent to enter into agreement with COOL for building use, seconded by S. Loudon. Discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

B. Item: 2026-2027 AES Budget

Action: Discussion and Possible Action

Supt. Bruneau gave a high-level overview of the budget, 270 students expected to be enrolled. In recent years have had largest class sizes, the goal this year is to make class sizes reasonable for continued student progress. Reviewed per pupil spending and enrollment data. Discussion regarding PreK and MBR requirements. Discussion regarding the challenge of the budget increase, and various line items. It was noted that this increase includes costs from grants that were previously used to cover salaries and expenses, but there are not as many grants currently available and these costs need to be covered for continued student progress and growth.

G. Cremé made a motion and recommendation to approve the 2026-2027 budget, in the amount of \$5,063,651.00, representing an increase of \$499,991.40, as presented by Supt. Bruneau, seconded by S. Loudon. No further discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

B. Lanzieri - yes

A. Lee - yes

S. Loudon - yes

C. Greenhouse - yes

G. Cremé - yes

S. St. Rock - yes

M. Miner - no

6-1-0 (PASSED)

C. Item: Energy Update/Next Steps

Action: Discussion and Possible Action

Reviewed the project proposal, Supt. Bruneau answered questions regarding the lights, etc. J. Maguire questioned the need for a Town meeting if the savings are not guaranteed. Discussion regarding the savings and how cost will be covered.

S. Louden made a motion to contract with Resource, Energy, & Lighting for the incentivization program offered to Andover Elementary School through Eversource, seconded by B. Lanzieri. Discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

D. Item: Bathroom Project Update

Action: Discussion and Possible Action

C. Greenhouse noted there were packets for all BOE members with different estimates from different companies. Average project cost among bids is \$350,000.00. Did a walk-through with Down's Construction. Discussion on how to move forward with choosing a contractor or going to RFP. The project will need to be done during summer so that the children are not present during demolition. E. Sanderson offered to support the RFP process to ensure that all bids are comparable in order to streamline the decision-making process. He reviewed what the RFP would look like and timeframes. Erik noted it would take a few days to complete the RFP and could be out to bid by Feb. 20, 2026, with RFPs submitted by sealed bid within 30 days. Reviewed the time needed to evaluate all submitted bids, interview top contenders, and choose a contractor, with the process taking about 7 weeks, and can be ready to start for summer construction. Question on how to advertise to collect RFPs (Town Website vs. School Website), C. Greenhouse will reach out to Fuss & O'Neill.

B. Lanzieri made a motion to engage a formal RFP process for the bathroom project, with Erik Sanderson supporting the BOE through the process with RFPs collected by the school, seconded by G. Cremé. Discussion.

5-2-0 (PASSED)

9. Comments from the Public on Agenda Items

L. Hopkins – Thanked Supt. Bruneau, Principal Taylor and BOE members for their support. Reflected on the benefits of small class sizes and how that impacts how children learn and can be successful, allowing teachers to get to know children and offer personalized instruction. It is unfair to children and staff to have large classroom sizes. It was a hard meeting to hear some of the comments, but appreciates everyone.

S. Sauyet – Noted that it was suggested that BOE members engage in bullying, noted that it is seen from J. Maguire in his opinion.

J. Morrell – Agrees with L. Hopkins, heart goes out to all working to support the children. On behalf of staff, thanked administration and BOE for standing ground, difficult discussions coming, hopes this goes the way everyone wants it to.

J. Hebert – Budget season is always difficult, comments should not be taken personally, understands that budget cuts can be tough, everyone has a job to do. Is it possible to rearrange classes with smaller sizes to free up a teacher for 6th grade? Thanked BOE for going out to RFP process for bathroom project, glad that E. Sanderson is involved.

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M. Loteczka – Thanked Supt. Bruneau and supportive BOE members, prior to Supt. Bruneau, school was not in a healthy place. Noted the scores Taylor shared which shows improvement, teachers are happier now.

10. Executive Session for the Purpose of Interpersonal BOE Communication Matter & BOE Self-Evaluation

S. Louden made a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of an interpersonal BOE communication matter and BOE self-evaluation, seconded by G Cremé.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

Entered Executive Session at 10:20 p.m.

S. Louden made a motion to exit Executive Session, seconded by G. Cremé. No discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

Exited by Executive Session at 11:27 p.m.

11. Other Action Items

BOE Informational Session – half hour before the Town Meeting on April 9, 2026.

12. Upcoming Meetings

- Regular BOE Meeting – March 11, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
- Items for Next Meeting – Additional 9000 Series BOE Policies.

13. Adjournment

S. Louden made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:29 p.m., seconded by M. Miner. No discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn M. Longley, Clerk

Pre-K