

Note: Per C.G.S. 10 – 218, Board of Education meeting minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exception of motions and votes recorded, these minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at the next regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and voted upon.

## SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Scotland, Connecticut

### Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2023

Chair Cassidy Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Board members present were Sherry Smardon, Rod Perry, Clark Stearns, Gracie Martin, Lisa LaBelle and Brittany Santiago. Administrators present were Superintendent Valerie Bruneau, Principal Ann Knowles, Special Ed Director Susan Costa (online) and Finance Coordinator Tim Smith. Others present was Nick Caruso from C.A.B.E.

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### 2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

#### 3. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD:

Sherry Smardon presented a letter of resignation effective at the conclusion of tonight's meeting.

#### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Regular Meeting of January 10, 2023:**

*#1-22/23 Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from January 10, 2023, made by Clark Stearns, seconded by Sherry Smardon and carried unanimously.*

#### 5. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD OR DELETE AGENDA ITEMS:

*#2-22/23 Motion to add to agenda after #9 Comments from the Public as Item #9A - Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Matter and invite the Superintendent to attend, made by Clark Stearns, seconded by Gracie Martin and carried unanimously.*

#### 6. CELEBRATIONS: None

#### 7. REPORTS

**A. Chairperson's Oral Report:** No Report

**B. Superintendent's Report including budget update:** Covered later on the agenda

**C. Principal's Report:**

- Enrollment is steady at 94 students. Starting to take registrations for next year with projected enrollment expected at 100 students.
- The Lunch Program is steady at 62%, Breakfast is down (served cold while lunch lady out on leave).
- Curriculum is continuing on the new Reading (next PD will be from the company). Will concentrate on the new Math next year.
- Continuing with 2 grant programs with monthly activities – Natural Instincts for grades 2-3 and Mystical Voyages for grades 4-6.
- There are no snow days to date.

**D. Special Education Report:**

- Providing staff training for CT SEDS on February 17<sup>th</sup> for all staff to have access to their students and their educational plans. Received information from the state for parents to access the portal (sending out information with video link - Sue and Deb will be available for additional help afterschool for parents in early March).

**E. Financial Report and Contract updates:**

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The Financial Report was reviewed. Rod Perry asked if there were any unusual expenses (decrease in Repairs & Maintenance).

**#3-22/23 Motion to approve the Financial Report dated January 26, 2023, made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Gracie Martin and carried unanimously.**

**F. PTO Report:**

Brittany Santiago presented the PTO Report. Paper Hearts were done for the office (received 55 so far - due Friday). The President is stepping down the end of this year (recruiting for officers and members).

**G. Shared Services updates:** None

**H. Committee Reports:** None

**I. Liaison Reports including Readiness Council:**

Cassidy Martin sent out letter advocating for Special Ed Funding on behalf of the Board (PHHS and CES like the letter and sent out letters as well). Lisa Labelle is following bills pertaining to the Special Ed funding formula - 6039 by Doug Dubitsky proposes changing 4.5 to 3 times cost per pupil for any school under 1,000 students, and 6022 by Mae Flexer proposes to be fully funded (would know Special Ed costs for the year if these bills passed). 6038 by Doug Dubitsky proposes forming a panel that would be responsible for outplacement. Area Superintendents are in favor of some form of changing the Special Ed formula.

**8. PRESENTATION – NICK CARUSO OF CABE ADDRESSING BOE FUNCTIONS:**

Nick Caruso from CABE presented Board Roles and Responsibilities and is excited to see the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the meeting and hearing discussion about legislation. The Board's primary role is to govern through policy (set clear expectations, hold system accountable, create work conditions to succeed, create public will to succeed, learn as a Board Team). Responsibilities include: maintaining good schools, making decisions based on interest of the district, honoring oath of office, providing equal opportunities, providing appropriate learning opportunities, adhering to mandates, providing a safe school setting, setting policies, evaluating the Superintendent annually, acting within the authority of the Board (not as an individual).

- The Superintendent is the CEO and decides what and how things are done designating the appropriate staff to do the work (Board should provide resources for the Superintendent to do their job), evaluates the teachers, provides estimate of itemized expenditures. Professional Development should be provided to teachers to bring back to instruction to be effective (a successful school experience leads to a successful life experience).
- Rod Perry asked about successful ways to improve communication with the community (share 3 bullet points at the end of every vote, involve the community when faced with a challenge to help figure out how to solve the problem before making a decision). Workshops are available on Community Engagement (the more that is made about student achievement, the better the outcome).

**BOARD BUSINESS**

**J. Items for Discussion & Actions**

**1. Final look at 9000's policy updates (Action Anticipated):**

The Board reviewed 9000's policy updates. Policy 9325 was tabled until next month.

**#4-22/23 Motion to approve 9000's Policies in stapled packet (9221, 9222, 9000, 9010, 9020, 9030, 9040, 9110, 9120, 9212, 9240, 9250), made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Gracie Martin and carried unanimously.**

**2. Proposed Special Meeting/Meet the BOE date for budget (Discussion):**

Valerie Bruneau presented preliminary FY 2023-24 budget with an overall increase of 0% for review. Changes: **Regular Instruction** - Teachers (3% contractual increase), Subs (increase to the daily rate), Group Insurance (expected to increase 25% - will be covered with surplus from changes in coverage);

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**Preschool** - covered by grants; **Special Ed** - Teachers changed from 1.5 to 2, In-Service (increase for BCBA – experts to show strategies on behavioral issues), Tuition Public In State (decrease for student no longer outplaced); **Health Office** – Nurse (increase - not a contracted position), Other Professional Services (increase for Dr. required on consult– hope to share services); **Psychological Services** – Testing (increase - contracted with EASTCONN); **Library/Media Services** – Books & Periodicals (decrease - not needed this year), **Technology** – Other Professional Services (decrease - savings with EASTCONN); **Superintendent’s Office** – Dues & Fees (decrease - being split with another district); **School Office** – Other Salaries (Office Staff - 3% contractual increase); **Food Services** – Other Professional Services (increase - raise in rates).

- Sherry Smardon asked about the cost for Propane (Valerie will check on).
- Rod Perry asked about rebates for Propane (the buses do not meet eligibility requirements). Grant funding (some expiring this year) that will be used includes: **Title 1** - Instructional Supplies (Curriculum), **Title 2** - Professional Services (OT and PT), **Title 4 Transfer** - Intervention & Remedial Services (portion for the Remedial Teacher), **Technology** (consider Smartboard replacement and rolling cart for the Principal, consider laptops for the Teachers), **IDEA** - Special Ed (Salaries, Speech Services), **ESSER Funds** (complete AC project with update on inspections), **REAP Grant** – (Intervention Services), **School Readiness** (sandbox closer to the school), **E-Rate Rebate** (replace Chromebooks).
- Rod Perry asked about School Security Grants (applying for grant on infrastructure and grant on communications for a quicker response to emergencies).
- Clark Stearns stressed the importance of creating a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan and suggested meeting with the Maintainer and Head Custodian to create and prioritize a wish list. A special meeting will be held for budget discussion with the public and the Board vacancy on February 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM.

**K. Old Business Updates: Newsletter “meet the BOE” and liaison descriptions:**  
Valerie Bruneau will send liaison descriptions to the Board.

**9. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS:** None

**A. Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Matter:**

***#5-22/23 Motion to enter into Executive Session (9:43 PM) for the purpose of discussing a Personnel Matter and invite the Superintendent to attend, made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Gracie Martin and carried unanimously.***

The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:12 PM.

**10. OTHER ACTION ITEMS:** None

**11. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- **Regular Board Meeting March 7, 2023**
- **Items for Next Meeting:** School Calendar for 2023-24 (waiting on PHHS vote)

**12. ADJOURNMENT:**

***#6-22/23 Motion to adjourn (10:13 PM) made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Cassidy Martin.***

***Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Scott  
Recording Clerk***

February 7, 2023

Dear Cassidy, Rod, Grace, Clark, Lisa, Brittany –

February marks 13 years for me sitting on the Scotland Board of Education. During this time, I watched my daughters grow – literally and figuratively - from little kids starting their education at SES to now continuing their education in college. I fondly remember – as I know Rod does too - my girls patiently sitting-through numerous BOE meetings. I like to think they learned a thing or two during those meetings.

Over the last 13 years, I have seen highs and lows – for both the school and our community. The one thing that has always remained constant is the focus on educating our children. We have had to make some tough decisions and we have had to agree to disagree.

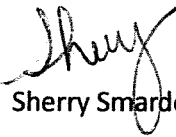
With all that being said, I have decided to end my time on the Scotland Board of Education at the conclusion of tonight’s meeting. This was not an easy decision and makes me sad, but ultimately, I know the time has come.

Before I “go” I wanted to share some parting thoughts that have helped get me through the last 13 years:

- agree to disagree,
- never let your own personal agenda get in the way of doing the right thing,
- speak gently - tone matters, kindness matters,
- ask questions, don’t jump to conclusions and respect what is discussed in an executive session as confidential.

And when I say my final “I make a motion to adjourn” later tonight, I know that I have made a difference in the lives of many. And while I may be stepping away from the Board, my belief in the education of our children still remains strong! My belief in SES and this BOE remain strong!

I wish you all patience and luck as you continue on your journey.

  
Sherry Smardon

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Role of the Board and Member (Powers, Purposes and Duties)**

The Board of Education ("Board") is the governing body of the school district and derives its power and exists under the Constitution and General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and the procedures of the Connecticut State Board of Education. The Board's purpose is to exercise leadership through the formation and adoption of policies.

Legal Reference:            Connecticut General Statutes  
   1-200 Definitions  
   10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education  
   10-220 Duties of boards of education.  
   10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules  
   10-240 Control of schools  
   10-241 Powers of school districts

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Public Statements**

The Board recognizes that communication is a continuous two-way process. The Board believes that it is important to keep the public informed about educational programs, and, in turn, that the community should have the opportunity to provide its thoughts and feelings to the Board. Communication is a concurrent responsibility of the Board and the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent will work with members of the Board to conduct an active and comprehensive program throughout the school district and community for the prompt dissemination of information on decisions of the Board. Releases to the press and brief summaries of Board actions prepared for distribution to staff members and parents/guardians are regarded as appropriate means of meeting requirements of this bylaw. Only the Board Chairperson or the designated agents of the Board shall release press releases relative to Board action.

(cf. 1112 News Media Relationships)

(cf. 1120 Board of Education Meetings)

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Bylaws of the Board**

**Board Related Responsibilities**

The Board shall:

1. Employ an able and qualified Superintendent for the school district and Principal for the school.
2. Adopt policies to govern the operation of the Board and the school system.
3. Communicate the educational program to the people of the community.
4. Keep abreast of future educational needs of the town as well as the present.
5. Adopt an annual budget.
6. Take such specific actions as are required by law.

Legal Reference:            Connecticut General Statutes  
                                     10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education.  
                                     10-220 Duties of boards of education.  
                                     10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules.

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Bylaws of the Board**

**Board of Education Officers**

**Number of Members, Terms of Office, Voting Power, Officers**

Membership on this Board shall be seven members. Board members shall be nominated in caucus and elected to the Board at the appropriate November election and shall serve a term of office of four (4) years. Officers of this Board shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. Officers shall be elected by the Board at the annual organizational meeting in December and shall serve for a term of one (1) year.

Newly elected members of the Board shall, before entering upon their official duties, take the oath of office administered by the Town Clerk.

Legal Reference:           Connecticut General Statutes  
                                  10 218 Officers. Meetings



**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Election of Officers****Board of Education Officers**

The Board shall elect from its members at the organizational meeting, a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and a Secretary.

A majority vote of the full Board, 4 votes, is required for election to office.

The newly elected Chairperson of the Board shall assume office and then shall preside over the election of a Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary.

The vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and/or Secretary are not chosen within one month, town Selectmen shall choose such officers from the Board membership.

All officers of the Board shall hold office for a term of one year until their successors are elected and have qualified, except in cases of resignation or removal.

Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson or Secretary, the Board shall elect a new officer to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term of office. Such election shall take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the effective date of termination.

The meeting shall be called to order by the Superintendent of Schools. In the absence of the Superintendent or his/her agent, a member of the administrative staff shall preside. The person calling the meeting to order shall preside until a Chairperson is elected.

Legal Reference:           Connecticut General Statutes  
                                  10-218 Officers. Meetings.  
                                  10-224 Duties of the secretary.  
                                  10-225 Salaries of secretary and attendance officers.

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Bylaws of the Board**

**Oath of Office**

Board of Education members, before taking office, shall take the following oath or affirmation by the appropriate designated town official:

“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and that I will honestly, faithfully, and impartially discharge my duties as a school board member to the best of my ability.”

Legal Reference:        Connecticut General Statutes  
                                 10-218a Oath of office  
                                 1-25 Forms of oaths

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Limits of Authority****General**

The Board is the unit of authority. Apart from their function as part of the unit, board members have no individual authority. Individually the board member may not commit the district to any policy, act or expenditure. The board member is prohibited from doing business with the school district and from having an interest in any contract with the school district in general. The board member does not represent a factional segment of the community, but is rather a part of the body which represents and acts for the community as whole. No individual member of the board, by virtue of holding office, shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools, nor as an individual command the services of any school employee. No member of the board of education shall be asked to perform any routine or clerical duties which may be assigned to an employee.

The Board's statutory authority as spelled out in Board policy 9000 is to be exercised collectively by Board members in public meetings of the Board and in committee meetings. Except for specific responsibilities of the Board officers set forth in board policy 9040, individual members have no individual authority in the district school, unless carrying out an assignment specifically authorized at a meeting of the Board, but exercise governance as part of the entire Board of Education or of a specifically authorized committee working under specific committee charges from the Board.

**Elected Members of the Board of Education**

Members of the Board are expected to represent and balance the educational interests of students in the public school, district citizens, and the State of Connecticut through:

1. Advocacy for appropriate educational opportunities for district students;
2. Regular attendance at Board meetings;
3. Participation in meeting discussions on issues before the Board;
4. Suggesting agenda topics to the Superintendent of Schools or the Board Chairperson;
5. Regular attendance and fulfilling responsibilities on committees to which they are appointed;
6. Becoming knowledgeable about Board authority, constraints, and procedures;
7. Becoming informed about the local school and its educational programs and activities;
8. Representing the community as part of a representative democratic governmental body;
9. Understanding and following Board of Education policy.

(cf. 1312 Public Complaints)

(cf. 4118.2 Academic Freedom)

Bylaw adopted by the Board: October 1, 2013

Reviewed by the Board: February 7, 2023

Scotland School District  
Scotland, Connecticut

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**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Limits of Authority (Continued)**

- (cf. 5145.2 Freedom of Speech/Expression)
- (cf. 6144 Controversial Issues)
- (cf. 9012 Role of Board of Education Members)
- (cf. 90408 Duties of Board Officers)

Legal Reference:            Connecticut General Statutes  
                                 10-220 Duties of boards of education.  
                                 10-232 Restrictions on employment of members of the board of education

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Commitment to Democratic Principles in Relation to Community, Staff and Students**

**Board-Staff Communications**

The Board recognizes the need to maintain open communication between itself and the staff. Essentially, communications with staff deal with three (3) general areas -- administration, policy and philosophy. While the Board recognizes the necessity for Board-Staff communications, it also recognizes that administrative matters must be dealt with through its chief administrator. Hence, the basic line of communication for administrative matters shall be through the Superintendent.

**1. Staff Communications to the Board**

All formal reports to the Board or any Board committee from administrators, supervisors, teachers or other staff members shall be submitted through the Superintendent. This necessary procedure shall not be construed as denying the right of any employee to appeal to the Board from administrative decisions on important matters, provided that the Superintendent shall have been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Board's policy on complaints and grievances.

Staff members are also reminded that Board meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe and participate firsthand the Board's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

**2. Board Communication to Staff**

All official communications, policies and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent, and the Superintendent will employ all such media as are appropriate to keep staff fully informed of the Board's problems, concerns and actions.

**3. Visits to Schools**

Individual Board members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will make arrangements for visitations through the Superintendent or the Principal of the Scotland Elementary School. Such visits shall be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Board members will be conducted only under Board authorization and with the full knowledge of staff, including the Superintendent, building administrators and other supervisors.

**4. Social Interaction**

Staff and Board members share an interest in the schools and in education generally, and it is to be expected that when they meet at social affairs and other functions, they will

Bylaw adopted by the Board: October 1, 2013

Reviewed by the Board: February 7, 2023

Scotland School District  
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**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Commitment to Democratic Principles in Relation to Community, Staff and Students (continued)**

**4. Social Interaction (continued)**

informally discuss such matters as educational trends, issues, and innovations and general school district problems. Individual Board members have no special authority except when they are convened at a legal meeting of the Board or vested with special authority by Board action. Board members are expected to avoid discussion of:

1. Matters that are, or have the potential of becoming, the subject of an executive session;
2. Information and data contained in personnel records protected by the privacy act.

(cf. 2220 - Representative and Deliberative Groups re staff involvement in decision making)

(cf. 5145 - Civil and Legal Rights & Responsibilities)

(cf. 9133 - Special/Advisory Committee re: staff advisory committee and student advisory committee)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
10-220 Duties of boards of education.

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Filling Vacancies****Appointments**

Should a vacancy occur on the Board, unless otherwise provided by charter or special act the position shall be filled by vote of the remaining members of the Board. The appointed member shall serve in an interim capacity until the next biennial election. At the biennial election, a successor shall be elected for the unexpired portion of the term. Such vacancies will be formally announced to the board at one of its regularly scheduled meetings. At the next meeting, the vacancy will be filled by the majority vote of all members of the board of education present, and the action shall be recorded in the minutes of the board meeting.

Pursuant to the process of filling vacancies as they may occur, the Board will advertise, via local media, its desire to receive letters of interest from citizens of Scotland who may wish to serve on the Board.

Suggestions and/or recommendations, from any segment of the community, of interested candidates are also encouraged.

If no appointment is made within thirty (30) days, the chief town official may appoint a person to fill the vacancy.

**Oath of Office**

Appointed Board members shall, before entering upon their official duties, take the oath of office as administered by the Town official.

Legal Reference:           Connecticut General Statutes  
                                  7-107 Vacancy appointments by selectmen.  
                                  9-167a Minority representation.  
                                  9-204 Minority representation on boards of education.  
                                  10-219 Procedure for filling vacancy on board of education.  
                                  10-156e Employees of boards of education permitted to serve as elected  
                                  officials; exception.  
                                  10-218a Oath of office.  
                                  10-232 Restriction on employment of members of the board of education.

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Resignation/Removal from Office/Censure**

**Resignation**

If for reasons of health, change in domicile, or any other compelling reason a member does decide to terminate service, the Board requests as early as possible notification of intent to resign so that the Board may plan appropriately.

When a member of a Board shall cease to be a bona fide resident of Scotland, membership on the Board is immediately terminated by such non-resident status.

**Removal from Office**

A Board officer may be removed from his/her position by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the whole Board, but they must remain on the Board for remainder of their term.

**Censure**

The Board may vote to censure or reprimand a member by a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership of the whole Board.

(cf. 9121 – Board of Education Officers)

(cf. 9221 - Filling Vacancies)

Legal Reference:           Connecticut General Statutes  
                                  7-103 Resignation of municipal officers



**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Board Member Professional Development**

The Board of Education places a high priority on the importance of a planned and continuing program of in-service education for its members. The central purpose of the program is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of public school governance in our community. The Board may plan specific in-service activities designed to assist Board members in their efforts to improve their skills as members of the policy-making body; to expand their knowledge about trends, issues, and new ideas affecting the continued welfare of the local schools; and to deepen their insights into the nature of leadership in a modern democratic society.

Funds may be budgeted annually to support the program. The Board, as a whole, shall retain the authority to approve or disapprove the participation of members in planned activities. The public shall be kept informed about the Board's continuing in-service education and about the program's anticipated short and long range benefits to our schools.

The Board regards the following as kinds of activities and services appropriate for implementing this policy:

1. Participation in appropriate school board conferences, workshops and conventions.
2. District-sponsored training sessions for Board members.
3. Subscriptions to publications addressed to the concerns of Board members.

In order to control the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Board establishes these principles and procedures for its guidelines:

1. The Superintendent shall inform the Board of school board conferences, conventions and workshops. The Board will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing benefits to the District.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Board Chair will determine appropriate representation at such meetings.
3. Board members may be reimbursed for their travel expenses.
4. When a convention, conference or workshop is not attended by the full Board, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

Professional journals and books in school professional libraries shall be made available to all Board members.

(cf. 1100 – Communication with the Public)  
(cf. 4133 – Travel Reimbursement)

Bylaw adopted by the Board: October 1, 2013  
Reviewed by the Board: February 7, 2023

Scotland School District  
Scotland, Connecticut

**SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bylaws of the Board**

**Remuneration and Reimbursement**

Board members receive no compensation for their services on the Board, but may, upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills, be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in their official board duties, attending conferences of school board associations and other professional meetings/visitations when such attendance and expense payment has had prior Board approval.

(cf. 9226 Orientation of Board Members)

(cf. 9234 Conflict of Interest)

Legal Reference:           Connecticut General Statutes  
                                  10-225 Salaries of secretary and attendance officers  
                                  10-232 Restrictions on employment of members of board of education