

**EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2025
Central Administration Boardroom**

1. A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Ms. Turner - 6:19 P.M.

2. MINUTES

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING OF JUNE 25, 2025

Motion by Ms. Van Orden, Second by Ms. Phillips

Resolved, upon the recommendation of the District Clerk, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Minutes of the Board of Education Meeting of June 25, 2025.

Vote: Ayes- 5, Nays- 0, Abstentions- 4 (Herron, Marchiony, Panasci, Shane)

Motion carried

3. BOARD FORUM #1

Ms. Van Orden thanked everyone for their support and welcomed all the new Board members. She also welcomed Dr. Kotes to the District and said she is excited to start the new school year together.

Mr. Panasci said he is excited to serve and looking forward to working with everyone.

Mr. Temple welcomed the new leadership team and said he is interested in planning ahead and trying to figure out how to ensure a successful transition of change.

Ms. Herron thanked all the previous Board members for all their work, and said she was grateful to serve on the Board.

Ms. Thorpe thanked everyone for welcoming her to the Board. She said she was looking forward to learning from everyone.

Mr. Buono welcomed all the new members. He thanked them for stepping up and participating in this important role. He said it can sometimes be difficult and challenging, but it is also very rewarding. He also said he was excited to now have a student voice on the Board and is looking forward to working with them, the administrative team and the new Board leadership.

Mr. Shane said he is also excited to serve, and he thanked everyone for helping with onboarding and welcoming all the new members.

Ms. Phillips welcomed everyone, and asked if Ms. Thorpe and Mr. Bollam, the new student members, were all set up.

Mr. Marchiony thanked everyone for getting the new members up to speed. He welcomed Dr. Kotes and said he was looking forward to working with everyone.

Ms. Turner thanked everyone for their support. She welcomed Dr. Kotes and all the new Board members and said she looked forward to working with everyone. She also thanked all the former Board members for all their work to get the District to where it is today.

4. PUBLIC FORUM #1

Mr. Dan Wagner, EGTA president, welcomed all the new Board members and Superintendent Kotes. He commended the Board for choosing Ms. Thorpe to serve as the student voice, and said she is a great choice. Mr. Wagner welcomed Dr. Kotes, stating the teacher's union is eager to work collaboratively to ensure the best outcomes for all students.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. East Greenbush CSD District-Wide Safety Plan

Dr. Kotes presented the Districtwide safety plan, and stated that it is open for a 30-day public comment period with a minor update noting that the SRO agreements are in the process of being renewed and will be added to the plan when finalized.

6. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Approval of Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PROGRAMS FOR RESIDENT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Motion by Mr. Temple, Second by Ms. Van Orden

Resolved, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities.

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

B. Employment Agreement - Jeffrey P. Simons, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Mr. Temple said he supports Mr. Simons' appointment and said it fills a crucial need in the District and allows the District to utilize Mr. Simons' experience to support Dr. Kotes. He said while Dr. Kotes is fully capable on his own, two heads are always better than one, and this added experience will be very helpful during this transition and in meeting the District's needs.

Dr. Kotes agreed and said that Mr. Simons, who has so much institutional knowledge from his long tenure, will be incredibly helpful during this transition. He noted that Mr. Simons will only be working temporarily, and will greatly assist with summer data reporting, fiscal requirements for grant writing. The Superintendent said the District has begun the search for a permanent Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, with interviews scheduled this week. He said he is excited about the candidates they will be screening, and the goal is to recommend someone for Board of Education appointment at the first August meeting.

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT JEFFREY P. SIMONS TO THE POSITION OF INTERIM ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ATTACHED EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

Motion by Mr. Marchiony, Second by Ms. Phillips

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves and appoints Jeffrey P. Simons to the position of Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction in Accordance with the attached Employment Agreement.

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

C. Copier/ Multi Function Copier Lease

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COPIER/ MULTI FUNCTION PRINTER LEASE.

Motion by Mr. Buono, Second by Ms. Van Orden

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Copier/ Multi Function Printer Lease.

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

D. Proposed Change in Policy, Second Reading #5695 - Students and Personal Electronic Devices

Dr. Kotes explained the new New York State law requiring all public schools in New York to implement a cell phone ban. He stated the District formed a committee with students, families, Board members, and staff to figure out the best way to comply, and said the new policy follows both their recommendations and the law. He stated that high school students will use Yondr pouches, magnetically locked bags that seal phones for the school day. He explained that exceptions will be made for emergencies, medical needs, or IEP-driven requirements. Additionally, the Superintendent noted that the implementation will be a challenging adjustment for students and staff, as many are used to checking their phones frequently. However, he said he is confident that staff will model the new behavior, helping the District comply with the law and create a healthier learning environment for everyone.

Mr. Buono thanked the students for their excellent presentation at the last meeting. He acknowledged that this will be a good opportunity for Ms. Thorpe to share feedback with the Board about how things are going, especially on issues directly impacting students and staff. He said the Board will appreciate hearing the student perspective sometime in the future.

Mr. Temple expressed his concern that five warnings before consequences might be perceived as too lenient by parents and the community. He was also concerned about the process of confiscating cell phones and the implication that this responsibility would fall primarily on administrators. Mr. Temple said given that the schools aren't bus accessible, he stressed the importance of an administrator-parent partnership in the policy, rather than an "admin-focused" approach, to address practical issues like time constraints and transportation for parents picking up phones.

Dr. Kotes acknowledged Mr. Temple's concerns and stated with the brand new policy, he expects there to be a trial and error period, and the District will be reviewing and modifying the policy as needed.

Ms. Van Orden said the committee should probably update the policy's wording to better reflect how consequences are handled. She explained that it is not truly five warnings because consequences begin immediately. For example, the first offense involves documentation and a trip to administration, and by the second offense, the phone is confiscated until the end of the school day.

Ms. Van Orden said she thinks the students would consider confiscation a pretty substantial consequence, and feels they need to adjust the language to clarify that it's a tiered system of consequences, not just five warnings.

Mr. Panasci stated he felt there was only one warning, and as a parent he would not be happy with his child if he had to go pick up a phone. He asked Mr. Temple what he meant by saying the schools are not bus accessible.

Mr. Temple explained that some parents rely on public transportation to get around and none of the school buildings are on a bus route.

Ms. Phillips stated that Mr. Harkin addressed the parent transportation issue at the last meeting, and stated the District can be flexible when dealing with possible hardships.

Mr. Buono suggested there be a clear process for handling feedback, so suggestions go right to the Policy Committee for review, and the Board doesn't spend too much meeting time on discussions. He said they should have a smooth way to address questions and concerns from students and parents as they put this policy into practice.

Ms. Herron asked about the process for handling a potential influx of special education referrals, specifically concerning students who might need their phones for mental health or other conditions. She wondered if other districts experienced a similar surge and how the District could monitor this to avoid overwhelming the special education department.

Ms. Van Orden said the committee discussed how to handle potential special education referrals, particularly for mental health or medical needs. She said that while she missed the visits to Bethlehem and Troy, she understands the administrations there were quite strict about exceptions, and that approach seemed successful for them. Ms. Van Orden said the committee decided that the school physician, Dr. Albert, will review all requests for exceptions. She said families will need to submit the necessary paperwork to ensure consistency. Ms. Van Orden stated the main exceptions the Committee has considered are for medical devices like insulin pumps that connect to a phone, where access is clearly essential. Additionally, she noted that for students granted an exemption, they'll still receive a modified Yondr pouch with the magnet removed, so they look the same as their peers. She said this will allow them to maintain privacy regarding their medical needs.

Dr. Kotes explained the District plans to handle phone exceptions as a policy procedure, rather than through an increase in special education referrals.

Ms. Phillips asked what is the usual process for reviewing new policies, especially significant changes like this.

Dr. Kotes explained that the District has a Policy Committee that reviews policy updates from NYSSBA, legal counsel, or those required by law (like the cell phone policy). The committee then proposes any changes or new language. Next, the updated policy comes to the Board for a first read, followed by a second read, and then a final adoption. He stated the main discussions and changes happen within the Policy Committee itself, not usually during Board meetings.

Mr. Temple stated the Board can provide feedback and suggest revisions at that stage, but the Policy Committee typically handles most of the substantive work and open discussions on the policy.

Dr. Kotes stated that the Policy Committee meets regularly throughout the year to keep policies updated. He said things change often, and the District needs to keep the policies up to date. He noted that many updates come from the subscribed policy service, however, some policies, like those for facilities, are very specific to the District. He explained that the Policy Committee reviews all these updates, makes recommendations, and then they go to the Board for a first and second reading before being adopted. The Superintendent suggested that the Board get a report from the high school sometime in the future, maybe in six months, just to see how things are going with the new policy, to make sure it's on the right track based on how it's working in practice. He reported that the District will need to post all collected data and disciplinary actions related to cell phone incidents on the District website at the end of the school year.

Mr. Shane said he would like to echo Mr. Buono's earlier comments and thank the entire committee that worked on the cell phone policy. He said as a Board member-elect at the time, he was truly impressed by the thorough research and due diligence. This included the faculty's efforts, student involvement, and site visits to other schools. He stated that he particularly appreciated the investigation into the actual longevity of Yondr pouches, going beyond manufacturer claims to understand real-world performance before any investment.

Ms. Van Orden thanked all the students involved and said she was impressed with how well they embraced the challenge of presenting.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SECOND READING OF POLICY #5695, STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

Motion by Mr. Shane, Second by Ms. Van Orden

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the second reading of policy #5695, Students and Personal Electronic Devices.

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

E. Revised MOU-EGTA Retirement Incentive

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE REVISED MOU-EGTA RETIREMENT INCENTIVE.

Motion by Mr. Buono, Second by Mr. Temple

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Revised MOU-EGTA Retirement Incentive.

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

7. TABLED MOTIONS

None at this time.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Buono asked for information about the Board retreat.

Dr. Kotes said it looks like August 25 & 26 are the best options. He stated that he will work with Ms. Turner to develop an agenda for the Board's session.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Financial Reports

Claim Auditor Reports for Warrants- 0113, 0114, 0115, V091, 0001

2025-07-09 Treasurer's Report for the Month of April, 2025

2025-07-09 Revenue Status Report for the Month of April, 2025

2025-07-09 Budget Status Report for the Month of April, 2025

2025-07-09 Budget Transfers for the Month of April, 2025

2025-07-09 Extraclassroom Treasurer's Reports for the Month of April, 2025

B. Instructional/Instructional Support Personnel Memo

A. DISCONTINUANCE

1. Resignation for the Purpose of Retirement

a. Ciccone, Christopher - Science Teacher, Columbia High School, effective 6/30/25.
Date of Hire: 1/2/96

b. Heller, Dawn - Teaching Assistant, Columbia High School, effective 8/21/25.
Date of Hire: 1/9/03

c. Seney, Renee - French Teacher/Teaching Assistant, Columbia High School, effective 6/30/25.
Date of Hire: 12/1/97

2. Resignations

a. Albert, Danielle - Teaching Assistant, Red Mill Elementary School, effective 6/30/25.
Date of Hire: 1/9/25 Reason: moving out of state

b. El Mekaoui, Kaoutar - Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective 6/30/25
Reason: per sub Request

b. Hart, Leslie - Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective 6/30/25
Reason: per sub Request

c. Kirsch, Alexander - Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective 6/30/25
Reason: per sub Request

d. Lasch, Megan - Teaching Assistant, Green Meadow Elementary School, effective 8/27/25.
Date of Hire: 8/31/21 Reason: accepted a job with the state

- e. Letourneau, Lisa - Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective 6/30/25
Reason: per sub Request
- f. Lindmark, Simon - Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective 6/30/25
Reason: per sub Request
- g. Unverzagt, Mia - Per Diem Substitute Teacher, effective 6/30/25
Reason: per sub Request
- h. Williams, Aimee - Teaching Assistant, Columbia High School, effective 8/15/24.
Date of Hire: 8/29/17 Reason: personal

B. APPOINTMENTS

1. Probationary Appointment

The probationary expiration dates below are tentative and conditional only. Except to the extent required by the applicable provisions of Section 3012(3) of the Education Law, in order to be granted tenure the teacher must receive composite or overall annual professional performance review ratings pursuant to Section 3012-c and/or 3012-d of the Education Law of either effective or highly effective in at least three (3) of the four (4) preceding years, and if the teacher receives an ineffective composite or overall rating in the final year of the probationary period the teacher shall not be eligible for tenure at that time. (No prior tenure)

- a. Smith, Brandon - Music, Howard L. Goff Middle School
(Replacing Scott Halliday, Retirement)
Tenure Area: Music
Probationary Period: 8/27/25 - 8/26/29
(unless extended in accordance with the law as above)
Certification Status: NYS Initial Music
Step Placement: 1B = \$47,075.00
Prior: 2025 Troy CSD; Latham Elementary, leaves of absence
Degrees: B.M. SUNY, Potsdam

2. Summer 2025 APEX Staff (7/7/25-8/14/25)

Teachers	Salary
Henderson, Chris	\$47.50 per hour
Keyoskey, Julia	\$47.50 per hour
Macpherson, Kara	\$47.50 per hour
Romanowski, Drew	\$47.50 per hour
Tracy, Melinda	\$47.50 per hour
Substitute Teachers	
Davis, Lauren	\$47.50 per hour
Kawczak, Christine	\$47.50 per hour
Polaski, Rachel	\$47.50 per hour

3. Specialized Instruction & Related Services - Special Education 12 Month Program (7/7/25-8/15/25)

Name	Position	Salary
Lyle, Denise	Occupational Therapist	As per EGTA Contract

4. Substitute Teacher, ESY Program Summer 2025

- a. Bechard, Christopher b. Childs, Kathleen c. Gigliello, Heather

5. Substitute Teaching Assistant, ESY Program Summer 2025

- a. Childs, Kathleen

6. Substitute Teaching Assistant, effective 9/3/25

- a. Heller, Dawn, Step OS = \$31.92 per hour
- b. Williams, Aimee, Step 7 = \$ 26.36 per hour

7. Per Diem Substitute Teacher

<u>Name</u>	<u>Certification Area</u>	<u>Degree Status</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Bouchey, Renee	Regenerative & Cancer Cell Biology	Ph.D	9/3/25
Maxstadt, Tonya	Elementary Education	M.S	7/1/25

C. Non-Instructional Support Personnel Memo

Discontinuance as listed:			
Name	Position	Effective Date	Reason
Chesser, Lynn	Senior Typist-Columbia High School	8/30/25	retirement
Chesser, Thomas	School Bus Driver-Transportation	8/30/25	resignation
Corellis, Kathleen	Substitute Food Service Helper	6/30/25	per employee request
Cushing, Kathleen	Substitute Typist	6/30/25	per employees request
El Mekaoui, Kaoutar	Substitute Aide	6/30/25	per employees request
Flintrop, Katelyn	Typist-CHS	6/30/25	reduced in force due to budgetary impact
Hubbard, Samantha	Substitute Aide	6/30/25	per employees request
Mann, Zachary	Substitute Maintenance	6/30/25	per employees request
McCollum, Mary	Insurance Technician-Administration Center	7/19/25	resignation
Perry, Antonette	Typist-DPS	6/30/25	reduced in force due to budgetary impact
Smith, Jeffrey	Senior Bus Driver-Transportation	8/09/25	resignation
Tillman, Vicky	Substitute Typist	6/30/25	per employees request
Urquhart, Olivia	Substitute Aide	6/30/25	per employees request
Walsh, Cheryl	School Bus Driver-Transportation	9/08/25	retirement
Appointment as listed:			
Name	Position	Effective Date	Salary
Powell, Corin	School Bus Driver-Transportation Probation: 8/27/25-2/26/26	8/27/25	Step 3 = \$27.64 per hour pending CSEA negotiation finalization 5 hours per day/10 months
Substitute employees as listed:			
Name	Position	Effective Date	Salary
Bradley, Margaret	Bus Aide	7/10/25	Step 4 (HS) = \$19.65 per hour
Chesser, Lynn	Typist Senior Typist	8/30/25 8/30/25	Step OS = \$27.93 Step OS = \$28.52
Cooley, Desmond	Custodial Worker	7/10/25	Step 1 = \$17.59 per hour
Flintrop, Katelyn	Typist	6/30/25	Step 2 = \$20.41 per hour
Jensen, Lucas	Aide	9/3/25	Step 1 (HS) = \$18.15 per hour
Powell, Corin	School Bus Driver	7/10/25	Step 1 = \$22.86 per hour pending CSEA negotiation finalization
Rudzinski, Christina	Aide	7/1/25	Step OS (MS) = \$31.01 per hour
Summer employment as listed:			
Name	Position	Effective Date	Salary
Oliver, Mark	Substitute Custodial Worker	7/07/25	Substitute rate = \$17.59 per hour pending CSEA negotiation finalization
Powell, Corin	Substitute Bus Driver	7/07/25	Step 1 = \$22.86 per hour pending CSEA negotiation finalization

D. Library Materials Recommended to be Weeded- Goff Middle School

E. Library Materials Recommended for Weeding - Green Meadow Elementary

F. Health and Welfare Services Contract- Enlarged City School District of Troy

G. Disposal of District Property - Assets

H. Approval of Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

Motion by Ms. Herron, Second by Ms. Van Orden

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby approves the Consent Agenda

Vote: Ayes-, Nays-

Motion carried

10. ADDENDUM

None at this time.

11. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

12. PUBLIC FORUM #2

Mr. Wagner, EGTA president, congratulated teacher Renee Seney on her retirement, praising her as a wonderful woman he'd worked with for a long time. He extended an even bigger congratulations to Chris Ciccone, calling his departure a real loss for the District. Mr. Wagner highlighted Ciccone's extensive contributions as a unionist, chief negotiator, military veteran, educator, and softball coach.

13. BOARD FORUM #2

Mr. Buono congratulated the retirees and thanked them for their years of service to the District.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Mr. Panasci, Second by Mr. Buono to Enter Executive Session for purposes of

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 6:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Pangburn
District Clerk

Motion by Ms. Van Orden, Second by Ms. Panasci to return to Executive Session

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 7:49 P.M.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Buono, Second by Ms. Van Orden to Adjourn the Meeting

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Buono
Assistant District Clerk