

**EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025
Central Administration Boardroom**

1. A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Ms. Turner: 7:00 P.M.

B. ATTENDANCE

	Present	Absent	Arrival
Mr. Buono	X		
Ms. Herron	X		
Mr. Marchiony	X		
Mr. Panasci	X		
Ms. Phillips	X		
Mr. Shane	X		
Mr. Temple	X		
Ms. Turner	X		
Ms. Van Orden	X		

Ex-Officio Student Member

Ms. Holly Thorpe	X
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Student Council

Natalie Krisanda	X
Matthew Pallone	X

Also Attending

Dr. Kurtis Kotes	X
Mr. Lisa Mahar	X
Mr. Martin Mahar	X
Ms. Jennifer Mulligan	X

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. EX OFFICIO STUDENT COUNCIL COMMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

A. Student Council Representatives: Natalie Krisanda~President; Matthew Pallone~Vice President

Natalie Krisanda and Matthew Pallone recapped their recent activities, including a successful freshman orientation and their first meeting of the new school year. They also discussed their plans for homecoming and spirit week, noting that the Student Council is looking for fundraising ideas for homecoming this year.

Mr. Temple asked if the Student Council president is always a senior, and if the vice president is a junior who automatically becomes president the following year.

Ms. Krisanda clarified that while the president is traditionally a senior and the vice president a junior, this isn't a strict rule.

4. MINUTES

A. Approval of Draft Minutes dated August 26, 2025

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING OF AUGUST 26, 2025.

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

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 August 26, 2025.

Vote: Ayes- 7, Nays- 0, Abstaining- 2 (Phillips, Temple)

Motion carried

5. BOARD FORUM #1

Mr. Temple welcomed everyone back and said he was excited for the new school year.

6. PUBLIC FORUM #1

Logan Messina, Columbia High School senior, noted that Policy 5695, which covers student electronic devices, does not specifically mention or prohibit wireless or Bluetooth devices, and instead focuses on internet-enabled devices. He said he believes that if the rule is to be enforced, it should be officially included in the policy. Furthermore, he argued that a Bluetooth ban is unnecessary, as there is no practical difference in distraction between wired and wireless earbuds. Mr. Messina also countered the argument that wireless earbuds require a phone, pointing out that students could use wireless MP3 players instead.

Mr. Messina also suggested that Yondr pouches should be used as a disciplinary tool rather than being mandatory for all students. He emphasized that learning self-control is important for students' future success.

Mr. Dan Wagner, resident, teacher and EGTA president welcomed everyone back to school and said he and EGTA are looking forward to working collaboratively with the Board and administration. He acknowledged that there may be some concerns about the phone ban, but said all the teachers are excited about the change and the focus of the students during classes.

7. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. NYSSBA Convention

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE AND APPROVE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY #2521, SCHOOL BOARD CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS AND WORKSHOPS, THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS TO ATTEND THE OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION CONVENTION AND EDUCATION EXPO IN NEW YORK, NY, AND AUTHORIZES AND APPROVES EXPENSES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY #6830. EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT, AND AUTHORIZE LODGING AT NYSSBA SELECTED CONFERENCE HOTELS AT PREDETERMINED RATES: MR. TEMPLE, MR. SHANE, MR. PANASCI, MS. HERRON, DR. KOTES, AND MS. MULLIGAN

Motion by Ms. Phillips, Second by Mr. Shane

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby authorizes and approves in accordance with Policy #2521, School Board Conferences, Conventions and Workshops, the following individuals to attend the October 23-25, 2025 New York State School Boards Association Convention and Education Expo in New York, NY, and authorizes and approves expenses in accordance with Policy #6830, Expense Reimbursement, and authorize lodging at NYSSBA selected conference hotels at predetermined rates: Mr. Temple, Mr. Shane, Mr. Panaschi, Ms. Herron, Dr. Kotes, and Ms. Mulligan.

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

B. Authorization to Approve Board Membership in the New York State Caucus of Black School Board Members

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE BOARD MEMBERSHIP IN THE NEW YORK STATE CAUCUS OF BLACK SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Motion by Mr. Shane, Second by Ms. Phillips

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District authorizes Board Membership in the New York State Caucus of Black School Board Members for the 2025-2026 school year

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Lisa Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Ms. Mahar announced that the District has chosen an internal candidate for the new mentor coordinator. She explained that following the previous coordinator's resignation, the District approved a memorandum of agreement with EGTA to make this an internal position. Ms. Mahar stated that they interviewed six teachers for the role, all of whom did an excellent job. She said the chosen candidate is Christine Kawczak, a Columbia high school math teacher with prior experience as a mentor herself. Ms. Mahar said Ms. Kawczak is eager to bring innovative professional development and support to mentor and mentee pairs, and that she believes her experience in coordinating large events, her strong organizational skills, and her positive influence make her an excellent fit for the role.

B. Dr. Kurtis Kotes, Superintendent

Dr. Kotes reported that the East Greenbush town historian has decided to stop looking for the remains of a war soldier believed to be on Red Mill Elementary school property, however, she is requesting approval to place a commemorative plaque on the property instead. He explained that this action does not require a formal Board vote, but he wanted to inform all Board members, especially the new ones, and get their feedback since they are the proprietors of the property. Dr. Kotes stated that the historian has already consulted with Mr. Bickel on a suitable location for the plaque. He said the language on the plaque will be carefully chosen to serve as a historical teaching tool rather than a headstone, given that the property is an elementary school. He said he will send a copy of the proposal to the Board members for their review.

Dr. Kotes stated that due to new added holidays and Regents exams, the high school graduation ceremony has been moving later and later into June. He said he and Mr. Harkin have discussed the possibility of moving the ceremony up by a week or two to a potential date like June 18th, a Thursday night, or even as early as the 12th or 13th. He said the primary concern is to ensure that a change in date would not prevent any students who need to take a Regents exam from participating. The Superintendent said that other school districts are facing the same issue, and families have expressed concerns saying that the late graduation date makes it difficult and more expensive to book venues for celebrations, as it often falls near the July 4th weekend. He explained that he brought this up as a discussion topic, not a Board vote, intended to give Mr. Harkin clear direction as he works with high school staff and Hudson Valley Community College to secure a new date. Dr. Kotes said he welcomed feedback from the Board on the proposed changes.

Mr. Temple expressed his concerns about an earlier graduation date and the potential impact on attendance. He felt to set a tone of educational excellence that it is important to encourage students to attend school until the very end of the academic year. He said while he understands the dynamics of student behavior, from a governance and academic perspective, he prefers a later graduation date. He clarified that he is referring to a ceremony held at the end of classes, not necessarily after all the Regents exams are completed. Ms. Herron raised concerns about the due date for fourth-quarter grades and the added pressure it would place on teachers to complete them in a short timeframe.

Ms. Van Orden said she was curious about how this would affect graduation rehearsals since they're typically held during Regents week. She wondered if this would mean they would need to pull seniors out of their final classes to attend, and asked what the schedule would look like.

Mr. Harkin noted that while the high school's graduation ceremony on the last Saturday of June has been successful, there have been some complaints in recent years. He said the primary issue is that the late date cuts into the July 4th weekend, making it difficult and expensive for families to plan events and trips. Mr. Harkin also mentioned that East Greenbush CSD is one of the last area schools to graduate. He said supported the idea of exploring an earlier graduation date to address these concerns, and said he will speak with staff and students for feedback.

Dr. Kotes also discussed the school start time topic and presented the Board with a report from 2018 on changing school start times, specifically by reversing the schedule for elementary and secondary schools. He said that although research shows that later start times for older students can improve academic performance, this change would present significant challenges, particularly in such a large district. The report examined several factors, including state requirements, student performance, and the major impacts on transportation, athletics, childcare, and the community. The Superintendent noted that the data is now outdated due to the pandemic and said there are many changes now, like increased remote work. He reported that the original committee's conclusion was that more information and community feedback were needed before moving forward. Dr. Kotes cautioned the Board to proceed slowly if they decide to revisit this topic, due to the high costs of a new transportation study and the potential for increased busing needs.

Mr. Marchiony asked Dr. Kotes if he was aware there were two or three transportation reports done previously, and wondered if the Board could have access to them.

Dr. Kotes said a report was referenced in the previous study, and that it analyzed the feasibility of a two- or three-tiered busing system. He explained that even with a two-tiered system, the District would need to hire more drivers and potentially buy more buses. The Superintendent stressed that this is a significant consideration, especially with the state's electric vehicle (EV) mandate still in effect, which adds another layer of complexity and cost. He said that transportation is a major factor, and the EV mandate is an uncertain variable that must be carefully considered if the District were to move forward with this.

Mr. Panasci asked if discussion of this initiative could be incorporated into strategic planning.

Dr. Kotes said he would be hesitant to introduce this now, since the new strategic plan will be presented at the next meeting.

Mr. Panasci said that unless the District can get a grant for the \$25,000, he is personally hesitant to move forward with a transportation study. He stated that while he understands this is a high-impact, long-term issue, he questions whether the District even wants to go in that direction, given the current priorities.

Mr. Temple said he believes that the Board should decide whether they want to move in this direction before the District commits to the expense. He said this is about more than just a logistical shift; they must consider the full budgetary picture, including staffing, buses, and the impact of the EV mandate. Mr. Temple thought that a transportation study is crucial to understand if the potential benefits for students, particularly high schoolers, is worth the logistical and financial challenges. He stated that while the budget is tight, this would be a one-time expenditure to get the information needed to make an informed decision.

Ms. Phillips suggested engaging with the transportation team in house to get a sense of bus routes, etc. She asked if the plan was a complete reversal of the current elementary and secondary schedules, or simply shaving a few minutes off the schedule. She wondered how shaving minutes would impact instructional time and academic programs. She said she is not in favor of reducing instructional time, but wondered if minor adjustments could be made to the school day. Ms. Phillips said she noticed there's some variation in the length of the school day, and maybe a small analysis could show if the District could at least shift the start time to 7:20 or 7:30 a.m. She said she realizes that this may be difficult because of the middle school bus runs that happen immediately after the high school runs.

Dr. Kotes said minor adjustments to start times would be easier to discuss than a complete swap of elementary and secondary schedules. He agreed that the first step should be to have a high-level conversation with transportation officials. He said it is a significant challenge when other districts in a BOCES or athletic council don't make the same change. The Superintendent said to be truly successful, it would need to be a regional effort. He said the research is clear that later start times benefit older students, but the logistics are far more manageable when multiple districts work together.

Mr. Temple said that an earlier start time for elementary schools would also affect families, especially during the winter when kids would have to get on the bus as early as 6:40 a.m., but he said he still thinks this is a topic worth discussing.

Ms. Phillips wondered if this might be an opportunity to encourage a regional conversation about transportation. She said the EV bus mandate is a huge factor, and since they have already discussed the need for charging stations, this could be a good starting point for a broader discussion on transportation.

Mr. Buono asked if this was something the Board has agreed they would like to pursue.

Mr. Kotes said his understanding is that the District was close to making a decision on this after extensive research, but the process was stopped by the COVID-19 pandemic. He said the Board needs to decide if they should abandon the idea completely or reopen the discussion. He cautioned that if the District decides to move forward, they would essentially be starting over. He stated that the original data is very old, and a lot has changed since then, such as the working conditions for families, including remote work and childcare. The Superintendent said that right now this is just a conversation, but in the near future, he will need clear direction from the Board on how to proceed.

Mr. Buono reported that past attempts to coordinate regional transportation have not been successful due to many challenges. He said that if Dr. Kotes wants to bring this up with BOCES leadership again, it's worth a try, however, it's a complex issue because it involves not just one BOCES but multiple school districts that vary greatly in size. He said that he thinks it's a good idea for the Board to get more information and explore the possibility with other school districts as well.

Dr. Kotes said he will share the original information with the Board, and then they can continue the discussion and decide what, if any, action to take in the future.

9. TABLED MOTIONS

None at this time.

10. OLD BUSINESS

None at this time.

11. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Financial Reports

Claim Auditor Reports for Warrants- 0013, 0014, 0015, 0016, V000

B. Instructional/Instructional Support Personnel Memo

A. DISCONTINUANCE

1. Resignation

- a. Anson, Ashleigh - Special Education, Donald P. Sutherland Elementary School, effective 9/27/25.

Date of Hire: 9/4/18 Reason: position in another district

B. APPOINTMENTS

1. Probationary Appointment

The expiration dates below are tentative and conditional only. In order to be granted tenure the teacher must receive composite or overall annual professional performance rating review ratings pursuant to Section 3012-c and/or 3012-d of the Education Law of either effective or highly effective to the extent required by the applicable provisions of the Education Law, the Rules of the Board of Regents and the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, 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. (Prior tenure)

- a. Soldner, Linda - Mathematics, The Center for Therapeutic Academic Excellence
(Replacing Pamela Jackson, Retirement)
Tenure Area: Mathematics
Probationary Period: 9/29/25-9/28/28 (pending verification of tenure)
(unless extended in accordance with the law as above)
Certification Status: NYS Professional Mathematics 7-12
Step Placement: 15M \$83,503.00
Prior: 9/07-Present Coxsackie-Athens CSD
Degrees: B.A. Siena College
M.S. SUNY, Albany

2. Probationary Appointment - Teaching Assistant

- a. Hand, Alyssa - Teaching Assistant, Green Meadow Elementary School
(Replacing Martha Wos, Retirement)
Tenure Area: Teaching Assistant
Probationary Period: 9/11/25-9/10/29
Certification Status: NYS Teaching Assistant, Level I
Step Placement: Step 1 = \$23.35 per hour
Hours per day: 6.5
- b. Squires, Colin - Teaching Assistant, Donald P. Sutherland Elementary School
(Replacing Brianna Maunu, Resignation)
Tenure Area: Teaching Assistant
Probationary Period: 9/25/25-9/24/29
Certification Status: NYS Teaching Assistant, Level I
Step Placement: Step 1 = \$23.35 per hour
Hours per day: 6.5

3. Mentor Coordinator 2025-2026 School Year

- Kawczak, Christine - Stipend \$5,800.00

4. 6th Period Assignment 2025-2026 School Year

Name	Building	Subject	Stipend
Morgan, Amy Goff		Special Education	\$6,500.00

5. Per Diem Substitute Teacher

Name	Certification Area	Degree Status	Effective Date
Delpozzo, Davina	Early Childhood Education	B.S	9/11/25
Doren, Anna	Social Studies	M. Ed	9/11/25
Kraz, Julianne	Early Childhood Education	A.A	9/11/25
Orenstein, Rachel	Business Administration	B.S	9/11/25

6. Student Teacher/Intern 2025-2026 School Year

Building	Student	Content Area	Cooperating Teacher	College/Term
Red Mill	Adriana Fatato	Social Work	Tricia Petromelis	Siena/25-26 SY

C. OTHER

1. Appointment Adjustment

a. Greene, David - Girls' Varsity Tennis

Base Salary: From: \$3,044.00 + \$1,389.00 = \$4,433.00

To: \$3,090.00 + \$1,410.00 = \$4,500.00

Start Date: From: August 26, 2024

To: August 18, 2025

Incorrect salary and start date listed in original appointment

2. Adjustment to Leave of Absence Dates

a. Monk, Dana - Unpaid Child-rearing leave of absence dates

From: 2025-2026 school year

To: 9/16/25 - 6/30/26

D. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Athletic Coaching Positions 2025-2026 Fall Season

a. Zachary Yannone	Varsity Girls' Cross Country
	Non-Certified Teacher - Professional Coaching License
Experience:	Cross Country Varsity Assist. Girls' Cross Country - Columbia-2022-2024
	Track Varsity Assistant Girls' Indoor Track - Columbia - 2023-2025
	Varsity Assistant Girls' Outdoor Track - Columbia-2022-2025
Base Salary:	\$3,813.00 + \$1,410.00 = \$5,223.00
Start Date:	August 18, 2025
b. Scott Mocerine	Boys' Junior Varsity Soccer
	Certified Teaching Assistant - Goff - Temporary Coaching License
Experience:	Soccer J.V. Boys' Soccer - Columbia - 2023-2024
Base Salary:	\$3,856.00
Start Date:	August 18, 2025
c. Courtney Brewer	Boys' Modified Soccer
	Certified Teacher - Elementary Education - Goff
Experience:	Track Varsity Boys' Outdoor Track Assist - Columbia - 2025
	XCountry Modified B & G Cross Country - Goff - 2024
Base Salary:	\$2,949.00
Start Date:	September 2, 2025

2. Volunteer Coaches 2025-2026 Fall Sports Season

The following will volunteer for our fall athletic programs. All hold current certification in CPR/AED, First Aid, Blood Borne Pathogens, DASA, Concussion Management, SAVE & Child Abuse.

Name	Sport
Mooney, Patrick	Football
Thomas, James	Football

C. Non-Instructional Support Personnel Memo

Discontinuance as listed:			
Name	Position	Effective Date	Reason
Asenbauer, Katharine	Substitute: Aide, Monitor, and Typist	9/3/25	per employee's request
Orciuoli, Carla	Cook-Goff	10/4/25	retirement
Weaver, Robert	School Bus Driver-Transportation	9/4/25	resignation
Appointment as listed:			
Name	Position	Effective Date	Salary
Sanford, Randie	Automotive Mechanic-Transportation Probation: 9/11/25-3/10/26	9/11/25	Step 3= \$29.54 per hour 8 hours/12 months
Siry, Rebekah	Food Service Helper-Green Meadow Probation: 9/11/25-3/10/26	9/11/25	Step 1 = \$18.10 per hour 5 hours/10 months
Substitute employees as listed:			
Name	Position	Effective Date	Salary
Delpozzo, Davina	Aide	9/11/25	Step 1 (BS) = \$22.48 per hour
Doren, Anna	Aide	9/11/25	Step 1 (M.Ed) = \$22.48 per hour
Heim, Amanda	Aide Monitor	9/11/25	Step 1 (HS) = \$18.15 per hour Step 1 (HS) = \$16.90 per hour
Orenstein, Rachel	Aide	9/11/25	Step 1 (BS) = \$22.48 per hour
Reynolds-Cotzas, George	Aide	9/11/25	Step 1 (BA) = \$22.48 per hour
Weaver, Robert	School Bus Driver	9/4/25	Step 4 = \$29.89 per hour
Appointment adjustment:			
Name	Position	Effective Date	Reason
Hammill, Julie	Substitute Aide	9/3/25	Step OS (BS) = \$31.01 per hour
Kraz, Julianne	Substitute Aide	9/11/25	Step 1 (AS) = \$20.60 per hour

D. Approval of Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities

E. Acceptance of Gifts and Authorization to Increase the 2025-2026 Budget

F. Disposal of District Property - Assets

G. Approval of Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

Motion by Ms. Herron, Second by Ms. Phillips

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

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

12. ADDENDUM

None at this time.

13. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

14. PUBLIC FORUM #2

None at this time.

15. BOARD FORUM #2

Mr. Shane thanked Next Steps Federal Credit Union for the backpacks of school supplies, and the Dlug family for the headsets that were donated to the District. He said the District and students are very appreciative.

Mr. Temple wished everyone a successful school year.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Mr. Panasci, Second by Mr. Shane to enter Executive Session to discuss the employment of a particular individual.

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 7:41 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Pangburn

District Clerk

Motion by Mr. Shane, Second by Ms. Phillips to exit Executive Session

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 9:34 P.M.

17. ADJOURNMENT

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

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 9:34 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Buono

Assistant District Clerk