

**EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026
Central Administration Boardroom**

1. A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Ms. Turner - 6:30 P.M.

B. ATTENDANCE

	Present	Absent	Arrival
Mr. Buono	X		
Ms. Herron	X		
Mr. Marchiony			X 6:33 P.M.
Mr. Panasci	X		
Ms. Phillips	X		
Mr. Shane	X		
Mr. Temple			.X 6:54 P.M.
Ms. Turner	X		
Ms. Van Orden	X		
Ex-Officio Student Member			
Ms. Holly Thorpe		X	
Mr. William Bollam	X		
Student Council Representatives			
Natalie Krisanda	X		
Matthew Pallone	X		
Also Attending			
Dr. Kurtis Kotes	X		
Ms. Lisa Mahar	X		
Mr. Martin Mahar	X		
Ms. Jennifer Mulligan	X		

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Ms. Van Orden, Second by Ms. Herron to Enter Executive Session to Discuss Matters Concerning Personnel and Student Activities

Vote: Ayes- 7, Nays-0

Motion carried

B. Return to Open Session

Motion by Mr. Panasci, Second by Mr. Buono to Return to Open Session

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 7:06 P.M.

3. REOPEN MEETING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

4. EX OFFICIO STUDENT COUNCIL COMMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

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

Natalie Krisanda and Matthew Pallone reported on the successful start of spring sports, the recent Columbia musical, "Pippin", and the Columbia Kicks Cancer campaign which raised over \$239,000, setting a three-year consecutive fundraising record. They also shared future fundraising plans, such as a car wash or bottle and can drive.

5. MINUTES

A. Approval of Draft Minutes dated February 25, 2026

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING OF FEBRUARY 25, 2026

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

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 February 25, 2026.

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

6. BOARD FORUM #1

Ms. Van Orden said she enjoyed the Columbia musical "*Pippin*" and congratulated Holly for how well she did in her role. She said she was looking forward to attending the Goff musical next weekend.

William Bollam also praised the play, and said he was already looking forward to next year's production.

Mr. Marchiony echoed the sentiments, and also congratulated the students involved with the Columbia Kicks Cancer program. He said he attended a bingo event for the fundraiser, and it was very well run and a great time.

7. PUBLIC FORUM #1

None at this time.

8. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

A. 2026-2027 Proposed Budget

Dr. Kotes shared a preliminary look at the 2026-27 fiscal year. He noted that the District has worked to align the needs with the strategic plan, focusing on areas like professional development, coursework, and enhancing community relations, specifically with effort aiming to improve forward-facing items like online registration and ensuring access to resources for all families. He explained that without using fund balance, there is a \$9.7 million gap, and using fund balance the gap is reduced to \$2 million. He stressed that the District is depleting the reserves and needs to be mindful of the future. The Superintendent said to close the structural deficit, the District must aggressively control health care costs and pursue strategic expenditure reductions.

Mr. Buono asked whether the current budget reflects the hybrid philosophy and percentage rollovers that had been discussed previously.

Dr. Kotes explained that this year's process shifted to team-based meetings rather than individual sessions. He confirmed that while some items, like class sizes, were rolled over, other areas like Special Education and Technology were analyzed more closely using the hybrid approach to identify specific needs.

Mr. Buono said making budgets are very challenging, and wanted everyone to know that input comes from many voices.

Mr. Marchiony asked if when businesses come off of PILOT agreements, do they go right onto the tax rolls.

Dr. Kotes said that most first grieve their assessments through the tax certiorari, but then subsequently go onto the rolls.

Mr. Panasci asked if the salary lines included filling in for the retirees and if so is there savings there.

Ms. Mulligan explained they have accounted for new fills and have averaged them at step 12. She explained there is not a large cost savings, because both the retiree and new employee would then have health insurance.

Dr. Kotes noted that the salary costs are pretty average when compared with other districts, but benefit costs are the largest burden. He discussed regionalization and annexing as ways for districts to find efficiencies, and said they need to work together with other districts to try to find opportunities, maybe through utilities or transportation costs.

Ms. Mulligan reported that Highmark is going up 16.5%, CDPHP 10% and RX about 20% next year.

Mr. Buono said the consortium needs to be more aggressive and work harder for the districts. He also asked if the District is planning to put forth different budget options and line by line details for the Boards review, so the community can see the different choices.

Mr. Marchiony asked about the capital outlay project.

Dr. Kotes stated that the District is looking into putting \$175,000 into the capital outlay project, using money that is not being used in the cafeteria fund. He explained the difference is that if they go over \$100,000 the aid will be returned over 15 years instead of in the following year. He said he suggests they plan on including a project every year so the revenue will continue to flow.

Ms. Turner said she does not see any potential downside in doing the capital outlay project.

Mr. Panasci agreed, and said he thought they should allocate as much as they can to the project.

Mr. Temple raised the topic of long-term planning, specifically regarding school consolidation and regionalization. He expressed a strong interest in finding creative, aggressive solutions for rising costs like health benefits. Mr. Temple suggested that being proactive now would put the District in a stronger position regardless of future legislative changes.

Dr. Kotes agreed that school district consolidation is a valuable conversation for the Board. He discussed the ongoing annexation process between Troy and Wynantskill as something to watch, noting the significant financial incentives and tax stability it could offer. The Superintendent suggested the Board include professional development on this topic during their summer retreat to explore future possibilities.

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Portrait of a Graduate

Ms. Mahar reported on the February 6th committee meeting, which included staff and Board members working to align the District's existing Portrait of a Graduate with the new New York State attributes. She emphasized that the District will maintain its local identity, specifically retaining "empathy" as a core attribute, while bridging it with State standards like critical thinking and effective communication. Ms. Mahar noted that these competencies are not extra work for students, but are being integrated into existing

curriculum and daily classroom activities to ensure all students are college and career ready. Looking forward, she said the committee will create a simple one-page guide for the new initiative, and will also start looking at how to measure student growth in these skills, and build these goals into classroom lessons.

B. AI In Learning Committee

Mr. Goodwin reported on the AI Learning Committee's initial day-long session, which brought together teachers, students, and administrators to align AI integration with the District's educational philosophies and the Portrait of a Graduate initiative. He stated that the meeting focused on increasing stakeholder knowledge through hands-on demo sessions using EduProtocols to show how AI can make instruction more engaging. He noted that the committee looked at the AI tools the District already uses, such as Gemini, NotebookLM, and Diffit, and talked about the right and wrong ways to use AI and how to make sure students still take the lead in their own learning. Mr. Goodwin said moving forward, the committee aims to develop a resource toolkit and specialized courses for both teachers and middle school students, with the ultimate goal of informing future Board policy through careful, sandbox-style piloting.

10. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Approval of 2024 Capital Project Commissioning Service

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2024 CAPITAL PROJECT COMMISSIONING SERVICE

Motion by Mr. Buono, Second by Ms. Phillips

Resolved, the Board of Education of the East Greenbush Central School District hereby Approves the 2024 Capital Project Commissioning Service

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Martin Mahar, Interim Director of Human Resources

Mr. Mahar presented a staffing update, stating that all the retiree positions have been posted as anticipated openings. He said the District decided to go out early in hopes of getting a good pool of candidates, and said the initial response has been great. Mr. Mahar explained that posting these as anticipated openings gives the District flexibility to see how many people the District actually needs to hire once the 30-day window closes.

B. Jennifer Mulligan, Director of Business and Finance Health Insurance Review Committee 2-24-26

Ms. Mulligan reported on the health insurance review committee meeting held on February 24 where Highmark presented data for the upcoming plan year. She explained the data shows that medical and pharmacy claims have increased by 15 percent which closely aligns with the 16.5 percent rise in medical premiums. She reported that high cost claimants exceeding 50,000 dollars accounted for more than half of the total paid claims while specialty drugs made up 51 percent of prescription costs. Ms. Mulligan stated there was a significant increase in emergency room utilization and plans to create targeted communications that encourage lower cost alternatives like urgent care or telehealth. Additionally, she said the District is monitoring the prescription drug plan which is self insured and has seen its projected deficit improve from 1.4 million dollars to approximately 500,000 dollars. Ms. Mulligan stated to further contain costs the District will explore wellness programs and new pharmacy management tools such as Best RX and Copay Armor while maintaining necessary cash reserves to handle claim variability.

C. Lisa Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction - CCS Meeting Minutes 3-4-26

Ms. Mahar shared updates from the Committee on Curriculum and Instruction meeting held on March 4, noting that the program reviews for English as a New Language and school counseling are progressing well through the needs assessment phase. She informed the Board that summer curriculum writing proposals are currently being accepted and then detailed a new transcript notation policy endorsed by the Academic Council. She explained that under this plan, students dropping a course after the initial five or ten week grace period will receive a withdrawal pass or withdrawal fail notation on their transcripts.

Mr. Temple asked if this change will affect the students transcripts.

Ms. Mahar said while these marks do not impact a student's grade point average, the change is intended to align with college level standards and encourage student accountability by providing a formal record of the attempted coursework.

Ms. Van Orden said she supports the new transcript idea, noting that it aligns with practices at the college level. She said there is a growing trend of students dropping courses prematurely and emphasized that while the withdrawal pass or withdrawal fail marks would not affect a student's grade point average, it would serve as an important incentive for students to persist and finish their commitments.

Ms. Mahar concluded her report by highlighting the upcoming regional professional development day, which has already seen high staff registration and offers a wide variety of enrichment opportunities.

D. Dr. Kurtis Kotes, Superintendent ~ NYSCOSS Winter Institute and Lobby Day

Dr. Kotes reported that he attended the State Superintendent Conference and Lobby Day, advocating to state legislature leaders on high-profile issues like state aid, special education funding (FAPE22), and charter schools. He also stated that the Governor is finally acknowledging concerns about the electric bus mandate. The Superintendent said that the District has paused EV bus purchases to wait for potential changes to the state's climate law, following recent comments from the Governor. He stated that although the transition to all-electric new purchases is currently slated for FY 2027-28, the District is exploring the possibility of utilizing waivers to extend that requirement out to 2031, should the mandate remain in place.

12. TABLED MOTIONS

None at this time

13. OLD BUSINESS

None at this time

14. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Financial Reports

#1 Claim Auditor Reports for Warrants- 0061, 0063.pdf

B. Instructional/Instructional Support Personnel Memo

A. DISCONTINUANCE

1. Resignation for the Purpose of Retirement

- a. Daley, Lisa - Teaching Assistant, Columbia High School, effective 6/27/26.
Date of Hire: 9/14/06
- b. Hirt, Jean - Teaching Assistant, Howard L. Goff Middle School, effective 6/27/26.
Date of Hire: 9/1/04

B. APPOINTMENTS

1. Probationary Appointment - Teaching Assistant

- a. Dubuque, Melissa - Teaching Assistant, Howard L. Goff Middle School
(New position)
Tenure Area: Teaching Assistant
Probationary Period: 3/12/26-3/11/30
Certification Status: NYS Teaching Assistant, Level III
Step Placement: Step 3 = \$24.45
Hours per day: 6.5

2. Clay Target Enrichment Coordinators 2025-2026 School Year

Name	Stipend
a. Batcher, Daniel	\$47.50 per hour
b. Gedney, Laura	\$47.50 per hour
	(Maximum of 80 hours each)

3. Student Teacher/Intern 2025-2026 School Year

Building	Student	Content Area	Cooperating Teacher	College/Term
Bell Top	Greta Karcher	Art	Karli Powers	Sage/Spring 2
Green Meadow	Greta Karcher	Art	Karli Powers	Sage/Spring 2
Green Meadow	Brier Cylkoff	Elementary	Nicole Maney	Sage/Spring 2

4. Per Diem Substitute Teacher

Name	Certification Area	Degree Status	Effective Date
Barrientes, Jacqueline	Physical Education	M.S. Ed	3/12/26
	Special Education		
Bucar, Kristen	EL & Kindergarten Education	B.S	3/12/26
Butt, Dinah	Science Education	M.S. Ed	3/12/26

C. OTHER

1. Salary Adjustments - Credit Hours

Name	From	To	Compensation (prorated for 1/2 year)
Almon, Jenna	B+12	B+15	\$82.50 (\$165.00)
Buoye, Holly	B+0	M+0	\$1,536.00 (\$3,072.00)
Wright, Sarah	B+0	B+9	\$247.50 (\$495.00)

2. Appointment Adjustment Appendix "D"

a. Red Mill Drama Club

From: Tiffanie McNett/Jacqueline Nagy \$1,997.00 (split stipend)

To: Elizabeth Griffin/Jacqueline Nagy \$1,997.00 (split stipend)

D. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Athletic Coaching Position 2025-2026 Spring Sports Season

a. Michael Gonyea Boys' Varsity Outdoor Track

Certified Teacher

Experience: Wrestling J.V. Wrestling Co-Coach - 2024/2026

Base Salary: \$3,968.00

Start Date: March 9, 2026

C. Non-Instructional Support Personnel Memo

Discontinuance as listed:			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Collins, Brittany	Bus Aide-Transportation	2/27/26	resignation
Ingoldsby, Vincent	Truck Driver-District Wide	5/1/26	retirement
Appointment as listed:			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Salary</u>
Substitute employees as listed:			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Salary</u>
Barrientes, Jaqueline	Aide	3/12/26	Step 1 (BS) = \$22.48 per hour
Collins, Brittany	Bus Aide	2/27/26	Step 8 = \$23.30 per hour

D. Approval of Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities

E. Health and Welfare Services Contract- South Colonie Central School District

F. Disposal of District Property - Assets

G. Approval of Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

Motion by Mr. Panasci, Second by Mr. Buono

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

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

15. ADDENDUM

None at this time.

16. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

17. PUBLIC FORUM #2

None at this time.

18. BOARD FORUM #2

None at this time.

19. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Ms. Van Orden, Second by Mr. Shane to Enter Executive Session for Matters Concerning Personnel

Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0

Motion carried

Time: 9:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Pangburn
District Clerk

Motion by Mr. Panasci, Second by Ms. VanOrden to exit Executive Session
Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0
Motion carried
Time: 10:37 P.M.

20. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Van Orden, Second by Ms. Phillips to Adjourn the Meeting
Vote: Ayes- 9, Nays- 0
Motion carried
Time: 10:37 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Buono
Assistant District Clerk