



HAMPTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER  
380 MAIN STREET  
HAMPTON, CT 06247

WEDNESDAY APRIL 22, 2026  
6:30 PM  
HAMPTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order  
Chair Mark Becker called the meeting to order at 6:35.  
Those in attendance were Juan Arriola, Laura Barrow, Mark Becker, Maryellen Donnelly, Tim Studer and Dennis Timberman. Also in attendance were Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski, Principal Victoria Smith and Business Coordinator Sally Lehoux.
2. Board Training: Special Education Overview  
Principal Smith presented a special education overview prepared by Director of Special Education Mary Jo Chretien and answered questions.
3. Audience for Citizens and Staff on Agenda Items  
Dayna McDermott Arriola and Juan Arriola commented on item 5 of the March 25, 2026 minutes: Approval of Minutes from Special Board Meeting 3/4/2026.  
First Selectman Allan Cahill asked for student data and student count.
4. Correspondent to the Board  
None
5. Approval of Minutes from Special Board Meeting 3/25/2026  
**Motion:** Dennis Timberman moved to approve the minutes of 3/25/2026.  
Juan Arriola seconded the motion.  
Voting yes were Juan Arriola, Laura Barrow, Mark Becker, Maryellen Donnelly, Tim Studer and Dennis Timberman.  
The motion passed unanimously.
6. Principal's Report  
Principal Smith reported on events, academic achievement, school climate, enrichment, and special education announcements.
7. Superintendent's Report  
Superintendent Skarzyński reported on advocacy by local districts, science of reading, budget and legislative updates.
8. Business Coordinator's Report  
Sally Lehoux reported on oil delivery, reasons for 2024-2025 surplus funds, and the FY 27 budget document.
9. Committee and Liaison Reports
  - a. Finance and Operations  
Mark Becker reviewed the committee's minutes of April 9.
  - b. EASTCONN  
Maryellen Donnelly reported that the EASTCONN board meeting will be held on April 26.  
Committee meetings have focused on policies, finances and legislation.

- c. Policy Committee  
The policy committee did not meet.
  - d. Communications  
Dennis Timberman provided a draft document to be distributed to the Hampton community. Board members should send comments to any of the committee members, Dennis Timberman, Nick Brockett, Stephanie Bora or Elizabeth Lindorff, prior to the May board meeting when the document will be discussed.
  - e. Superintendent Evaluation Ad Hoc  
The superintendent evaluation committee did not meet.
  - f. Curriculum Review  
The curriculum review committee did not meet.
10. Discussion and Possible Action: FOIA Complaint Against Hampton Board of Education  
Chair Mark Becker, Juan Arriola and Russell Blair, FOIA Director of Education and Communications, met. Mark Becker provided Juan Arriola with the written statement:  
The agenda and subsequent minutes for the Hampton Board of Education meeting of November 19, 2025 listed an executive session for Superintendent Goals. This description was too vague and did not meet the requirement of Freedom of Information. The agenda should have stated a reason such as "to discuss the performance and evaluation process of the superintendent". In the future, I will be more descriptive to allow the public to know why the Board is entering executive session.
11. Discussion and Possible Action: Calendar Updates and Final Day of School for Students  
**Motion:** Tim Studer moved that the last day for students will be June 18 waiving the last three student days but still meeting the requirement of 180 school days.  
Laura Barrow seconded the motion.  
Voting yes were Laura Barrow, Mark Becker, Tim Studer and Dennis Timberman.  
Abstaining were Juan Arriola and Maryellen Donnelly  
The motion passed.
12. Discussion and Possible Action: Board of Education Goals Review  
Mark Becker reviewed progress on the action items for goal one. Further review will be done during a subsequent meeting.
13. Additions to the Agenda  
**Motion:** Juan Arriola moved to add discussion on inclusion of the Rogin Nassau Attorneys report on the 4/22/26 minutes.  
Laura Barrow seconded the motion.  
Voting yes were Juan Arriola, Laura Barrow, Mark Becker, Maryellen Donnelly, Tim Studer and Dennis Timberman.  
The motion passed unanimously.  
**Motion:** Juan Arriola moved to add the Rogin Nassau Attorneys report on the 4/22/26 minutes.  
Laura Barrow seconded the motion.  
Voting yes were Juan Arriola, Laura Barrow, Mark Becker, Maryellen Donnelly, Tim Studer and Dennis Timberman.  
The motion passed unanimously.  
The report will be included with the minutes.
14. Next Agenda Planning  
Communication committee BOE information document  
Progress on goals and action items
15. Second Audience for Citizens and Staff  
None

16. Adjournment

**Motion:** Juan Arriola moved to adjourn.

Laura Barrow seconded the motion.

Voting yes were Juan Arriola, Laura Barrow, Mark Becker, Maryellen Donnelly, Tim Studer and Dennis Timberman.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:11.

Respectfully submitted,  
Maryellen Donnelly

**TO:** Hampton Board of Education  
**FROM:** Rogin Nassau, LLC  
**DATE:** January 23, 2026  
**RE:** Investigation: Patrice Merendina

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**MEMORANDUM**

**Introduction**

We were asked to investigate allegations made by the former Hampton Elementary School Principal, Patrice Merendina, through her counsel and by letter dated September 19, 2024 (**Exhibit 1**), that she was the subject of defamatory statements allegedly made by a member of the Hampton Board of Education prior to her resignation. Based upon our investigation, we were unable to substantiate those claims. As part of our investigation, we interviewed multiple Board Members and Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski.<sup>1</sup> Our review of documents was limited to the September 19, 2024 letter directed to the members of the Hampton Board of Education and Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski along with the Bylaws of the Hampton Board of Education (**Exhibit 2**), Connecticut General Statutes Section 9-203 and 9-205, newspaper articles published by *The Hampton Gazette* and *The Chronicle* (**Exhibit 3**), and Hampton Board of Education meeting minutes dated September 27, 2023 through January 22, 2025.

The concerns advanced by Ms. Merendina are directed to a Juan Arriola, a member of the Hampton Board of Education, and his relationship to a former employee of Hampton Elementary School, Armin Harris, who resigned from his position as head custodian on July 24, 2024.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, Ms. Merendina

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<sup>1</sup> The interviews were conducted throughout 2025 due to scheduling conflicts and concluded on December 8, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> We were not provided with the letter of resignation authored by Mr Harris. We also understand that Mr. Harris filed an internal grievance which triggered a private investigation by a law firm. We were not provided with the grievance or the related investigative report. Finally, Mr. Harris reportedly filed a charge with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights & Opportunities (“CHRO”). We were not provided with a copy of the CHRO charge nor any related pleadings, discovery materials or findings.

claims that Mr. Arriola made “false accusations and statements filled with innuendo and suggestions” that Ms. Merendina engaged in racial discrimination against Mr. Harris, and that Mr. Arriola used “his position as a Board Member to harass and publicly attack and slander Ms. Merendina.” Ms. Merendina claims that Mr. Arriola attended a meeting held on June 21, 2024 between Mr. Harris, Ms. Merendina and Mr. Skarzynski, during which Mr. Arriola accused Ms. Merendina of being racist.<sup>3</sup>

### **Investigation**

Our investigation revealed that Mr. Arriola, who is an outspoken member of the community and has spoken publicly about his political views, discrimination and his opinions about school issues, is a

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<sup>3</sup> Ms. Merendina further claims that Mr. Arriola improperly obtained confidential information involving Ms. Merendina’s personnel file, including the findings from an investigation of a grievance filed by Mr. Harris relating to claims of racial discrimination, and that Mr. Arriola disclosed such information to the public and to the press. Ms. Merendina claims that Mr. Arriola also publicly disclosed and disseminated an email from Mr. Harris to Ms. Merendina, which reiterates Mr. Harris’s claims of discrimination, during a Board of Education Meeting. While not part of our investigation, we did not find credible evidence that Mr. Arriola obtained or sought to obtain confidential information from any personnel file or that he disclosed any confidential information regarding any personnel to the press. There is no credible evidence that Mr. Arriola provided the *Hampton Gazette* or *The Chronicle* with a copy of the investigatory findings or that Mr. Arriola spoke with members of the press regarding the specifics of Mr. Harris’s CHRO complaint or subsequent investigation. Rather, we found that Mr. Harris was in possession of the information published by the press and spoke directly with the press regarding his resignation. Our investigation revealed that although Mr. Arriola sought to distribute a copy of Mr. Harris’s letter of resignation, which allegedly contained allegations that Ms. Merendina discriminated against Mr. Harris, during a Board of Education Meeting, the letter was not read by the Board.

parent of a student who attends Hampton Elementary School.<sup>4</sup> Prior to joining the Board of Education, Mr. Arriola taught English as a second language at various schools in New Mexico, Texas, New Jersey and Connecticut for 38 years, which included 28 years as a teacher in the City of Hartford. Mr. Arriola stated that he a United States military veteran who served during the Vietnam War. Mr. Arriola's background as a teacher and passion for schools and improving the school system drove Mr. Arriola to run for a position on the Hampton Board of Education three times before he was eventually elected to a position on the Board six years ago. Mr. Arriola voiced deep concern for the Hampton school system and the children who attend Hampton Elementary School. During his time as a Board Member and as a parent of a student at the school, Mr. Arriola became acquainted with Mr. Harris, who made Mr. Arriola aware of his claims of alleged discrimination and related 2023 grievance. In early 2024, the Board was verbally

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<sup>4</sup> The United States Constitution and the Connecticut Constitutions protect the exercise of free speech particularly in the public square and on matters of public concern. Connecticut General Statutes § 52-196a (b), is Connecticut's anti-SLAPP statute. SLAPP is an acronym for strategic lawsuit against public participation. Aguilar v. Eick, 234 Conn. App. 281, 283 and at n.1 (2025)(citation omitted). "The purpose of Connecticut's anti-SLAPP statute is to protect defendants who are sued for exercising their right of free speech . . ." (Internal quotation marks omitted.) Quevedo v. Hearst Corp., Superior Court, judicial district of Stamford-Norwalk, Docket No. CV-19-5021689-S, 2019, Conn. Super LEXIS 3478 at \*3 (December 19, 2019) (Sommer, J.). Section 52-196a provides that "In any civil action in which a party files a complaint, counterclaim or cross claim against an opposing party that is based on the opposing party's exercise of its right of free speech, right to petition the government, or right of association under the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of the state in connection with a matter of public concern, such opposing party may file a special motion to dismiss the complaint, counterclaim or cross claim." Section 52-196a(e)(3) further provides : "The court shall grant a special motion to dismiss if the moving party makes an initial showing, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the opposing party's complaint, counterclaim or cross claim is based on the moving party's exercise of its right of free speech, right to petition the government, or right of association under the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of the state in connection with a matter of public concern, unless the party that brought the complaint, counterclaim or cross claim sets forth with particularity the circumstances giving rise to the complaint, counterclaim or cross claim and demonstrates to the court that there is probable cause, considering all valid defenses, that the party will prevail on the merits of the complaint, counterclaim or cross claim." If the motion to dismiss is granted, the prevailing party shall be awarded reasonable attorney's fees, including the costs and fees incurred in connection with the filing of the motion to dismiss. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 52-196a (f).

informed of the findings of an investigation into Mr. Harris's complaints, which included a finding there was no evidence of any underlying racial discrimination by Ms. Merendina.

On June 21, 2024, Mr. Harris requested Mr. Arriola, who just happened to be in the Hampton Elementary School building for an unrelated reason, to attend a meeting scheduled with Ms. Merendina and Mr. Skarzynski with him, as someone whom Mr. Harris trusted, for support.<sup>5</sup> Ms. Merendina and Mr. Skarzynski advised Mr. Arriola that he was not permitted to be involved in personnel matters as a Board Member and that Mr. Harris was only entitled to have a staff colleague present at the meeting. Mr. Arriola objected to leaving the meeting, which was adjourned after an animated discussion.

On July 24, 2024, Mr. Harris provided Mr. Arriola with his letter of resignation and asked Mr. Arriola to distribute the letter to the Board, which Mr. Arriola attempted to distribute during the Board Meeting being held the same day. The letter of resignation, however, was collected immediately from all attendees and was not addressed further during the Board Meeting. Neither our interviews nor the meeting minutes we reviewed revealed any specific derogatory statements targeted at Ms. Merendina during the July 24, 2024 Board meeting or any other Board Meetings prior to the time Ms. Merendina resigned her position.

Mr. Arriola described his relationship with Ms. Merendina as "cordial." Our investigation did not reveal evidence that Mr. Arriola specifically or the Board members more generally had any animosity towards Ms. Merendina. To the contrary, she was variously described as "passionate," being "full of energy," doing a great job with staff, and having very positive interactions with students.

### **RELEVANT LAW**

To establish a prima facie case of defamation, a "plaintiff must demonstrate that: (1) the defendant published a defamatory statement; (2) the defamatory statement identified the plaintiff to a third person; (3) the defamatory statement was published to a third person; and (4) the plaintiff's

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<sup>5</sup> Our investigation did not include whether Mr. Arriola's status as a Board member presented a conflict.

reputation suffered injury as a result of the statement.” Gambardella v. Apple Health Care, Inc., 291 Conn. 620, 627–28 (2009). A statement must be false to be actionable as defamation. Cweklinsky v. Mobil Chemical Co., 267 Conn. 210, 228–29 (2004). “[W]hen claiming defamation, [c]ertainty is required in the allegations as to the defamation and as to the person defamed; a complaint for defamation must, on its face, specifically identify what allegedly defamatory statements were made, by whom, and to whom. A complaint is insufficient to withstand dismissal for failure to state a cause of action under Connecticut law where, other than the bare allegation that the defendant’s actions caused injury to plaintiff’s reputation, the complaint sets forth no facts of any kind indicating what defamatory statements, if any, were made, when they were made, or to whom they might have been made.” Winters v. Concentra Health Services, 2008 WL 803134 at \*6, Superior Court, Judicial District of New Haven, Docket No. CV 07 5012082 (March 5, 2008, Thompson, J.); see also Chertkova v. Connecticut General Life Ins. Co., 2002 WL 1902988 at \*4-5, Superior Court, Judicial District of New Britain, Docket No. CV 980486346 (July 12, 2002, Berger, J.), aff’d, 76 Conn. App. 907 (2003) (“[a] complaint for defamation must, on its face, specifically identify what allegedly defamatory statements were made, by whom, and to whom”). Notably, the alleged defamatory statement must be found by the court to be a statement of fact and not pure opinion. McPhee Electric, LTD, LLC v. Konover Construction Corp., 2009 WL 484655 at \*38 (New Haven Sup. Ct., Oct. 22, 2009)(Lager, J.)(citations omitted).

Publicity that places another in false light is actionable under Connecticut law as an invasion of privacy. Jonap v. Silver, 1 Conn. App. 550,557 (1984) (citing Goodrich v. Waterbury Republican-American, Inc., 188 Conn. 107, 127 (1982)). A false light invasion of privacy claim requires proof that “the false light in which [she] was placed would be highly offensive to a reasonable person, and . . . the actor had knowledge of or acted in reckless disregard as to the falsity of the publicized matter and the false light in which [she] would be placed. . . . The essence of a false light privacy claim is that the matter published concerning the [claimant] (1) is not true . . . and (2) is such a major misrepresentation of [her] character, history, activities or beliefs that serious offense may reasonably be expected to be

taken by a reasonable [person] in [her] position.” Borg v. Cloutier, 200 Conn. App. 82, 109 (2020)(quoting Goodrich v. Waterbury Republican-American, Inc., 188 Conn. at 131.

In Strada v. Connecticut Newspapers, Inc., 193 Conn. 313, 314, (1984), the Connecticut Supreme Court considered a state senator’s claim of libel by innuendo against a newspaper. The court affirmed the entry of summary judgment in favor of the defendant holding that “there can be no libel by innuendo if the challenged communication is true and concerns public officers and public affairs even though a false implication may reasonably be drawn by the public.” Id. at 315. In IN Energy Solutions, Inc. v. Realgy, LLC, 114 Conn. App. 262, 277 n.8 (2009), the Appellate Court noted that “the communications specified by [the plaintiff] do not actually identify [the plaintiff] by name. In fact, most of the alleged defamation is, in [the plaintiffs] own words, “implied.” *This court has rejected claims of “defamation by innuendo.”* (citation omitted). (Emphasis added.)

Even if there was *evidence* to support Ms. Merendina’s defamation and false light claims, such claims are not legally actionable absent any *facts* supporting a finding of actual malice where the subject of the statements is a public official. “In an action for defamation, a public official is prohibited from recovering damages for a defamatory falsehood relating to his official conduct unless he proves by clear and convincing evidence that the falsehood was published with ‘actual malice.’” Kelley v. Bonney, 221 Conn. 549, 581 (1992) (citing New York Times Co. v. Sullivan, 376 U.S. 254 (1964))(a public school teacher is a public official for purposes of defamation law). See also Jee v. New York Post Co., Inc., 671 N.Y.S.2d 920, 924 (N.Y. Sup. Ct 1998), aff’d, 260 A.D.2d 215 (1st Dep’t 1999), appeal denied, 93 N.Y.2d 817 (1999) (actual malice standard applies to a public school principal as a public official).

Actual malice requires that “the statement, when made, was made with actual knowledge that it was false or with reckless disregard of whether it was false.” Gambardella v. Apple Health Care, Inc., 291 Conn. 620, 627 (2009). “A speaker acts with reckless disregard of the falsity of his statement if he ‘entertained serious doubts as to the truth’ of his statement, or if he possessed a ‘high degree of awareness of [his statement’s] probable falsity.’” Dongguk University v. Yale, 873 F. Supp. 2d 460, 465 (D. Conn. 2012) (quoting St. Amant v. Thompson, 390 U.S. 727, 731 (1968); Garrison v. Louisiana, 379

U.S. 64, 74 (1964)). “A failure to investigate by itself is not enough to prove actual malice.” *Id.* The plaintiff “must demonstrate a purposeful avoidance of the truth.” *Hopkins v. O'Connor*, 282 Conn. 821, 846, 925 (2007). The actual malice standard applies when a public figure or public official sues for invasion of privacy by false light. *Cantrell v. Forest City Publishing Co.*, 419 U.S. 245, 249 (1974); *Goodrich v. Waterbury Republican-American*, 188 Conn. 107, 130 (1982).

Proof of actual malice must be made with “clear and convincing” evidence. *Kelley v. Bonney*, 221 Conn. at 580 (1992)(citing *New York Times v. Sullivan*, 376 U.S. 254, 279-80 (1964)).

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Based upon the interviews conducted, documents reviewed, additional information obtained, and applicable law, we were unable to find evidence that supports Ms. Merendina’s claims of defamation.

Despite specifying Mr. Arriola as the speaker of allegedly defamatory statements, the allegations made in the letter from Ms. Merendina’s counsel do not contain the required specificity of a viable defamation claim. Ms. Merendina has not identified any specific statements made by Mr. Arriola in concluding that he “essentially accused Ms. Merendina and the administration of being racist” during a meeting held on June 21, 2024 between Mr. Harris, Ms. Merendina and Mr. Skarzynski. Likewise, our investigation did not reveal any evidence of any specific derogatory statements about Ms. Merendina made by Mr. Arriola to any other members of the Board or during any public Board Meetings. Additionally, the Letter to the Editor written by Mr. Arriola and published in *The Hampton Gazette* does not name Ms. Merendina or make any false accusations against any specific person.

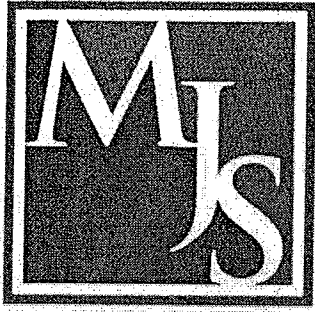
We can find no basis to conclude that Mr. Arriola made any defamatory statements about Ms. Merendina, let alone with actual malice, or made any statements that by innuendo rise to the level of defamation or a false light privacy invasion. Similarly, Ms. Merendina’s September 19, 2024 letter has not identified with any specificity the allegedly sexist comments made by Mr. Arriola to Ms. Merendina

or comments that she alleges amounted to accusations that Ms. Merendina was a racist<sup>6</sup> made during the June 21, 2024 meeting, and we were unable to corroborate that any such comments were made. We were also unable to substantiate Ms. Merendina’s claims that Mr. Arriola made any defamatory statements directed to Ms. Merendina during any Board of Education meetings prior to her resignation or to the press.

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<sup>6</sup> Courts have found that calling someone a “racist, hater, or bigot-without more, will not result in defamation liability.” Jorjani v. NJ Inst. Of Tech., 2019 LEXIS 39026 at \*19 (D. N.J., March 11, 2019). See also Murphy v. Rosen, 2022 Conn. Super. LEXIS 585 at \*21 (May 16, 2022)(Gordon, J.) (citing Jorjani with approval and granting a special motion to dismiss a defamation action pursuant to General Statutes § 52-196a where the person was accused of being a “white supremacist”).

# **EXHIBIT 1**



## *Strafaci Law Firm*

191 Hempstead Street, P.O. Box 348  
New London, Connecticut 06320  
Telephone: (860) 442-8667 / Fax: (860) 442-0218  
[contact@strafacilaw.com](mailto:contact@strafacilaw.com)

**M. John Strafaci, Esq. / M. Joseph Strafaci, Esq.**  
Paralegals: Jennifer L. Gibbons / Darlene K. Torcoletti

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September 19, 2024

Rose Bisson, Chairperson  
Hampton Board of Education  
380 Main Street  
Hampton, CT 06247  
Via Email: [rbisson@hamptonschool.org](mailto:rbisson@hamptonschool.org)

Mark Becker, Vice Chairperson  
Hampton Board of Education  
380 Main Street  
Hampton, CT 06247  
Via Email: [mbecker@hamptonschool.org](mailto:mbecker@hamptonschool.org)

Mr. Andrew Skarzynski  
Superintendent  
Hampton Elementary School  
380 Main Street  
Hampton, CT 06247  
Via Email: [askarzynski@hamptonschool.org](mailto:askarzynski@hamptonschool.org)

**RE: Ms. Patrice Merendina  
Principal of Hampton Elementary School**

Dear Ms. Bisson, Mr. Becker and Mr. Skarzynski:

Please be advised that my firm has been retained to represent Ms. Patrice Merendino, Principal of the Hampton Elementary School. It was not an easy decision for Ms. Merendino to retain legal counsel; however, her past efforts to request assistance

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September 19, 2024.

RE: Merendina / Hampton Elementary School

from the Board of Education in addressing this matter have not been successful. This situation is now to the point where she feels it is necessary for her to retain legal counsel to protect her rights and professional reputation.

As you are aware, Mr. Juan Arriola, who is a member of your Board of Education, has been engaging in a concerted attack against Ms. Merendina's personal and professional reputation since last July 2024. His conduct has now resulted in the media publications of false allegations and complaints against her. Most recently there was an article in *The Chronicle* that I believe many of you have read.

The most recent article in the *The Chronicle* is extremely troubling. The basis for the article, in large part, is drawn from a resignation letter (email) from this employee, which Mr. Arriola has been publicly disseminating and publishing in other publications such as the *Gazette* (his wife is the editor) since July 2024. The article repeats the allegations made by this employee in a grievance which was previously addressed by the Board and claims racial discrimination (presumably by Ms. Merendina). This article claims that disciplinary action was taken against Ms. Merendina and that then-Superintendent Sarli authored a letter wherein she stated that Ms. Merendina's engaged in conduct that was "inappropriate." Mr. Arriola, a Board of Education Member, previously inserted himself into both Mr. Harris' personnel matter and claimed to be his representative at meetings with the school administration. Mr. Arriola has been making false accusations and statements filled with innuendo and suggestions that Ms. Merendino discriminated against Mr. Harris. The fact that Mr. Arriola is a Board member, with access to confidential information, has given these unfounded accusations an appearance of credibility. Mr. Arriola has clearly taken on the role of the advocate for Mr. Harris and has been using his position as a Board Member to harass and publicly attack and slander Ms. Merendina. He is doing this simply because she was required to take certain action with regard to an employee who a personal friend of a Board member.

It is unclear to us why, as a Board Member, Arriola was made aware of the alleged findings from the investigation of Mr. Harris' grievance related to Ms. Merendina as well as other matters involving Ms. Merendina's personnel file. Ms. Merendino was never provided with a copy of the findings of the investigation into Mr. Harris' personnel matter, and we have requested a copy of same. However, Mr. Arriola apparently obtained information regarding the same and provided it to *The Chronicle*. Further, we

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are requesting an explanation as to the reasons Mr. Arriola was provided with this information or obtained access to same.

As you are aware, it is a serious violation of Board policy as well as state and federal law for Mr. Arriola to disclose information that he obtained based on his position as a Board of Education member to the public and to the media. Articles mentioning Ms. Merendina have appeared in the Chronicle and previously the *Gazette* (where his wife is Editor). I believe you may have witnessed him provide confidential personnel information regarding this matter to his wife during a public meeting.

I would like to outline briefly the history of Mr. Arriola's misconduct, and Ms. Merendina's efforts in obtaining assistance from the Administration and Board of Education.

This matter stems from personnel action involving a former employee. I will not address the specifics of his case, because he is entitled to his privacy. I will, however, address Mr. Arriola's role, which is entirely inappropriate and has now risen to the level that may require legal action if this Board does not directly and affirmatively take the appropriate and necessary action to stop Mr. Arriola's continued vendetta against Ms. Merendina.

As most of you are aware, there was an incident on June 21, 2024. The Board of Education was made aware of it at that time. What took place is as follows:

The former employee was scheduled to meet with Mr. Skarzynski and Ms. Merendina at 1:30 p.m. He arrived for his meeting. Mr. Arriola also appeared and informed Mr. Skarzynski and Ms. Merendina that he was there to appear with Mr. Harris -- presumably as his representative. Mr. Skarzynski informed Mr. Arriola that it was improper for him to appear on behalf of an employee, because Arriola is a Board Member. (Employees may have a co-worker present as a witness). Arriola refused to leave Ms. Merendina's office.

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During this meeting, Mr. Arriola made a number of statements that are considered slanderous. He essentially accused Ms. Merendina and the administration of being racist. Mr. Skarzynski did respond by telling him that this comment was highly inappropriate. Arriola also stated that the Board meetings would become "volatile." Specifically, Mr. Arriola stated "if you think the board meetings were volatile before, you wait." Ms. Merendina considered his comment and the way he made it as threatening and expressed this concern at the meeting. Arriola also made comments suggesting that the administration and Ms. Merendina were racist. This, of course, is completely false. Further, comments were made to Ms. Merendina during this meeting which we view as sexist. Arriola's conduct during this meeting was so inappropriate and disruptive that Ms. Merendina was essentially forced to leave the meeting, which was being held in her own office. No Board of Education member has the right to treat staff members, including Ms. Merendina who is a building principal, this way.

Furthermore, Mr. Arriola used his position to obtain a copy of the personnel file of the former employee, and apparently obtained the investigation report and findings from the grievance investigation. We can only assume that the employee gave authorization for him to obtain his personnel file; however, Ms. Merendina did not give authorization for Mr. Arriola to obtain or review any documents related to her employment. It seems clear from the recent news reports that Mr. Arriola also was provided with materials which he and/or others provided to the press to suggest that Ms. Merendino was disciplined as a result of the investigation. Of course, Ms. Merendina denies any wrongdoing on her part, and this is all clearly part of a witch hunt by a Board of Education member to paint her as a racist who harassed and discriminated against another employee of color.

Ms. Merendina reached out to the Board after the volatile meeting in June to report Mr. Arriola's misconduct. On June 26, 2024, Ms. Merendina sent her correspondence to Board of Education Chairperson Bisson and Vice Chairman Becker describing the events in her office on June 21, 2024, and the Mr. Arriola's misconduct. I have attached a copy of her letter to this correspondence. Unfortunately, the Board failed to take appropriate action, and this appears to have empowered Arriola to the point where he feels he can do or say anything without consequence.

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September 19, 2024

RE: Merendina / Hampton Elementary School

Mr. Arriola, since that meeting, has gone to the public and media to spread false accusations against Ms. Merendina. He published an article in the Hampton *Gazette* (September 2024). This article identifies him as a Board member and states that it is letter that was read by him at a Board of Education meeting on July 24, 2024. He discusses the former employee's personnel matter and further claims that his resignation was the result of "glaring racism." He further states that this was the second incident of such racism and claimed that there was one other incident involving racism at the school. Although he does not mention Ms. Merendina by name in his article, I think we all understand that the Hampton is a small town, and the school is a small community. Everyone knew he was making this accusation against Ms. Merendina. The reaction in the community certainly had that effect.

Furthermore, Mr. Arriola publicly disclosed and disseminated, at a Board of Education meeting, an email from Mr. Harris to Ms. Merendina. This email repeats some of the claims by the former employee; however, more importantly is the fact that Mr. Arriola used his position as a Board of Education member to publicly disclose and disseminate this email. He actually passed-out a copy to the press and members of the public.

He has continued to attack Ms. Merendina's professional reputation in the public and has himself and/or through others disclosed information he obtained as a member of the Board of Education (much of which is confidential material related to personnel matters) to the press and media.

Mr. Arriola's conduct is not only inappropriate for a Board member, but he has now caused substantial damage and injury to Ms. Merendina's professional and personal reputation. Hampton is her hometown, and Mr. Arriola has been using his position on the Board of Education to paint her as a racist.

I respectfully suggest that the Hampton Board of Education can no longer condone his behavior and needs to take serious action to stop Mr. Arriola's misconduct, and to prevent further damage to Ms. Merendina's professional and personal reputation. Of course, significant damage has already been done, and it is probably impossible to give her back her excellent reputation that has now been tarnished by your Board member's reckless misconduct.

Page 6

September 19, 2024

RE: Merendina / Hampton Elementary School

Please forward this letter to your legal counsel so that I can further discuss this matter with her or him.

Given the fact that his matter involves a personnel matter, I trust that this letter will not be made public without Ms. Merendina and my office's written consent.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation and assistance in this regard, and I look forward to hearing from your legal counsel.

Very truly yours,



M. John Strafaci

MJS/jlg

Enclosure

cc:

Patrice Merendina (via email only w/cc of enclosure)

Ms. Maryellen Donnelly, Secretary (via email only w/cc of enclosure)

Mrs. Elizabeth Lindorff (via email only w/cc of enclosure)

Ms. Diane Gagnon (via email only w/cc of enclosure)

Mr. Dennis Timberman (via email only w/cc of enclosure)

Mr. David Halbach (via email only w/cc of enclosure)

Mr. John Russell (via email only w/cc of enclosure)

# The Hampton Gazette



VOLUME XLVI, No. 8 SEPTEMBER 2024

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Dayna McDermott-Arriola

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Mary Oliver, Art Direction

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**CONTACT INFORMATION** Editorials, articles, calendar or event information, press releases or questions: please email to [hamptongazette@yahoo.com](mailto:hamptongazette@yahoo.com) in Word format (not pdf) or to Editor, Hampton Gazette, PO Box 101, Hampton, CT 06247, by the 15th of each month. All submissions to the Gazette are subject to editing. The Gazette reserves the right not to accept submissions.

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## PHOTOS

(jpg high resolution, please) may be emailed to [photos@hamptongazette.com](mailto:photos@hamptongazette.com)

## EDITORIAL POLICIES

Each letter to the Gazette must be signed and include and address & telephone contact for verification. Signing all correspondence to the Gazette is encouraged, but at the request of the writer, a signature may be withheld. Letters written on behalf of an organization require the signature of an authorized spokesperson. All letters submitted to the Gazette are subject to editing and the Gazette reserves the right to reject any or all letters. Readers should be aware that the opinions of individual writers are not necessarily those of the Gazette. The Gazette will not print letters it regards as libelous. Photographs and articles published here are the property of the individual photographer or writer and may not be reproduced without express permission of the contributor.

# UPS& DOWNS

**THUMBS UP** to the Mennonite Youth Ministry Group for weeding the front of Town Hall where the roses Michael Chapel planted so many years ago are thriving in spite of less than hospitable conditions – the gravelly slope, harsh exposure to the western sun, and annual neglect. Still, they bloom.

**THUMBS DOWN** to the torrential rains of this last month. Our corner of the state was fortunate, but our neighbors to the west endured what was labeled a one-thousand year storm and will be dealing with the after effects for a long time. Let's hope for a calm end to the "hurricane season".

To the Editor:

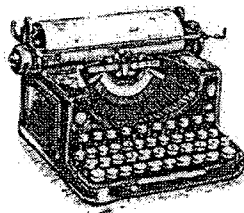
The following letter was read to members of the Hampton Elementary School Board of Education at their July 24th Meeting.

When I came to this extremely clean school, Armin Harris was one of the first persons I saw. He was always friendly, and always had a "good morning" for everyone. "Mr. Armin" was a person who the children trusted and interacted positively with during the school day. Our children of color had someone they could relate to in the school where there is no one on staff who looks like them. Armin was a role model for all of those children who are deprived of the experience of having other people of color in their lives. Armin was a gentleman and a gentle man.

I am deeply disappointed that Armin felt forced to resign, but he could clearly see the writing on the wall. As a board member and as a human being, I never stick my head in the sand when it comes to glaring racism and the indignity that comes with it. I have tried since last September to avoid this moment that we find ourselves in now. I believe this was avoidable, not inevitable. This will become the second claim to the Commission on Human Rights. The first was an instance; the second makes it a practice. There are legal ramifications that come with that "upgrade".

This is not a proud moment for Hampton Elementary School.

Juan Arriola

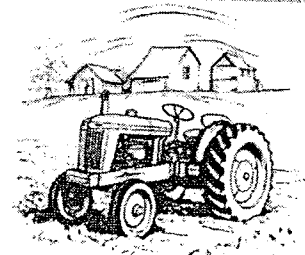


## Administrative Assistant Position Open

The Hampton Congregational Church is seeking a person to fill a part-time administrative assistant position. 10 hours per week at the church in Hampton. Among the required skills are: accurate typing, written and verbal communication, time and resource management, and ability to maintain confidentiality. Please send resume and letter of interest to Judy Sommariva at [searchcomm2021@gmail.com](mailto:searchcomm2021@gmail.com)

Brush hogging with vintage tractors,  
plowing & harrow services.

Call John at 860.771.0439





Hampton Elementary School  
380 Main Street  
Hampton, CT 06247

June 26, 2024

Dear Chairperson Brisson and Vice Chairman Becker,

It is my personal and professional responsibility to share with you some concerns I have as it relates to the Bylaws of the Board of Education and an event that happened on Friday, June 21, 2024.

In an effort to address performance concerns with a member of the Hampton Elementary School staff, a meeting was scheduled for 1:30pm on June 21, 2024. Mr. Juan Arriola entered the school building as a representative of the staff member. He stated, "I'm here with him." Upon clarification on the roles and responsibilities of Board members as it relates to personnel matters by Superintendent Skarzynski, the member of the Board of Education chose not to leave my office. Superintendent Skarzynski and myself explicitly stated that a meeting should not and will not be held and both the staff member and Mr. Arriola chose to stay in my office, unwelcomed.

My concerns include but are not limited to the following Bylaws:

**9271: Code of Ethics**

- Board members and Superintendents recognize that clear and appropriate communications are key to the successful operation of the school district.
- Board members and Superintendents will always carry out their respective roles with the highest levels of professionalism, honesty and integrity.
- Board members and Superintendents both recognize that they serve as a part of an educational team with mutual respect, trust, civility and regard for each other's respective roles and responsibilities.

Both Superintendent Skarzynski and I were confused about Mr. Arriola's attendance at a meeting for a personnel matter. The lack of communication has had a negative impact on the successful operation of the school district. There was an obvious lack of professionalism in my office on June 21, 2024 with statements such as, "if you think Board meetings are volatile, wait until you see me now." Mutual respect and regard for my role and ultimately Superintendent Skarzynski's role would have been properly displayed by exiting my office upon request. Due to me feeling unsafe in my own work environment, I chose to collect my building keys, car keys, and cell phone and remove myself from the room and building.

My hope is to work towards an environment of employment that adheres to the Board of Education Bylaws. I am willing to contribute to the advancement of Hampton Elementary School in any way you see fit and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
  
Ms. Patrice Merendina

# **EXHIBIT 2**

Hampton Board of Education

BYLAWS OF THE BOARD

9000 SERIES

<u>POLICY</u>		<u>FINAL</u>
9000	<a href="#"><u>ROLE OF THE BOARD AND MEMBERS</u></a> .....	09/16/2010
9010	<a href="#"><u>LIMITS OF AUTHORITY</u></a> .....	09/16/2010
9012	<a href="#"><u>LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD</u></a> .....	02/22/2012
9020	<a href="#"><u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u></a> .....	06/27/2012
9121	<a href="#"><u>ELECTION OF OFFICERS</u></a> .....	11/28/2012
9125	<a href="#"><u>ATTORNEY</u></a> .....	10/24/2012
9131	<a href="#"><u>COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE</u></a> .....	09/26/2012
9132/ 9133	<a href="#"><u>STANDING COMMITTEES</u></a> .....	01/23/2013
9133	<a href="#"><u>SPECIAL COMMITTEES/ADVISORY COMMITTEES</u></a> .....	11/04/1999
9150	<a href="#"><u>BOARD CONSULTANTS</u></a> .....	09/26/2012
9210	<a href="#"><u>QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS</u></a> .....	02/22/2012
9214	<a href="#"><u>NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND ELECTIONS</u></a> .....	03/28/2012
9221	<a href="#"><u>FILLING OF VACANCIES</u></a> .....	11/04/1999
9222	<a href="#"><u>RESIGNATION/REMOVAL FROM OFFICE/CENSURE</u></a> .....	09/26/2012
9230	<a href="#"><u>ORIENTATION OF BOARD MEMBERS</u></a> .....	04/25/2012
9250	<a href="#"><u>REMUNERATION AND REIMBURSEMENT</u></a> .....	06/22/2011
9260	<a href="#"><u>BOARD MEMBER PROTECTION</u></a> .....	02/22/2012
9270	<a href="#"><u>CONFLICT OF INTEREST</u></a> .....	04/25/2012
9271	<a href="#"><u>CODE OF ETHICS</u></a> .....	10/28/2011
9272	<a href="#"><u>CODE OF CONDUCT ON DATA USE</u></a> .....	09/16/2010
9300	<a href="#"><u>METHODS OF OPERATION</u></a> .....	09/16/2010
9311	<a href="#"><u>POLICIES</u></a> .....	11/28/2012
9312	<a href="#"><u>BYLAWS</u></a> .....	09/16/2010
9314	<a href="#"><u>SUSPENSION OF POLICIES, BYLAWS AND REGULATIONS</u></a> .....	09/26/2012
9321	<a href="#"><u>TIME, PLACE, NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS</u></a> .....	10/28/2011
9322	<a href="#"><u>PUBLIC AND EXECUTIVE SESSIONS</u></a> .....	10/28/2011
9323	<a href="#"><u>CONSTRUCTION/POSTING OF AGENDA</u></a> .....	04/24/2024
9325	<a href="#"><u>MEETING CONDUCT</u></a> .....	10/28/2011
9325.1	<a href="#"><u>QUORUM</u></a> .....	10/28/2011
9325.2	<a href="#"><u>ORDER OF BUSINESS</u></a> .....	02/22/2012
9327	<a href="#"><u>ELECTRONIC MAIL COMMUNICATIONS</u></a> .....	06/27/2012
9330	<a href="#"><u>BOARD/SCHOOL SYSTEM RECORDS</u></a> .....	11/28/2012
9350	<a href="#"><u>HEARINGS</u></a> .....	09/26/2012
9400	<a href="#"><u>MONITORING PRODUCTS AND PROCESS</u></a> .....	09/16/2010

## *Hampton Board of Education*

9000

### Bylaws of the Board

#### Role of Board and Members (Powers, Purposes, Duties)

The Board of Education 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 regulations of the Connecticut State Board of Education.

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.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: **TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 08/26/2010**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 09/16/2010**

## *Hampton Board of Education*

9010

Bylaws of the Board

Limits of Authority

General

The Board of Education's statutory authority as spelled out in Board policy 9000 is to be exercised collectively by Board of Education members in public meetings of the Board and in committee meetings. Except for specific responsibilities of the Board officers set forth in Board policy 9121, individual members of the Board have no individual authority in district schools, 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 of Education are expected to represent and balance the educational interests of students in the public schools, 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 of Education 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 local schools and their 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. 4118.21 Academic Freedom)  
(cf. 5145.2 Freedom of Speech/Expression)  
(cf. 6144 Controversial Issues)  
(cf. 9000 Role of Board Members)  
(cf. 9121 Duties of Board Officers)

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 08/26/2010**  
**FINAL APPROVAL: 09/16/2010**

9012

**Bylaws of the Board**

**Legal Responsibilities of Board of Education**

The Board of Education shall have authority to take all action necessary or advisable to meet its responsibilities under the state statute and Town Charter including but not limited to the following:

1. To annually establish, with the Superintendent of Schools, educational priorities for the school district.
2. Create, abolish, modify and maintain such positions, schools, divisions and classifications as may be necessary for the efficient administration of the educational enterprise.
3. To elect a Superintendent of Schools in accordance with state statutes.
4. To consider and adopt an annual budget, prepared by the Superintendent of Schools.
5. To determine the number, classification, duties and remuneration of employees.
6. To establish policy for employment, promotion and dismissal of personnel in accordance with state statutes.
7. To provide for the appraisal of the performance of personnel.
8. To initiate and approve the acquisition and disposition of school sites and to initiate and approve plans for school buildings.
9. To consider any specific recommendations made by the Superintendent of Schools.
10. To keep the citizenry informed of purposes, values, conditions and needs of public education in the Town.
11. To consider, revise and adopt any changes in the curriculum.
12. To take any other actions required or permitted by law.
13. To make reasonable provision to implement the educational interests of the State, as defined by law, so that
  - (a) each child shall have for the period prescribed in the General Statutes equal opportunity to receive a suitable program of educational experiences;
  - (b) the school district shall finance at a reasonable level an educational program designed to achieve this end;
  - (c) the school district shall provide educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from other racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds;
  - (d) the mandates in the General Statutes pertaining to education within the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education shall be implemented.

*Hampton Board of Education*

14. To maintain a safe school setting and shall, in accordance with the statutes, maintain records of allegations, investigations, and reports that a child has been abused or neglected by a school employee, as defined in C.G.S. 53a-65)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[53a-65](#) Definitions

[10-220](#) Duties of boards of education. (as amended by PA 11-93)

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 01/25/2012**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 02/22/2012**

**Bylaws of the Board**

**Public Statements**

The Board of Education 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 input.

Communication will be a concurrent responsibility of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools will work with the members of the Board of Education to conduct an active and comprehensive program throughout the school district and community for the prompt dissemination of information about decisions made at all Board meetings. Releases to the press and brief summaries of Board meeting actions prepared for distribution to staff members and parent/guardians are regarded as appropriate media of information for meeting the requirements of this Bylaw. Press releases relative to Board of Education action shall be released only by the Board Chairperson or the delegated agent of the Board.

(cf. [1112](#) - News Media Relationships)

(cf. [1120](#) - Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings)

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 03/28/2012**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 06/27/2012**

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Board of Education Officers**

#### **Election of Officers**

The Board of Education shall elect from its members at the organizational meeting, a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary. The organizational meeting shall be called to order by the current Board Chairperson who will preside until his/her successor is chosen. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, or Secretary in that order shall preside until a new Chairperson is elected.

Election of officers shall be in writing and the vote of each member shall be made available for public inspection within forty-eight hours and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. A Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary shall be chosen within one month of the election.

#### **Chairperson**

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Education and shall perform other duties as directed by law, State Department of Education regulations, and by this Board. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chairperson shall:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Board.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Board's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters which may occur between Board meetings.
4. Appoint Board committees, subject to Board approval.
5. Call special meetings of the Board as necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Board at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Board meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Board, the Chairperson shall:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Board in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Board's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of the meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if it is not clear to every member.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Board.

## *Hampton Board of Education*

7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries, referring questions of legality to the Board attorney.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.
9. Declare the meeting adjourned.

The Chairperson shall have the right, as other Board members have, to offer resolutions, discuss questions, and to vote.

### **Vice-Chairperson**

The Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson at Board meetings in his/her absence and assist the Chairperson as requested by him or her.

### **Secretary**

The Secretary of the Board of Education shall:

1. perform the duties of the Chairperson at Board meetings in the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.
2. maintain a record of all Board proceedings as required by state law; one copy shall be maintained in the office of the Superintendent and one copy in the office of the Town Clerk.

(cf. [9324](#) Meeting Conduct and Parliamentary Procedure)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-218](#) Officers. Meetings.

[10-224](#) Duties of the secretary.

[10-225](#) Salaries of secretary and attendance officers.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 10/24/2012

FINAL: 11/28/2012

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Attorney**

The attorney of the Hampton Board of Education shall be the legal advisor of the Board and its officers in questions related to their official duties. The Board of Education may appoint, either on a full-time or retainer basis, an attorney or attorneys to serve as school attorney. The primary function of the attorney is to provide professional legal counsel and representation for the Board and Superintendent.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the District shall normally be made by the Superintendent or Board Chairperson in accordance with Board policy and when an obvious need exists. Such services may also be obtained as a consequence of a formal vote of the Board.

The attorney shall:

1. Represent the Hampton Board of Education in legal proceedings.
2. Give his/her written opinion on all legal questions referred to him/her by the Board of Education or the Superintendent.
3. Attend Hampton Board of Education meetings, conferences and other meetings as requested by the Board, Superintendent, Board Chairperson or Board committee.
4. Fulfill such other legal duties as the Hampton Board of Education may assign.

The Board retains the right to terminate the service of any attorney.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 09/26/2012

FINAL: 10/24/2012

**Bylaws of the Board**

**Committee of the Whole**

The Board of Education shall act as a committee of the whole in final consideration of all matters.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[1](#)-200 Definitions

[1](#)-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 08/22/2012

FINAL: 09/26/2012

Bylaws of the Board

Committees and Advisory Committees

Standing Committees

As deemed necessary, the Board of Education may establish standing committees from among its membership to make recommendations for Board action. The following rules will govern the appointment and function of such committees which shall:

1. be established through action of the Board of Education at the organizational meeting following elections.
2. have their members appointed by the Board Chairperson
3. be informed in writing at the time of committee formation of committee purpose, functions, and duties;
4. make recommendations for Board action, but it may not act for the Board except in those instances where authority to act has been specifically delegated to the committee by the Board;

The Board Chairperson and the Superintendent of Schools shall be ex-officio members of all standing committees

Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be created for special assignments. The same rules shall apply to special committees as apply to standing committees, except that they may be created as needed and shall be dissolved immediately upon completion of an assignment. The Board Chairperson and the Superintendent of Schools shall be ex-officio members of all ad hoc committees.

Duties of the committee shall be outlined at the time of appointment, and the committee shall be considered dissolved when its final report has been made to the Board of Education.

Committees as Public Entities

All Board of Education committee meetings are public meetings unless the committee is composed entirely of non-Board members and the Board successfully has petitioned the Freedom of Information Commission prior to the committee formation for such committee to be exempt from this requirement.

All committees of the Board of Education shall follow the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act as required by statute.



**Bylaws of the Board**

**Board Consultants**

The Hampton Board of Education will from time to time engage the services of qualified professional consultants to provide new insights and ideas for dealing with especially difficult problems and/or to provide special services which present staff is unable to provide. The kinds of assistance sought from consultants may include, but will not necessarily be limited to the following:

1. Conducting fact-finding studies, surveys, and research;
2. Providing counsel or services requiring special expertise;
3. Assisting the Board in developing policy and program recommendations.

Before engaging a consultant, the Board may require submission of a written proposal which can be incorporated into a contract or purchase order if it satisfies the wishes of the Board. Proposals will detail:

1. The specific objectives to be accomplished by the consultant;
2. The specific tasks to be performed;
3. The procedures to be used in carrying out the tasks;
4. The target dates for completion of tasks;
5. The method to be used to report results to the Board and/or to deliver any "product" (e.g., long-range plans, codified policy manual, etc.) to the Board; and
6. Costs.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 08/22/2012

FINAL: 09/26/2012

**Bylaws of the Board**

**Qualifications of Members**

A Board of Education member must be a resident elector of the district. Therefore, he/she must be at least eighteen (18) years of age and a citizen of the United States.

Under state law, no member of the Board shall be employed for compensation in any position in the school system. Should a Board member be subsequently employed in the school system, his/her position on the Board shall become vacant.

(cf. [9270](#) Conflict of Interest)

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 01/25/2012**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 02/22/2012**

**Bylaws of the Board**

**Election of Members**

**Number of Members and Elections**

The Board of Education will consist of nine members elected in accordance with town ordinance or state statutes for four year terms. Terms of newly-elected Board members shall commence on the second Tuesday after said election.

**Oath of Office**

Elected Board of Education members shall, before entering upon their official duties, take the oath of office and be sworn in by the Town Clerk.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[9-187a](#) Date term to begin.

[9-203](#) Number and term of members of boards of education.

[9-204](#) Minority representation on board of education.

[10-219](#) Procedure for filling vacancy on local board of education.

[1-24](#) Who may administer oaths.

[1-25](#) Forms of oaths.

[10-218a](#) Oath of office.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 02/22/20112**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 03/287/2012**

## *Hampton Board of Education*

**9221**

### **Bylaws of the Board**

#### **Filling Vacancies**

#### **Appointments**

If a vacancy occurs in the office of any member of the Board, it shall be filled by the remaining members of the Board until the next regular town election. At that election, a successor shall be elected for the unexpired portion of the term, and the official ballot shall specify the vacancy to be filled.

#### **Oath of Office**

Appointed Board of Education members shall, before entering upon their official duties, take the oath of office and be sworn in by the Town Clerk.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[9-187a](#) Date term to begin.

[9-203](#) Number and term of members of boards of education.

[9-204](#) Minority representation on board of education.

[10-219](#) Procedure for filling vacancy on local board of education.

[1-24](#) Who may administer oaths.

[1-25](#) Forms of oaths.

[10-218a](#) Oath of office.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 10/24/2012

FINAL: 11/28/2012

**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 of Education shall cease to be a bonafide resident of the town membership in the Board shall immediately cease.

**Removal from Office**

Any Board officer may be removed from a position of a Board officer by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the whole Board.

**Censure**

The Board may vote to censure or reprimand a member by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the whole Board.

(cf. [9221](#) - Filling Vacancies)

(cf. [9121](#) - Officers)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[7](#)-103 Resignation of municipal officers

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 08/22/2012

FINAL: 09/26/2012

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Orientation of Board Members**

The Board of Education and the administrative staff shall assist each new Board member-elect to become familiar with and to understand the Board of Education's functions, policies and procedures and operation of the school district before the member takes office. The following methods shall be employed:

1. The incoming member shall be given selected materials on the function of the Board of Education and the school district.
2. The incoming member shall be invited to attend Board meetings and functions and to participate in its discussions.
3. The incoming member shall be invited to meet with the Superintendent and other administrative personnel to discuss services they perform for the Board and the school district.
4. The incoming member shall be provided with a copy of the Board 's policies and bylaws, administrative regulations and copies of pertinent materials developed by the State School Board Association, Board minutes for the past year and other helpful information explaining the Board's roles and responsibilities.
5. The Board Chairperson or designee shall arrange a meeting with new Board member(s) for the purpose of explaining and answering questions about Board processes and procedures.
6. The Board Chairperson may request a veteran Board member to mentor a new member.
7. The incoming member may attend, at district expense, workshops for newly elected members as approved by the Board of Education.

### **Candidates**

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall invite all current candidates for the office of Board of Education member to attend (1) Board meetings, except that this invitation shall not extend to any executive sessions, and (2) pre-election workshops for candidates.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APROVAL: 03/28/2012**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 04/25/12**



**Bylaws of the Board**

**Board Member Protection**

The Hampton Public Schools shall maintain adequate insurance to protect the district and its Board of Education against loss because of fire, damage to school property, loss to other property, or general liability resulting as a responsibility of the school district, and save harmless its Board and staff while acting in behalf of the school district.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-235](#) Indemnification of teachers, board members and employees in damage suits; expenses of litigation.

[10-236](#) Liability insurance.

[10-236a](#) Indemnification of educational personnel assaulted in the line of duty.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL:           01/25/2012**

**FINAL APPROVAL:               02/22/2012**

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Conflict of Interest**

Board members shall comply with laws regarding conflict of interest and attempt to avoid situations which might have even the appearance of a conflict. Two areas of Board operations must be approached with particular care to prevent any real or seeming conflict of interest — purchasing and personnel hiring. Therefore:

1. No member of the Board shall have any direct monetary interest in contracts with the school district, nor shall he/she furnish directly any labor, equipment, or supplies to the district. However, the district may contract with corporations or businesses in which a Board member is an employee. In such instances the member must declare his/her association with the firm and refrain from debating or voting on any related votes.
2. The following rule shall govern conflict of interest in the employment of staff and members of the Board of Education: a spouse, minor child, Board of Education member dependent, or persons related otherwise by blood or marriage to a Board of Education member must be appointed by the Board of Education and may be employed only following full disclosure of the relationship by the Board of Education member in a public meeting and sufficient vote of appointment without counting the vote of the related Board of Education member.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[7-479](#) Conflict of interest.

[10-225](#) Salaries of secretary and attendance officers.

[10-232](#) Restrictions on employment of members of Board of Education.

P.A. 05-10 An Act Concerning Civil Unions

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 03/28/2012**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 04/25/2012**



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9272

Bylaws of the Board

Code of Conduct on Data Use

As a guide to the appropriate use of data in the decision-making process, Board members shall:

1. Request information and data gathered by District staff that helps the Board members make better-informed decisions about policies affecting student achievement district-wide.
2. Request data as a Board, not as an individual, unless the information is readily available and will not redirect staff time.
3. Use data to represent all of the Board member's constituents honestly and equally and refuse to surrender the Board member's responsibilities to special interest or partisan political groups.
4. Avoid using the Board position, and the information data supplies as a result of Board membership, for personal gain.
5. Recognize that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a Board meeting after everyone on the Board has had adequate time to review all the data and information.
6. Respect the confidentiality of privileged information.
7. Abide by majority decisions of the Board, while retaining the right to seek changes through ethical and constructive channels.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 08/26/2010**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 09/16/2010**

*Hampton Board of Education*

9300

Bylaws of the Board

Methods of Operation

The Board of Education shall concern itself only with broad questions of policy and not with administrative details. The Board shall rely upon the Superintendent of Schools to recommend policies for adoption and to administer policies enacted by the Board. Such policies shall be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be taken by the Superintendent in meeting a number of problems and jobs. Application of such policies to individual problems and jobs is an administrative function to be performed by the Superintendent.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 08/26/2010**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 09/16/2010**

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Policies**

#### **Introduction**

Board of Education policies translate beliefs and desires of elected officials into action through the Superintendent and the school staff. Except for specific meeting decisions, policies are a Boards' best means of shaping district education through specifying in Board policy "what will be done." The Superintendent's administrative regulations provide the "how it will be done" to accompany Board of Education policies

Policies also make it clear, at least by implication, that Superintendents are expected to follow the direction of the entire Board as it is expressed through its policies. On a daily basis, Board policies, except for bylaws, are primarily for the guidance of the Superintendent and his/her staff. It is, however, the Board's responsibility to ensure the Superintendent uses policies in making decisions; it is, similarly, the Superintendent's responsibility to insist that both policies and their amplifying regulations are followed by everyone in the school system

#### **Organization and Contents of Policy Manuals**

Policy manuals contain three basic types of entries — Board of Education policies, Superintendent regulations, and Board of Education bylaws:

1. Policies are guides for discretionary action by the Superintendent and staff; not all policies require administrative regulations;
2. Regulations are the Superintendent's amplifications of Board policies into specific staff actions; not all administrative regulations require policies;
3. Bylaws are rules governing Boards of Education's internal operations.

#### **Development of Board Policies**

The development of sound educational policies is one of the primary duties of the Board of Education. Policies serve to promote democratic and responsive school governance and constitute a major method by which the Board exercises its leadership. Policies are guides for discretionary administrative action by the Superintendent and his/her staff. Policy development and revision should follow these principles:

1. Policies and regulations shall be given high priorities by the Board and by the Superintendent;
2. Many people at different levels shall be given opportunities to participate in development and review of policies and regulations;
3. Procedures for development and revision of policies and regulations shall be clear and well understood; participants shall know their roles and authority; lines of communication shall be observed;
4. Use of policies and regulations as guides to action shall be stressed at all organizational levels, and policy or regulatory violations shall not be overlooked or condoned;
5. Policy and regulatory effectiveness shall be monitored regularly by the Board of Education, the

## *Hampton Board of Education*

Superintendent, and by other staff members;

6. Board members and administrators shall guard against intrinsic problems of policies and regulations. (*rigidity and inflexibility, bureaucratic or insensitive administration of policy, etc.*)

Anyone may propose a new policy or policy changes — members of the community, the staff, students, Superintendent, or Board members. Proposed new policies and policy changes from staff shall be forwarded to the Superintendent for presentation to the Board. Although the Board encourages and welcomes community, staff and student involvement, only the Board may establish policy.

The Superintendent is encouraged to submit written recommendations for new policies and for revision of existing policies as necessary for the effective operation of the public schools.

Approved policies shall be in writing and coded according to the policy codification system approved by the Board, and made part of the official policy manual maintained by the Superintendent. Policy manuals and copies of new and changed policies shall be distributed to all members of the Board of Education and school administrators, and shall be made available to the staff, students, and general public.

### **Adoption and/or Amendment of Board of Education Policies**

Procedure for the adoption of a new policy or the amendment of existing policy shall be:

1. Upon referral to the policy committee, the committee will develop a statement of policy or change of existing policy based on the following:
  - a. Suggestions and requests from Board members;
  - b. Recommendations from the Superintendent;
  - c. Statutory requirements;
  - d. Citizen input.
2. The policy committee shall present a policy statement, or revised policy statement, with its recommendations to the Board at a regular Board meeting. No action shall be taken at this presentation meeting.

*Hampton Board of Education*

3. The Board shall act on proposed policies at a subsequent regular meeting of the Board at which time amendments to the policy proposals may be made and the policies approved if the changes are not a departure from the essence of the policy proposal; if the proposed changes are major, a policy should be brought back for a second review at the next regular meeting with a further recommendation from the Board's policy committee. Proposed policy changes approved by majority vote of the Board shall take immediate effect.

4. For proposed policy statements, new or revised, because of changes or additions to Connecticut General Statutes or State Board of Education Regulations, approval may be given at the initial presentation.

Formal adoption of policies and/or amendments of policies shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting. Only those written statements so adopted and recorded shall be regarded as official policies.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-221](#) Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies, and procedures.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 10/24/2012

FINAL: 11/28/2012



**Bylaws of the Board**

**Suspension of Policies, Bylaws, and Regulations**

Policies, bylaws, and regulations shall be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time by majority vote of all members of the Board of Education at a meeting in the call for which the proposed suspension has been described in writing, or upon a two-thirds vote of all members of the Board when no such written notice has been given.

Legal Reference: *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*

Connecticut General Statutes

[10-221](#) Boards of Education to prescribe rules, policies, and procedures.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 08/22/2012

FINAL: 09/26/2012

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Time, Place, Notification of Meetings**

#### **Regular Meetings**

The Board of Education shall file with the Town Clerk, not later than January 31st of each year, the schedule of the regular meetings of the Board of Education, and shall post the schedule on the District's Internet website. No meeting shall be held sooner than thirty days after such filing.

#### **Special Meetings**

Notice of each special meeting of the Board of Education shall be filed not less than twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting with the Town Clerk and be posted in the Office of the Clerk giving the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted. The special meeting shall also be posted on the District's Internet Website. No other business shall be considered by the Board at that special meeting. Each member of the Board of Education shall be notified by the Superintendent or the Clerk not less than 24 hours prior to the time of the special meeting and shall be advised of the time, place and business to be transacted, although any Board member may waive the 24 hour notification by a written waiver of notice or a telegram to the purpose.

#### **Notice of Meetings**

Notice of meetings will be mailed to persons filing a written request renewable in January of each year. The Board of Education will charge a fee for these notices based upon cost of the service, as provided by law.

#### **Electronic Participation**

The Board of Education allows electronic participation whenever there is communication by or to a quorum of the Board, whether the communication is in person or by means of electronic equipment. Meetings in which some Board members participate electronically are subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

The Board may allow members to participate in meetings by telephone or other electronic means. Board members may not simply vote electronically, but must be connected with the meeting throughout the discussion of business. If a Board member electronically joins the meeting after an item of business has been opened, the remotely located member shall not participate until the next item of business is opened.

**Bylaws of the Board**

**Time, Place and Notification of Meetings**

**Electronic Participation** (continued)

When a Board member participates electronically, the member will be considered present and will have his or her actual physical presence excused. The member shall be counted present for purposes of convening a quorum. The Board Secretary will document it in the Minutes when members participate in the meeting electronically.

Any Board member wishing to participate in a meeting electronically will notify the Board Chairperson and Superintendent as early as possible. The Superintendent will arrange for the meeting to take place in a location with the appropriate equipment so that Board members participating in the meeting electronically may interact and the public may observe or hear the comments made. (Each part of the telephone conference call meeting shall be audible to the public at the location specified in the notice for the meeting. The location designated in the notice as the location of the meeting shall provide two-way communication during the entire telephone conference call and the identification of each party to the telephone conference call shall be clearly stated prior to the meeting.) The Superintendent will take measures to verify the identity of any remotely located participants.

(cf. 9327 – Electronic Mail Communications)

- Legal Reference:
- Connecticut General Statutes
  - 1-200 (2) Definitions. “Meeting”
  - 1-206 Denial of access to public records or meetings.
  - 1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public, as amended by June 11 Special Session, PA 08-3
  - 1-227 Mailing of notice of meetings to persons filing written request.
  - 1-228 Adjournment of meetings. Notice.
  - 1-229 Continued hearings. Notice.
  - 1-230 Regular meetings to be held pursuant to regulation, ordinance or resolution.
  - 10-218 Officers. Meetings

Bylaw adopted by the Board:	TENTATIVE APPROVAL:	09/28/2011
	FINAL APPROVAL:	10/26/2011

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Public and Executive Sessions**

#### **Public Meetings**

All meetings of the Board of Education, regular, special and emergency shall be open to the public with the exception of executive sessions. A chance or social meeting, a caucus, a meeting of a personnel search committee for executive level employment candidates, or a discussion of strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining are not defined as "meetings" under the Freedom of Information Act. A meeting is defined as a hearing or other proceeding of the Board, any convening or assembly of a quorum of the Board and any communication by or to a quorum of the Board, whether in person or by means of electronic equipment to discuss or act upon a matter over which the public agency has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advocacy power. Communications between and among a quorum of members convening on electronically linked personal computers or by telephone conference call are subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

#### **Executive Sessions**

The public may be excluded from meetings of the Board of Education which are declared to be executive sessions. Executive sessions may be held upon a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting taken at a public meeting for only one or more of the following reasons, and may not be held for any other reason:

1. Discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee, provided that such individual may require that discussion be held at an open meeting.
2. Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation that the Board or a member of the Board, is party.
3. Matters concerning security strategy or the deployment of security personnel, or devices affecting public security.
4. Discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate by a political subdivision of the state when publicity regarding such site, lease, sale, purchase or construction would cause a likelihood of increased price until such time as all of the property has been acquired or all proceedings or transactions concerning same have been terminated or abandoned.
5. Discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records or the information contained therein described in Subsection (b) of Section 1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The motion to go into executive session shall identify the persons, in addition to the Board, who shall be invited to be in attendance in the executive session. The persons invited into executive session shall be limited to persons needed to present testimony or opinion pertinent to matters before the Board and such persons' attendance shall be limited to the time period for which their presence is necessary.

#### **Smoking**

Smoking will not be permitted in any room in which a meeting of the Board of Education is being conducted, nor during the time immediately prior to the meeting. A request that there be no smoking during the meeting will be made by the Chairperson during the opening ceremonies.

## Bylaws of the Board

### Public and Executive Sessions

#### Non-Meetings

Not every meeting of the Board of Education constitutes a “meeting” under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). A meeting does not include:

- Any meeting of a personnel search committee to executive level employment candidates;
- Any chance meeting, or a social meeting neither planned nor intended for the purpose of discussing matters related to official business;
- Any meeting discussing strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining;
- A caucus of members of a single political party notwithstanding that such members also constitute a quorum of a public agency;
- A quorum of the members of the Board who are present at any event which has been noticed and conducted as a meeting of another public agency, in that case, the event shall not be deemed to be a meeting of the Board as a result of their presence at such event. (For example, if the Board of Education is invited to attend a meeting of the Board of Finance, such a meeting does not have to be noticed and posted by the Board of Education.)

There is no specific executive session privilege for the discussion of collective bargaining issues. However, discussion of “records, reports of strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining” is permitted in executive session, provided that such documents exist.

Absent such documents, such strategy discussions and/or negotiations themselves must be held as a “non-meeting.” Collective bargaining is excluded from the definition of a meeting under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Collective bargaining sessions shall be held outside the scope of the FOIA as a “non-meeting.” Such sessions may be held at any time without posting, and related strategy sessions or updates to the Board of Education may be held either before or after the end of a regular or special meeting, without the need to post such meetings.

(cf. 1331 - Smoking in School Facilities)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
1-200 Definitions. (as amended by PA 02-130)  
1-206 Denial of access to public records or meetings.  
1-210 Access to public records.  
1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public.  
1-226 Recording, broadcasting or photographing meetings.  
1-231 Executive sessions.  
19a-342 Smoking prohibited in certain places.

**Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 09/28/2011**  
**FINAL APPROVAL: 10/26/2011**

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Construction of the Agenda**

The Superintendent in cooperation with the Chairperson of the Board of Education shall prepare an agenda for each regular meeting. Any member of the Board of Education may call the Superintendent or Board Chairperson and request any item to be placed on the agenda no later than 72 hours prior to the legally required public posting of the agenda. Any business not included on the filed agenda for a regular meeting may be added to the agenda, considered, and acted upon if there is an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the members of the Board present and voting.

### **Posting of the Agenda**

At least 24 hours prior to the time of the regular meeting, the agenda shall be posted at the School in a place readily available to parents, teachers and the general public, in the Office of the Town/ Clerk, posted on the District's Internet website, and shall be filed in the Superintendent's office.

In addition to posting Board of Education meeting agendas on its website 24 hours prior to the meeting, any associated documents that may be reviewed by members of the Board at such meeting will be made available on the Board's website prior to the meeting.

Connecticut General Statutes

1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public. (as amended by PA 07-213)

Public Act 23-160 An Act Concerning Education Mandate Relief and Other Technical and Assorted Revisions and Additions to the Education and Early Childhood Education Statutes

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 03/27/24  
FINAL APPROVAL: 04/24/24

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Meeting Conduct**

Meetings of the Board of Education shall be conducted by the Chairperson in a manner consistent with the adopted bylaws of the Board.

All Board meetings shall commence at the stated time and shall be guided by an agenda which has been prepared and delivered in advance to all Board members and other designated persons.

The conduct of meetings shall, to the fullest possible extent, enable members of the Board to (1) consider problems to be solved, weigh evidence related thereto, and make wise decisions intended to solve the problems, and (2) receive, consider and take any needed action with respect to reports of accomplishment of students or of school system operations.

Provisions for permitting any individual or group to address the Board concerning any subject that lies within its jurisdiction shall be as follows:

1. Five minutes may be allotted to each speaker and a maximum of twenty minutes to each subject matter.
2. No boisterous conduct shall be permitted at any Board of Education meeting. Persistence in boisterous conduct shall be grounds for summary termination, by the Chairperson, of that person's privilege of address. If necessary, the Chairperson may clear the room so that the Board can continue the meeting.
3. No oral presentation shall include charges or complaints against any employee of the Board of Education, regardless of whether or not the employee is identified in the presentation by name or by another reference which tends to identify an individual. All charges or complaints against employees shall be submitted to the Board of Education under provisions of Board of Education policy.

Speakers are asked to express themselves in a civil manner, with due respect for the dignity and privacy of others who may be affected by their comments. While it is not the Board's intent to stifle public comment, speakers should be aware that if their statements violate the rights of others under the law of defamation or invasion of privacy, the speaker may be held legally responsible. Speakers unsure of the legal ramification of what they are about to say are urged to consult first with their legal advisor.

The Board of Education may adjourn any regular or special meeting to a specified time and place. If all members of the Board are absent, the clerk may adjourn the meeting. A copy of the notice of adjournment shall be conspicuously displayed near the meeting room door within twenty-four hours of adjournment.



**Bylaws of the Board**

**Quorum**

A majority of the entire Board membership shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special meeting.

The Board may take no action in the absence of a quorum except to adjourn to another date, unless this Bylaw is waived in accordance with Bylaw 9314.

(cf. 9324 Meeting Conduct & Parliamentary Procedures)

(cf. 9314 Suspension of Policies, Bylaws, Regulations)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-200 Definitions.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 09/28/2011  
FINAL APPROVAL: 10/26/2011

**Bylaws of the Board**

**Order of Business**

The order of business shall be at the discretion of the Chairperson and may include the following items:

1. Call to Order
2. Audience for Citizens
3. Communication/Correspondence
4. Approval of the Minutes
5. Report on Disbursement of Funds
6. Budget Update
7. Committee Reports
8. Report of the Superintendent
9. Information Items
10. Action Items
11. Discussion Items
12. Adjournment

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[1](#)-232 Conduct of meetings

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 01/25/2012**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 02/22/2012**

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Meetings**

#### **Electronic Mail Communications**

The Board of Education believes that Board members electronically connected to other Board members is an efficient and convenient way to communicate. The main goal of electronic mail (e-mail) is to expedite the passage of information. E-mail gives Board members quick access to one another. Communication among Board members via e-mail should conform to the same standards as other forms of communication. (i.e., committee meetings, etc.) as directed by the Freedom of Information Act. When used properly, e-mail is an effective communications tool and can provide a formal record.

All Board members are encouraged to access e-mail. It will be the responsibility of individual Board members who use e-mail to provide hardware, hook-up and pay all consumable expenses associated with e-mail usage.

#### **Guidelines for Board E-Mail Usage**

The Freedom of Information Act mandates that all meetings of public bodies such as school Boards be open to the public. It is the policy of the Board of Education that E-mail shall not be used in such a manner as to deprive the public of the rights given to it under the Freedom of Information Act. For this purpose, this bylaw sets forth guidelines for the uses intended to be made of E-mail by Board members when communicating with other Board members.

1. E-mail, like other written forms of communication relating to the conduct of the public business is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and subject to disclosure.
2. Board members shall not use e-mail as a substitute for deliberations at public Board meetings, and/or shall not discuss policy matters or vote informally on any issues.
3. E-mail should be used to pass along factual information.
4. Security of e-mail communication cannot be assured. Board members shall not reveal their passwords to others in the network or to anyone outside of it. If any Board member has reason to believe a password has been lost or stolen, or that e-mail is being accessed by someone without authorization, he/she shall notify the Superintendent, who will notify the district's technology specialist.
5. Personnel issues and other sensitive subjects should never be discussed on-line. The confidentiality of employee data, student data, and other sensitive subjects must always be maintained.

Any usage contrary to the aforementioned shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent and may result in the suspension and/or revocation of system access.

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### **Accessing E-Mail**

In an effort to encourage all Board members to access E-mail, while maintaining public fiscal responsibility, the Board of Education will loan to any Board member needing access, a modem, computer (when surplus is available), and other hardware peripherals to be returned to the Board office upon leaving office. It will be the individual Board member's responsibility to provide the hook-up and pay all consumable expenses associated with E-mail usage. In the event a Board member elects not to access E-mail, a hard copy of all E-mail directed to "Board" will be placed in the Board packet delivered via courier, and will also be accessible in the Board of Education Office.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

The Freedom of Information Act.

[1-200](#) Definitions.

[1-210](#) Access to public records. Exempt records.

[1-211](#) Disclosure of computer-stored public records.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 03/28/2012**

**FINAL APPROVAL: 06/27/2012**

## **Bylaws of the Board**

### **Board/School System Records**

Any recorded data or information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, received or retained by the Board of Education or the school district, whether handwritten, typed, tape-recorded, printed, photostated, photographed, or recorded by any other method is by definition a "public record" and access thereto during normal hours of business shall be granted to any citizen. The Board recognizes the need for its records to be stored as a blend of printed, bound and electronically recorded (i.e., audiotapes, videotapes, micro-fiche, computer disk) material. All such records shall be maintained at the office of the Superintendent of Schools, who shall be the custodian of all public records of the district.

Not included in the category of public records to which the privilege of access is given are the following:

1. Preliminary drafts or notes provided the custodian or the Board of Education has determined that the public interest in withholding such documents clearly outweighs the public interest in disclosure.
2. Personnel or medical files and similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute an invasion of personal privacy.
3. Records pertaining to strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation to which the district is a party until such litigation or claim has been adjudicated or otherwise settled.
4. Trade secrets.
5. Test questions, scoring keys and other examination data used to administer a licensing examination, examination for employment or academic examinations.
6. The contents of real estate appraisals, engineering or feasibility estimates and evaluation made for or by the district relative to the acquisition of property or to prospective public supply and construction contracts, until such time as all of the property has been acquired or all proceedings or transactions have been terminated (except that the law of public domain is not affected by this provision).
7. Records, reports and statements of strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining.
8. Records, tax returns, reports and statements exempted by federal law or state statutes or communications privileged by the attorney-client relationship.
9. Names or addresses of students enrolled in the public schools without the consent of each student whose name or address is to be disclosed who is eighteen or older and a parent or guardian of such minor student.
10. Records including engineering and architectural drawings; security systems' operational specifications (except a general description, cost and quality of the system); training manuals that describe security procedures, emergency plans or security equipment; internal security audits; and logs and other documents containing information on security personnel movement or assignments if reasonable grounds exist to believe their release would pose a safety risk, including harm to anyone, a facility or equipment.
11. Security manuals, emergency plans, emergency recovery or response plans and staff meeting minutes or records or portions of them that contain or reveal security information or otherwise exempt records.

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12. Educational records not subject to disclosure under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 123g; as amended.

13. Records of standards, procedures, processes, software and codes not otherwise available to the public, the disclosure of which would compromise the security or integrity of an information technology system.

### **Availability of Records**

Any person shall receive promptly on request, a plain or certified copy of any public record except those which access is not permitted under law, at a cost not to exceed fifty cents per page. If any copy requested required a printout or transcription, or if any person applies for a printout or transcription of a public record, the fee shall not exceed the cost to the school district. The district will require prepayment of the fee if the fee is estimated to be two dollars or more. There will be no sales tax for this service. There will be no charge if the person requesting the record is an indigent, the record requested is exempt from disclosure, or if, in the judgment of the custodian of records, compliance with the request benefits the general welfare.

An additional charge of one dollar for the first page and fifty cents for each additional page may be made for certification of any records or of any fact within the record.

The Superintendent, on behalf of the Board of Education, shall notify an employee in writing when a request is made for disclosure of the employee's personnel, medical or similar files, if the Superintendent reasonably believes disclosure would invade the employee's privacy.

#### Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-15 Application for copies of public records.

1-200 Definitions.

1-210 to 1-213 Access to public records. (as amended by PA 02-113)

1-211 Access to computer stored records.

1-214 Public contracts as part of public records.

1-225 to 1-240 Meetings of public agencies.

Federal Rules of Civil Procedure – 2006 Amendments

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 10/24/2012

FINAL: 11/28/2012

**Bylaws of the Board**

**Board of Education Hearings**

The Board of Education shall hold a public hearing when so petitioned by one percent of the electors of the district with signatures of the electors verified by the Town Clerk. Such public hearings must be called for a time and place designated by the Board, not later than three weeks after receipt by the Board of such petition.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-238](#) Petition for hearing by board of education.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: TENTATIVE: 08/22/2012

FINAL: 09/26/2012

## *Hampton Board of Education*

9400

Bylaws of the Board

Monitoring Products and Processes

Self-Evaluation

The Board of Education is made up of duly elected individuals to oversee the Public Schools of the community. This very responsible and complex job requires that the Board blend its diverse opinion into a common purpose which will give direction to the school system. The local community looks to its Board of Education to provide leadership for the school system. The success of the system depends on how well that role is carried out.

Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board of Education that there shall be an annual program of self evaluation in which each member shall participate.

Annually the Board will schedule dates to conduct its self-evaluation. The evaluation will include, but not be limited to, the following leadership areas: community leadership of education, influencing educational policy, community involvement, communicating with the public, the decision making process, planning and setting goals, allocating resources, developing Board policy, policy oversight, selecting and evaluating the Superintendent, working with the Superintendent, promoting good employee relations, setting expectations for Board member conduct, conducting the work of the Board, Board member development.

Policy Review and Evaluation

The Board shall follow through the policies it has formulated. It shall evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff, and shall weigh the results. The Board shall rely on the school staff, students, and the community to provide evidence of the effect of the policies which it has adopted.

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

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

**TENTATIVE APPROVAL: 08/26/2010**  
**FINAL APPROVAL: 09/16/2010**

# **EXHIBIT 3**

# Hampton Gazette

Newspaper in Hampton, Connecticut

## School Principal Resigns from Hampton Elementary

Hampton Elementary School Principal Patrice Merendina resigned from her position at the September 25 meeting of the Board of Education. Ms. Merendina has served as the school's principal since July of 2024.

Many of those present at the meeting expressed their appreciation for Ms. Merendina and their remorse in her decision. "I have been offered and accepted a position with Norwich Public Schools," Merendina wrote in a letter to parents. "In order to reach my professional goals, it is necessary for me to accept the position of Coordinator of State Initiatives to work on supervision, evaluation, family engagement, extended learning programs, assessment, and equity. This administrative position will also allow me to work in the area of supporting teacher recruitment through alternative routes to certification, teacher duration, and mentorship."

During her brief tenure, Merendina worked to improve test scores, reorganize staffing, and streamline procedures. Notably, she was a visible presence in classrooms and at community functions, and encouraged involvement of students and their families in the community.

The Gazette joins the community in thanking Ms. Merendina for her service and wishing her well in her future career.

This entry was posted in Uncategorized on October 5, 2024 [<https://hamptongazette.com/2024/10/05/school-principal-resigns-from-hampton-elementary/>].

[https://www.thechronicle.com/news/hampton-elementary-school-parent-had-run-in-with-custodian-before-he-resigned/article\\_7a21064e-81c5-11ef-8d8c-a7165a750ca0.html](https://www.thechronicle.com/news/hampton-elementary-school-parent-had-run-in-with-custodian-before-he-resigned/article_7a21064e-81c5-11ef-8d8c-a7165a750ca0.html)

FEATURED

## Hampton Elementary School parent had run-in with custodian before he resigned

TRACI HASTINGS @TheChronicleCT

Oct 3, 2024



Armin Harris, head custodian at Hampton Elementary, submitted his letter of resignation to the Board of Education in July.

FILE

**HAMPTON** — Armin Harris resigned as head custodian on July 24 via a letter to Board of Education member Juan Arriola, citing a hostile work environment. Harris had worked at the school since 2019, and he and his wife had an outside contract for additional cleaning services as well, which was terminated in what the school termed a cost-saving measure before Harris' resignation.

Before his resignation, Harris had filed a Discrimination Grievance Form at the school, then-Principal Patrice Merendina, detailing several incidents, including one in which he said he was punished for approaching an individual on the grounds during a school day whom Harris initially feared might be a security risk. Harris said that as head custodian his original job description, since changed, also made school security part of his duties.

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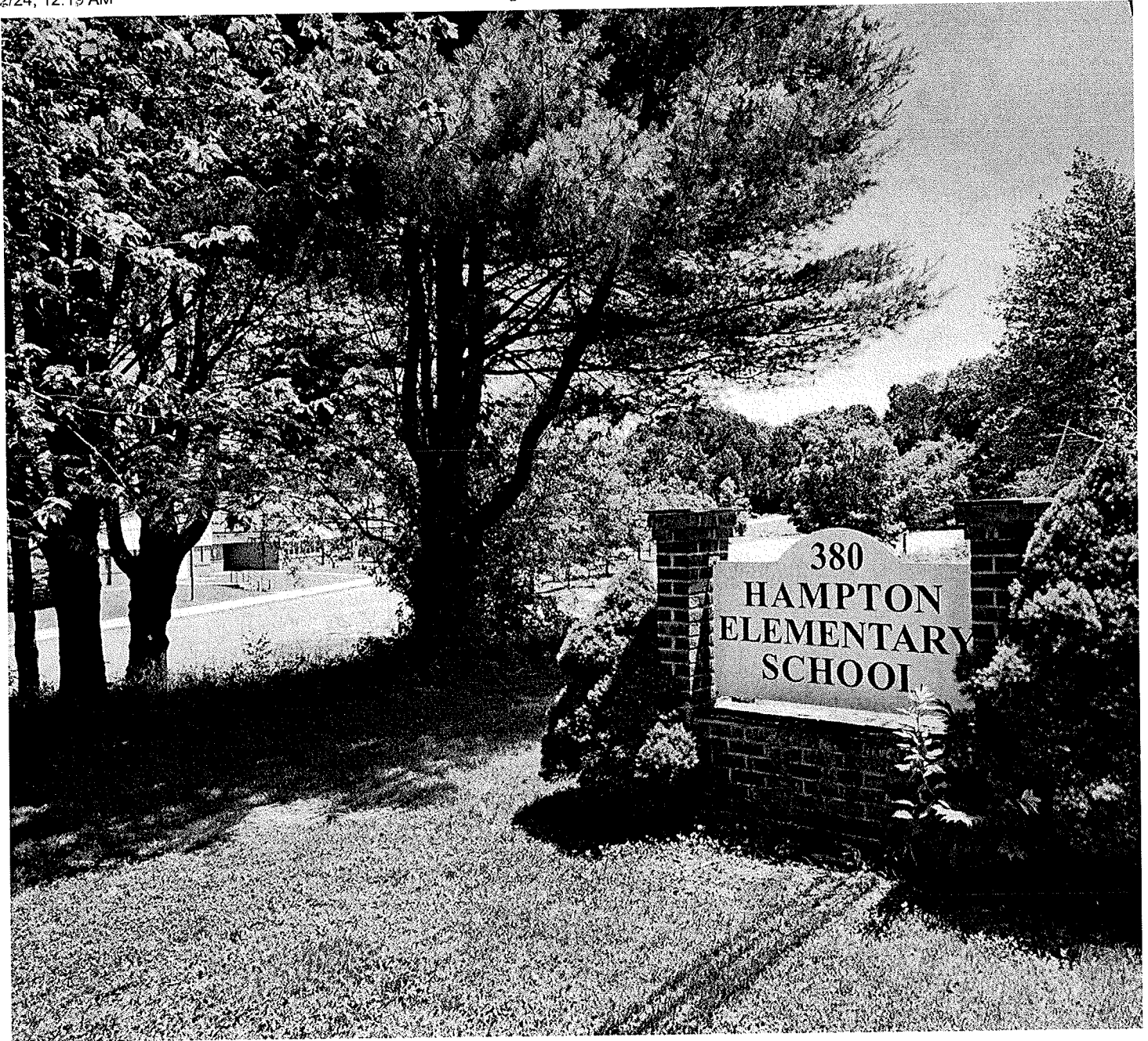
[https://www.thechronicle.com/news/custodian-resigns-due-to-hostile-environment/article\\_46c226c8-6cb4-11ef-9040-b7400d96d770.html](https://www.thechronicle.com/news/custodian-resigns-due-to-hostile-environment/article_46c226c8-6cb4-11ef-9040-b7400d96d770.html)

FEATURED

## Custodian resigns due to 'hostile environment'

TRACI HASTINGS @TheChronicleCT

Sep 9, 2024



Armin Harris, head custodian at Hampton Elementary, submitted his letter of resignation to the Board of Education in July.

FILE



HAMPTON — A custodian at Hampton Elementary has resigned, citing a hostile environment.

Armin Harris, the head custodian, submitted his letter of resignation to the Board of Education on July 24, via one of the Board of Education members.

In his letter, Harris noted he had been employed at the school since 2019, but has been the head custodian for the last two years.

“I enjoyed my work and looked forward to everyday life there,” the letter read in part. “Unfortunately, I can no longer say I now feel and have the same pleasure and enthusiasm when I leave my home to come to work at HES.”

Harris cited staffing changes that resulted in a different environment, which caused him to feel discriminated against.

At Hampton Elementary School, Patrice Merendina was tapped to be the new principal prior to the start of the 2023-2024 school year, following the retirement of Principal Samantha Robeson. During the fall of 2023, Valerie Bruneau was named as an interim superintendent while Superintendent Samantha Sarli was out on a short leave; Sarli returned, but resigned her post in January. Another interim superintendent, Andrew Skarzynski, filled in for the spring of 2024, and then was named to the position permanently at the end of the 2023-24 school year.

In September of 2023, Harris filed a Discrimination Grievance Form at the school, a copy of which was made available to the Chronicle. Harris details incidents from August and September of that year, including allegations he was yelled at, had his breaks curtailed and was penalized for approaching an individual on school grounds during the school day because Harris was initially concerned the individual might be a security risk.

Harris also filled a different role at the school, as he and his wife owned a cleaning company which had been contracted to perform nighttime custodial duties, separately from his duties as head custodian. Harris said the

administration found fault with the number of hours the company worked at night. The contract was subsequently not renewed.

"I am now working in a hostile environment, which has extended to retaliation against my family business which contracts with this school, because of the color of our skin," Harris said in his grievance.

Then-superintendent Sarli addressed his grievance in a December 21 letter to Harris which was also provided to the Chronicle.

"As you know, outside, neutral investigators were brought in to conduct a thorough investigation into the allegations raised by your complaint," Sarli's letter stated in part. "Based on the information provided by the parties and identified witnesses, as well as other evidence that was collected and reviewed, the investigators substantiated some of your allegations, while others were not substantiated."

Sarli said while some of Merendina's conduct was "inappropriate" and had subsequently been discussed with her, "the investigators note that the evidence gathered and reviewed does not indicate that Ms. Merendina treated you differently, subjected you to a hostile work environment, harassed you, or retaliated against you based on your color or any other protected class."

Harris told the Chronicle administrators did not discuss which part of his allegations were substantiated and which weren't, and when he sought to have meetings to discuss them, he requested to have a representative with him; he selected Hampton resident Juan Arriola to accompany him to meetings. The administration denied Harris' request to have Arriola attend meetings with him.

Arriola is a member of the Hampton Board of Education, and ultimately was the board member who brought Harris' resignation letter to the rest of the board.

Harris is not a member of a union; in fact, all non-certified staff at Hampton Elementary School are non-unionized. In the absence of a union representative, it is the practice of Hampton Elementary School to allow staff members who wish to discuss personnel matters with the administration to be accompanied by a colleague if so wished, but not just any friend or family member.

Ultimately Harris felt his only option was to resign, as the stress of his job was having an adverse affect on his health, and he actually felt too ill to deliver his letter of resignation to the Board of Education in person.

"One person can only endure so much of being reprimanded publicly, scolded as though a child, embarrassed ... no one should be treated by any member of management in such a manner," Harris' resignation letter read in part.

Harris' letter was cc'ed to the Commission of Human Rights and the NAACP; Harris said his complaints are still pending with both organizations.

Harris said he hated to resign as he loved the students, parents and staff. He said he also was dedicated to helping the school run more efficiently, negotiating with vendors, reducing waste and helping to oversee efficient groundskeeping.

Harris, a grandfather and father of eight children who also volunteered with the Boys and Girls Club, said he loved working at the elementary school because of the students, a feeling he said the students reciprocated toward

him. His resignation letter cites the gifts, drawings and notes he received from students and some staff that he kept on a display in his office at Hampton Elementary.

“The entire stuff I did there, the stuff beyond just cleaning that no one even knows about – it feels like it all went to waste,” Harris said. “I loved talking with the kids. That was just the greatest thing. I will miss that the most.”

Merendina did not respond to requests for comment.

Current Superintendent Skarzynski said he would not comment on any resignation matter, but did say that the non-renewal of the contract for Harris' cleaning company was solely based on financial reasons, and the Board of Education found cost savings in hiring two part-time custodial staff instead.

While Skarzynski said he had no comment on any individual employee, past or present, he said the goal of the Hampton Elementary School administration and board of education was to create a successful community environment in which the students are the priority.

“Our goal with any employee concern, first and foremost is to address the concern so there is a successful outcome for all involved,” Skarzynski said. “We value all our employees. Our goal is always to make sure our employees succeed, for the best possible student outcome.”

Harris said he filed is complaints with the CHRO and the NAACP to raise awareness of bias and discrimination.

“I'm not looking for money,” Harris said. “I just want them to know they can't pick on people of color. I've never seen that kind of racism before.”

11/22/24, 12:19 AM

Custodian resigns due to 'hostile environment' | News | thechronicle.com

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# Hampton Gazette

Newspaper in Hampton, Connecticut

## Board Decisions, Principal's Departure, Affect School Culture at Hampton Elementary

The Hampton Elementary School Board of Education voted 5-3 at its 10/23 meeting to conduct an investigation into allegations raised against a board member. There were many residents in attendance, drawn to the last few meetings presumably, based on their remarks, due to agenda items "pertaining to the conduct of a board member". However, their questions went unanswered when the board entered a closed executive session, as the public discussion was limited to only the motion, made by Dennis Timberman and seconded by Mark Becker, "to authorize the Board Chair person in consultation with the Board's legal counsel to retain the services of a third party to investigate the complaint made against a Board Member."

Although the minutes fail to reflect his request, Juan Arriola, the member whose conduct is in question, was denied an open executive session by Chairman Rose Bisson because of "attorney-client privilege". Arriola has filed a complaint with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Commission regarding this decision, asserting his right to a public session for the portion of the executive session that discussed "the conduct of a board member". The statute governing executive sessions provides that the individual "may require that discussion be held at an open meeting".

This will be the fourth complaint regarding executive sessions filed this year. The first, alleging that the session was improperly noticed, was resolved in the complainant's favor through the commission's ombudsman program. The second was decided in favor of Board members Arriola, Diane Gagnon, and John Russell who objected to the former Superintendent's presence during an executive session. The third complaint filed was the result of an executive session last month called "to discuss an attorney-client privileged communication related to an employee", however, the "client", Arriola alleged in his complaint, was former school Principal Patrice Merendina, not the Board of Education. That complaint has yet to be resolved.

The conduct to be investigated stems from Arriola's "involvement" in a discrimination grievance filed by former custodian Armin Harris alleging that school administrators failed to follow policies related to an incident that occurred at the school in September of 2023. Harris, who has since resigned, has also filed a complaint with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO). In a letter dated 9/19/24 addressed to Bisson and Becker, Merendina's attorney claimed that "Arriola used his position as a Board of Education member" to "publicly disclose information he obtained". The six-page correspondence was distributed on 9/20 to all of the school board members, except Arriola, who obtained it on 9/28 via a FOI request.

The complaint alleges that Arriola's attempt to attend a meeting between Harris, Merendina, and Superintendent Skarzinski on 6/21 was improper, and was ultimately cancelled. However, a CHRO representative has independently confirmed that Arriola did so at their suggestion. It also alleges that Arriola inappropriately distributed Harris' letter of resignation to members at the 7/26 meeting of the school board, where letters of resignation are normally received. Though the complaint accuses Arriola of "passing out a copy to the press", Harris himself sent his letter to the CHRO, the NAACP, the First Selectman, an attorney, and the newspaper.

The complaint also alleges that Arriola breached state and federal law when he "disclosed information that he obtained based on his position as a Board of Education member to the public and to the media". Most of the complaint centers around the "substantial damage and injury to Ms. Merendina's professional and personal reputation" due to an article published in the Willimantic Chronicle on 9/10. The article reported a communication from former Superintendent Sarli stating that the investigation into Harris' discrimination grievance concluded that Merendina engaged in certain "inappropriate conduct". Merendina accused Arriola of providing the Willimantic Chronicle with all of the information, however the reporter has confirmed in writing that she had no contact with Arriola regarding the matter.

Most of the parents attending the meeting were focused on why Merendina resigned, blaming multiple culprits, including the Superintendent, the school board at large, one member in particular, and the Willimantic Chronicle. Merendina's letter to parents stated "In order to reach my professional goals, it is necessary for me to accept the position of Coordinator of State Initiatives" with Norwich Public Schools. Superintendent Skarzinski confirmed the same at the meeting of 9/26 when the board voted to accept her resignation. One parent lamented that her child no longer wants to come to school for fear another staff member might leave. Another parent announced that Merendina would be willing to return to the school if "some things happen", but didn't identify what those things were.

Concerns about the reasons for Merendina's departure were not the only complaints. One parent criticized the school for failing to deal with instances of bullying, another claimed the school has become "unwelcoming" to the extent that she's considering the removal of her children from the school. She listed as examples the new procedures for dropping off and picking up students curbside rather than in the school, the necessity of making an appointment in order to enter the building, and new procedures which require parents to get fingerprinted in order to volunteer in their child's classroom, or chaperone field trips. All of these practices were implemented by Merendina, not current Interim Principal Vikki Smith, who also serves as the school's Special Education Director.

Despite citizens' descriptions of the board as "dysfunctional" and worse, the administration reported positive steps on some important matters. The school will be employing an additional teacher to assist with the students in the first and second grade class which has 25 students, a measure supported by parents and staff. The Superintendent will be amending the volunteer procedures so that fingerprinting will not be required when parents are supervised by a teacher. It was also decided that parents will be alerted in the event that the police are called to the school to address any incident. And the school is negotiating a contract with a former, retired custodian who will assist the custodian who replaced Harris with procedures to deal with the day-to-day operations of the school.

Kathi Newcombe

This entry was posted in Uncategorized on October 30, 2024 [<https://hamptongazette.com/2024/10/30/board-decisions-principals-departure-affect-school-culture-at-hampton-elementary/>].

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# Hampton Gazette

Newspaper in Hampton, Connecticut

## Hampton Elementary School Superintendent Resigns

Hampton Elementary School Superintendent Samantha Sarli has resigned as of January 15, suddenly and without explanation. Dr. Sarli was hired in July of 2022, initially for a starting salary of \$61,585, and then accepted the board's offer of an additional \$5,969 to help compensate for insurance. In June of 2023 she requested and was granted a three month leave of absence, returning in October of 2023.

Dr. Sarli listed her accomplishments in her letter of resignation: becoming a part of the Science of Reading Network Improvement Community which accelerated teachers' technique and selected a new reading curriculum; strengthening building security; receiving and applying a multi-media security grant to upgrade security systems; creating a collaborative interview process in hiring a new principal; collaborating with the Partners for Educational Leadership to establish a plan and goal of capacity building related to belonging and equity training to the board and staff. Her tenure, however, was also plagued with two discrimination grievances filed with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, one which was settled in the complainant's favor and the other which is reportedly pending, and two complaints filed with the Freedom of Information Commission, one resolved with a written apology from the Board of Education; the other, which challenged Dr. Sarli's presence in executive sessions, is still pending.

The school board will be conducting a search for a new superintendent in the near future. In the meantime, Andrew Skarynski was appointed by the school board at its January 24 meeting, and will serve as interim superintendent.

This entry was posted in Uncategorized on February 2, 2024

[<https://hamptongazette.com/2024/02/02/hampton-elementary-school-superintendent-resigns/>].

[https://www.thechronicle.com/news/hampton-elementary-school-principal-has-resigned/article\\_ceb04cba-7c2f-11ef-8e8d-a74347d85438.html](https://www.thechronicle.com/news/hampton-elementary-school-principal-has-resigned/article_ceb04cba-7c2f-11ef-8e8d-a74347d85438.html)

FEATURED

# Hampton Elementary School principal has resigned

TRACI HASTINGS @TheChronicleCT

Sep 27, 2024



Former Hampton Elementary School principal Patrice Merendina.

Hampton Elementary School

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## HAMPTON — Hampton Elementary School's principal has resigned.

Patrice Merendina tendered her resignation at the Board of Education meeting held Wednesday night.

Read the full story in the print or e-edition of the Chronicle.

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