BOE Regular Meeting
June 8, 2026 7:00 PM

1. Call to Order
   Courtney Ennis, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:08PM. Other Members present: Nicole Serra, Kelly McNamara, Andrew Koniecko,and Heather Helwig. Charles Raymond was excused. Dan Harris was absent. Also present: Dr. Roy Seitsinger; Superintendent, Victoria Schwery; Fiscal Assistant, and Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comment
   No emailed Public Comment.

   Nathanael Lee; parent, has a son in PK who is a diabetic. Because of his dietary needs he sends lunch to school with his son each day. He asked why the food cannot be heated up for his son. He asked if we could purchase a microwave in order to do so. Dr. Seitsinger stated that he would look into this right away.

   Cara Sawyer; parent, thanked Chris Pickett and Eric McGlone for overseeing a wonderful 8th grade trip to D.C. All the kids loved and appreciated the trip. She hopes that other teachers will step up and support the continuance of this trip in the future.

4. Consent Agenda
   Moved, to accept the consent agenda as presented. Ennis/Serra. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

5. Old Business: Public Comment
   Board Chair Update
   Courtney Ennis; Board Chair, reminded all Board Members that Nick Caruso will be in attendance on July 22nd for BOE Training. She asked that Board Members send her specific areas of concern or ideas for training.

6. Superintendent's Update
   Moved, to add a discussion about Shared Services to the Agenda under item 6e. Ennis/Helwig. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

   Moved, to approve the 2026-2027 BOE Meeting Date Calendar with the following adjustment; change the October 2027 meeting date to October 4th. Ennis/Helwig. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

   Moved, to approve the 2026-2027 BOE Finance Committee Meeting Date Calendar with the following adjustment; change October 2027 meeting date to September 30th. Ennis/Serra. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

   Culture and Climate Report Presentation
   Ray Bernier and Chris Pickett presented the staff survey results from 2024-2025 to the Board. The goal of the survey was to gather staff feedback regarding school connectedness, safety, inclusivity, behavioral systems, working conditions, and overall school climate. Moving forward,

Kiley Young; from the CT Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation, will work as a liaison with us. A lengthy discussion followed the presentation. It was determined that a focus group would be used in the future, and that the survey would be open to students as well as staff, with more defined questions and a place to leave written comments.

Legislative Collaboration: We received an email from the Lisbon BOE recognizing the need to take a more active role in advocacy at the state and federal levels. They invited up to 3 of our BOE members to participate at their next Legislative Committee Meeting on June 30th at 6pm. Kelly, Courtney and Heather stated they would like to attend.

Shared Services with the Voluntown School District: Dr. Seitsinger explained that we already participate in various shared services. We share our Food Service Director with 6 school districts and we share one of our Social Workers with Voluntown. Beginning with the 2026-2027 school year Preston would like to enter into a shared service agreement with Voluntown for transportation services. Voluntown will pay Preston 30,000 dollars. Twenty-two thousand will go to the district and 8000.00 will go to Brendan Merrill the Transportation Supervisor. This will be a one year contract and much of the scheduling work will be done over the summer months. It is not day to day operations. Voluntown already employs someone in that position. A lengthy discussion followed. BOE members wanted to make sure that Preston's needs would be met first. Dr. Seitsinger assured them that would be the case. It was determined that Brendan Merrill would report quarterly on the success of the arrangement.

Moved, to enter into the transportation shared services agreement between Voluntown Board of Ed and Preston Board of Ed as presented. Ennis/Helwig. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

7. Preston PTO
Kayla Thompson thanks Allison Thayer as the outgoing PVMS PTO President. Kayla will take over that position in the Fall. PVMS Field Day will be held on June 10th. Their last fundraiser is selling tickets for the summer Sea Unicorn Game. Due to a decrease in volunteerism, Kayla is hoping to form a PTO Grandparent Group. On June 11th a 5th Grade Stepping Up Ceremony will be held at PVMS at 5:30PM. The current 5th grade was the COVID class and parents wanted to give them a little something extra. They hope that it can become a school function instead of a PTO function in the future. A bunch of fun events are planned for the last day of school on June 17th.

8. Principals' and Director of Student Services Reports
Craig King; Director of Student Services, received a special education expansion grant. Items are beginning to arrive. Some are for the sensory room. The IDEA 611 and 619 grants have been submitted. Craig is waiting to hear about the need for possible revisions. We also received the High Quality Special Education Incentive Grant which will allow for enhancements to existing special education programs. Craig is working with Brendan on Summer School Transportation and he is finishing up IEPs and 504s.

Ray Bernier; Principal PVMS, thanked the PVMS PTO for their countless hours of effort throughout the year. SBAC testing was completed during the first heatwave of the season. Field Day will take place on Wednesday, June 10th. The PVMS Awards Ceremony will be held on June 11th at 9:30AM. The 5th

Grade Stepping Up Ceremony will take place on June 11th at 5:30PM. The PK Stepping Up Ceremony will be held on June 17th. Ray shared a letter from the Senior Center thanking PVMS for providing luncheons to seniors all year. They thoroughly enjoyed the meals and the company.

Chris Pickett; Principal PPMS, thanked Cara for her kind words regarding the D.C. trip. He also thanked Eric McGlone and all the parents who attended. Grade 7 visited the Pfizer School of Medicine. Grade 6 visited the Peabody Museum. SBAC Testing was completed in May. Grade 8 deployed their submissibles at the Avery Point Pool. PPMS Field Day is on June 10th at Ocean Beach. PPMS Awards will be held on June 11th at 1:30PM. June 16th is the Grade 8 Graduation at PVMS. The graduating students will walk through PVMS the morning of June 16th. The last day of school for students in grades 6 and 7 is June 17th.

9. Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Kelly McNamara stated that the BOE FC met on Thursday, June 4th. They discussed the changes in funding due to the release of 118,100 from the state. The Referendum failed by 6 votes and the Board of Finance cut our budget by 118K. The DRIP Grant will help us with Capital Projects. Kelly asked that the Board share information with the community as much as possible.

Curriculum Committee: Andrew Koniecko stated that the committee met on May 27th. They spent the bulk of the meeting reviewing Policy 6141. This Curriculum Policy was adopted in 2009 and does need some revisions. It will be brought before the full Board.

Building Needs Assessment Committee: Dan Harris was absent.

10. Financial/Capital Report

Victoria Schwery presented the April YTD Financial Report in Cindy's absence. Overall, we are tracking under budget. The recommendation is to wait to make any transfers to meet any shortfalls as recommended by the Superintendent in accordance with Board Policy.

Moved, to approve the April 2026 YTD Budget Report as Presented. Ennis/Serra. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Our next Town Meeting is on June 25th at 7pm in the PVMS Gym. The next Referendum is on July 9th at PPMS. Voters will be voting on a 2.2% increase over last year's budget. This will increase the mil rate by .4%.

FY27 Budget: One of the most timely topics is the Summer Voyages Program. Thirty parents showed interest in the Program through an informal survey. Dr. Seitsinger explained that we can continue to provide this Program to families due to the Summer Mental Health Grant Extension. A short discussion followed.

Moved, to extend the meeting past 9:00PM. Ennis/Helwig. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Moved, to use up to 27K of the Summer Mental Health Grant to fund the Summer Voyages Program for 2026. Ennis/Helwig. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Tucker Mechanical Expense: There is a need to install a new A/C unit in the server room at PVMS. Tucker proposed the cost of such unit and installation to be 10,904. Per Board Policy, this must be voted on.

Discussion followed. The Board asked to see the bids.

Moved, to authorize the Superintendent to purchase the A/C unit for the server room at PVMS. Ennis/McNamara. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

11. Public Comment

Cara Sawyer; parent, encouraged the Board to come up with a discipline policy with regard to extra-curricular activities and sports. The Policy would help make things less messy. As a Coach she said she didn't see the bad behavior that some students exhibit in school. A policy would help with such instances and keep everyone on the same page. She supports the Climate and Culture work that is being done.

Kayla Thompson; parent, encourages the Board to include parents in the Climate and Culture discussions. She hears about bullying going on at the schools and thinks the results of the survey must vary between classrooms.

12. Adjournment

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 9:38PM. Ennis/Serra. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

DRAFT

Climate and Culture Narrative
Preston Public Schools

School Climate Survey Overview

During the 2024-2025 school year, Preston Public Schools administered staff climate surveys in advance of the implementation timeline associated with Connecticut's updated school climate legislation. The purpose of the surveys was to gather staff feedback regarding school connectedness, safety, inclusivity, behavioral systems, working conditions, and overall school climate in order to help guide future improvement efforts.

District and building leaders reviewed the survey findings collaboratively with School Climate Committees to identify trends, strengths, and areas for growth. While a small number of survey items may have produced less reliable data due to question wording or inconsistent response scaling, the surveys overall provided valuable information that will help guide future planning and climate improvement efforts. The district will continue refining survey tools and processes in partnership with the Connecticut Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation as part of ongoing school climate work.

Districtwide Themes

Several themes emerged consistently across both schools.

Strengths Identified Across Schools

Staff responses reflected many positive perceptions regarding:

- collegial relationships and collaboration
- inclusivity and respect for diverse backgrounds
- emotional and physical safety
- commitment to students
- supportive school communities

At both schools, staff generally reported feeling connected to their school communities and supported by colleagues and supervisors. Survey responses also reflected positive perceptions regarding fairness, inclusivity, and professionalism across the district.

Opportunities for Growth

The most significant area for growth identified across both schools involved:

- Schoolwide consistency in behavior management practices
- Clear accountability and follow-through when expectations are not met

The primary growth area identified across both schools involved consistency in behavior systems and schoolwide expectations. Staff also identified communication and workload management as areas for continued attention, although perceptions varied between schools.

School Highlights

Preston Plains Middle School (PPMS)

PPMS survey responses reflected particularly strong perceptions regarding:

- Collegial relationships
- Collaboration among staff
- Support from supervisors
- School connectedness
- Emotional safety and belonging

Staff frequently described PPMS as a supportive and collaborative environment where positive professional relationships are valued. Survey results reflected a strong sense of

community and staff support, while also identifying opportunities to continue strengthening consistency in behavioral expectations and responses.

Preston Veterans' Memorial School (PVMS)

PVMS survey responses reflected strengths in:

- Inclusive and respectful environment
- Positive school community connections
- Staff professionalism
- Commitment to students

Staff frequently described PVMS as a welcoming school community characterized by respect, professionalism, and dedication to student success. Staff responses reflected the need for strengthening consistency in behavioral expectations, communication, and schoolwide systems.

Next Steps

As a result of these findings, the district and School Climate Committees have begun identifying priorities and developing action steps focused on:

- strengthening behavioral expectations and follow-through systems
- increasing consistency across classrooms and grade levels
- expanding opportunities for staff voice and feedback
- continuing PBIS and school climate improvement efforts
- supporting positive school culture and student connectedness

The district will also begin implementing whole-school Restorative Practices training in August 2026, with professional development continuing through November 2026. This work is intended to strengthen relationships, improve communication and conflict resolution, increase accountability, and provide staff with additional tools to support student behavior and school climate.

Overall, the survey findings indicate that both schools have many strengths and clear opportunities for continued growth. Preston Public Schools remains committed to using this feedback thoughtfully and collaboratively to strengthen safe, supportive, inclusive, and student-centered learning environments.

Survey Results:

Results from PVMS Staff Survey

Results from PPMS Staff Survey

Respectfully submitted by:

Raymond Bernier
Preston Veterans' Memorial School

Christopher Pickett
Preston Plains Middle School

I feel supported by other staff at my school

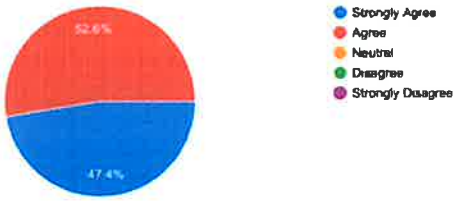
19 responses

I feel supported by other staff at my school

23 responses

I get along well with other staff members at my school

19 responses



I get along well with other staff members at my school

23 responses

I feel like I am an important part of my school

19 responses

I feel like I am an important part of my school

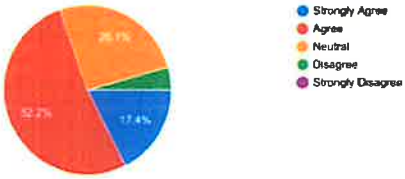
23 responses

Teachers at my school frequently recognize students for good behavior

19 responses

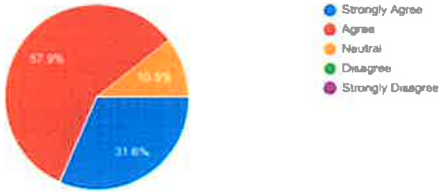
Teachers at my school frequently recognize students for good behavior

23 responses



Teachers at my school have high standards for achievement

19 responses



Teachers at my school have high standards for achievement

23 responses

Teachers at my school treat students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity or culture

19 responses

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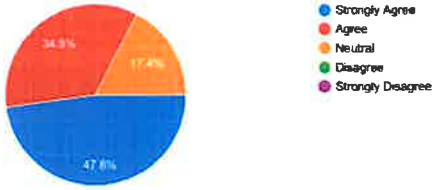
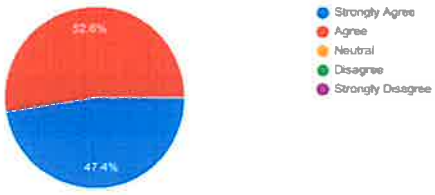


I feel emotionally safe at my school regardless of my race, ethnicity, culture or values.

19 responses



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23 responses

If I report unsafe or dangerous behaviors, I can be sure that the problem will be taken care of

19 responses

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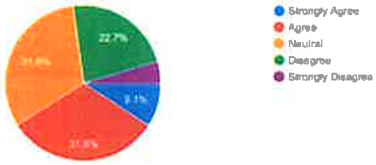
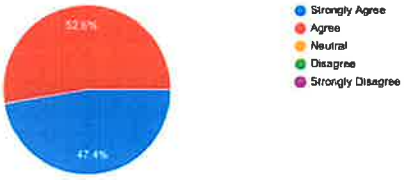
22 responses



I feel safe when entering and leaving my school building

19 responses



I feel safe when entering and leaving my school building

23 responses

Students at my school would help another student who was being mistreated

19 responses

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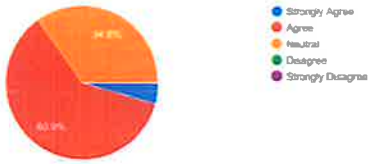
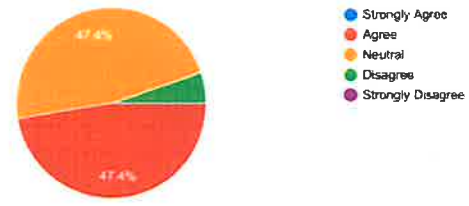
23 responses



Students at my school demonstrate behaviors that allow teachers to teach and students to learn

19 responses



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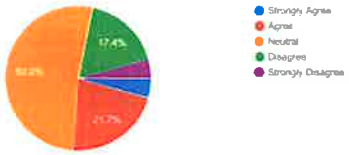

Students at my school treat other students with respect regardless of race, ethnicity, culture or academic ability

19 responses

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23 responses