

The Regional District 13 Board of Education School Naming Committee met in special session on Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Committee Members Present: Mrs. Cowan, Mr. Roraback, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Eddinger, Ms. Kahnke, Mrs. Longley, Mrs. Marteka, Mr. Padilla, and Mrs. Schlicker
Committee Members Absent: Ms. Lynch

Mrs. Cowan called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Agenda

Mrs. Schlicker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Kahnke, to approve the agenda as presented.

All in favor of approving the agenda as presented: Mrs. Cowan, Mr. Roraback, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Eddinger, Ms. Kahnke, Mrs. Longley, Mrs. Marteka, Mr. Padilla, and Mrs. Schlicker. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes – January 28, 2026

Mrs. Schlicker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Kahnke, to approve the January 28, 2026 minutes as presented.

All in favor of approving the January 28, 2026 minutes as presented: Mrs. Cowan, Mr. Roraback, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Eddinger, Ms. Kahnke, Mrs. Longley, Mrs. Marteka, Mr. Padilla, and Mrs. Schlicker. Motion passed.

Research & Feedback Discussion

Mrs. Cowan discussed the logistics of Durham and Middlefield residents voting on the new school name. Mrs. Cowan presented an informal ballot process in both Durham and Middlefield, likely with one voting location per town, for about a week on an honor system.

Committee members identified that one of the school name options, Memorial Elementary School, may be confused with another Memorial Elementary School in Connecticut. Veterans Memorial Elementary

School was offered as a suggestion to not only add specificity to the school's ties to Middlefield, but also honor the original intent of the school's name. Committee members also discussed Wadsworth Elementary School as an option; however, Mr. Moore identified concerns about using the Wadsworth name due to its ties to institutions and landmarks in the community. Committee members will contact the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and any relevant foundations on the logistics and permissions of using Wadsworth in the school name. Committee members also suggested reaching out to the historical societies for more research about Col. Wadsworth. Alternative ideas referencing local Native American history were mentioned; however, further research was necessary before presenting a finalized name. The three leading name choices are Veterans Memorial Elementary School, Three Oaks Elementary School, and Wadsworth Falls Elementary School.

Next Steps

The committee discussed the voting process for selecting the new school name. Committee members agreed that community members in both towns will be able to vote via ballot boxes placed at each town hall for one week (Monday–Friday, the week of March 16), with notification through town email blasts, newsletters, social media, signage, and ParentSquare. The committee recommended that every student will get a vote. Elementary students will vote using a shared committee created form (with a short description of each school name read aloud), while middle and high school students may vote using a committee created Google Form. Staff members will also be allowed to vote using a checklist system in each school's front office. Voting will conclude by Friday, March 20, results will be reviewed by the committee on March 25, and the selected name will be brought to the Board of Education for approval on April 1. Mascot and school colors will be decided later, based on student input. The Committee established they will use a shared google doc to create and finalize language that will be used and presented to voters, ballot boxes will be created for each town hall, and the committee will meet again before voting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

Mrs. Marteka made a motion, seconded by Ms. Kahnke, to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Cowan, Mr. Roraback, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Eddinger, Ms. Kahnke, Mrs. Longley, Mrs. Marteka, Mr. Padilla, and Mrs. Schlicker. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Meghan Shortell-Fratantonio