



BLUE HILLS

REGIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
BHR, ROOM W-218
NOVEMBER 18, 2025, 7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS:

Mark Driscoll	Canton (Chair)
Carl Walker	Avon
Thomas Polito	Dedham
Kevin Connolly	Norwood
Taryn Mohan	Holbrook
Marybeth Joyce	Milton
Karen Graves	Randolph
Sheila Vazquez	Westwood

ABSENT:

Eric Erskine	Braintree
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ADMINISTRATION:

Jill Rossetti	Superintendent-Director
Elvio Ferreira	Business Manager
Geoff Zini	Principal

FACULTY & STAFF:

Ed Catabia	Athletic Director
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STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

Nissy Kahuha	Senior Class President
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1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mark Driscoll led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO DSC

Student Representative, Nissy Kahuha, explained that the report would cover events from the previous month, as she was absent due to volleyball. The following items were highlighted:

- The school held Spirit Week and a pep rally, including Color Day and Character Day, which was distinct from Halloween. The senior picture was taken with significant help from a teacher, and Nissy Kahuha expressed excitement about the photo appearing in the yearbook.

- A Taco event was organized and was highly successful, selling out completely. Students, their families, and even guests from outside the school attended and enjoyed the event. There was interest in hosting similar events in the future.
- Senior gifts were distributed, including stickers and a keychain labeled “VHR 2026.” The students received these gifts well.
- During Spirit Week, students participated in hallway decorating. The hallway, which Nissy Kahuha helped decorate, was highlighted for its creativity and teamwork. Each grade decorated a different section of the English hallway, and the overall effort was praised, especially the improvement shown by the freshmen.
- The homecoming event was a significant success, with over 400 tickets sold. Students enjoyed the event, and there is excitement for upcoming events such as prom.
- In sports, the volleyball team qualified for the MI AA tournament but was eliminated in the first round. The boys’ soccer team also competed and reached either the semi-finals or the first round. The golf team advanced to the second round of their tournament and ended the season in a tie.
- Preparations for winter sports are underway, with meetings being held and family ID reminders sent out to interested students.
- Nissy Kahuha mentioned participation in Team Speak Out, a community-building initiative that will restart soon, with a significant event planned for May 6, 2026.
- Grade nine students are halfway through their exploratory program, which is generating excitement about the new students joining various shops and activities.
- The upcoming holiday fair is scheduled for December 6, 2025, featuring various vendors and student council sales. Previous fairs included activities such as meeting Santa Claus.

Nissy Kahuha concluded the report with a quote on kindness: “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle,” attributed to Plato. When asked about Team Speak Out, Nissy Kahuha explained that it is an organization designed to build community within the school. Trained facilitators lead small groups in activities and discussions, including icebreakers and deeper topics, to help students connect and open up. The program culminates in larger group sessions to strengthen the community.

5. ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

5.1 FALL SPORTS UPDATE

The Athletic Director, Ed Catabia, provided the Fall Sports report, highlighting the following updates:

- The golf, soccer, and football teams all qualified for the MI AA tournament, with the girls’ soccer team winning the vocational championship.
- The football team will play in the semifinals against Northeast on Friday night.
- Seven student athletes will attend a leadership conference at the MI AA on December 18, 2025, led by Melissa.
- A captain’s workshop for fall sports was successful, and similar programs are planned for winter and spring sports.
- Coach Flynn and Coach Gertie will receive an award from the Mass Basketball Coaches Association this Sunday.
- The Thanksgiving football game will be played on Wednesday night at Taunton High School, not on Thanksgiving Day.
- Winter sports schedules are available but may change, especially for first-year teams.
- Hockey games are held locally, and the arrangement is popular with parents and students; the state sets ice time costs.

- Boys and girls swimming are offered, coached by Jonathan Palmer, with Beverly Wood as assistant coach.

6. SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

6.1 DONATION REQUEST

On a motion made by Dedham, seconded by Norwood, it was resolved to accept a \$1,000 donation from the Kraft family for the Blue Hills football program. Motion carried unanimously.

The Superintendent-Director Jill Rossetti reported that Andre Tippett, an NFL Hall of Fame linebacker, visited Blue Hills and donated \$1,000 to the football program on behalf of the Kraft family and the New England Patriots Charitable Foundation. This donation was acknowledged as a tribute to Coach Madden's commitment to developing the next generation.

6.2 PROJECT PLAYHOUSE DONATION

On a motion made by Westwood, seconded by Randolph, it was resolved to approve DSC's participation in Project Playhouse. Motion carried unanimously.

The Superintendent-Director, Jill Rossetti, discussed participation in Project Playhouse, which had previously been a rewarding experience for students, especially those in the construction program. All project materials were donated, and the event received positive publicity.

7. DSC CHAIR REPORT

7.1 RECORDING SECRETARY/CLERK REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS IN AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE HIRING UPDATE

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Avon, it was resolved to offer Carol Maloney the position of recording secretary. Motion carried unanimously.

The District Chair, Mark Driscoll, reported that the Ad-hoc Subcommittee received over 20 applications for the part-time administrative assistant position. They narrowed it down to three candidates, interviewed two via Zoom, and brought in the third for an in-person interview. The Committee recommended Carol Maloney from Walpole for the administrative assistant role, citing her extensive experience in school administration and meeting management. She previously worked in Norwood public schools and at Blessed Sacramento Walpole. Her start date will be coordinated with the administration, pending paperwork and necessary signoffs.

7.2 POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT – COMPETENCY DETERMINATION (CD)

The Policy Subcommittee discussed a new competency determination policy, prompted by changes in state requirements (specifically, the MCAS exam can no longer be used for awarding competency determination to graduates). The proposed policy, based on guidance from MASC, allows schools to use the following to demonstrate mastery of skills and competencies.

- A final assessment for a course,
- A capstone or portfolio project,
- or an equivalent measure determined by the principal or designee,

Coursework requirements included:

- Two years of high school English,
- One year each of Algebra 1 and Geometry,
- One year of Biology, Physics, or Chemistry,
- Starting with the class of 2027, one year of United States history.

The policy aims to address typical students and outliers (e.g., transfer students, those who took high school-level courses in 8th grade). The Subcommittee voted to recommend the policy for a second reading, with a third reading and final vote scheduled for the next meeting.

The Committee asked for clarification about accepting juniors and seniors as transfer students, stating that, as far as they were aware, only transfers from other vocational schools were accepted.

Principal Zini confirmed that only transfers from other vocational schools (specifically, Chapter 74 approved programs) are accepted, and only if there is space in the same program. Transfers from other types of schools or into different programs are not allowed.

The Committee asked if the competency requirement meant passing a graded course.

Principal Zini explained that, according to state regulations, competency determination requires both successful completion of a course and demonstration of mastery through a final assessment or capstone project, as per the district's grading policy. The state differentiates between passing a course and showing mastery of skills. The Committee acknowledged the complexity and noted that the policy would be revisited as needed.

7.3 FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

On a motion by Dedham, seconded by Norwood, it was resolved to accept the administration's budget goals. Motion carried unanimously.

Elvio Ferreira, Business Manager presented the following five main budget goals:

- Strategic financial management and capital planning: Focuses on monitoring and planning for the campus's long-term capital needs over the next five to 10 years.
- Future-focused facilities and infrastructure: Aims to maintain a modern, safe, and industry-relevant learning environment for students and faculty, including technical and academic areas and campus security. The dental assisting program is pending state approval.
- Academic and technical excellence: Ensures that all programs have up-to-date credentialing and equipment to meet curriculum needs, supporting both current and future academic pathways, including Chapter 74 programs.
- Staff development and student support: Prepares for the implementation of a lottery system and anticipates needs for English language learners and social-emotional learning training for staff and faculty.
- Organizational and administrative capacity: Involves assessing staff needs and conducting thorough reviews to ensure the continued quality of services for students.

8. TREASURER'S REPORT AND WARRANT

On a motion made by Holbrook, seconded by Randolph, it was resolved to approve the following Warrants:

FY26:

Warrant #23 for \$156,075.83, Voucher Numbers 1038-1039

Warrant #24 for \$532,723.05, Voucher Numbers 1040-1041

Warrant #25 for \$6,992.11, Voucher Numbers 1042

Warrant #26 for \$182,439.01, Voucher 1043 and Wire Transfer

Warrant #27 for \$71,624.59, Voucher Numbers 1044-1045

Warrant #28 for \$599,081.64, Voucher Numbers 1046-1050

Motion carried unanimously.

Prepared by Patricia Leonhardt, Treasurer: read by Ms. Marybeth Joyce, Secretary.

9. **MINUTES APPROVAL**

On a motion made by Dedham, seconded by Milton, it was resolved to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2025, District School Committee meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

10. **BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT**

10.1 **BUDGET GOALS**

The Business Manager, Elvio Ferreira, noted that the organization is currently in good financial shape, as indicated by the first quarter report. No new updates were shared.

10.2 **TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FORMS**

Travel reimbursement forms were distributed for signatures. Adjustments will be made for those who attended the conference, consolidating reimbursements into a single form.

11. **ADMINISTRATION REPORTS**

11.1 **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

11.1.1 **OPEN HOUSE, SHOWCASE, AND THANKSGIVING GAME**

The Principal, Geoff Zini, reported a highly successful Open House event, noting that 1,257 visitors were counted using clickers at the door, though the actual number may be slightly higher.

The upcoming showcase for eighth graders is scheduled for next Tuesday morning, with 498 students registered—an increase from last year. Additionally, over 415 in-district applications for enrollment have been started, with the regular application deadline set for January 1, 2026.

11.1.2 **OUT OF STATE TRAVEL CLUB**

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Westwood, it was resolved to approve the Outing Club's out-of-state travel to Mount Cardigan Lodge, Alexandria, NH, on January 9 and 10, 2026. Motion carried unanimously.

The Outing Club, active since returning from COVID, secured a grant from the Appalachian Mountain Club for a trip to Mount Cardigan, Alexandria, NH. The trip is scheduled for January 9 and 10, 2026, including an overnight stay at AMC Cardigan Lodge and a hike up

Mount Cardigan. Two adult chaperones and eight students will participate. The grant covers all costs and provides students with the necessary gear and clothing.

11.1.3 MISCELLANEOUS

It was mentioned that the group is moving the grievance to arbitration and that they have responded to the BHEA, but no agreement was reached, so the matter will be passed to procurement administration.

12. FUTURE BUSINESS

A Committee member noted that the construction class team is currently working on a house in Dedham. One student, previously approved by the Committee, is adding a second dorm to the house. The member shared positive feedback about the project, noting daily visits, conversations with the teacher, and observing the students' hard work. The project is progressing very well, and the students are consistently engaged.

The date of the next District School Committee meeting is December 16, 2025.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session required.

14. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Dedham, seconded by Randolph, and carried, it was agreed that there was no further business to transact; the meeting closed at 7:40 p.m.

DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Director

Director

Date

Date