MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
BLUE HILLS REGIONAL ROOM W-218
OCTOBER 20, 2026, 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS:

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

ABSENT:

Thomas Polito	Dedham

ADMINISTRATION:

Jill Rossetti	Superintendent-Director
Elvio Ferreira	Business Manager
Geoff Zini	Principal
Tim Rose	Facilities Director
Paul Bavuso	Academic Director
Laura Serpa	Director of Admissions & Guidance

FACULTY & STAFF:

Kathy Dowd	Health Assisting Teacher

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

Irena Angier	Class President

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 7:00 p.m. by Chair Mark Driscoll.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Ms. Irena Angier, the student representative, reported on recent student activities, including Senior Sunrise on October 2; a senior event on October 6 that sold 191 tickets; the pep rally; sophomore fundraising; and homecoming. Approximately 350 tickets were sold for the homecoming dance. The football team won its homecoming game, 46–12. Girls' soccer won its league championship and advanced to the state tournament. Boys' soccer and volleyball also competed.

5. SENIOR TRIP ABROAD

Ms. Kathy Dowd, Health Assisting Teacher, presented a proposed 2028 Mediterranean Coast trip with EF Tours to Italy, France, and Spain, departing from Milan and ending in Barcelona. She reviewed the itinerary, payment arrangements, inclusions, and safety procedures. Chaperone and administrator assignments will be determined later. The discussion addressed students' responsibility for passports, regular passport checks, reminders about local laws, and any additional travel-entry requirements or fees.

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Randolph, it was resolved to approve the requested travel dates and one excused absence for the teachers attending the trip. Motion carried.

6. HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT REPORT

Director of Admissions, Ms. Serpa, reported enrollment of 900 students for the 2026–2027 school year, an increase of five students and the highest enrollment in five years. Grade 11 recorded the largest gain. There were 27 withdrawals between October 1, 2025, and September 30, 2026, compared with 29 the previous year. Most withdrawals involved transfers back to sending public schools.

The admissions process received 633 applications: 411 complete and 222 incomplete. Of the completed applications, 246 students enrolled, 80 declined, and 85 remained waitlisted. The offer acceptance rate increased from 72% to 75%. Comparisons with the previous year were not possible because the admissions process changed to a lottery. The sophomore lottery had 31 applicants; 18 seats were offered and five accepted.

Incomplete applications involved missing residency documentation, signatures, unfinished submissions, or out-of-district applications. Families and sending schools were contacted to provide opportunities to complete applications. The proportions of students from each member community remained broadly consistent with the prior year.

Ms. Serpa agreed to provide the requested town-level breakdown of freshman student support data.

7. SPRING MCAS AND ACCOUNTABILITY RESULTS PRESENTATION

Academic Director Dr. Bavuso presented the 2026 state assessment and accountability results. Blue Hills remained in good standing and did not require assistance or intervention. Its reported accountability score increased from 28% to 45%, and the school performed better than 60% of similar schools. The four-year graduation rate was 98.2%, with a reported dropout rate of zero. Overall chronic absenteeism was 4.6%, compared with 17.1% statewide, and all reported student groups met their attendance targets. English language arts and science achievement declined slightly, while mathematics remained generally stable.

Priorities for the year include supporting the 55 lowest-performing students, improving science results, strengthening mathematics growth, and expanding access to advanced coursework. Planned work includes targeted Title I services, curriculum-map revisions, and adjustments to the afterschool MCAS acceleration program. Some subgroup results were suppressed because the tested group contained fewer than 20 students. The English learner program currently has 24 students, which may allow separate reporting next year, subject to reporting criteria.

8. FACILITIES SUMMER PROJECTS UPDATE

Facilities Director, Mr. Rose, reviewed summer maintenance and facilities projects, including roof work, concrete curbing and walkway improvements, stadium bleacher refinishing, replacement of an aging kitchen freezer, drainage repairs, landscaping, dental lab completion work, kitchen equipment installations, and installation of a grant-funded culinary dishwasher.
Additional work included repairing a leaking roof near the automotive classroom, sealing asphalt cracks, and installing a temperature-alert system intended to provide repeated notifications until acknowledged. A five-by-five-foot pad outside a rear door was identified as required by the building inspector. Drainage evaluation was also discussed as necessary before significant future paving.

Reported costs included approximately $86,000 for curbing, $82,000 for bleacher work, and $8,000 for the temperature-alert system. Mr. Rose agreed to add project costs and a budget analysis to the report.

9. SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

9.1 Donations

No donations were presented.

9.2 Decommissioned Items

Superintendent-Director Ms. Jill Rossetti requested approval to decommission obsolete, damaged, or replaced items from Metal Fabrication, Health Assisting, Early Education and Care, and Cosmetology. Items included a Metal Fabrication Time Saver, medical equipment and outdated books, a broken medical cart, a laminating machine, classroom furniture, an unusable whiteboard, and superseded cosmetology textbooks.

On a motion made by Holbrook, seconded by Norwood, it was resolved to decommission the items as presented. Motion carried.

9.3 Superintendent-Director Goals

Ms. Rossetti presented five proposed goals for 2026–2027:

- Strategic governance, communication, and professional practice.
- Grade 9 student success, including baseline data, at least two priority areas, quarterly reviews, and measurable improvement in at least one area by June. • Prepared, collaborative, and fiscally responsible collective bargaining involving the PEC agreement and five bargaining units.
- Enrollment outreach and community confidence across the nine member communities.
- Implementation of the 2026–2030 District Strategy Plan, aligned with the School Improvement Plan.

A June report will address first-year strategy-plan accomplishments, challenges, and recommended second-year priorities.

On a motion made by Holbrook, and seconded by Braintree, it was resolved to approve the goals as presented. Motion carried.

10. DSC CHAIR REPORT

10.1 Discussion of Open Meeting Law Complaint

The Chair discussed Mr. Polito's complaint concerning a discrepancy between the agenda in the printed meeting packet and the agenda followed at the meeting. Ms. Rossetti was asked to explain and stated that the correct agenda had been posted and distributed electronically, but an incorrect draft had been included in the hard-copy member packets. The Chair stated the Committee's position that the public notices and distributed public documents were accurate. No determination by the Attorney General was reported.

On a motion made by Randolph, seconded by Braintree, it was resolved to authorize the Committee to work with legal counsel to prepare a response to the Attorney General's office regarding the Open Meeting Law complaint. Motion carried.

10.2 Policy Regarding Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers Engaged in Civil Law Enforcement (Protect Act) August 2026

The Committee considered the policy governing interactions with law enforcement officers engaged in civil enforcement.

Motion carried unanimously.

10.3 DSC Subcommittee Assignments & Chairs for Subcommittees

The Chair announced revised subcommittee chair assignments covering Curriculum and Advisory; Finance and Administration; Personnel and Negotiations; Policy; Athletics and Extracurricular Activities; Evaluation; Buildings, Facilities, Safety and Security; and Website and Technology. Marybeth Joyce will continue to handle warrants.

10.4 Finance and Administration Subcommittee Meeting

The Subcommittee reviewed the FY2028 budget calendar, budget goals, and potential staffing priorities with Dr. Ferreira. The discussion included an audit recommendation to hire a certified public accountant.

On a motion made by Holbrook, seconded by Norwood, it was resolved to accept the FY 2027-2028 budget calendar, budget goals, and CPA staffing item. Motion carried.

10.5 Evaluation Subcommittee Meeting

10.5.1 District Treasurer Evaluation Results to Ms. Mohan

The District Treasurer's evaluation was deferred until the following month because the Treasurer was unavailable.

10.6 Curriculum and Advisory Subcommittee Meeting

10.6.1 Deck Application and Horseshoe Pit

The Subcommittee reviewed a Construction Technology project in Dedham to expand an existing five-by-five-foot deck to eight by eight feet. The work was expected to take approximately one month and begin as soon as possible.

The Braintree horseshoe-pit proposal remained pending receipt of additional specifications and was not submitted for approval.

Motion carried unanimously.

10.7 MASS/MASC Joint Conference, November 4-6, 2026: Official Delegate: Carl Walker

The Chair announced the November 4–6 conference and noted the designated delegate, Carl Walker. Committee members were also invited to legal counsel's reception on November 5, from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m., at Toscana Restaurant in Peabody.

10.8 District Clerk & Recording Secretary Ad Hoc Committee

The district continues to seek a District Clerk/Recording Secretary. The position will be reposted internally before an external posting.

10.9 Municipal Representative Update

No update was available. Further discussion is needed on how to proceed.

10.10 Ethics Training

Committee members were reminded to complete ethics recertification and send their completion certificates to Taryn Mohan. Electronic certificates are acceptable. Members were asked to complete both required components. Reminders will be sent to members whose certificates remain outstanding.

11. TREASURER'S REPORT AND WARRANT

The report was prepared by Treasurer Patricia Leonhardt and read by Secretary Marybeth Joyce.

On a motion made by Braintree, seconded by Holbrook, it was resolved to approve the following warrants for FY27:

- **Warrant #13 for $72,512.78 – Voucher Numbers 1029-1030**
- **Warrant #14 for $103,918.06 – Voucher Numbers 1031-1032**
- **Warrant #15 for $589,458.62 – Voucher Numbers 1033-1035**
- **Warrant #16 for $1,016,943.72 – Voucher Number 1036-1039**
- **Warrant #17 for $586,301.91 – Voucher Numbers 1040-1041**

Motion carried unanimously.

12. MINUTES APPROVAL

The School Committee reviewed the minutes of the District School Committee meeting held on September 15, 2026.

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Milton, it was resolved to approve the minutes of the District School Committee meeting held on September 15, 2026, as presented. Motion carried.

13. BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT

13.1 Scholarship Information on Cleanup and Restructure Based on the Treasurer's Email on 8/28/26

Business Manager Dr. Elvio Ferreira presented the District Treasurer's request to work with the Business Office to remove duplicate scholarship-account entries and deactivate redundant items to reduce the risk of errors.

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Randolph, it was resolved to approve the Business Manager's report and request. Motion carried.

13.2 Revolving Account Balances for FY 2027

Dr. Ferreira presented an informational report showing revolving-fund balances as of July 1, 2025; expenditures during the year; balances as of July 1, 2026; and accompanying analysis. No vote was required.

13.3 Request Transfer LPN to Dental $170,000 to Pay Remaining Instructor Salary, Construction Overage, and Purchase Supplies for SY 2027

A transfer of $170,000 from Fund 60, the postgraduate revolving account, to Fund 59, the dental program project account, was requested to pay remaining construction costs, purchase final equipment, and obtain exploratory-program supplies.

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Milton, it was resolved to approve the transfer of $170,000 from LPN to Dental to pay remaining instructor salary, construction overage, and purchase supplies for SY 2027. Motion carried.

14. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

14.1 Principal's Report

14.1.1 Spirit Week, Homecoming

Principal Geoff Zini reported that Spirit Week activities were being held over two weeks so students on alternating academic and vocational schedules could participate. Approximately 350 students attended the homecoming dance.

15. FUTURE BUSINESS

The next District School Committee meeting is November 17, 2026.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session was required.

17. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Braintree, seconded by Randolph, and carried, the Committee agreed there was no further business to transact; the meeting closed at 8:03 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.

_____
Chair

_____
Date