

**Ashland School Committee Minutes  
October 9, 2024**

Ashland Town Hall  
101 Main Street  
Select Board Meeting Room

Hybrid meeting: recorded on Zoom

Present: Laurie Tosti, Chair  
Marc Terry, Vice Chair  
Tina Fitanides, Secretary  
Paul Kendall, Member  
Marcy Culverwell, Member  
James Adams, Superintendent  
Michael Caira, Assistant Superintendent  
Chris Mathieu, Director of Finance  
Abhishek Karthik, student representative, Ashland High School

**Agenda Review and adoption**

Ms. Tosti reviewed the agenda items for the meeting. She took roll call and asked the School Committee members to approve the agenda as presented.

Vote:

Ms. Culverwell: Present and AYE

Ms. Fitanides: Present and AYE

Mr. Kendall: Present and AYE

Mr. Terry: Present and AYE

Ms. Tosti: Present and AYE

**Public Comment**

None

**School Committee Student Advisory Council**

Vanessa Thompson reported that the athletic team captains were offered leadership training. It has had a positive impact on the sports teams. Admissions counselors are visiting Ashland High School during X-block and students are able to sign-up to attend an info session about the college. Family Reconnect Weekend is coming up, and no homework is allowed to be assigned. It is an opportunity for students to take a break from schoolwork and reconnect with people at home.

Sanya Mathuswami reported Ashland Day took place recently. Over 20 student groups participated. QR codes were introduced for the first time so that guests without cash could pay for items electronically during the event. The student mentioned how the cell phone policy is now more consistent from class to class and is more equal throughout the school. Cell phones are less of a distraction during class.

Abhishek Karthik reported that school safety drills occurred, fire drills have happened, and picture day has happened. Next week, PSATs are scheduled, along with Community Service Day, and an opportunity for seniors to work on their college applications or go on a college tour.

National Honor Society applications are due soon, and Homecoming is coming up, with a pep rally, a dance, spirit week and a football game.

### **Ashland High School Student Council**

Sarah Miksis and Bobby Abromovich presented. Student Council at AHS has done fundraising, purchased supplies for all departments, including a grill for school events. They are open to suggestions for future purchasing needs. Water bottle fillers were a recent purchase and installation at the high school, funded by the Student Council. Events – Clocker Idol, Pancake Breakfast, Bingo Night, all open to the community.

### **Updates from AHS**

Kelley St. Coeur discussed how they are enacting the cell phone policy – consistency across teachers with implementation. Students have been compliant, less distracted during instructional time. Coming up this week, 10th-grade students will take the PSAT. Seniors can work on college applications or go on a college tour. Other students have the ability to participate in a community service project. Currently, we have 240 students registered for the PSAT and 280 students signed up for community service.

### **Warrant Approvals**

Between September 26, 2024, and October 9, 2024, Paul Kendall, authorized by his signature payables in the amount of \$ 622,351.49. This includes General Fund expenses of \$ 288,987.14, Revolving expenses of \$ 305,605.35, and Grants expenses of \$ 27,759.00.

### **Superintendent's Report**

The Administrative team attended the ASHPAC Lighting the Way Awards this week. Parents of special education students can nominate staff to acknowledge their work and contributions to their children's education. Mr. Adams and Dr. Caira recently attended a New England School Superintendent's conference in Connecticut. At a recent Tri-County Superintendent's Roundtable meeting, the group discussed the fact that there is a limited pipeline of new staffers interested in Administration roles in Education. The interest in current high school students to pursue jobs in education is down from 18% to 4%.

Mr. Adams, Dr. Caira and Mr. Mathieu have been meeting monthly with the Ashland Educators Association (union) membership in an effort to build relationships. Many of the board members of the AEA are new this year.

### **Assistant Superintendent's Update**

Curriculum meetings have begun to review student's MCAS results by subject. Teachers are doing item analysis to better inform instructional practices. MCAS student results will be mailed home to families on Friday, 10/11/24. iReady assessments will also be shared with families during October conferences, and grade 6 iReady results will be mailed home to parents.

As an education evaluation update – teachers' goals have been submitted, each teacher has a professional practice goal and a student learning goal. The teacher evaluation process has begun, and 117 observations have already been completed by October 7.

CPI (Crisis Prevention) training was recently led by Katie Bent. The Mendon, Upton, Ashland, and Milford groups will be meeting in October. Year 2 and Year 3 teachers will be participating in Learning Walks to observe other teachers and their techniques in the classroom.

Raptor Technology has been implemented across schools for visitors and dismissals.

### **Policies**

#### **A second read of JLCED - Guidelines for Management of Life-Threatening Allergies**

Mr. Terry moved to approve the policy as presented. Ms. Culverwell seconded the motion. Vote:

Ms. Culverwell: AYE

Ms. Fitanides: AYE

Mr. Kendall: AYE

Mr. Terry: AYE

Ms. Tosti: AYE

### **Superintendent's Goals for 2024-2025**

Mr. Adams' goals with details will be posted on our website.

#### **Goal 1 - Resource Management - Provide a safe environment for all students and staff**

By May 2025, each school will conduct at least two appropriate safety drills (shelter in place, ALICE protocol, evacuation/reunification) and implement all the Ashland Public School Safety Committee recommendations.

#### **Goal 2 - District Policies**

The Superintendent will review our current district policies and develop a framework that identifies a three-year plan for updating all district policies to align with District-Wide Goals, Massachusetts General Laws, and exemplars from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

#### **Goal 3 - Curriculum and Programming**

The Superintendent will work with the Ashland Middle School principal and staff to develop and implement a new master schedule designed to maximize student learning and equitable access to resources. The new schedule will be developed during the 2024-25 school year and implemented in the 2025-26 school year.

#### **Goal 4 - Curriculum and Programming**

In collaboration with the Assistant Superintendent and the Ashland Education Association, the Superintendent will review procedures associated with educator evaluation, in order to ensure calibration and consistent processes across all schools by June 2025.

#### **Goal 5 - Resource Management - Provide a safe environment for all students and staff -**

#### **Provide facility enhancement and maintenance over the long term in a cost-efficient manner.**

The Superintendent will evaluate the current space needs at Henry Warren School and Pittaway School, to determine if a Statement of Interest (SOI) for future funding through the MSBA should be submitted by April 2025.

#### **Goal 6 - District Communication**

During the 2024-2025 school year press releases, social media posts, and a minimum of 2 in-depth spotlights on students, faculty, staff or programs will be distributed to the community and appropriate press outlets in an effort to highlight the strengths of the District and the excellent work being performed both in the Ashland Public Schools and the greater community by our faculty, staff, and students.

### **Goal 7 - Curriculum and Programming (District Wide Led by Assistant Superintendent)**

In collaboration with the Assistant Superintendent, the Superintendent will create systems to implement consistent Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) processes and procedures for the Henry Warren Elementary School and the David Mindess Elementary School by June of 2024, to begin in the 2024/2025 school year.

Mr. Kendall moves to approve the Superintendent's Goals as presented. Mr. Terry seconds. Vote:

Ms. Culverwell: AYE

Ms. Fitanides: AYE

Mr. Kendall: AYE

Mr. Terry: AYE

Ms. Tosti: AYE

### **MASC Resolutions**

It was determined that none of the School Committee members are available to attend the delegate assembly at the MASC conference in November.

### **Clubs and Activities**

Debate Club and new account for the Class of 2028 (current freshman class) to be added to the AHS Student Activities accounts. There are currently 46 students registered in the Google Classroom for the Debate Club, and they recently held a Bake Sale as a fundraiser. Mr. Kendall moves to approve the two new accounts as presented and further moves to give permission to Ms. St. Coeur to deposit and withdraw money from said accounts. Mr. Terry seconds the motion.

Vote:

Ms. Culverwell: AYE

Ms. Fitanides: AYE

Mr. Kendall: AYE

Mr. Terry: AYE

Ms. Tosti: AYE

### **Consent Agenda**

Mr. Terry moved to approve the Consent Agenda items. Ms. Fitanides seconds the motion.

Vote:

Ms. Culverwell: AYE

Ms. Fitanides: AYE

Mr. Kendall: AYE

Mr. Terry: AYE

Ms. Tosti: AYE

### **Reports of School Committee Members**

Ms. Fitanides attended the AHSPAC Lighting the Way event this week. It was a nice event to honor and recognize several teachers and staff members in the district.

Mr. Kendall attended FallFest, a fundraiser in town that raises money for youth sports and school teams.

Mr. Terry attended the Site Council meeting at AHS today. There were 20 attendees at the meeting. Attendees discussed the cell phone policy consistency. They also discussed the clubs available at the high school. There are lots of clubs with small groups of students attending.

Ms. Tosti attended the Wellness Subcommittee meeting recently.

At 7:26 pm, Ms. Fitanides moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Terry seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen King  
Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

### **Documents used during the meeting**

3C - Warrant Approvals - OCTOBER 9, 2024

4A - Copy of REVISED 5A 3 - Clean Copy of JLCED-R Guidelines

4B - Superintendent Goals 2024-2025

4C - MASC Resolutions 2024

4D - AHS SAA - Class of 2028, Debate Club

5A - Minutes - September 25, 2024

5B - G&D SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

5C- One-by-One Grant from 4Imprint

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