



**DISTRICT COMMITTEE
OPEN MEETING MINUTES
MEETING #1894
February 11, 2025**

Members Present

Thomas Hatem	Methuen	Chairperson
Julio Mejia	Lawrence	Vice Chair
William Tarbox	North Andover	Asst. Treasurer
Zoila Disla	Lawrence	
Annemarie Ms. Faris	Andover	
Bradley Jones	Methuen	
Edison Mr. Mercedes	Lawrence	

Members Absent

Others Present

John N. Lavoie	Superintendent-Director
Brenda Richardson	Assistant Superintendent
Melissa Ms. Martel	Director of Finance
Cheryl Dennis	District Recorder

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hatem called the meeting to order at 6:00PM Roll *Call by District Record: Ms. Faris (present), Ms. Disla (late arrival), Mr. Jones (present), Mr. Mejia (present), Mr. Mercedes (present), Mr. Tarbox (present), Mr. Hatem (present).*

2. MINUTES

a. Minutes of January 21, 2025

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to approve the minutes of January 21, 2025.

2ND: Mr. Jones

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#18901

3. FINANCE REPORT

a. Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report

b. Cash Balance Report

Ms. Martel presented the Cash Balance Report

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to accept the Cash Balance Report as reported.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#18902

c. Revolving Fund Report

d. Budget Report

e. FY Budget Presentation

Ms. Martel updated the District Committee on the FY26 Budget reviewing slides. Large budget drivers were pointed out, two slides directly from DESE, the detail of estimated revenues, assessment detail – most revenue is received from Chapter 70 – 75%, grants and donations. Mr. Jones asked for clarification of pupil services which Ms. Martel indicated it is part of instruction. Mr. Mercedes asked about donated vehicles which Ms. Martel replied they may go to autobody. Ms. Faris questioned if the classes were larger thereby posing an extra burden to instructors and questioned if another teacher could be obtained for core areas? Supt. Lavoie stated classes were based on a teacher to student ratio no higher than 25 to 1. Acknowledging GLTS was bringing in more students, Ms. Faris stated her concern relative to possible shortcuts occurring within the instruction of students. Supt. Lavoie stated GLTS ensures there are a sufficient number of teachers to students. Referencing the new positions slide, Mr. Mercedes asked how long had the positions been needed? Supt. Lavoie reviewed the actual positions on the slide stating that biotechnology was the only one that had been open for a year - we've posted for a year haven't been successful in securing one. The staff we are hiring is to meet the needs of students with specific learning issues. Mr. Mejia reported there are seven administration positions with increases of \$70000 without an explanation. Ms. Martel indicated it was a Step and COLA. Reviewing the organizational chart, Ms. Disla felt it was inaccurate. Do we still have a Director of child care? Supt. Lavoie responded there will not be a Director of child care next year – the person overseeing next year will be one of the Chap. 74 teachers. Ms. Faris expressed her concern with the number of individuals. Ms. Faris said there'll be a lead teacher and no director for that position? I'd like to eliminate a level in the middle. Supt. Lavoie stated that these teachers are not supervisors. They facilitate, they're a leader in the sense that they coordinate - they oversee the budget process for each program. Ms. Faris feels you can eliminate or merged together. Supt. Lavoie provided feedback stressing their value. Mr. Mejia indicated he had a problem with not receiving an overview and budget book in advance. It was discovered that Mr. Mejia and Ms. Faris regrettably did not receive the bound budget book in the mail while other members had. Mr. Mejia stated he was outraged at the million-dollar budget for the office of the superintendent and various salaries further stating he didn't understand why we're where we are with these salaries – these contracts are outrageous. Supt. Lavoie responded that the administrators' salaries are in line with other schools; and if you want to keep good people, we need to be competitive and the salaries are negotiated within their contracts. You cannot compare GLTS to Lawrence High School - the expertise required is very different and difficult to find – salaries are comparable to other technical schools. Mr. Mejia questioned why 15 administrators were required to run the school? Supt. Lavoie stressed that quality leadership leads to quality instruction. Mr. Mejia stated he was referring to administrators, not instructors and its way too much money. Supt. Lavoie said our budget is targeted on student needs and to meet those needs, we need administrators. My job is to ensure the school and students receive what they need – it's been improving inclemently. My team of administrators are the best I've worked with. Supt. Lavoie emphasized there is a lot to it. Mr. Mejia stated I'm not ok with the number of administrators we have. Mr. Jones questioned if changes to the curriculum or anything new originated from the state? Supt. Lavoie responded that some of the new curriculum was recommended by the Department of Education. Supt. Lavoie said I support this budget 100% and am extremely disappointed that you cannot support my work.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Donations

- BA Sciences, Ms. Sherry Foley, Salem, NH donated an Equinox Pump to our Biotechnology Program.
- Mr. Walter DiCarlo, Stoneham, MA donated a 2015 XV Subaru valued at \$8,600.

- b. Articles
- c. Public Participation

5. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

a. Out of State Travel

- Mr. Jean Gomez and Mr. Thomas Sullivan, Plumbing Instructors and students are asking to travel to Nashua, NH on March 5, 2025 to attend Viega LLC so that the students can learn how to install Propress and Megapress fittings, No Cost.

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to approve the Out of State Travel as presented.

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#18903

b. Admissions Report

c. Co-Op Report

Mr. Mercedes commented on the fact that just five students from cosmetology were out on co-op and expressed his desire to explore ideas on how to increase those numbers.

d. Construction Project Update

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on the Construction Projects stating the new hangar was 80% complete and should be finalized in March - a final visit with the FAA will be scheduled for April. The students are handling the electrical inside the landscape barn, carpentry students are handling the partitions and framing, and the HVAC work is being completed by students as well. Work on the café is at a standstill – have to get a sewer line in and move an air handler within that space. The barn and café should be done by the end of the school year. Mr. Jones asked if the sewer line were coming from the driveway? Supt. Lavoie responded no, it's coming out of the building, diagonally across the road. Ms. Faris asked if these challenges were new as it was her understanding they were to open in November when she started. Supt. Lavoie indicated delays were primarily due to Health Department issues.

e. Methuen City Council Mtg. Update

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on the Methuen City Council Mtg. Chair Hatem introduced Attorney Wayne Simmons who was invited along with Mr. Jones to address the District Committee on the request to come before the Methuen Town Council Meeting. Mr. Simmons stated that Chair Hatem and Mr. Jones were not speaking for the District Committee when they met with members of the City Council. The Council requested information dating back to 2010 with regards to Supt. Lavoie's salary. At the City Council Meeting they indicated some things were missing and we're in the process of tracking that down. They requested the information in a digital format which was provided and we'll answer additional questions in a letter by the end of the week. Supt. Lavoie added that the majority of documents requested had been sent with the remainder by the end of this week.

6. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. District Committee Priorities

b. Policy

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. TABLED MATTERS

10. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT

a. Resignations

b. Leaves of Absence

c. Retirements

d. Appointments

- Katherine Martinez, Cafeteria Utility Aide, Effective 1/27/25
- Jamie Murnane, Cafeteria Utility Aide, Effective 1/27/25
- Massiel Vasquez, Special Education Bilingual Family Liaison, 1/27/25
- Nhuy Phan, Long Term Sub, Math, Effective 1/21/25
- Kimberly Beck, Employer Engagement Manager, Effective 2/3/25

e. Job Postings

- Field Support Service Assistant, Flexible hours, 7 hours/day, 35 hours/week, year-round position, \$40/hour, 35 hours or \$70,000/year, non-unit position, funding through Facility Rental. Replacement position, not filled since 2021. (see attached updated job description)

Ms. Disla noted the position was almost full time and did not include specific job requirements. Supt. Lavoie said the requirements were not listed – they'll be out in the field with the people attending the games and will work with the renters. Ms. Disla said that what Supt. Lavoie read was not in the packet. Asst. Supt. Richardson read the job description.

MOTION: Mr. Tarbox moved to approve the job posting as presented.

2ND: Mr. Jones

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#18904

- Clean Energy Careers Program, March, 2025-February, 2027, part-time to be supported with the Merrimack Valley Renewal Fund Grant managed by the Attorney General's Office, New Position. (see attached job description)

Ms. Disla stated this was similar to the previous posting - job posting for a manager without necessary requirements. Supt. Lavoie indicated this position is grant funded. Mr. Jones questioned if the grant ends does the position to which Supt. Lavoie responded yes.

MOTION: Mr. Tarbox moved to approve the job posting as presented.

2ND: Ms. Disla

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#18905

- New Positions for SY2026

1-Math Teacher

2-Reading Teachers

2-Wellness Teachers

1-Multi-Learner Teacher
1-Multi-Para Professional

Supt. Lavoie stated these positions haven't been posted as yet – they're necessary for next year.

MOTION: Ms. Faris moved to approve the new teacher positions.

2ND: Mr. Jones

VOTE: Unanimously Approved
#18906

11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved for a 5-minute recess.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

VOTE: Unanimously Approved
#18907

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to enter Executive Session at 8:03PM

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved
#18908

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to accept MAPSA offer.

2ND: Mr. Mercedes

VOTE: Unanimously Approved
#18911

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to adjourn at 8:45PM

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved
#18912

Respectfully Submitted



Cheryl Dennis
District Recorder

Minutes Reviewed



Supt. Lavoie N. Lavoie
Superintendent-Director