Approved by the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee on May 15, 2025

HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

5 School Street, Wenham, MA 01984 • Tel. 978-468-5310

School Committee Meeting (agenda)
Buker Elementary School Multipurpose Room
In-Person Meeting
Zoomlink is for Public Comment Only
Meeting ID: 87176588533
Thursday, May 1, 2025
7:00 p.m. - 9:05 p.m.

Present:
Dana Allara
Julia Campbell
Jen Carr
David Frenkel
Trent Honda
Amy Kunberger
David Polito

Also Present:
Eric Tracy, HWRSD Superintendent
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent

1. Call to Order
At 7:00 p.m. Dana Allara called the meeting to order.

2. Pledge of Allegiance
All those in attendance rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Dana Allara reminded the community that the meeting is being recorded and live streamed via HWCam.

3. Citizen's Comments Exhibit
Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify themself by name and address. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material.

There was no citizen comment.

4. Review of School Committee Protocol Exhibit
Jen Carr read School Committee protocol number 1.

5. Review of School Committee Mission Statement Exhibit
Trent Honda read the following from the mission statement: *The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District School Committee's mission is to ensure our schools create graduates with a passion for lifelong learning together with the critical skills needed to maximize their potential.*

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee will lead and inspire a District that attracts and retains high-quality educators, by acknowledging and respecting their expertise and professionalism.

6. Consent Agenda

a. Warrants Exhibit
   - Voucher No. 26
   - Voucher No. 1041
   - Voucher No. 4100
   - Voucher No. 4101
   - Voucher No. 4102
   - Voucher No. 4103
   - Voucher No. 4104
   - Voucher No. 4105

b. Minutes
   - April 17, 2025 Exhibit

c. Donations
   - HW Edfund Mini-grant - Empowering Student Voices Through a 4th Grade Newspaper Club; $2,399.81 Exhibit

Dana Allara requested to hold the minutes from the consent agenda.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee approve the consent agenda minus the April 17 minutes as presented in the agenda packet.

Motion by: David Polito **Seconded by: Amy Kunberger**

MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

Dana Allara requested that on page 2 of the minutes under citizens comment the spelling of Beth Herr's name be corrected.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee approve the minutes of April 17, 2025 with correction to the spelling of Beth Herr's name.

Motion by: David Polito **Seconded by: Jen Carr**

MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

7. New Business

a. M.A.S.S. Certificate of Academic Excellence

Superintendent Tracy presented the M.A.S.S. Certificate of Academic Excellence to high school valedictorian Madeline Carey.

b. Updated Cell Phone Policy Presentation Exhibit

Principal Menegoni and student Kendall Arnold discussed the proposed new high school cell phone policy and next steps. They also discussed the The STUDY Act, a new bill that seeks to implement a “bell-to-bell" restriction on access to cell phones and personal electronic devices during school hours to improve the overall learning environment and school culture. It also proposes standards for social media companies that encourage safe and responsible use. It was suggested that the district look into having campus call boxes installed for emergencies. The cell phone policy will appear in the student handbook for final review/approval by the School Committee by the end of June.

c. Northshore Education Consortium Approved FY26 Budget Exhibit

Superintendent Tracy discussed the Northshore Education Consortium Annual Report and FY26 budget.

d. Discuss SC Retreat Dates

The Committee discussed proposed dates for the School Committee retreat and agreed on August 20, 2025.

e. Appoint School Committee Subcommittees

Amy Kunberger suggested that for continuity sake it makes sense for members to remain on their current subcommittees.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee reorganize our subcommittees by remaining on our current subcommittees.

Motion by: Amy Kunberger **Seconded by: Jen Carr**

MOTION PASSED 5-1-1 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Kunberger and Polito voted yes, Member Frenkel voted no and Member Honda abstained)

8. Finance & Operations

a. FY25 - Q3 Financial Forecast Exhibit, Exhibit, Exhibit

Assistant Superintendent Leone provided a presentation on the Q3 financial forecast for FY25.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee approve the FY25 Operating Expense Budget Transfers as recommended here in by the Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Administration and as presented on the previous slide entitled “FY25 Q3 Transfer Request”.

Motion by: David Polito **Seconded by: Julia Campbell**

MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Administration to prepay FY26 OOD Tuitions with FY25 funds not to exceed the amounts established by MGL Chapter 40 § 4E & Chapter 71 § 71D.

Motion by: David Polito **Seconded by: Jen Carr**

MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

9. Committee Report

a. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee next meeting June 2. In response to a question, it was noted that the subcommittee will bring to the full School Committee in the fall a report on the capital submission and approval process.
b. Policy Subcommittee - next meeting tentatively rescheduled to May 21. In response to a question, it was noted that the subcommittee is still working on the super-majority "cheat sheet".
c. Negotiations Subcommittee - next meeting Monday, May 5.
d. Secretary Report - David Polito will resend email to members and get updates. He will check on executive session minutes.

10. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Tracy noted today is National Principal Day, tomorrow is School Lunch Hero Day and next week kicks off Teacher Appreciation Week. He discussed his reading to classrooms for Neurodiversity Month. In response to a question, he and Assistant Superintendent Leone discussed the previous report on the high school roof and stated that they would get back to the Committee on whether there was a cost for that report.

11. Chair's Report

Dana Allara stated that she would be doing office hours on Tuesdays from 10:00 to 11:00 at Central Office and Amy Kunberger stated that she would be doing office hours on Thursdays from 1:00 to 2:00 at the Library. In response to a question, Dana Allara discussed a legal opinion that was asked for by either one or both of the Select Boards regarding a MGL that would allow a regional school committee to hold a vote on a debt exclusion such as the one before us that would only require a majority approval of the two towns. She wanted to be clear that this opinion was not asked for by this Committee or by the district. She stated that she believes this opinion was obtained as part of the Select Boards doing their due diligence on this matter. She stated that she had seen the opinion and would share it with the members.

12. Topics for Future Meetings

13. Adjourn

I move to adjourn at 9:05 p.m.

Motion by: David Frenkel **Seconded by: Trent Honda**

MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)