

MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee
School Committee Meeting - Budget Vote
Monday, April 28, 2025 - 6:30 p.m.
Hoosac Valley High School - Resource Room
125 Savoy Road, Cheshire, MA

PRESENT: Adam Emerson, Erin Milne, John Duval, Andy Przystanski, Robert Tetlow, Fred Lora

ABSENT:

OTHERS: Superintendent Aaron Dean,

104313 Call to Order

Chairman Adam Emerson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

104314 Public Comment or Question - None

104315 Approval of Minutes - March 24, 2025

MOTION: On Motion of Erin Milne and second by Andy Przystanski

VOTED: to approve the March 24, 2025 School Committee minutes. The vote was unanimous.

104316 Report of Business Manager - None

104317 Report of Sub-Committee

A. Policy Meeting - Aaron - going through policy with MASC - 2 sections so far with suggested revisions, will be making recommendations and bringing them to the committee. Next meeting will have another section to review. At the end of the process will give you a total revised manual for review. Later in the Superintendent report, will review the Competency determination graduation requirements.

104318 Communications

A. Lyndsey McGinnis - Overnight Trip to New York - Rock Climbing - Lyndsey presented an upcoming trip, one of the series of the adventure class. Initially was going to be an overnight, but will do a day trip to cut down on the cost. Cost is coming from Pathway Grant funding, using the van. Trip is in New Paltz, New York for the last piece of the rock climbing puzzle. 9 students will attend. 3 certified guides with them. 3:1 ratio. No cost to the students. 2 hour road trip, May 19, 2025, Monday, leave at 6:00 a.m. and return later in the evening. All students will make up their work.

MOTION: On Motion of Erin Milne and second by Andy Przystanski:

VOTED: to approve the trip to New York. The vote was unanimous.

B. Rebecca Koczela/Wendy Bennett - Senior Class Advisors - Trip to Brownstone Adventure Park - Connecticut. - Rebecca and Wendy reported on their trip. The students voted to go on their senior trip to go to Brownstone Park, Wednesday, June 4, 2025. The park is on a lake, they have ziplines, inflatables, a beach, 35 out of 45 students that are committing. The cost would be \$20.00 for students and their account can cover the remaining. Will sign a waiver, permission slip before they go. Inability to pay wouldn't prevent anyone from going. Rebecca is looking to get a school bus, not sure what the fee would be if they need to hire a bus.

MOTION: On Motion of Erin Milne and second by Andy Przystanski:

VOTED: to approve the senior class trip to Brownstone Adventure Park in Connecticut. The vote was unanimous.

C. Rebecca Koczela - New York City Trip - June 19, 2025 - Rebecca and Amanda Watroba - had a great year with the musical and kids, the momentum and enthusiasm has been great. Taking them to NYC to take in a Broadway show. The Great Gatsby - one day trip. Have lunch, see a show and head back home. Approximately 25 students and 5 adults. \$40.00 per student. No issues with inability to pay.

MOTION: On Motion of Andy Przystanski and second by Fred Lora:

VOTED: To approve the New York City Trip. The vote was unanimous.

104319 Report of Superintendent -

A. Organizational Chart - After the last meeting, Aaron and Fred met, Fred did a mock chart, trying to put his vision together. Aaron reviewed the draft chart with the committee.

B. Absenteeism - Aaron went over the attendance data - Elementary: 409 students -chronically absent - 23% - High School - 301 students - 27% absent rate - Middle School - 303 students - 20% absent rate. There are a number of circumstances for the absenteeism. We send letters out to families for chronic absenteeism, working on the wording of the letters. We have 30 or so cases with DCF in the courts. Doing due diligence to get students in school. High school numbers are a little skewed, some students are out due to internships. Continually working on this. Teams at each school are looking at this and taking steps to improve. Our target is 95%. We are between 90-92%.

C. Competency determination requirement - What we looked at in terms of the courses that were required for C.D. We added them here and crafted a language that uses the state language exactly as it was put together. We laid out these other courses that the students have to pass in order to get C.D., through the 10th grade curriculum. What we can do for students who did not get passing grades and students who transferred in we had to address as well to make sure we have a final say in terms of matching the transcripts with courses. These are the recommended changes that the committee needs to adopt so we can graduate our students this year. Adam Emerson - second bullet - Algebra I/Algebra II, Integrated math is that a passing grade in all three or in one course? Aaron: either/or. Adam, if approved, this would take effect immediately so students who are seniors now, would this apply to them? Aaron: yes. Technically, it already does, students who did not pass MCAS could not take a retest from this point forward. Talking about a couple of students, they should meet this requirement.

Keeping consistent with the state language: recommended updated language for committee to adopt:

Students must meet HVRSD requirements for a competency determination to receive a highschool diploma. These requirements are in addition to the graduation requirements.

As deformed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the competency determination shall be based on the academic standards and curriculum frameworks for tenth graders and shall represent a determination that a particular student has demonstrated mastery of a common core of skills, competencies and knowledge in these areas by satisfactorily completing coursework that has been certified by the student's district as showing mastery of the skills, competencies, and knowledge contained in the state academic standard and curriculum frameworks in the areas measured by the MCAS high school tests described in section one I administered in 2023, and in any additional areas determined by the board.

Students who have previously earned a CD through a regular or retest administration of the MCAS (including the November 2024 retest) or through a DESE appeal process, have earned their CD.

Students in HVRSD who have not yet earned their competency determination through previous MCAS administrations can meet the requirement for a competency determination through the following:

- * Receive a passing grade in the equivalent of a grade 10 English course; add the word AND
- * Receive a passing grade in the equivalent of an Algebra II/ Integrated Math equivalency; Take out Algebra I: add the word AND
- * Receive a passing grade in the equivalent of a Biology or Physics or an equivalent course.

Students who do not meet the required passing grades in the prescribed courses may enroll in summer school, credit recovery courses or be scheduled to take additional coursework by their school counselor that meets the MA Curriculum Framework Standards. These opportunities will provide students who have not yet met the CD requirements with additional chances to fulfill the graduation standard.

If a student transfers into HVRSD at any point during their high school career, a transcript review will be conducted to ensure that coursework from the previous school aligns with HVRSD coursework for the CD and graduation requirements. The principal shall be the arbiter for all disagreements in transcript reviews. An appeal of the principal's decision may be made to the Superintendent. The Superintendent's decision on transcript reviews related to CD is final.

Adam asked for a Motion to adopt. Motion by Andy and second by Fred, Any discussion? Erin questioned the way the math is phrased, wondering if naming several options is going to limit us? Should we say Algebra I or higher? Aaron sent it to the principal to see what they used in the past and this is what was given. The way it is worded is unclear, do we need all three to pass? Discussion with the committee on language. Should we add an AND in all three bullets? Remove Algebra I?

Erin suggested to amend the second bullet "receive a passing grade in Algebra II or the integrated math equivalent" which uses the exact language in Mass. Core.

Erin Milne: motion to amend and second by Andy Przystanski: through the following course equivalencies - Receive a passing grade in the equivalent of a grade 10 English course, and Receive a passing grade in Algebra II or the Integrated Math equivalency, and Receive a passing grade in the equivalent of a Biology or Physics or an equivalent course.

VOTED: to approve the Competency Determination Update. The vote was unanimous.

104320 Chairman's Report - None

104321 Unfinished business - Academy Day - May 4th - Aaron will check with counselors on who is attending.

104322 New Business - None

104323 Action Items

104324 For the Good of the Order

Erin Milne: attended several meetings with the finance committee and town select board - thanked Aaron and Erika- information very well received, a testament for materials that were put together.

Fred Lora: mock interviews with seniors - very well attended. Monday is election day - go out and vote.

Adam Emerson: invited, but wasn't able to attend, our students who graduated from the CNA program -congrats to Aaron and leadership team getting our students career ready. This work is very important and sets our students up for success.

MOTION: On Motion of Erin Milne and second by Andy Przystanski

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary