

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
June 18, 2025

The regular meeting of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee was held in the school cafeteria. The following members, staff and others were present:

Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chair
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone
Mark J. Potter of Douglas
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chair
James M. Mitchell of Sutton
Tyler D. Bartlett of Upton
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge

Members Absent:

Paul J. Braza of Milford
Jan P. Hanratty of Millbury
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Anthony E. Steele, Asst. Superintendent/Principal
Christopher C. Pilla, Treasurer
Nicole M. Ferguson, Business Manager
Dr. Matthew Connors, Vocational Director
Michele Denise, Vocational Director
Kerri Baltramaitis, Vocational Director
Peter Wojnar, Advisory Board Chair
Robert Dolegiewicz, Facilities Manager
Lisa Ciarametaro, Nutrition Educator
Helge Liedtke of Millville
Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the Chair, Mr. Hall. Dr. Fitzpatrick was notified in advance that Mr. Braza, Mr. Hanratty, and Mr. Koopman would not be in attendance.

Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts seconded by Mr. Intinarelli it was unanimously voted to waive reading of the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting of May 15, 2025 and to accept the minutes as written.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – C. Pilla

3.1. The Treasurer's Report was presented dated April 30, 2025. Mr. Pilla indicated that the circulated handout showed a beginning balance date of 3/31/2024, which was a typographical error. Mr. Pilla indicated that he would share the original paperwork with the correct beginning balance date of March 31, 2025, with Dr. Fitzpatrick's Administrative Assistant. The report reflected an ending balance of \$4,652,777.34 in Total Funds, including \$1,635,504.15 in Project Funds and \$3,017,273.19 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted by the Committee to approve April 30, 2025, Treasurer's Report as presented.

3.2. The School Committee was presented with the right-to-borrow paperwork. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted to move to allow the District Treasurer to be authorized under the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 16(G) as amended by Chapter 134 of the Acts of 1972, and with approval of the Chair of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee, to borrow money from time to time in

anticipation of revenue for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and to issue a note as may be given for a period of less than one year in accordance with General Laws Chapter 44, Section 17.

Item 4. Student Council Representatives – Maddison Dos Santos & Isla Koopman

Dr. Fitzpatrick was notified in advance that the student representatives, Maddison Dos Santos and Isla Koopman, had scheduling conflicts and would be unable to attend the meeting.

Item 5. Student Recognition – Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick

5.1. Representing the Liedtke family, Helge Liedtke of Millville shared that his wife and daughters were unanticipatedly delayed, and they asked that the student recognition proceed as scheduled. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the Committee that Helge and Helena Liedtke, the parents of Vivienne, a rising junior in the Biotechnology program at BVT, and Lara, an incoming freshman at BVT, discovered Volt Hockey in 2022. The Liedtke's created a U.S. Volt Hockey team named the Rolling Warriors. Volt Hockey is an adaptive sport, utilizes motorized wheelchairs that are joystick-operated, making them accessible for individuals with limited mobility. Dr. Fitzpatrick formally recognized Vivienne for her outstanding contributions to the Rolling Warriors, the first American Volt Hockey team to win the North American Volt Hockey Championship in Toronto, Canada. Vivienne's sister, Lara, is an instrumental part of the hockey program, supporting the team both on and off the rink in Canada, and trained as a referee for Volt Hockey in Norway last year. The Committee was shown an informative video clip about the Rolling Warriors, and then Mr. Liedtke spoke about the team, its success, and what it meant to his family. Mr. Finn and Mr. Steele commended the family.

Item 6. District Clerk Appointment

6.1. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Cray, it was unanimously voted to appoint Anthony E. Steele, II District Clerk of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District during the entirety of his superintendent-director term commencing July 1, 2025.

Item 7. Annual Wellness Assessment Report – Lisa Ciarametaro

Nutrition Educator Lisa Ciarametaro presented the Annual Wellness Report for the 2024-25 school year. The presentation included staff news, new menu items, catered events, district support, kitchen improvements, training and development, new à la carte items, special events, safety, board of health updates, and anticipated changes. The Body Mass Index (BMI) for yearly comparison was also shared with the Committee. Mr. Finn noticed an increase in the number of students who declined to be weighed. Physical Education Teachers, Mr. Locwin and Mr. Burke, inform students that the BMI data is shared anonymously and that students' names are not attached to their height and weight. Mr. Finn suggested that the participant's rationale be further investigated to obtain a better BMI. Mr. Hall also asked for the number of participants to calculate the percentage compared to the total number of students. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that Lisa trained under Martha Pellegrino, the long-time school nutritionist, before Martha's retirement.

Item 8. Vocational Director's Update –Dr. M. Connors, K. Baltramaitis

8.1. Vocational Directors Dr. Connors and Ms. Baltramaitis presented the end-of-year

vocational report. A Cooperative Education Report for Spring 2025 was shared in a handout, which included the Class of 2025 Co-Op placement data, an overview of Co-Op office operations, and a recap of Career Signing Day. The handout included pictures and descriptions of students working on vocational projects and community outreach. Dr. Connors shared some examples, which included work for Heritage Park in Upton, Massachusetts State Police in Milford, Douglas Public Schools in Douglas, Senior Center Van in Millville, Whitinsville Social Library in Northbridge, Whittier Farms in Sutton, Douglas Common Preservation Society in Douglas, Police Department in Millville, and Fire Museum in Uxbridge. In addition to many in-house projects at Blackstone Valley Tech.

8.2. Career Signing Day was held on May 27, 2025; it was a well-attended event. Many students are heading directly into the workforce with their Co-Op employer or military service.

Item 9. General Advisory Update – Peter Wojnar

9.1. Ms. Denise presented the Committee with the Vocational Department's Advisory Board 2024-25 Report via a slide presentation and thanked Mr. Wojnar for his contributions. Mr. Wojnar shared that the General and Program Advisory Meetings were well-attended, the frameworks for shops had been reviewed, and work with Shop Leeds regarding the curriculum had been completed. Four hundred and twelve advisory members represent eighteen vocational shops across industry, community, parents, and students. Mr. Wojnar thanked Dr. Fitzpatrick and the Committee for selecting Mr. Steele as Dr. Fitzpatrick's successor. Dr. Fitzpatrick thanked Mr. Wojnar and extended his best wishes.

Item 10. Business Manager – N. Ferguson

10.1. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted to award the construction contract for the foundation and site development to Zeyco Construction, LLC of Boston, MA as the most responsible and eligible bidder, with a total bid of \$89,000.

10.2. Donation Approval(s)

a. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted to accept a donation of miscellaneous equipment from Dan Jarosh which will be used for instructional and training purposes in the HVAC program at BVT.

b. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Finn, it was unanimously voted to accept a donation of miscellaneous equipment from Rich and Marion Leonhard which will be used for instructional and training purposes in the Advanced Manufacturing program at BVT.

Item 11. Assistant Superintendent-Director's Report - A. Steele

11.1. Robert Dolegiewicz, Facilities Manager, shared the Facilities Department's 2025 Summer Projects and 2025 Summer Preventative Maintenance Plan handouts with the Committee. Some of the proposed summer projects include installing the foundation of the HVAC/VOC storage building and erecting a steel building for HVAC/VOC storage, prepare the courtyard parking lot for paving, renovate Café Annex into a music classroom and 430B into office space, supply HVAC connections and fire protection to the cafeteria freezer, install exterior drainage and landscape around the cafeteria/new exterior cooler units, finalize design plans and procure equipment for the Culinary Arts renovation, demolish the old discuss lunch

pad and landscape, install additional lighting in the HVAC shop, update (remove and replace) lighting in the Advanced Manufacturing pod, add service cameras to the Automotive Collision shop, add power to the plumbing shop, assist Technology Department with ninety-two Wi-Fi router installations, and remove trees and organic waste behind the MRS building.

11.2. The Senior Class Day and Memorial Scholarship Night were held on May 27, 2025.

a. A 2025 Scholarship Report was shared with the Committee. The report showed a grand total of 2025 dollars awarded at \$2,850,155 with a total renewable value of \$9,230,665.

11.3. Mr. Steele reported that the Spring Sports Awards Night honoring its student-athletes was held at the school on May 28, 2025. The program from the evening was shared with the Committee.

11.4. Mr. Steele reported that the Class of 2025 Commencement Ceremony was held at the DCU Center, Worcester, MA, on May 29, 2025. The evening ceremony celebrated the accomplishments of 315 graduates with all pomp, pageantry, and pride they deserve. Mr. Steele shared a copy of the graduation program with the Committee.

11.5. Mr. Steele informed the members that the end-of-year procedures for seniors have been completed. Assistant Principals Catherine Proctor and an offer extended to David Champagne. A full administrative team for next school year and in good shape. The last day of school on June 17th kicked off with the Last Day Wave, which means the summer projects are underway – summer cleaning and preparing the building for a return to school.

11.6. Admissions Update: Mr. Steele shared a handout titled Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Vocational Technical Education, 603 CMR 4.00 with the School Committee. This document shows the proposed amendments to portions of 603 CMR 4.00 by ~~striketrough~~ (language deleted) and underline (new language) of the policy as it was voted by BESE on May 2025.

The proposed new guidelines transition from the current merit-based admissions (scholastic, attendance, behavior, recommendation and interview) policy to a qualified lottery with attendance, behavior, and interest being the determining criteria to enter. Written and submitted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), for vote by the BESE, these regulations could undermine the integrity of these vital institutions, jeopardizing the opportunities they provide to our students and communities. Ultimately creating a (weighted or unweighted) lottery admissions system that also has an effect on placement in the programs upon acceptance.

Mr. Steele provided an overview of the shared policy, as voted, which serves as a guideline for the criteria each Massachusetts vocational school must include in its Admissions policy. A discussion ensued about how to develop thoughtful solutions for the fair implementation of a lottery among its member towns, given that additional guidance from DESE had yet to be received. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that the unpredictability of the lottery could deter some students from applying, but he is concerned about the unintended consequences. The mandated lottery suggestions are not well thought out, and admissions should not be a random lottery process. It certainly raises more questions than answers.

Mr. Finn asked how students would be selected via a lottery and whether it would be done on a per-town basis. Mr. Steele shared that DESE provided schools with a framework, but the implementation is up to the school to set parameters within its admission policy. The 5-year rolling average of eighth-grade enrollment in K-12 or the eighth-grade enrollment for each town gives an operational ratio that changes each year. The fairest way is to look at the Department of Education enrollment for operational ratio, to determine the number of spots per town. In essence, thirteen min-lotteries, one for each town. It's not a simple spin of a wheel. Mr. Steele described various scenarios that could unfold and considered how to address potential unintended consequences.

11.7. Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trip Request(s)

a. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted to grant initial conditional approval for an overnight/out-of-state field trip requests for 18 Culinary Arts students and four chaperones to travel to Florida to observe the Food and Hospitality Industry at Disney World in April of 2027 for planning purposes.

Item 12. Signatory Authorizations - J. Hall

12.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to empower the Superintendent-Director, Anthony E. Steele, II, as an authorized signatory for the Regional School District commencing July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, as it pertains to Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District purchase orders, contracts, grants, and other legally binding documents between the District and any/all outside agencies.

12.2. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to empower the Business Manager, Nicole M. Ferguson, as an authorized signatory for the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District commencing July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, as it pertains to Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District purchase orders, contracts, grants, and other legally binding documents between the District and any/all outside agencies.

Item 13. Budget Report – G. Finn

13.1. The FY26 Budget and Stabilization/Savings Account status reports as of May 29, 2025, were available at the meeting. The report indicates all thirteen sending towns have approved the budget at their annual town meeting.

13.2. Annual Town Meeting Status Reports

Mr. Finn shared information on the annual town meeting actions on the district's budget advising that the budget secured unanimous approval from all thirteen member towns.

13.2.a. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that the Town of Milford voted in favor of the budget on May 19. Milford also favorably supported the stabilization account.

13.2.b. The Town of Hopedale voted in favor of the budget on May 20. Dr. Fitzpatrick reported that in Hopedale the favorable vote to establish a stabilization account occurred on May 21, 2024, at the Town Meeting.

13.2.c. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that he joined Mr. Finn at the annual meeting in the Town of Blackstone where Blackstone voted in favor of the budget on May 27. Blackstone also favorably supported the stabilization account.

13.2.d. Mr. Hall shared that the Town of Bellingham voted in favor of the budget on May 28. Bellingham also favorably supported the stabilization account.

Item 14. Superintendent-Director's Report - Michael F. Fitzpatrick

14.1. A letter dated June 18, 2025 from Dr. Fitzpatrick to Dr. Patrick Tutwiler was shared with the Committee. With the favorable action taken by our member community of Bellingham on May 28, 2025, the letter formally makes DESE aware that the school district has secured the necessary local municipality votes to establish a stabilization account. Funding this newly established account is expected to be accomplished via grants, donation, unanticipated revenue, and line-item transfers.

14.2. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the committee that he attended the M.A.S.S. Spring meeting on May 22, 2025 in Marlborough where he was recognized for his fifty-three years of service during the meeting.

14.3. The BVT Annual Golf Tournament was held on June 9, 2025, at Highfields Golf and Country Club in Grafton. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that it was a fun-filled day and a huge success, traditionally raising approximately \$15,000, which enhances the educational opportunities and athletic activities for BVT students.

14.4. An FY25 Grant Update as of June 11, 2025 was shared with the Committee. The update shows a Total FY25 To-Date as \$2,865,810 with a Total Approved for Future Years as \$2,863,310.

14.5. The Class of 2019 Five-Year Alumni Study was shared with the Committee for their review.

14.6. Notification of Resignation(s)

a. A Notification of Resignation letter dated May 19, 2025, from Kaitlin Bird, Math Teacher, gave notice that she will not return to BVT next school year, was accepted.

b. A Notification of Resignation letter dated May 14, 2025, from Tim LaRocca, Reading Teacher, gave notice that he will not return to BVT next school year, was accepted.

c. A Notification of Resignation letter dated June 6, 2025, from Raymond Valois, Carpentry Instructor, with an effective date of June 17, 2025, was accepted.

Item 15. New Business

Dr. Fitzpatrick shared a BVT School Committee Report Card of impressive recognition with an A+ on such subjects as completion rate, scholarship assistance, budget approval, special recognitions, special savings account, future improvement, grand acquisitions with each member of the School Committee. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that he was proud of the shared partnerships with the Committee and asked that they continue to support Mr. Steele during the transition to his new role next year indicated that he leaves them with a positive report card.

Item 16. Items for the Good of the Committee:

The monthly compilation of news clippings and correspondence packet was provided at the meeting for members to review individually.

Item 17. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on August 21, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. without Dr. Fitzpatrick.

Item 18. *Executive Session Per MGL Chpt. 30A, §21(a) # 2

On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, a roll call vote was taken to go into executive session at 7:56 p.m. because discussion of this subject in open session would be detrimental to the School District. The roll call was as follows:

Mr. Hall – Yes	Mr. Broderick – Yes	Mr. Finn – Yes
Mr. Potter – Yes	Mr. Yitts – Yes	Mr. Intinarelli – Yes
Mr. Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Bartlett – Yes	Mr. Ebbeling – Yes
Mr. Cray – Yes		

On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, a roll call vote was taken to come out of executive session at 8:01 p.m. The roll call was as follows:

Mr. Hall – Yes	Mr. Broderick – Yes	Mr. Finn – Yes
Mr. Potter – Yes	Mr. Yitts – Yes	Mr. Intinarelli – Yes
Mr. Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Bartlett – Yes	Mr. Ebbeling – Yes
Mr. Cray – Yes		

Item. 19. Decide: Release Status of Executive Session Minutes

19.1. Decide: Release Status of Exec. Session Minutes of January 18, 2024:

On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was voted to release the minutes of the executive session of January 18, 2025 because the subject matter would not be detrimental to the District.

19.2. Act Upon Deliberations Conducted During Executive Session was not needed.

On behalf of the District School Committee, the Chair extended a special Thank You to Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick for his 53 years of service in education and 31 years of dedication to the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District and best wishes for a happy retirement.

Item 20. Meeting Closure:

20.1. The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8:03 p.m.

20.2. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted to adjourn at 8:03 p.m.

Listing of materials used in the meeting:

- Item 2.1. Minutes of Meeting of May 15, 2025
- Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report dated April 30, 2025 (available at meeting)
- Item 3.2 Suggested Motion – BVVRSD Treasurer's Right-to-Borrow
- Item 6.1. Suggested Motion – BVVRSD District Clerk Appointment
- Item 7.0. Wellness Committee BVT Cafeteria Newsletter/End of Year Report
- Item 8.1. Cooperative Education Report Spring 2025/Vocational Projects (available at meeting)
- Item 10.1. Suggested Motion – BVVRSD General Contractor Foundation & Site Development
- Item 10.2.a. Donation Letter, Various Equipment for the HVAC Program
- Item 10.2.b. Donation Letter, Various Equipment for the Advanced Manufacturing Program
- Item 11.1. Facilities Department 2025 Summer Projects & Maintenance (available at meeting)
- Item 11.2.a. Class of 2025 BVT Scholarship & Awards Report \$9,230,665
- Item 11.3. Spring Sports Awards Night Program (available at meeting)
- Item 11.4. Class of 2025 BVT Graduation Program
- Item 11.6. Proposed Amendments to Regulations, 603 CMR 4.00 (available at meeting)
- Item 11.7. Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trip Request Culinary Arts to Disney, Orlando, FL
- Item 12.1. Suggested Motion – BVVRSD Signatory Authorization Anthony E. Steele, II
- Item 12.2. Suggested Motion – BVVRSD Signatory Authorization Nicole M. Ferguson
- Item 13.1. BVT FY26 Budget Status Report dated May 29, 2025 & Stabilization Account Report
- Item 14.1. Correspondence Letter to Dr. Patrick Tutwiler dated June 18, 2025
- Item 14.4. FY25 Grants to Date (as of June 11, 2025)
- Item 14.5. Class of 2019 5 Year Grad Study
- Item 14.6.a. Notification of Resignation Letter: Kaitlin Bird, Math Teacher
- Item 14.6.b. Notification of Resignation Letter: Tim LaRocca, Reading Teacher
- Item 14.6.c. Notification of Resignation Letter: Raymond Valois, Carpentry Instructor
- Item 16. Items for the Good of the Committee
- Item 17.1. Items for the Good of the Committee
- Item 18.1. CONFIDENTIAL Non-Released Executive Session Minutes of January 18, 2024

Respectfully submitted by,



Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary