



**Monomoy Regional School District - Monomoy Regional School Committee  
Annual MRSC Workshop Minutes  
Thursday, July 24, 2025 at 5:00 PM  
Monomoy Regional High School Library, 75 Oak Street, Harwich, MA 02645**

**Members present:** Meredith Henderson, Brad Schiff, Steve Davol, Jackie Zibrat-Long, Bre Rose, Betty Gray, Ryan Edwards

**Members not present:** Ryan Clarke (joined at 6:25 p.m.)

**Administrators present:** Scott Carpenter, Robin Millen, Michael MacMillan, Joy Jordan

**Guests present:** Jeff Dykens, Mark Kelleher, Charles Gruszka, Cindy Gushee

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. by Meredith Henderson

B. Reports and Discussions

- i. DESE Annual Submission of School Resource Officer and Mental, Social or Emotional Health Support Personnel Data  
Dr. Carpenter pointed to the one page document in the packet to meet a new state law asking Superintendents or designee to report to the School Committee on the School Resource Officer program in the district. MRSD has one in each town, funded by that town's police department. Also included is a report on the social emotional support staff available in the district (number of counselors, etc., and the budget impact of those).
- ii. Approval of prior year encumbrances

**MOTION: To approve the payment of \$1,289.60 in FY25 invoices not previously encumbered, as presented to the School Committee. Motion by Betty Gray, second by Jackie Zibrat-Long. Unanimously approved by all members present.**

- iii. Approval of Child Care Services Lease Agreement - YMCA

**MOTION: To approve that the district enter into a lease agreement for up to five years with the YMCA for the use of classrooms and an office at Harwich Elementary School for the purposes of providing child care services. Motion by Jackie Zibrat-Long, second by Betty Gray. Unanimously approved by all members present.**

C. Action Items -Vote Required

- i. Approval of prior year encumbrances - see above
- ii. Approval of Child Care Services Lease Agreement - YMCA - see above

D. Housekeeping items  
**None**

E. Understanding Factors Underlying Our Regional Agreement

Dr. Carpenter presented the slide deck that was included in the packet.

- a. What brought the towns together to form Monomoy originally?
  1. Harwich was facing an accreditation issue in the facilities aspect - Harwich High School needed to either be renovated or rebuilt. Harwich Middle School was nearing similar issues. The state wanted districts to regionalize to receive funding for new buildings. Chatham's



- issues were in enrollment and the low number of students they had. The mutually beneficial needs brought the two towns together.
- b. Trends in foundation enrollment, local effort capacity, state foundation budget, municipal revenue growth factor, and required local contribution components of the Chapter 70 formula
    1. Dr. Carpenter reviewed the various factors and funding sources noted above (detailed in the slide deck). He noted, regarding foundation enrollment, that Monomoy has done a good job of retaining its resident students (avoiding need to pay out to other districts), as well as attracting school choice students into the district.
    2. Discussed foundation enrollment, Chapter 70 formula, and the calculation of Required Local Contributions for Chatham and Harwich (see spreadsheet linked in packet)
  - c. How these factors impact the assessment formula within the Regional Agreement and potentially fuel tension between member towns
    - i. How local contributions, state funding, grants, and other revenues are applied to the assessment (to fund the budget)

Reviewed chart on page 8 of slide deck and examined variations in required local contribution among towns in regional agreements (this conflict doesn't exist in single-town districts, only in regionals)
  - d. Trends in year-round resident and voter census numbers for member towns

Reviewed trends in year-round populations (all people, not just students). Notable covid jump as people relocated.

Shifting student demographics were discussed (see table on page 10 of slide deck). Notable decreases at elementary level, moderate at middle school level, and small increase at high school (end of a bubble). Also discussed the approach to incoming school choice as a free seat model to make fiscal sense.

Reviewed table of demographic trends showing increased diversity of students (while struggling to hire equally diverse staff), increase in low income students, increase in English learners, slight increase in special education.
  - e. The logic behind the change to the Regional Agreement in 2022 and the impact on each town

The change was made to address the increasing enrollment disparity between the two town's elementary schools and the resulting inequitable financial impact.

Dr. Carpenter reviewed the process for updating the regional agreement – it does not need a vote to 'open' it; a proposal needs to be brought to the School Committee for discussion and eventual vote (then on to each town/Town Meeting and DESE) – can be a long process.

Discussion of the Why for updating the agreement now - noted the letter sent by Harwich Select Board. Need clarity on the fiscal driver and/or detailed proposal, more specific than simply a desire to spend less. Voters in both towns will need to approve any change. Additionally, who is doing the work to make those proposals and calculate the various models?
- F. Understanding the current and future impacts of shifting demographics since regionalization  
Elementary enrollment/demographics and K enrollment/demographics when compared to secondary enrollment/demographics
- a. Harwich:Chatham resident student ratios
  - b. English Language Learner numbers and home languages
  - c. School choice enrollment
  - d. Available classroom space in each elementary school and middle school
- G. Behind the PreK Conversation: Is it time to consider Universal Preschool?
- a. Using the available free classroom spaces, build into a future budget funding for universal preschool for 4-year-olds (full day, full school year) and potentially 3-year-olds (if space is available)



Following discussions this spring regarding MRSD preschool programs, do those conversations indicate a desire/need from our families for universal preschool? There seemed to be numbers to back that up, and there is currently space available for such a program serving 4-year-olds, and space for both 3 and 4 could be available in coming years. Noted Mashpee's universal preschool programs as an example. Can the towns afford it? Both towns currently have a preschool voucher program, and theoretically that funding could be used. Would families need a school day/school year program? Or would they need extended hours, etc.? It is up to the School Committee to determine whether to explore this option.

- H. Secondary Capital Needs in the Next 5-10 Years and future planning  
Michael MacMillan updated on current progress of MRMS siding and roofing projects – currently on track.
- a. Middle school needs beyond the windows, siding, and roof: HVAC system?  
Possible needs include boiler, flooring, generator, furniture
  - b. High school needs: Turf field and track  
Possible needs include turf field, press box, furniture
- I. Elementary School Major Capital Needs in the Next 5-10 Years and future planning
- a. HES Boiler and MSBA Accelerated Repairs Requirements  
Possible needs include boiler, smoke alarms, HVAC
  - b. CES Siding, Windows, and Roof  
Possible needs include siding, roof, windows, boiler, flooring, generator, furniture
  - c. Given the enrollment trends, family wants, and capital needs, exploring the educational benefits, potential cost savings, and challenges of theoretical elementary school consolidation  
Considering the upcoming capital needs of elementary schools and decreasing enrollment numbers - does it make sense to revisit earlier conversations about elementary school consolidation/building one new elementary school?
- J. How can we better engage the Select Boards and voters of our towns?  
No discussion on this

Discussion re: creating School Committee goals for next year and whether it should be a workshop or regular meeting? The consensus was that it should be a workshop.

- Schedule a workshop September 4 at 6:30 p.m.

- K. Presentation of Warrants

Presentation of the Warrants Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants were presented for MRSC member signatures

- L. Adjournment

**MOTION: Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.**