

Cohasset Public Schools
143 Pond Street
Cohasset, MA 02025
Empower Students to Improve Communities

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE COHASSET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Wednesday, June 18, 2025
6:00 PM**

Learning Commons
Cohasset Middle and High School
143 Pond Street
Cohasset, MA 02025

Committee Members in Attendance: Jennifer Lesky (Chair)
Lance Dial (Secretary)
Corey Evans

Also in Attendance: Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations
Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent
Sarah Shannon, Superintendent

Call to Order

Chair Jennifer Lesky called the meeting to order at 6:14 PM. Roll call: Mr. Dial – Present Virtually; Mr. Evans – Present Virtually; Mrs. Hanna – Not Present; Mrs. Lesky – Present; Mr. MacLellan – Absent. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Opening Remarks

Chair Lesky offered a warm welcome in her first meeting as Chair. She congratulated students on their graduations, thanked teachers and staff for their work, and wished the community a restful summer.

Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

Invited Guests

The Committee welcomed Ms. Kate Darling as the new Cohasset High School Assistant Principal. Ms. Darling shared her background in project-based learning, teacher mentoring, and restorative justice. Members extended a warm welcome and expressed support for her transition.

Cell Phone Policy Vote

Principal Brian Scott presented two proposals for Cohasset High School's cell phone policy: a partial allowance during breaks or lunch, or a full restriction during the school day. Committee members discussed the proposals and expressed support for the full restriction.

After discussion and a motion duly made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Mr. Dial, it was:

RESOLVED, to adopt a full restriction policy on cell phone usage at Cohasset High School during the school day;
Vote: Mr. Dial – Aye; Mr. Evans – Aye; Mrs. Lesky – Aye.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Shannon reflected on the close of the school year, thanking teachers, staff, students, and families. She highlighted athletic accomplishments, including state championship appearances by boys' and girls' lacrosse and a final IV appearance by the tennis teams. She also noted the departure of Principal John Mills, who has accepted a new role as Assistant Superintendent for Carver Public Schools, and outlined the search process for his successor.

Teaching and Learning

Superintendent Shannon and Assistant Superintendent Scollins reported on year-end academic updates. Elementary progress reports had been posted, and middle and high school report cards were scheduled for June 25. Benchmark assessments for grades K–8 were also completed and shared with families.

Budget, Resources, and Governance

Director of Finance and Operations Susan Owen provided a monthly update. The FY25 approved school budget is \$23,909,407 with an additional one-time allocation of \$342,399, for a total of \$24,251,806. As of May 31, expenditures totaled \$19,892,881 with encumbrances of \$5,072,731, leaving an estimated shortfall of (\$713,806). Accounts remain frozen. She noted shortfalls in SPED tuitions, utilities, SPED transportation, custodial supplies, and regular transportation. A discussion ensued.

Ms Owen also reported the termination of the Enel X electric school bus pilot program, with the charger to be returned within 60 days.

PSO Gift

The Committee was directed to its materials and discussed proposed grants from the Parent School Association in the amount of \$4,050 for various student enrichment projects.

After discussion and a motion duly made by Mr. Dial and seconded by Mr. Evans, it was:

RESOLVED, to accept the gift of \$4,050 from the Parent School Organization for Spring grants as presented in Exhibit F-2;

Vote: Mr. Dial – Aye; Mr. Evans – Aye; Mrs. Lesky – Aye.

Community Relations / Communication

There were no reports from school committee subcommittees or liaisons.

School Committee Governance

The Committee reviewed liaison and subcommittee assignments. Formation of a Finance Committee will be considered at a later meeting when a full slate of members is present.

Superintendent Evaluation

The Committee conducted its formal evaluation of Superintendent Sarah Shannon, nearly one year into her tenure. Chair Jennifer Lesky described the transition as “seamless” and praised Shannon’s leadership in navigating a budget shortfall, guiding development of a new strategic plan, and advancing long-term facilities planning through the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Shannon received ratings of proficient and exemplary

across all measures, earning an overall rating of proficient. Members highlighted her professionalism, empathy, and ability to strengthen relationships across the district, as well as her emphasis on incorporating student perspectives into major decisions.

Following the evaluation summary, members offered personal remarks of appreciation. Chair Lesky commended Shannon's "spectacular" performance and invoked her motto, "Onward." Secretary Lance Dial emphasized the extraordinary challenges she faced in her first year—budget pressures, contract negotiations, and academic improvements—praising her ability to make the district stronger. Member Corey Evans congratulated her on a successful transition year and looked ahead with optimism, noting that the groundwork laid would support an exciting year to come.

Approval of Minutes

The Committee was unable to approve prior minutes due to lack of quorum. The May 21, 2025 minutes were tabled.

Executive Session

The Committee noted that executive session to discuss bargaining and litigation strategy would be scheduled for a future meeting when a quorum is present.

Adjournment

After a motion duly made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Mr. Dial, it was:

**RESOLVED, to adjourn the regular meeting of June 18, 2025 at 6:56 PM;
Vote: Mr. Dial – Aye; Mr. Evans – Aye; Mrs. Lesky – Aye.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lance C. Dial