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, September 3, 2025
6:00 PM

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

Attendance

Committee Members in Attendance	Jennifer Lesky (Chair); Craig MacLellan (Vice Chair); Lance Dial (Secretary); Corey Evans; Tori Hanna (Absent)
Others in Attendance	Sarah Shannon, Superintendent; Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent; Susan Owen, Director of Finance and Operations

Call to Order

Chair Jennifer Lesky called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. Roll call confirmed Mr. Dial, Mr. MacLellan, and Mrs. Lesky present; Ms. Hanna absent; Mr. Evans joined virtually at 6:04 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Opening Remarks

Chair Lesky welcomed teachers, administrators, staff, students, and parents back for the new school year, noting the positive start and excellent weather.

Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

Invited Guests

Principals introduced new staff across schools. At Osgood: Skylar Theodore (Special Education), Kaitlyn Downs (Reading Specialist), and Megan Reese (long-term substitute music). At CMS: Joe Bandera, Victoria Cataldo, John Farrell, Amy Freida, Emily Graham, Vanessa Leary, Melissa Lonney, Rachel Marinelli, and Jen Scott. At Deer Hill: Noah Edge and Abby Bizarro. The Committee discussed the strength of these hires, and Chair Lesky thanked the principals and teachers for attending despite the busy start of school.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Shannon described a strong start to the school year, including new teacher orientation, celebratory staff gatherings, and student traditions such as Senior Sunrise. She highlighted updates to the district website with a new community partnerships page, praised Cohasset Middle High School's #4 ranking in Boston Magazine, and

discussed improved communications. The Committee discussed the importance of communication strategies, including potential student, parent, and staff involvement.

New Strategic Plan and District Goals

Mrs. Shannon presented the updated five-year strategic plan, which had been approved in May and then refined by a graphic designer. The revised plan, now available on the district website as a flipbook, keeps the same content but is streamlined for easier access. She emphasized that the plan reflects a highly collaborative process with contributions from the School Committee, administrators, teachers, students, and parents, and is grounded in stakeholder data. The new mission places students first, inspiring character, purposeful growth, and authentic scholarship, while the vision highlights students improving communities and incorporates new core values.

The plan sets out a theory of action and defines four compass points—teaching and learning, leadership, wellness, and community engagement/resources—each with specific initiatives, expected outcomes, responsible parties, and timelines. Mrs. Shannon placed strong emphasis on the fact that this is a *five-year plan*; while there is urgency and excitement around the work, it cannot be accomplished in a single year. Over the summer, leadership mapped out what can reasonably be achieved each year, producing a district action plan that will drive school improvement plans and teacher goals. The motto, "learn, grow, and inspire together," underscores a commitment to collective growth across the school, parent, and broader community. Finally, she noted that the district action plan incorporates the Superintendent's goals, including her participation in the new superintendent program and ongoing coaching support from Maureen LaCroix.

The Committee discussed the strategic plan with the Superintendent and amongst themselves.

Teaching and Learning

Dr. Scollins reported on academic initiatives including the rollout of ASPEN*GO*, upcoming PSAT and SAT administration, mandatory staff training programs, and new Title I and IIA funding. The Committee discussed the breadth of training and importance of federal funding.

Budget, Resources and Governance

Superintendent Shannon reported that the electric bus is being sold and replaced with a diesel bus, with Town and Select Board support. A passenger van is already in use for athletics. Mr. Evans reported that the MSBA has approved Osgood School repairs, requiring a Town vote by November 5, 2025. Mr. Dial inquired about Stabilization fund balances; Superintendent Shannon noted the Town Accountant is preparing that information. The Committee discussed the need for parent support at the Special Town Meeting and praised the collaboration with Town officials.

Community Relations / Communication

The Finance Subcommittee will meet mid-September. Mr. Evans raised concerns about increased diesel fuel costs compared to the electric bus.

School Committee Governance

The Committee conducted a second read of the Service Animal Policy. After discussion and a motion duly made by Mr. MacLellan and seconded by Mr. Evans, it was:

> **RESOLVED, to adopt the Service Animal Policy as a standalone policy;**
> **Roll Call Vote: Mr. Dial – Aye; Mr. Evans – Aye; Mr. MacLellan – Aye; Mrs. Lesky – Aye.**

Executive Session

The Chair noted that there was a reason for the Committee to move into executive session, specially reason #7. After discussion and a motion duly made by Mr. Dial and seconded by Mr. MacLellan, it was:

> **RESOLVED, to move into Executive Session under §7 and not return to public session;**
> **Roll Call Vote: Mr. Dial – Aye; Mr. Evans – Aye; Mr. MacLellan – Aye; Mrs. Lesky – Aye.**

Adjournment

The general session of the regular meeting of the Cohasset School Committee for Wednesday, September 3, 2025, adjourned at 7:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Lance C. Dial
September 8, 2025