



**DISTRICT COMMITTEE  
OPEN MEETING MINUTES  
MEETING #1902  
August 26, 2025**

<b><u>Members Present</u></b>	Thomas Hatem	Methuen	Chairperson
	Julio Mejia	Lawrence	Vice Chair
	William Tarbox	North Andover	Asst. Treasurer
	Zoila Disla	Lawrence	
	Annemarie Faris	Andover	
	Bradley Jones	Methuen	
	Edison Mercedes	Lawrence	

**Members Absent**

<b><u>Others Present</u></b>	John N. Lavoie	Superintendent-Director
	Brenda Richardson	Assistant Superintendent
	Melissa Martel	Director of Finance
	Gerry DiStefano	Treasurer
	Cheryl Dennis	District Recorder

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hatem called the meeting to order at 6:00PM Roll *Call by District Record: Ms. Faris (present), Ms. Disla (present), Mr. Jones (present), Mr. Mejia (present), Mr. Mercedes (present), Mr. Tarbox (present), Mr. Hatem (present).*

**2. MINUTES**

*a. Minutes of June 17 & 26, 2025*

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved to approve the minutes of June 17 & 26, 2025.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#18997

**3. FINANCE REPORT**

*a. Cash Balance Report*

Mr. DiStefano presented the Cash Balance Report.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jones moved to accept the Cash Balance Report as presented.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Tarbox

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#18998

*b. Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report*

*c. Revolving Fund Report*

*d. Budget Report*

*e. Budget Transfers*

- Ms. Martel asked the DC to approve the Budget Transfer of \$100,000 back to the IT budget.

Ms. Faris questioned why the funds were transferred initially to which Ms. Martel responded it was for software, subscriptions and schoolwide subscriptions.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved to approve the Budget Transfers.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Mejia	Yes
Mr. Mercedes	Yes
Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Ms. Faris	Yes
Ms. Disla	Yes
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Hatem	Yes

#18999

*f. Financial Statements and Audit Report*

Mr. Mejia questioned if these were for the 2023 or 2024 audit to which Chair Hatem responded it's for 2023.

**4. COMMUNICATIONS**

*a. Donations*

*b. Articles*

- Greater Lawrence Technical School Awarded \$1,320,000 Career Technical Initiative Round 10 Grant to Expand Training for Jobseekers

Supt. Lavoie indicated this will benefit twelve different programs for adults to seek training. This will allow GLTS to help unemployed or underemployed citizens to secure higher salaried positions.

- Healey-Driscoll Administration Expands Career Technical Education to Support 900 More Students This School Year

Supt. Lavoie stated he was asked to make remarks for Gov. Healy's press release, a copy of which is in everyone's packet.

- 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Original Taste of Methuen

Mr. Jones indicated it was a very successful event and that GLTS had someone participating that represented the school.

- DESE Letter on the Aviation Maintenance Technician Program Public Participation

Chair Hatem mentioned the receipt of a nice letter. Supt. Lavoie stated it allows us to start our first aviation freshman class program. Ms. Faris questioned if it is only for freshmen to which Supt. Lavoie responded yes, for the first year. Mr. Mejia questioned the rationale for only offering it to freshmen. Supt. Lavoie stated new exploratory programs are always started with freshmen only.

- Victor Martinez (former teacher) is requesting name dedication for weight room

*c. Public Participation*

Mr. Martinez from the class of 1984 addressed the District Committee on the passing of Coach Yancy and requested that Supt. Lavoie consider dedicating the weight room in his honor.

**5. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR**

*a. Update on Building Projects*

Supt. Lavoie referenced a list in the packets outlining the building projects. Ms. Faris requested clarification on the opening of the cafeteria which keeps changing. We took votes on the construction and renovation of that area and it's not what it is and I learned that from other people and not from the Superintendent directly. Supt. Lavoie stated the cafeteria is still going to open but difficulties occurred with the town and engineers as well as architects due to sewage lines and underground work. In the meantime, it was apparent that other projects took priority to handle the increase in the student population. We gave the cafeteria department the new pieces we purchased for that project as they needed to be replaced, equipment was provided to the culinary arts department, and necessary, new powerlines were pulled into that space. That building at will become a second cafeteria, possibly next summer. It was put on hold for this year in lieu of other projects we felt were more critical. Ms. Faris voiced her opinion that this is a disingenuous decision on your part. You've restated the same issues from last year and I feel this money was misspent. The money is replacing equipment that did not need to be replaced. Supt. Lavoie disagreed with Ms. Faris and volunteered to bring in the Director of Facilities to verify. I could have completed the cafeteria but I didn't feel it was the correct decision at the time. Mr. Mejia questioned what the status was of the MSBA roof project to which Supt. Lavoie said it was rejected in June as we're two years short of meeting the standards. They suggested we redo the letter of interest in two years. Chair Hatem requested information on the Automation Project. Supt. Lavoie stated our ATAC systems needed to be upgraded to allow the Director of Facilities to operate the entire building from a computer both from within the building and his home.

*b. Admissions Report*

Supt. Lavoie stated we're at 499 for freshmen, we can take one more student. We currently have 600 students on the waitlist at this time. Mr. Mejia questioned if the changes to admissions from the Board of Education, is that this school year or next? Supt. Lavoie stated it will take effect this upcoming admission session. Mr. Mejia questioned if the DC has to update the admission policy? Supt. Lavoie indicated the Dept. of Education will provide us with updates which I'll bring before the District Committee. Mr. Jones questioned if some of the schools were from out of the district to which Asst. Supt. Richardson stated some are private and home school and some are out of district - students who may be homeless but they all must meet the district standards.

*c. Update on (2) New Programs*

- Supt. Lavoie updated the DC on (2) New Programs
  - Animal Science/Veterinary Science (Career Cluster is Agriculture and Natural Resources)

Supt. Lavoie stated he was looking for approval to seek two new programs: Veterinary Science which we're working on if the DC chooses to allow us to move forward. We can apply for 5-million-dollar grant - part of a bill put forth by Representative Moran.

- Criminal Justice/Public Safety (Career Cluster is Legal and Protective Services)

We believe there is a high opportunity for strong job placement in criminal justice. I do have a proposal if the DC wants to move forward.

Ms. Disla stated that it should have been put on the agenda. Supt. Lavoie stated a motion is required to apply for the grant and we don't have a lot of time to put the grant together – requesting the DC vote on moving this forward tonight.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved for discussion.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

Mr. Jones questioned if the intent was to purchase the land to build a building? Supt. Lavoie stated it was to lease land with the MSPCA which would be funded by this grant if we negotiate an agreement with them that is suitable for us. If not, we'd be looking to build on site. Ms. Faris, I see value in it but I don't see why we're continuing to expand here. I think we're at our limit and feel it's a safety issue given the capacity of students - the school is exceptional as it is. Supt. Lavoie stated the structure to be built, if necessary, would not be part of the existing building. This type of funding does not come along every day, when it's there, we have to take advantage of it. Mr. Mercedes agrees with Ms. Faris and feels that while the opportunity is great, we should consider reinforcing what we have already. Mr. Jones questioned if there is another animal science program within the state? Supt. Lavoie responded there was yes at greater Lowell. Chair Hatem noted it was listed as leasing a spot from the MSPCA on one page and a purchase of land on another. Supt. Lavoie indicated it's supposed to say lease, not purchase.

Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Faris	No
Ms. Disla	Abstained
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Mejia	Yes
Mr. Mercedes	No
Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Mr. Hatem	Yes

4 yes', 1 no, 1 abstained

Motions Carries

#19000

Criminal Justice Program:

Supt. Lavoie the program does not require a lot of equipment or space. Mr. Tarbox questioned if GLTS would work with UMASS Lowell on criminal justice to which Supt. Lavoie responded yes, we would partner with Northern Essex and UMASS Lowell. Mr. Mejia questioned in what capacity? What career path: police, fire? Supt. Lavoie indicated IT security work, working for the court systems, anything to do with public safety. I don't have all the pathways right now but can provide them. Mr. Mejia asked how many students and where would they be located? Supt. Lavoie responded the medical program would be expanded to accommodate the criminal program. Fifteen students the first year and increase those numbers in subsequent years based on its success. Mr. Mejia questioned where Supt. Lavoie saw this need to which he responded he's personally aware of a shortage with his own areas. Supt. Lavoie reported that we had a workshop in August - if the Dept. of Education allows us to pursue the program, we'll identify all the pathways and job opportunities.

**MOTION:** Mr. Tarbox moved to approve the Criminal Justice Program.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Mejia

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Ms. Faris	No
Ms. Disla	No
Mr. Jones	No
Mr. Mejia	Yes
Mr. Mercedes	No
Mr. Hatem	Yes

3 yes', 4 no's

Motion does not pass

#19001

d. Update on Leasing a lot of Land to build building at MSPCA

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on leasing a lot of land to build a building at MSPCA mentioning a motion he'd put forth at the next meeting to lease from the MSPCA, similar to the aviation hangar lease. By the next meeting we'll have met with the MSPCA to further discuss our partnership. The cost to our communities will be zero - not looking for a vote this evening. Supt. Lavoie stated we'll move forward with the grant given the DC approval. Ms. Faris stated I'm not against the animal program – I feel it's too much too soon.

e. *Changes to Appendix B (Coaches)*

Supt. Lavoie will update the District Committee on the changes to Appendix B. Supt. Lavoie requested this be tabled– it's a contract negotiable which needs to be discussed in executive session.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved to table this matter.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19002

Mr. Jones requested Supt. Lavoie provide more detail when it next comes up.

f. *Update on New T-shirts*

Asst. Supt. Richardson displayed the t-shirt and sweatshirt, and hoodies. Supt. Lavoie stated they consist of one color/one design. Mr. Jones thinks they look great. Ms. Faris stated the DC voted in June and it wasn't to be implemented until October. The Board voted and it should have been implemented at the beginning of the year I requested a letter go out to parents - that never occurred and the website is unclear – it leaves everyone questioning what it is you're looking for. Supt. Lavoie disagreed there was no clarity from the DC. We sent out an RFP for a company for the t-shirts which was required to go out for two weeks. We had to award the contract which had to be ironed out, we met as an administrative team on how to implement it and we put a great process in place. Everyone must place their order online by October 1<sup>st</sup>. This all takes time and effort and doesn't happen overnight. Mr. Mejia said that after the letter went to parents, he counted 18 phone calls from different families from different communities indicating a misunderstanding of what was required - the calls were nasty. Parents agree with a uniform policy – I feel what we presented was an oversight, I abstained from voting and I regret my vote, I'd like to make a motion to reconsider our previous vote. Mr. Mejia requested clarification if we've spent any money yet to which Supt. Lavoie responded no we have not. Mr. Mejia stated I'm here to follow what parents and communities want.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved to rescind the previous vote made regarding uniforms at the June 26, 2025 meeting.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Ms. Faris

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Mejia	Yes
Mr. Mercedes	No
Mr. Tarbox	No
Ms. Faris	Yes
Ms. Disla	No
Mr. Jones	No
Mr. Hatem	Yes

3 yes', 4 no's

Motion does not pass

#19003

Mr. Mercedes mentioned we're never going to get everyone to like a vote. We're talking about this policy way too long and I don't feel we should discuss this again. Ms. Disla stated we need closure on the uniforms. I think we made a wise decision. We need to leave this the way it is. Mr. Tarbox asked membership to review what was voted on. Supt. Lavoie reviewed the 2 options that the DC voted on. Ms. Faris the same uniform in

shop and academic I don't understand how this got into the handbook. Ms. Disla feels it's unacceptable the District Committee members are being spoken to in the manner exhibited by the Superintendent. Supt. Lavoie expressed his frustration for being criticized all night long for his work. On this particular policy, the DC did not listen to me. I am passionate about the school. This is my last year and I want to do more and not sit back.

*g. Out of State Travel (2)*

Supt. Lavoie is looking to send up to four staff members to attend the ACTE's CareerTech Vision Conference and Expo on December 9-12, 2025 in Nashville, TN. Estimated Cost for up to four staff members is: \$8,380.00.

Ms. Faris questioned who would be going? Supt. Lavoie indicated that was not known as yet.

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to approve the out of state travel to TN.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Faris	Yes
Ms. Disla	Yes
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Mejia	Yes
Mr. Mercedes	Yes
Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Mr. Hatem	Yes

#19004

Supt. Lavoie is looking to send up to two staff members to SchoolSafe 2025 Conference on November 4-6, 2025, Fort Worth, Texas. Estimated Cost for up to two staff members is: \$3,350.00.

Ms. Faris requested again that out of state travel documentation be completed when presented to the DC. Supt. Lavoie stated he would ask in both cases that reports be created and he'd provide them to the DC.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved to approve the out of state travel to TX.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Ms. Faris

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Ms. Faris	Yes
Ms. Disla	Yes
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Mejia	Yes
Mr. Mercedes	Yes
Mr. Hatem	Yes

#19005

## **6. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE**

### **7. OLD BUSINESS**

*a. District Committee Priorities*

*b. Policy*

### **8. NEW BUSINESS**

### **9. TABLED MATTERS**

## 10. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT

### a. Resignations

- Elizabeth Pelletier, Science Instructor
- Joseph Savino, HVAC Instructor
- Michelle doVale-Callahan, Special Education Instructor
- Robert Maiella, Co-Op Coordinator
- Jacob Elwell, Mathematics Instructor
- Peter Leonard, Horticulture Instructor
- David Benvenutty, Security

### b. Leaves of Absence

### c. Retirements

### d. Appointments

Ms. Faris questioned if this was just information to which Supt. Lavoie responded yes. Ms. Faris said my remarks are informational as well. This is a lot of new hires and questioned if they have requirements? Supt. Lavoie responded yes. Ms. Faris further questioned if teacher requirements are different from administrator requirements to which Supt. Lavoie responded yes. Ms. Faris as noting an administrator is required to be certified she herself is aware of a hire made without that. She can't believe we don't have a pool of candidates to choose from. Supt. Lavoie stated sometimes no one that applies has that license. Ms. Faris said I don't want to see uncertified hires in GLTS. Supt. Lavoie indicated if that's the case, he'll look into it and he requested she let him know who it is she referring to as he is unaware of any administrator without a license.

### e. Job Postings

- Help Desk/IT Support Technician, Per Clerical Contract, SY25-26, New Position. (See Attached)

Mr. Mejia asked about a Director of IT and how many techs are in that department now? Supt. Lavoie state there are two techs and we have no intention of hiring a Director at this time.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved to approve the Help Desk/IT Support Technician position.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Ms. Faris

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Mejia	Yes
Mr. Mercedes	Yes
Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Ms. Faris	Yes
Ms. Disla	Yes
Mr. Hatem	Yes

#19006

- Social Studies Curriculum Revision, requires up to 11 Teachers to review and revise current curriculum adjustments needed for SY25-26, Per Teachers Contract, September, 2025-June, 2026, Grant Funded, New Position (Details attached)

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to approve the 11 Teachers for Social Studies Curriculum Revision as presented.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Tarbox

Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Disla	Yes
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Mejia	Yes

Mr. Mercedes Yes  
Mr. Tarbox Yes  
Ms. Faris Yes  
Mr. Hatem Yes  
#19007

- English HQIM Curriculum Council, up to 8 teachers to serve on the English HQIM Curriculum Council as part of the PRISM III grant, Per Teachers Contract, September, 2025-June, 2026, Grant Funded, New Position (Details attached)

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to approve up to 8 teachers to serve on the English HQIM Curriculum Council.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Faris Yes  
Ms. Disla Yes  
Mr. Jones Yes  
Mr. Mejia Yes  
Mr. Mercedes Yes  
Mr. Tarbox Yes  
Mr. Hatem Yes  
#19008

## 11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

### 12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved to enter into Executive Session at 9:00PM

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Mercedes

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Jones Yes  
Mr. Mejia Yes  
Mr. Mercedes Yes  
Mr. Tarbox Yes  
Ms. Faris Yes  
Ms. Disla Yes  
Mr. Hatem Yes  
#19009

Enter Open Session

**MOTION:** Mr. Jones moved to replace the CTE coordinator position that is currently vacant.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Tarbox

Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Disla No  
Mr. Jones Yes  
Mr. Mejia Yes  
Mr. Mercedes No  
Mr. Tarbox Yes  
Ms. Faris No  
Mr. Hatem Yes  
#19012

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to dedicate the weight room for Coach Yancy.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Tarbox

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Mejia                Yes

Mr. Mercedes        Yes

Mr. Tarbox            Yes

Ms. Faris              Yes

Ms. Disla             Yes

Mr. Jones             Yes

Mr. Hatem            Yes

#19013

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Mr. Mercedes moved to adjourn at 9:50PM.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19014

Respectfully Submitted



Cheryl Dennis  
District Recorder

Minutes Reviewed



Supt. Lavoie N. Supt. Lavoie  
Superintendent-Director