

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
October 16, 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
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon
Jan P. Hanratty of Millbury
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chair
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge
James M. Mitchell of Sutton
Tyler D. Bartlett of Upton
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge

Anthony E. Steele II, Superintendent-Director
Michele S. Denise, Principal
Bryant Laflamme, Vocational Director
Christopher C. Pilla, Treasurer
Miranda Dolegiewicz, Administrative Assistant
Maddison Dos Santos, Student Council Representative
Isla Koopman, Student Council Representative
Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary

Members Absent:

Paul J. Braza of Milford
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by the Chair, Mr. Hall. Mr. Steele was notified in advance that Mr. Braza and Mr. Intinarelli would be unable to attend.

Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the September 18, 2025, regular School Committee meeting and to approve the minutes as written.

2.2. On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Finn, it was voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the October 1, 2025, special School Committee meeting and to approve the minutes as written. The motion carried. Mr. Yitts abstained, noting he had not attended the meeting.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – C. Pilla

3.1. The Treasurer's Report dated July 31, 2025, was presented. The report reflected an ending balance of \$932,010.11 in Total Funds, including \$1,371,663.17 in Project Funds and \$439,653.06 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented.

3.2. The Treasurer's Report dated August 31, 2025, was presented. The report reflected an ending balance of \$3,041,790.88 in Total Funds, including \$1,252,471.22 in Project Funds and \$1,789,319.66 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, it was unanimously voted to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented.

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

The Student Council (STUCO) Representatives provided an update on recent and upcoming activities. They reported that the 2025 Homecoming Bonfire was being held later that evening, beginning at 6:30 p.m. outside on the softball fields. The annual Fire Barrels event features small bonfires, games, activities, snacks, and club fundraisers. School Committee members were invited to attend after the meeting concluded. The representatives also noted that the Council is planning to participate in conferences in October and November. In celebration of the Homecoming Bonfire, STUCO sponsored a pop-up Spirit Week, with themed dress-up days: Tuesday – Pink Out, Wednesday – White Out, Thursday – Meme Day, and Friday – Pajama Day. The Student Council also recently created Halloween and Veterans Day cards for distribution to a nearby senior center and a veteran’s center. Lastly, preparations are underway for the annual Turkey Bingo fundraiser. This year, STUCO aims to provide full Thanksgiving dinners to 22 families. Community members are welcome to contribute to this initiative. Mr. Steele thanked the representatives and asked them to convey the Committee’s appreciation to all students involved, especially for their efforts to support senior citizens, veterans, and families in need.

Item 5. Business Manager – N. Ferguson

Mr. Steele reported that the Business Manager, Nicole Ferguson, had provided advance notice that she would be unable to attend the meeting. He presented her report on her behalf.

5.1. FY25 Audit Update/Excess & Deficiency Update:

On behalf of the Business Manager, Mr. Steele presented an update on the FY25 district financial audit. The audit, which began on July 1, 2025, is being conducted by Hague, Sahady & Co., the district’s audit firm since FY16. The audit has progressed more slowly than in previous years due to changes in the audit team and the depth of the review. No findings are currently anticipated on either the district side or the student activity account. Mr. Steele also reported that the Excess & Deficiency (E&D) filing was submitted on October 3, 2025, following a slight delay. The School Committee will be informed once the E&D is certified.

5.2. Budget Subcommittee Proposed FY27 Meeting Schedule:

The Budget Subcommittee presented a proposed schedule of FY27 public meeting dates and times to the School Committee. Once finalized, the schedule will be posted on the school website (Budget Subcommittee page), and on the bulletin boards in the Main Office and Business Office.

5.3. Donation Approval(s):

a. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to approve the donation of a 2008 Nissan Altima from Laura Campagna, to be used for instructional and training purposes in the Automotive Technology program.

b. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Cray, it was unanimously voted to approve the donation of plumbing stock—including various valves, fittings, and connections—from Webstone, to be used for instructional and training purposes in the Plumbing program.

c. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Cray, it was unanimously voted to approve the donation of Mitsubishi ductless wall-mounted units from T. Mazzio, to be used for instructional and training purposes in the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration program.

Item 6. Principal's Report – M. Denise

6.1. Program Advisory Committee Update:

Principal Denise provided an update on the Program Advisory Committee. The first meeting of the Program Chairs Advisory for the 2025–2026 school year was held on Tuesday, September 16, 2025. The Fall Program Advisory Dinner is scheduled to take place at the school on October 29, 2025.

6.2. 2025 Homecoming Report:

Principal Denise reported that the 2025 Homecoming was celebrated as a week-long event beginning on September 22, 2025. Activities included themed spirit days, a pep rally, a dance attended by approximately 840 students, and a full day of athletic events on September 27. The bonfire was postponed to October 16, 2025, due to inclement weather. Principal Denise noted that the Homecoming activities were well-received by students.

6.3. Bus Driver Appreciation Breakfast:

Principal Denise reported that the annual Bus Driver Appreciation Breakfast was held on October 3, 2025, in the Three Seasons Restaurant. The event included training sessions for drivers and was well attended. Vendetti Bus Company reported that BVT was the only high school it serves that had no incidents on its buses to date.

Item 7. Superintendent-Director's Report – A. Steele

7.1. Subcommittee Chair Vacancies:

In reviewing the Delineation of Subcommittees of the School Committee, it was noted that five subcommittees currently have chair vacancies: the Policy Subcommittee, Insurance Advisory Subcommittee, Teacher Sick Leave Bank Advisory Subcommittee, Administration/Support Staff Sick Leave Bank Advisory Subcommittee, and the Facilities Subcommittee. Superintendent Steele requested that members consider serving as chair of one of the vacant subcommittees. Discussion followed. During the discussion, members were encouraged to consider leadership roles, particularly those who have more recently joined the School Committee. Mr. Finn and Chairman Hall spoke to the need to plan for succession and likewise encouraged members to consider leadership positions on subcommittees.

7.2. Events/Updates:

a. Superintendent Steele informed the Committee that he was a recent guest on *That Milford Show*, a non-scripted local talk show hosted by Al Correia. The segment was taped on September 23, 2025, at the Milford TV studio and is scheduled to air four times per week on local cable: Comcast channel 8 and Verizon channel 38. The interview is also available on YouTube under *That Milford Show, TMS #835*. Mr. Finn commented that the segment provided helpful information, particularly regarding the district's mandated lottery admissions process.

b. BVT welcomed the Class of 2026 International Fellows from the National Defense University for a visit and school tour on September 24, 2025. The visit was part of the University's annual program to observe career and technical education and other education models in Massachusetts. During the tour, the Fellows visited vocational shops and engaged with faculty and students. Representatives from the University noted that BVT continues to serve as a reference point for discussions throughout the year and expressed interest in returning next year.

c. Superintendent Steele reported that he and Dr. Connors attended the Blackstone Valley Superintendents' Consortium (BVSC) on September 26, 2025. During the event, they presented BVT's lottery-based admissions process, which includes a student apportionment system for each member town to address year-to-year variability in applicant trends. Superintendent Steele noted that he had a follow-up meeting with the Consortium scheduled for the following day.

d. The Police Chief's Breakfast was held at BVT on October 2, 2025, in the Three Seasons Restaurant. This annual event, held in partnership with Upton Police Chief Nicholas Palmieri, invites Police Chiefs and School Resource Officers from all thirteen sending towns. The event serves as a forum to strengthen partnerships and express appreciation for their work within the surrounding communities.

7.3. October 1 Preliminary Enrollment Headcount:

The preliminary enrollment headcount as of October 1, 2025, was presented at the meeting. School Committee members received a comparison of BVT enrollment by town and grade. Principal Denise co-presented with Superintendent Steele, providing additional insight into enrollment trends. While retention programs remain strong and enrollment is steady, some factors beyond the school's control contribute to vacancies. We are exploring new strategies to fill vacancies due to attrition in the upper grade levels.

7.4. Electronic School Committee Member Document Discussion:

Superintendent Steele introduced the prospect of transitioning to electronic documents for School Committee members to improve workflow efficiency and reduce costs. The proposal to implement a paperless packet process would involve migrating key internal processes to electronic systems. The topic was opened for discussion, and members expressed support for the benefits of using electronic devices and making the transition. A laptop cart with devices will be provided at the next meeting. We will continue with both paper-based and electronic formats to gather feedback and perfect any new methods.

7.5. The Connect (Alumni) – Fall 2025:

The Fall 2025 edition of *The Connect* alumni newsletter was made available at the meeting.

Item 8. New Business

Two new business items were discussed:

Superintendent Steele shared that Marc Terry received written legal affirmation from the Department of Education confirming that the School Committee's interpretation of a local agreement is valid and that the Committee should proceed as planned.

Superintendent Steele also informed the Committee that he had received an email from the Teachers Association requesting to begin negotiations, marking the first step in the process before sharing ground rules. Richard A. Villani Esq., Milford Town Manager, expressed his interest in assisting in the process as the Municipal Representative.

Item 9. Items for the Good of the Committee:

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

Item 10. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on November 20, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Hall noted he will not be available to attend.

Item 11. Meeting Closure:

11.1. The Chair, Mr. Hall, declared the meeting closed at 7:00 p.m.

11.2. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Listing of Materials Used in the Meeting:

Item 2.1. Regular Meeting Minutes of September 18, 2025

Item 2.2. Special Meeting Minutes of October 1, 2025

Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report dated July 31, 2025

Item 3.2. Treasurer's Report dated August 31, 2025

Item 5.2. Proposed Budget Subcommittee FY27 Meeting Dates

Item 5.3.a. Donation: 2008 Nissan Altima for Automotive Technology, L. Campagna

Item 5.3.b. Donation: Plumbing Valves, Fittings, and Connections, Webstone

Item 5.3.c. Donation: Mitsubishi Ductless Wall-Mounted Units for HVAC/R, T. Mazzio

Item 7.1. Subcommittees of the School Committee: Chair Vacancies

Item 7.3. October 1 Preliminary Enrollment Headcount

Item 7.5. *The Connect* (Alumni Newsletter) – Fall 2025

Item 9. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted,



Anthony M. Yilts

Secretary