

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee**  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting**  
**December 18, 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  
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon  
Paul J. Braza of Milford  
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

Anthony E. Steele II, Superintendent-Director  
Dr. Matthew J. Connors, Assistant Superintendent  
Michele S. Denise, Principal  
Nicole M. Ferguson, Business Manager  
Christopher C. Pilla, Treasurer  
Mary May, Workforce & Economic Development Director  
Leonard O'Neil, Foreign Trips Advisor  
Maddison Dos Santos, Student Council Representative  
Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary

**Members Absent:**

Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton  
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale  
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge

**Item 1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by the Chair, Mr. Hall. A quorum was present.

**Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts**

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Broderick, the Committee unanimously voted to waive the reading of the November 20, 2025, regular School Committee meeting minutes and approve the minutes as written.

**Item 3. Treasurer's Report – C. Pilla**

3.1. The Treasurer's Report dated October 31, 2025, was presented. The report reflected an ending balance of \$2,773,790.67 in Total Funds, including \$1,123,401.06 in Project Funds and \$1,650,389.61 in Local Funds.

On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented.

The Treasurer reported that depository interest rates have declined since last year and that funds remain secure. He stated that interest rates will continue to be monitored in coordination with the Budget Subcommittee.

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

Student Council Representative Maddison Dos Santos presented an update on Student Council activities, including the annual Holiday Drive Collection to benefit students and families. Other initiatives underway include a winter spirit week, a handball tournament, and teacher appreciation efforts. A bottle-and-can drive is being held to raise funds and support attendance at the LEAD Conference in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Steele thanked the Student Council for its efforts and also acknowledged the annual toy drive organized by Officer Poxon.

**Item 5. Business Manager – N. Ferguson**

5.1. FY26 Budget Status: The School Committee received the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 Monthly Budget Report for the period July 1, 2025, through December 18, 2025. The report reflected a total budget balance of \$3,088,681.76 as of December 18, 2025.

5.2. Donation Approval(s):

a. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Braza, the Committee unanimously voted to approve a donation of \$2,050 in Mastercard and Goretto's Supermarket gift cards from David Fields.

b. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Koopman, the Committee unanimously voted to approve a \$3,500 donation from UniBank to offset maintenance costs for a student transportation vehicle. The District also received van subsidy donations this school year from Bank Hometown, Millbury National Bank, and Country Bank.

c. On a motion by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Braza, the Committee unanimously voted to approve a \$7,730 donation of shared proceeds from the Blissful Meadows Golf Club Annual Company Open, to be used for turf management and professional development planning for the 2026–2027 school year.

**Item 6. Budget Subcommittee Report – J. Mitchell**

The School Committee was informed that, at the Budget Subcommittee meeting held on December 11, 2025, Mr. Mitchell was designated to serve as Chair of the FY27 Budget Subcommittee.

6.1. First Round Line-Item Series: 1000 & 5000: The Budget Subcommittee met on December 11, 2025, and conducted an initial review of salary, wage, and fringe benefit expenditures, including instructional and non-instructional staffing by full-time equivalent (FTE). The Subcommittee also reviewed Administration (Function 1000) and Fixed Charges (Function 5000).

6.2. Salary, Wage & Fringe Benefits: The Budget Subcommittee met on December 18, 2025, and conducted a follow-up review of previously presented areas and identified items for further review.

**Item 7. Policy Subcommittee – A. Steele**

7.1. Admissions Policy Revisions (Policy: JF-Admissions):

a. At the recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee, the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee, on a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, unanimously voted to accept and adopt the revisions to the Admissions Policy (Policy:

JF-Admissions), as presented. This revised admissions policy, in response to a mandate from the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), complies with DESE regulations, 603 CMR 4.03(6). These regulations require a mandatory admissions lottery with a locally determined option for extra lottery weights. This admissions policy, approved by a majority vote of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee, will take effect immediately and implement a lottery-based system for the 2026-2027 fall admissions cycle.

Item 8. Assistant Superintendent-Director's Report – Dr. M. Connors

8.1. CTI Update: Dr. Connors reported that registrations for CTI programs have increased from 44 to 81 students since the last meeting. Welding has now reached the threshold to run. Advanced Manufacturing and Plumbing programs each require three additional students to meet the minimum enrollment. A targeted radio campaign is planned for early January to fill remaining seats. There are currently more than 60 grant-funded enrollments, with the remaining students self-paying. A total of 28 offered programs, including five grant-funded programs and various career training and personal enrichment courses. Ms. May was present and available, along with Dr. Connors, to answer questions regarding the CTI program.

8.2. Promising Practices Breakfast: The School Committee was informed that the annual Blackstone Valley Superintendent's Consortium Promising Practices Breakfast was held on December 16, 2025, at the Three Seasons Restaurant. Mr. Jerry Polselli of the Career Enrichment department at BVT was recognized as the District's recipient for his project, the BVT "Game of Life," which integrates AI and vocational curriculum, as well as for his contributions to student learning and instructional practices.

Item 9. Principal's Report – M. Denise

9.1. Sophomore Ring Ceremony & Dance: Principal Denise reported that the Sophomore Ring Ceremony & Dance was held at the school on December 5, 2025. It was a well-attended class event.

9.2. Wellness Fair: Principal Denise reported that the annual Wellness Fair for staff was held on December 10, 2025, organized by the Wellness Committee and included a breakfast and wellness activities.

9.3. Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trip Requests:

a. Mr. Len O'Neil, Foreign Trips Advisor and History Instructor, presented an overview of past foreign travel trips and sought pre-approval for a trip to Italy in 2027. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Koopman, the Committee unanimously voted to grant initial and conditional approval for the trip to Italy in April of 2027.

b. On a motion by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Finn, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the P&D field trip request to the New England Institute of Technology in East Greenwich, Rhode Island, on January 15, 2026.

Principal Denise also reported on the Holiday Winter Art Show, the Culinary Arts Holiday Stroll with gingerbread displays, and an upcoming hot chocolate bar event.

Item 10. Superintendent-Director's Report – A. Steele

10.1. Superintendent Steele provided a preliminary report on the annual Superintendent's Fundraiser Dinner. On a motion by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Broderick, the Committee unanimously voted to authorize school officials to request permission from the Upton Board of Selectpersons to serve alcoholic beverages/wine on campus for event scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2026. The alcohol will be dispensed by adult staff members to age-eligible, non-student attendees.

10.2. Updates/Events:

a. Superintendent Steele reported that representatives from the Upton Men's Club met at BVT on November 25, 2025, to discuss potential future events on campus. Due to site constraints at nearby Nipmuc Regional High School, the Upton Men's Club may take a one-year hiatus from their annual Fourth of July fireworks display. A member who organizes a "repair fair" for the elderly has expressed interest in holding the event at BVT.

10.3. Superintendent Steele presented the School Committee with his "First 100 Days Report," which spans July 1, 2025 to November 24, 2025.

10.4. Admissions Update:

New Procedure: The Committee will annually set the capacity for the incoming freshman class. The Committee discussed the size of the freshman class for FY27.

a. On a motion by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Finn, the Committee unanimously voted to set the FY27 freshman class size at 315 students.

10.5. Special Education Staffing Update: Superintendent Steele provided an update on Special Education staffing, including adjustments to Student Services and the designation of Ms. Martell as the District Special Education contact.

10.6. Notification of Resignation/Retirement(s):

a. A notification of retirement letter dated December 11, 2025, from Kristin Martell, Special Education, with an effective date of July 1, 2026, was accepted.

b. A notification of retirement letter dated December 1, 2025, from Priscilla Koopman, Long Term Substitute, with an effective date of January 5, 2026, was accepted.

Item 11. New Business

There was no new business to report.

Item 12. 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. Superintendent Steele reported that Mr. Koopman participated in a wreath presentation at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which was included in the news clippings.

Item 13. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on January 15, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Item 14. Meeting Closure:

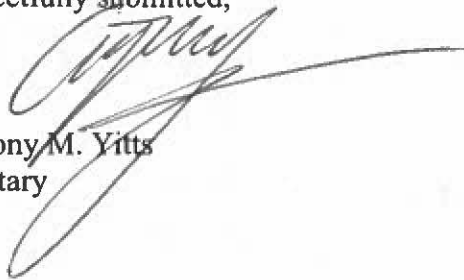
14.1. The Chair, Mr. Hall, declared the meeting closed at 6:58 p.m.

14.2. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Koopman, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

Listing of Materials Used in the Meeting:

- Item 2.1. Regular Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2025
- Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report dated October 31, 2025
- Item 5.1. Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Monthly Budget Report from 7.1.25 to 12.18.25
- Item 5.2.a. Donation: Gift Cards, D. Fields, Sutton
- Item 5.2.b. Donation: Van Subsidy UniBank
- Item 5.2.c. Donation: Blissful Meadows
- Item 7.1. Admissions Policy Revisions (Policy: JF-Admissions)
- Item 7.1.a. Suggested Motion: Admissions Policy Revisions (Policy: JF-Admissions)
- Item 9.3.a. Foreign Trip – Italy April 2027
- Item 9.3. b. P&D – NE Institute of Technology, E. Greenwich, R.I.
- Item 10.3. 100 Days Report
- Item 10.6.a. Kristin Martell – Special Education Coordinator, Retirement
- Item 10.6.b. Priscilla Koopman – Long Term Substitute, Retirement
- Item 12. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted,



Anthony M. Yitts  
Secretary