



Marblehead School Committee Meeting

Chair: Jennifer Schaeffner, transitioned in-meeting to Al Williams

Meeting Date, Time & Location: July 2, 2025 at 6:00 PM, Brown School Library and hybrid via Zoom

SC Members Present: H.Gwazda, B. Ota, J. Schaeffner, K. Schmeckpeper, A. Williams

Agenda & Materials: [Link](#)

Meeting Recording: [Link](#)

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Henry Gwazda

Call to Order

Ms. Schaeffner called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. The school committee recited the pledge of allegiance.

School Committee Reorganization

The committee conducted nominations and recorded votes for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

- **CHAIR:**

- Mr. Ota nominated Ms Schaeffner for chair, noting his plan to nominate Ms Schmeckpeper as Vice Chair.
- Henry Gwazda nominated Al Williams as Chair - echoed by Kate Schmeckpeper.
- VOTE - Mr. Ota and Ms. Schaeffner voted for Ms. Schaeffner, Mr. Gwazda, Mr. Williams and Ms. Schmeckpeper voted for Mr. Williams.
- Mr. Williams assumed the chair.

- **VICE CHAIR:**

- Henry Gwazda nominated Kate Schmeckpeper for Vice Chair. There were no other nominations.
- VOTE - Mr. Gwazda, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ota and Ms. Schmeckpeper supported the nomination, Ms. Schaeffner abstained.
- Ms. Schmeckpeper assumed vice-chair.

- **SECRETARY:**

- Ms. Schmeckpeper inquired as to whether Mr. Ota had interest in the role - he did not.
- Ms. Schmeckpeper nominated Mr. Gwazda.
- Mr. Ota nominated Ms. Schaeffner.
- VOTE: Mr. Gwazda, Mr. Williams and Ms. Schmeckpeper voted for Mr. Gwazda. Mr. Ota and Ms. Schaeffner voted for Ms. Schaeffner.
- Mr. Williams advised Mr. Gwazda that full SC meeting minutes are taken for the committee but that the role becomes especially important when recording executive session discussions and decisions.

Student Representative Update



Skipped - not available during the summer

Commendations

The committee publicly thanked outgoing members Allison Taylor and Sarah Fox and candidate Emily DeJoy for their service and willingness to run for office.

Public Comment

Mr. Williams announced that individual comments will be limited to 3 minutes, and that the public comment period would be limited to 15 minutes, unless otherwise decided-upon by the committee.

Speakers: Sarah Pouladian, Mark Adams, Sarah Fox, Michelle Bell (Sustainable Marblehead), Cindy Tower Lowen, Kate Thomson

Re-Vote on Committee Re-Org

- **CHAIR:**
 - **Motion:** Ms Schmeckpeper made a motion that Al Williams be Chair, Mr. Gwazda seconded. (Mr. Ota nominated Ms. Schaeffner for Chair, there was no second.)
 - **Vote:** Mr. Gwazda, Mr. Williams and Ms. Schmeckpeper in favor, Mr. Ota and Ms. Schaeffner not in favor. The motion passed (3-2).
- **VICE CHAIR:**
 - **Motion:** Mr. Gwazda made a motion that Kate Schmeckpeper be Vice Chair, Mr. Williams seconded.
 - **Vote:** Mr. Gwazda, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ota and Ms. Schmeckpeper in favor, Ms. Schaeffner not in favor. The motion passed (4-1).
- **SECRETARY:** A speaker in public comment suggested that Mr. Gwazda may have a conflict of interest that precludes him from service as Secretary. Out of an abundance of caution, Mr. Williams suggested that Mr. Gwazda inquire with the state ethics board regarding any potential conflicts of interest that may exist. Mr. Gwazda indicated that he had already inquired with the ethics office as to the existence of a conflict of interest, but agreed to revisit the question and return to the committee with more information.

Introduction of MVMS Principal (Matt LeVangie)

Superintendent Robidoux introduced Matt LeVangie as the new MVMS Middle School principal; committee members and staff reported positive feedback from the search and site visits and noted Mr. LeVangie has already begun work and acclimation activities. Mr. LeVangie commented briefly on his first days in the district and was welcomed by the committee. Mr. Robidoux also thanked the outgoing principal, Matt Fox, for enabling an outstanding transition.

Superintendent Updates



Mr. Robidoux recognized the start of his second year in the role, and thanked Ms. Schaeffner for her support in Chair, and welcomed the two new members of the school committee - Ms. Schmeckpeper and Mr. Gwazda. Summer programs are underway and well attended. Many facilities committees are also ongoing this summer. Finally, Mr. Robidoux shared the retirees who left the district at the end of 2025.

Schedule of Bills

The committee reviewed the schedule of bills, in the amount of \$1,249,383.20.

- **Moved:** Mr. Williams asked for a motion to approve the schedule. Ms. Schmeckpeper moved, Mr. Gwazda seconded.
- **Vote / Result:** The motion passed (5-0).

Donation: Brown School Landscaping

Mr. Robidoux presented the committee with a donation of landscaping materials (six dwarf Alberta spruce and plantings, plus fence screening). Administration will coordinate acceptance logistics and installation.

- **Motion:** Mr. Gwazda made a motion to accept the donation, Mr. Ota seconded.
- **Vote / Result:** The motion passed (5-0).

Meeting Minutes (Feb-June)

Ms. Schaeffner made several draft minutes available for review. The committee did not vote to approve them at this meeting. Members to review draft minutes and be prepared to vote them at the next meeting.

Financial Update

Mr. Pfifferling reported that the fiscal year closeout is in progress and FY26 is open; conversion from Softright to Munis is underway, payroll processing continues, and a full FY25 closeout will be provided once final entries are completed. Highlights included FY25 prepayments (roughly \$1.0M prepaid tuition) and purchases such as 17 AEDs and equipment to support facilities projects. The finance team will provide a full FY25 closeout and surplus estimate ASAP.

Roof project update / RDA & Leftfield contract amendments / bidding approach

The OPM and designer for the MHS roof project presented project timeline, scope, and options. The team recommended bidding two alternatives (membrane replacement and fluid-applied restoration) and to let the market decide. The committee discussed costs, warranties, PV readiness, and schedule risk.

- **Motion:** Ms. Schaeffner made a motion to approve two sets of bid documents for options B & C, Mr. Williams seconded.
- **Amended Motion:** Ms. Schaeffner made a motion to approve the amended contracts as submitted for both RDA and Left Field that include the two options for design and bid process for Option B and Option C, Mr. Williams seconded.
- **Vote / Result:** The motion passed (5-0).

Next steps:

- Administration will submit approved contract amendments to Select Board for their approval.



- The facilities subcommittee will convene within 2 weeks with OPM/designer and local envelope expert to review alternates and set a decision timeline for bid evaluation.
- Administration to contact original roof designer/SMMA to confirm whether existing roof is PV-ready and whether conduit installation should be included in design.
- Members emphasized the need for decisive review when bids return.

Policy Updates

Administration presented updates to tech-related policies (JNDB, JNDB-E, JNDB-R) for the student handbooks as well as draft language for the student survey/research policy (IL). The committee unanimously approved the tech policy updates but deferred the student survey/research policy (opt-in vs opt-out language) for further review and counsel/MASC consultation. The committee also reviewed a recess policy providing K–3 up to two recesses and grades 4–6 one recess; after discussion and noting bargaining implications, the committee unanimously voted to approve the policy as written, pending a policy number / code being assigned. Next steps:

- Ms. Ferreira to research policy IL (student survey/research), confirm opt-in/opt-out language and consult MASC and legal counsel; return to committee for vote next meeting.
- Mr. Williams to coordinate necessary executive session / discussions with MEA re: operationalizing the five-minute start change tied to recess implementation.

Student Handbooks

Administration presented consolidated handbook updates, including academic integrity expectations and an updated attendance chart; the committee voted to approve the handbooks (motion passed 4-1). Ms. Schaeffner voiced ongoing concerns about high school attendance policy. A chronic absenteeism measurement will be addressed separately.

- **Motion:** Mr. Gwazda made a motion to approve the student handbook, Ms. Schmeckpeper seconded.
- **Vote:** Mr. Gwazda, Mr. Williams, Mr. Ota and Ms. Schmeckpeper in favor, Ms. Schaeffner not in favor. The motion passed 4-1.

Next steps:

- Administration to move forward with publishing handbooks and associated materials on district website and notify families prior to school year start.
- Administration to continue work on attendance communication and consider follow-up proposals to address chronic absenteeism concerns.

Retreat planning (Aug 4)

The committee confirmed a retreat for Aug 4, 2025 from 9:00am to 1:00pm, and discussed proposed agenda items including legal updates, MASC workshop, and discussion of the district improvement plan.

- Mr. Williams and Ms. Schmeckpeper to finalize retreat agenda, confirm MASC and legal participation, and circulate pre-work materials prior to retreat.



Subcommittees & Liaison Assignments

The committee agreed to form a facilities subcommittee to include Mr. Gwazda and Ms. Schaeffner as school-committee representatives and a policy subcommittee to include Ms. Schaeffner and Ms. Schmeckpeper. Other subcommittee and liaison assignments will be finalized at the retreat. Members discussed setting meeting dates for the coming year and agreed to meet again on July 31, 2025.

Other / New Business

Committee confirmed next regular meeting for July 31, 2025, and discussed the need to create a full 2025-26 school committee meeting calendar. No additional new business recorded.

Adjournment

Mr. Williams asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:11pm. Ms. Schmeckpeper moved, Mr. Gwazda seconded. The motion passed (5-0).