



HAMILTON-WENHAM

Regional School District

5 School Street, Wenham MA 01984

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District School Committee Meeting Minutes

School Committee Meeting ([agenda](#))

Buker Elementary School Multipurpose Room

In-Person Meeting

[Zoomlink](#) is for Public Comment Only

Meeting ID: 99478036875

Thursday, January 8, 2026

7:00 p.m. - 8:49 p.m.

Present:

Dana Allara

Julia Campbell

Jen Carr (remote participation)

Amy Kunberger

Kristin Noon

Also Present:

Eric Tracy, HWRSD Superintendent

Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent

1. Call to Order

At 7:04 p.m. Dana Allara called the meeting to order. She reminded the community that the meeting is being recorded and live-streamed via HWCAM and she stated that because a member is participating remotely, all votes this evening will be roll call votes. Dana Allara advised the Committee and the community that, due to health reasons, David Frenkel has submitted his resignation from the School Committee. She stated that David asked that she let the community know that it has been his privilege to serve on the Committee. The Committee wished David the best.

2. Citizen's Comments [Exhibit](#)

Jeff Austin, Hamilton, discussed the two recent workshops held by the School Committee/Administration. He stated that if the goal is to build trust, the Committee should focus on transparency and communication. He stated that the governing body has to accept criticism. He encouraged the Committee to answer questions from the community in public, complete a full facilities assessment and to focus on redoing the education plan.

Beth Hurr, 270 Asbury Street, Hamilton encouraged members of the Committee to tour the Welch School. She congratulated the Town of Hamilton for their successful work with the

Gordon Seminary. She encouraged the Committee to change their public comment policy to allow responses to questions from the community.

3. Review of School Committee Protocol [Exhibit](#)

Julia Campbell read School Committee Protocol number 8.

4. Review of School Committee Mission Statement [Exhibit](#)

Julia Campbell read the following from the Mission Statement: The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District School Committee's mission is to ensure our schools create graduates with a passion for lifelong learning together with the critical skills needed to maximize their potential. The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee will lead and inspire a district that is a source of civic pride and municipal engagement to serve the community for generations to come.

Dana Allara stated that without objection she would take the Student Report out of order. There was no objection.

5. Student Government Representative; *Evie Bernard*

Evie Bernard provided an update on events and activities throughout the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District.

6. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Tracy wished all a happy new year. He discussed the recent listening session and stated the next session is January 29. Superintendent Tracy provided an update on the work of the School Start Time Committee and stated that the group is making good progress and is on track to bring a report to the School Committee in March. He notified the Committee that he and the Cutler School Principal will be going to the State House to receive an award for Cutler Elementary School receiving the School of Recognition designation from DESE. He reviewed the upcoming public hearing dates and reminded the community that Tuesday is Family Literacy Night.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Warrants [Exhibit](#)

- Voucher No. 14
- Voucher No. 1082
- Voucher No. 1083
- Voucher No. 4189
- Voucher No. 4190
- Voucher No. 4191
- Voucher No. 4192
- Voucher No. 4193

b. Minutes

- December 18, 2025 [Exhibit](#)
- December 29, 2025 [Exhibit](#)

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee approve the consent agenda as presented in the exhibit.

Motion by: Julia Campbell

Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

ROLL CALL VOTE MOTION PASSED 5-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Kunberger and Noon voted yes)

8. New Business

a. Launch Strategic Planning [Exhibit](#)
Superintendent Tracy discussed the launch of the strategic planning process.

b. Town Election Information [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#)
Dana Allara discussed the towns' election and town meeting dates. She encouraged anyone in the community that needs additional information on the School Committee elections to reach out to her or contact their town clerk.

9. Finance & Operations

a. Vote Superintendent's Tentative FY27 Budget Proposal [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#)
Assistant Superintendent Leone reviewed the revised superintendent's tentative FY27 budget. The Committee thanked the administration for their work to revise the budget as the Committee requested. The Committee held a lengthy discussion on whether the reductions were sufficient or if additional reductions are needed and if so what those reductions would be. In response to a question, Assistant Superintendent Leone reviewed the budget process and confirmed that if the Committee voted the tentative budget as is this evening they could still make changes.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee approve the Tentative FY27 General Fund Expenditures Budget of \$47,653,295. This amount includes General Fund Operating Expenses, after Offsets, in the amount of \$45,692,031 and General Fund Debt Service Expenses, after Offsets, in the amount of \$1,961,264. Furthermore, the Gross Operating Expenses of the District, before Offsets, have been allocated by the DESE defined chart of accounts according to the "Summary by DESE Category" chart included in the budget presentation and as detailed in the exhibits.

Motion by: Julia Campbell

Seconded by: Kristin Noon

Assistant Superintendent Leone confirmed with the Committee that they wish to leave athletic user fees as presented and are requesting an additional approximately \$500,000 be reduced from the budget and that this information be discussed at the upcoming Quintuple Board Meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE MOTION PASSED 5-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Kunberger and Noon voted yes)

10. Committee Report

- a. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee - meeting January 12
- b. Policy Subcommittee - meeting January 26
- c. Negotiations - meeting January 22, Dana reminded the Committee that they will need a

member to replace David Frenkel on this subcommittee.

- d. Secretary Report - up to date
- e. In Our Inboxes - no update

11. Chair's Report

Dana Allara informed the community that both the recent listening session and the School Committee workshop were recorded and can be viewed on HWCAM. Amy Kunberger reminded the community that Annie Jr. is at the Miles River School next weekend.

12. Topics for Future Meetings

There were no topics for future meetings.

13. Adjourn

I move to adjourn at 8:49 p.m.

Motion by: Julia Campbell

Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

ROLL CALL VOTE MOTION PASSED 5-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Kunberger and Noon voted yes)