



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: 93451272853

Thursday, February 12, 2026

6:30 p.m. - 9:10 p.m.

Present:

Dana Allara

Julia Campbell (remote participation departed at approximately 9:00 PM)

Jen Carr

Amy Kunberger

Kristin Noon

Also Present:

Eric Tracy, HWRSD Superintendent

Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent

1. Call to Order

At 6:32 p.m. Dana Allara called the meeting to order. She reminded the community that the meeting is being recorded and live-streamed via HWCAM.

2. Public Hearing #2 - HWRSD FY27 Budget

Assistant Superintendent Leone gave an overview of the proposed FY27 budget.

Bridget O'Donnell, 105 Main Street, asked questions regarding the possibility that Chapter 70 funding will be reformulated, the status of the regional transportation reimbursement rate and budget/funding communications to the community. Superintendent Tracy stated that any recommended change to Chapter 70 funding would not impact the FY27 budget as any recommendation would need to go through the full state process before being implemented; the recommended regional transportation reimbursement rate in the Governor's budget is higher than the current rate but the Governor's budget still needs to go through the full state process. Dana Allara stated that the Committee would be discussing community communication later this evening and Amy Kunberger stated that MTA is inviting any community member to sign their online Fiscal Crisis document.

Katie O'Brien, 114 Forest Street, asked what happens if the budget is passed at town meeting but the override does not pass. Superintendent Tracy provided an overview of the town meeting budget process and stated that even if the override passes at both town meetings it then needs to pass at the ballot box. He stated that if the override doesn't pass the School Committee has 30 days to decide next steps such as accepting the levy budget, going back with a reduced budget number or going back again with the same number.

Jen Caufield, Juniper Street, asked what the override numbers will be. Assistant Superintendent Leone stated that budgets are not yet finalized but currently the estimate is \$1.7 million for Hamilton and just under \$500,000 for Wenham. She stated her concern that Hamilton will not approve that large of an override.

There was no additional comment and the public hearing closed at 6:53 p.m.

Dana Allara stated that without objection she would take items out of order and hold the citizen comment section until 7:00 pm. There was no objection.

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

Kristin Noon read School Committee Protocol number 10.

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

Amy Kunberger 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 attracts and retains high-quality educators, by acknowledging and respecting their expertise and professionalism.

5. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Tracy discussed his attendance at a panel of local educators hosted by Representative Bowman to talk about school budgets related to Chapter 70 funding. He discussed the recent Kindness Concert at the elementary schools and reminded the community that course selection for next year will begin after vacation week. He updated the community on the state's work on graduation requirements. In response to a question he stated that the graduation requirements will not impact the Class of 2026.

6. Citizen's Comment [Exhibit](#)

There was no citizen comment.

7. Consent Agenda

- a. Warrants [Exhibit](#)
 - Voucher No. 17
 - Voucher No. 1087
 - Voucher No. 4196
 - Voucher No. 4197

- Voucher No. 4198
 - Voucher No. 4199
- b. Minutes
- January 22, 2026 [Exhibit](#)
 - January 21, 2026 Quintuple Board Meeting [Exhibit](#)
- c. Donations
- HW Edfund Mini-Grant - HS/MS Library Nonfiction Collection Update; \$9,600 [Exhibit](#)
 - New England Biolabs, Inc. - Robotics Donation; \$1,000 [Exhibit](#)
- d. Field Trips
- Model UN Field Trip March 2026 [Exhibit](#)
- e. Other
- Youth Football Advertisements [Exhibit](#)
 - Spring 8th Grade Waivers Request [Exhibit](#)

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee accept the consent agenda as written.

Motion by: Jen Carr

Seconded by: Kristin Noon

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

8. New Business Committee Report

a. State of the Buildings Report [Exhibit](#)
Curtis Wightman provided the state of the buildings report to the Committee.

b. Vote - HS Roof Project MSBA [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#)
Curtis Wightman and Superintendent Tracy discussed the high school MSBA roof project.

I move that the Hamilton–Wenham Regional School District (the “District”) hereby appropriates the amount of \$10,296,345 for the purpose of paying costs of the roof system replacement at the Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School located at 775 Bay Road in Hamilton, MA, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto (the “Project”), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended at the direction of the District’s Director of Facilities, Operations and Transportation. To meet this appropriation the District is authorized to borrow said amount, under and pursuant to Chapter 71, Section 16(d), of the General Laws and the District Agreement, as amended, or pursuant to any other enabling authority. The District acknowledges that the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District; provided further that any grant that the District may

receive from the MSBA shall not exceed the lesser of (1) Forty-five and fifty-two hundredths percent (45.52%) of eligible, approved Project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA, and that the amount of borrowing authorized pursuant to this vote shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA. I further move that within seven (7) days from the date on which this vote is adopted the Secretary be and hereby is instructed to notify the Select Board and the Finance Committee of each of the member towns of this District as to the amount and general purposes of the debt herein authorized, as required by the District Agreement and by Chapter 71, Section 16(d), of the General Laws.

Motion by: Amy Kunberger

Seconded by: Kristin Noon

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

c. Superintendent's Formative Evidence [Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy discussed his mid-cycle formative evidence and stated that any member needing additional information should feel free to reach out to him. In response to questions, Superintendent Tracy stated that the rubric linked to the document is the current rubric and that bullet 4 under goal 3 is complete and he will update the document to reflect that. Dana Allara stated that at the next meeting the Committee will discuss the evaluation timeline.

d. Appoint Vacant Committee Liaisons [Exhibit](#)

Dana Allara stated that the Hamilton and Wenham Master Planning positions should be removed from the list as they are complete. Julia Campbell requested a correction to the document to show that she is serving on the Wellness Committee.

I nominate Kristin Noon to the position of liaison to the Wenham Select Board.

Motion by: Jen Carr

Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

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

I nominate Kristin Noon for the position of liaison to the SEPAC.

Motion by: Amy Kunberger

Seconded by: Jen Carr

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

e. Hamilton-Wenham School Conversation Report [Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy discussed the community conversations process and report. He stated that he will send this information out to the community and ask the towns to do the same.

9. Finance & Operations

a. FY27 Final Budget Vote [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#)

Assistant Superintendent Leone thanked all involved in the budget process. He gave an overview of the FY27 budget including a last minute change due to insurance premiums being

3% lower than anticipated resulting in an approximately \$150,000 savings. He discussed next steps in the process. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee to reduce the proposed budget as presented on the agenda by the amount of the insurance savings making the updated general fund expenditure amount in the motion \$47,251,917 and the offset amount to \$45,290,653.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee approve the Final FY27 General Fund Expenditures Budget of \$47,251,917.

This includes General Fund Operating Expenses, after offsets in the amount of \$45,290,653 and General Fund Debt Service Expenses 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 this budget presentation and as detailed in the exhibits with the exclusion of (\$153,983) from the “Benefits & Fixed Charges” DESE Category.

Motion by: Amy Kunberger

Seconded by: Jen Carr

The Committee had a brief discussion regarding how the budgets would be presented at the town meetings and whether it would be just the school district funds included in the over the levy budget. Assistant Superintendent Leone stated that he will provide additional information to the Committee on this issue once the towns have finalized the process.

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

b. School Committee Budget & Capital Communication

The Committee discussed ways to communicate information and educate the community regarding the budget and town meetings process.

I move that the School Committee designate Amy Kunberger and Kristin Noon to develop a recommended communications plan for the School Committee budget and override.

Motion by: Jen Carr

Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

The Committee discussed Amy and Kristin working with Superintendent Tracy, Assistant Superintendent Leone and reaching out to members from the Select Boards and Finance Committees.

MOTION PASSED 4-0 (Members Allara, Carr, Kunberger and Noon voted yes)

10. Committee Reports

- a. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee - will be meeting after vacation
- b. Policy Subcommittee - next meeting March 16
- c. Negotiations Subcommittee - negotiating with ESP union and will provide an update at next executive session meeting
- d. Secretary Report - no update
- e. In Our Inboxes - no update

11. Chair's Report

There was no Chair's report.

12. Topics for Future Meetings

Topics include Assistant Superintendent Leone presenting the FY26 forecast, Policy Subcommittee 1st reading and a discussion regarding the Superintendent's evaluation timeline.

13. Adjourn

I move to adjourn.

Motion by: Kristin Noon

Seconded by: Jen Carr

MOTION PASSED 4-0 (Members Allara, Carr, Kunberger and Noon voted yes)