

Cohasset Public Schools
143 Pond Street
Cohasset, MA 02025
Empower Students to Improve Communities

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE COHASSET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
January 07, 2026
6:00PM**

Cohasset Middle and High School
Learning Commons
143 Pond Street
Cohasset, MA 02025

Attendance

Committee Members in Attendance	Jennifer Lesky, Chair Lance Dial, Secretary Corey Evans, School Committee Member Jacob Squatrito, Interim School Committee Member
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Others in Attendance	Dr. Sarah Shannon, Superintendent Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations
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Call to Order

Chair Jennifer Lesky called the regular meeting of the Cohasset School Committee to order at 6:00 PM.

Roll Call: Mr. Dial-Present; Mr. Evans-Present; Mr. Squatrito-Present; Ms. Lesky-Present.

Mr. MacLellan was absent.

Ms. Lesky noted that with four members, the Committee had a quorum.

Opening Remarks

Chair Lesky welcomed everyone back and wished the community a Happy New Year. She noted that the district has entered the second half of the academic year and looks forward to continued progress in classrooms and district initiatives. She also reminded community members that the meeting is recorded and that participation remains available via Zoom.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Invited Guests

South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) Quarterly Update (C-1)

Mr. Michael Losche, Executive Director of SSEC, provided an overview of current programming and thanked Cohasset for its partnership and engagement. SSEC provides specialized services, including ASD programming, and is currently operating out of Hingham and leased space in Hull.

Mr. Losche presented a request for member districts to approve the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund in accordance with DESE guidance. The fund would be financed solely through surplus tuition revenue, would not require additional district contributions, and would allow interest accrual for long-term capital planning. With lease decisions approaching in Hull, the fund would provide flexibility for major repairs or potential property acquisition.

Mr. Dial clarified that the vote would not obligate Cohasset financially and was limited to authorizing SSEC to establish the reserve account. Mr. Evans asked about current surplus handling and timing of the proposal. Mr. Losche explained that surpluses currently remain in the general fund and are occasionally refunded, but a reserve would provide stronger long-term fiscal planning capacity.

After discussion,

A motion was made by Mr. Dial and seconded by Mr. Squatrito to support the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund at the South Shore Educational Collaborative.

Roll Call Vote: Dial – Aye; Evans – Aye; Squatrito – Aye; Lesky – Aye. Motion passed 4–0.

Superintendent Report

Superintendent Update

Dr. Shannon reflected on the December 22 professional learning day, which included 21 workshops led by 28 educators. The day began with cross-building community circles and focused in the morning on instructional topics such as AI in education, grading practices, writing strategies, and interdisciplinary learning. The afternoon sessions centered on wellness, including mindful walks, collaborative activities, and social-emotional topics. Feedback has been positive, and the Professional Learning Council will review suggestions for refinement next year.

Dr. Shannon also announced an upcoming district communication survey designed to gather feedback on communication practices and preferences. She shared that the newsletter would include information explaining how snow day decisions are made, highlighting the coordination required with multiple Town partners.

The Committee discussed the district's effort to limit non-emergency communication during Winter break. Mr. Dial reported receiving mixed community feedback and suggested clearer framing in future communications. Mr. Evans recommended revisiting the structure next year to improve clarity. Dr. Shannon emphasized research on the importance of true disconnection during vacation time and the intent to support staff wellbeing. Ms. Lesky noted that honoring professional boundaries ultimately benefits students and the district.

Annual Town Election – May 9, 2026

The Committee discussed the request to use the Deer Hill School Gymnasium for the Annual Town Election. Mr. Dial inquired about longer-term alternative location planning for future elections.

After discussion,

A motion was made by Mr. Squatrito and seconded by Mr. Evans to allow the Annual Town Election on Saturday, May 9, 2026 to occur at the Deer Hill School Gymnasium.

Roll Call Vote: Dial – Aye; Evans – Aye; Squatrito – Aye; Lesky – Aye. Motion passed 4–0.

Teaching and Learning

Student Services Update – December Data

Mr. Stapleton presented December special education data, reporting 16 Annual Reviews, 9 Re-Evaluations, and 7 Initial Evaluations, for a total of 32 meetings. He noted that MTSS processes continue to function as intended, with interventions often implemented prior to formal eligibility determinations.

2026–2027 Integrated Preschool Information (E-1)

Registration for Integrated Preschool is open January 5–31, 2026. The program operates Monday through Thursday with AM and PM sessions and uses a lottery system for peer role models if demand exceeds capacity. The curriculum aligns with Massachusetts Pre-K standards and includes a multidisciplinary support team.

Mr. Evans expressed interest in future conversations about expanding and strengthening the program. Ms. Lesky praised the program's impact and requested future longitudinal data on MTSS referrals and eligibility trends to better understand patterns over time. Mr. Stapleton noted that while tracking requires cross-building data coordination, it is feasible and aligns with prior data work.

Budget, Resources and Governance

Gift from Cohasset Education Foundation (CEF) (F-1)

Dr. Shannon presented CEF grants totaling \$89,825. The funding supports arts programming, outdoor learning improvements, author visits, bike racks, math professional development, middle school enrichment materials, a senior wellness day, and district-wide strategic plan initiatives related to redefining success.

After discussion,

A motion was made by Mr. Dial and seconded by Mr. Evans to accept the donation from the Cohasset Education Foundation as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Dial – Aye; Evans – Aye; Squatrito – Aye; Lesky – Aye. Motion passed 4–0.

Gifts from Parent School Organization (PSO) (F-2)

Dr. Shannon presented PSO gifts totaling \$8,143, supporting fitness center supervision, sensory tools, recess equipment, instructional subscriptions, classroom materials, and Math Day resources. The Committee briefly clarified line-item totals prior to voting.

After discussion,

A motion was made by Mr. Dial and seconded by Mr. Squatrito to approve the PSO gift total as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Dial – Aye; Evans – Aye; Squatrito – Aye; Lesky – Aye. Motion passed 4–0.

Community Relations / Communication

Mr. Evans noted that any public communications issued in the name of the School Committee should be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to distribution. Mr. Dial provided a brief update from the Budget

Subcommittee, noting preliminary review of projected materials and indicating a fuller report will follow at a future meeting.

School Committee Governance

There were no minutes for approval and no topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair.

Executive Session and Adjournment

Ms. Lesky noted there was a reason to move into executive session for reason #2, collective bargaining strategy regarding teachers.

A motion was made by Mr. Dial and seconded by Mr. Evans to enter Executive Session for reason #2, collective bargaining strategy regarding teachers, with no return to public session.

Roll Call Vote: Dial – Aye; Evans – Aye; Squatrito – Aye; Lesky – Aye. Motion passed 4–0.

The regular meeting adjourned at 6:43 PM.

Documents/Materials Used by School Committee Members

January 7, 2026 Meeting

- South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) Quarterly Update
- Student Services Update – 2026–2027 Integrated Preschool Information
- Gift from Cohasset Education Foundation (CEF)
- Gifts from Parent School Organization (PSO)

Respectfully submitted,
Lance C. Dial
3.4.2026