



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: 91765852932

Thursday, March 5, 2026

7:00 p.m. - 8:44 p.m.

Present:

Dana Allara

Meghan Benson

Julia Campbell

Amy Kunberger

Kristin Noon

Also Present:

Eric Tracy, Superintendent

Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent

1. Call to Order

At 7:01 p.m. Dana Allara called the meeting to order. She reminded the community that the meeting is being recorded and live-streamed via HWCAM. She stated that Member Megan Benson is participating remotely so all votes will be roll call votes.

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

There was no citizen comment.

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

Julia Campbell read School Committee Protocol number 7.

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

Kristin Noon 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 supports and guides the Superintendent to execute and achieve the Approved 2025-2026 District Goals.

5. Superintendent's Report [Exhibit](#), [Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy discussed the recently released Office of the Inspector General, *Special Education Transportation Study: Strategies to Mitigate Rising Costs*. Superintendent Tracy gave an update on the status of the solar canopy project at the middle school parking lot and he discussed the possibility of adding solar on the high school roof. He discussed the most recent water main break at the Cutler School and noted that the repair is temporary and at some point the district will need to replace the water main. Superintendent Tracy discussed the upcoming DECA state competition. He stated that Hamilton-Wenham has 118 students participating in the state competition.

6. Consent Agenda

- a. Warrants [Exhibit](#)
 - Voucher No. 21
 - Voucher No. 1093
 - Voucher No. 1094
 - Voucher No. 4207
 - Voucher No. 4208
 - Voucher No. 4209
 - Voucher No. 4210
 - Voucher No. 4211
 - Voucher No. 4212
- b. Minutes
 - February 26, 2026 [Exhibit](#)
- c. Donations
 - Friends of Winthrop - Field Trip Donations; \$5,467.24 [Exhibit](#)
 - FOTA Grant - Drama Festival T-Shirts; \$500 [Exhibit](#)

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

Motion by: Julia Campbell

Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

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

7. New Business Committee Report

- a. FY27 Budget Communications Discussion [Exhibit](#)

The Committee reviewed and discussed the draft joint budget communication document prepared by Amy and Kristin. Dana stated that she has notified the Chairs of the other boards that the Committee is discussing the draft tonight and requested they review the letter and provide details on missing numbers as soon as possible. In response to a request, Kristin agreed to draft a similar letter from just the School Committee so that the information can be provided at the Friends meeting on Tuesday since it is unlikely that the other boards will have had time to review and approve the joint letter in time for the Friends meeting. Dana Allara

stated that her objective at Tuesday's Friends meeting is to give a high level overview to the group and she will make note of any questions asked to see if they should be added to the list of FAQs. It was the consensus of the Committee to clarify the statement ...*the school district is cutting \$1.25M from its budget* to state *the school district is reducing its original budget request by \$1.3 million*. The Committee discussed possibly putting together a 3 minute power point presentation for the community meetings. Amy will share a pdf draft of the FAQs with members. Assistant Superintendent Leone stated that he would work on answers to the FAQs. Amy stated that she will also share the document with Superintendent Tracy and Janell so the document is available to the public if requested. Amy will continue to work on the one-page budget summary and a one-page summary for the high school roof project for distribution at town meetings. Both the summary documents will be brought to the Committee at the next meeting for review and approval. The Committee continued discussion on how best to get information on the budget override out to the public. Superintendent Tracy stated that he can send out information on the office hours and Kristin Noon agreed to reach out to the newspaper to see if office hours could be listed on the newspaper calendar. Superintendent Tracy will bring to the next meeting information on reductions should the override not pass.

b. School Facilities Discussion

Superintendent Tracy discussed school infrastructure, information he gathered from community conversations on this topic and his recommendation that the district commission an independent architect/designer to provide a cost comparison between renovations and new build. He stated that RFPs could be requested at differing levels such as basic immediate repairs, ADA compliance, etc. He stated that he has talked to some designers regarding this and has also reached out to local communities who have done similar RFPs. He would like to send out a quick survey to determine how deep the communities want to go and then hone in on a final RFP that could be ready in tandem with a request for funds at a special town meeting. The cost range for studies depending on the depth ranges from approximately \$200,000 to \$500,000. In response to questions, he stated that the district may still be able to qualify for MSBA funds but timing could be an issue and the education plan will need to be modified; funds for the studies would need to come from either a debt exclusion or an override.

8. Finance & Operations

9. Committee Reports

- a. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee - next meeting date tentative March 16
- b. Policy Subcommittee
 - i. Second Reading & Vote Policy JFABD Updated - Homeless Students Enrollment Rights and Services [Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy discussed the response from the district's attorney on the questions raised at the last meeting. He stated that the attorney recommends leaving in the paragraph that has some redundancy because it speaks to the federal law and in section 8 she clarified that it refers to any child not living with a parent or legal guardian.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee approve Policy JFABD - Homeless Students Enrollment Rights and Services as presented in the exhibit.

Motion by: Julia Campbell

Seconded by: Kristin Noon

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

- c. Negotiations Subcommittee - next meeting March 9
- d. Secretary Report - no update
- e. In Our Inboxes - letter from Board of Health received today and will be shared

10. Chair's Report

There was no Chair's Report.

11. Topics for Future Meetings

Summary documents for town meetings and override reduction list.

12. Adjourn

I move to adjourn 8:44 p.m.

Motion by: Julia Campbell

Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

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