Ashland School Committee Minutes
March 25, 2026

Ashland Town Hall
101 Main Street
Select Board Meeting Room

Hybrid meeting: recorded on Zoom

Present:
Laurie Tosti, Chair
Marc Terry, Vice Chair
Paul Kendall, Member
Marcy Culverwell, Member
Tina Fitanides, Secretary
James Adams, Superintendent
Michael Caira, Assistant Superintendent
Chris Mathieu, Director of Finance
Abhishek Karthik, student representative, Ashland High School

Agenda Review and adoption
At 6:00 pm, Ms. Tosti opened the meeting, reviewed the agenda and took attendance.
Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: Present and AYE
Ms. Fitanides: Present and AYE
Mr. Kendall: Present and AYE
Mr. Terry: Present and AYE
Ms. Tosti: Present and AYE

Public Comment
None.

Warren School Student Chronicles
Student writing with Community Volunteer Donna Shaw.
Mr. Pete Regan, Warren School Principal, introduced Mrs. Shaw as a member of the Warren School Site Council, and a retired educator. She has been working with the second grade students at Warren to revise, edit and publish their writing in the "Warren School Student Chronicles". Four second grade students joined Mr. Regan to share how writing sessions with Mrs. Shaw have helped improve their writing skills. They then read from their own short essays, such as "My Best Friend" and "College Football".

Override Data Slides
Paul Kendall intends to share these slides to the Town forum, and wanted to share them with the School Committee members first. He reviewed slides that covered the following information:
Budget Overview, Expenses, Funding
Ashland General Fund
Ashland General Fund Expenditures
Ashland Public Schools General Fund Expenditures
APS Professional Salaries and per pupil expenditures
APS Special Education and Transportation

Town of Ashland Fixed Costs
Ashland Health Insurance Expenses
Variable Funding Sources
State Education Funding - Chapter 70
Unrestricted State Aid
Ashland Annual Revenue - New Growth
Projected Tax Impact for Homeowners

Warrant Approvals
Between March 12, 2026, and March 25, 2026, Paul Kendall, authorized by his signature payables in the amount of $486,769.19. This includes General Fund expenses of $404,930.93, Revolving expenses of $74,509.89, Grant expenses of $7,265.00, and Meals Tax of $63.37. Finally, he authorized payroll in the amount of $1,456,173.46.

Superintendent Report: James Adams
The FY 27 Budget Update will be a standing item over the next several meetings. April 8 will be the School Committee Public Budget Hearing. Tomorrow, Thursday, 3/26 will be a town meeting about the proposed override and what will be the impact if the Town's voters do not fund the override.

Assistant Superintendent's Report - Dr. Michael Caira
Dr. Caira attended Literacy Night at Warren School. He reports that it was a big success. Parent/Teacher conferences are happening this week on Tues, Wed and Thursday afternoons at the elementary schools. The Educator Evaluation committee met this week and had a productive meeting. They agreed on a document that will be the basis of a new rubric going forward.
On April 2 there will be a scheduled early release for students, and professional development scheduled for staff. Most teachers will have an opportunity to do some training on our new Student Information System: PowerSchool.
Mr. Terry asked if the new system will be more robust than iPass. Mr. Adams responded that with PowerSchool, families will be able to update their biographical information themselves, online. The goal is to roll out the new Student Information System by July 1, 2026. Special Education will delay their rollout to PowerSchools Special Programs by a year.

Student Activity Bank Reconciliations - Chris Mathieu
The Student Activity Accounts have been reconciled for Fiscal Year 2025 and the first half of Fiscal Year 2026. Mr. Mathieu is presenting the reports to the School Committee for their review and acceptance. Ms. Culverwell moves to approve the Student Activity Account Reconciliation reports as presented. Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Mr. Kendall: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE
Ms. Tosti: AYE

Driscoll Scholarship Committee
The School Committee needs to nominate a member to join the Driscoll Scholarship Committee to review applications and select a recipient. Mr. Terry nominates Ms. Tosti to the position. Ms.

Tosti accepts, as long as the meeting can take place on or before May 19, 2026, which will be the end of Ms. Tosti's term as School Committee chair.

WACA - TV
Mr. Adams reports that Barbara Chisholm and Paul Beaudin will be attending a future school committee meeting with a proposal. In the meantime, Mr. Adams provided some background and context. The current lease for WACA- TV is ending, and to renew would be expensive. WACA-TV wants to move into the AHS TV studio and make some minor renovations to the space. The group used to be located in the Middle School, but the School Department is currently using that space for Facilities and IT offices. Mr. Adams feels that WACA is a community organization that we need to support. Mr. Terry suggested that they consider security issues of visitors to the high school if the WACA-TV studio is located there. Mr. Adams agreed.

TriBoard Minutes Review
Move these into the Consent Agenda.

Consent Agenda
Ms. Fitanides moves to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Kendall seconded the motion. Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Mr. Kendall: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE
Ms. Tosti: AYE

Report of School Committee Members
Abhishek Karthik reported that English MCAS wrapped up today for 10th graders. The Seal of Bi-Literacy testing also took place this week for juniors and seniors. Spring sports season has begun and the first games will be soon.

Ms. Culverwell attended the Middle School Site Council meeting today. MCAS testing at the middle school will take place next week and the week after. The middle school ran a successful popcorn fundraiser and raised $20,000 to go towards offsetting the costs of field trips for Gr6, Gr7 and Gr8. The Unified Basketball Jamboree is next week and Ashland is hosting. Keefe Tech offered 16 spots to AMS students. The Principal and staff are working through a grade analysis, reviewing academic mastery and habits of learning.

At 7:04pm, Mr. Terry moved to adjourn. Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Mr. Kendall: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE
Ms. Tosti: AYE

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen King
Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

Documents used during the meeting

Student Activities Monthly Reconciliation Reports
- WS_SA FY 2025
- DMS_SA FY 2025
- AMS_SA FY 2025
- AHS_SA FY 2025
- WS_SA FY 2026 JULY - DEC.
- AMS_SA FY 26 JULY - DEC.
- DMS_SA FY 2026 JULY -DEC
- AHS_SA FY 26 JULY - DEC.

School Committee Agenda March 25, 2026
Warrant Approvals 03_25_26
Override Slides - School Committee - 2026-03-25
FY 26 03.25.26 School Committee Acceptance Log
Tri Board Minutes 12_10 Meeting
Minutes for January 21 Triboard - School Committee
Minutes - March 11, 2026
Driscoll Scholarship Committee