

S.C. MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee
School Committee Meeting
Monday, April 27, 2026 - 6:30 p.m.
Hoosac Valley High School, Resource Center, 125 Savoy Road, Cheshire, MA

PRESENT: Erin Milne, John Duval, Robert Tetlow, Fred Lora, Tracey Tierney, Adam Emerson, Jen Solak

ABSENT:

OTHERS: Aaron Dean, Kristen Palatt

104451 **Call to Erin Milen called the meeting to Order at 6:30 PM**

104452 **Public Comment or Questions**

104453 **Approval of Minutes - March 23, 2026**

MOTION: On Motion of John Duval and second by Jen Solak

VOTED: To approve March 23, 2026 meeting minutes. The vote was unanimous

104454 **Report of Business Manager - None**

104456 **Report of Sub Committees - None**

104457 **Communications**

- A. **Ignite Reading Tutoring Program** - Kristen Palatt presented information on the ignite reading tutoring program. She recently met with the ignite specialist to go over data at the midpoint of the tutoring sessions. Progress of the 45 students currently engaged in the tutoring was presented. Students are picked based on their benchmark test data based on need grades 1, 2 and 3. Some of the key takeaways from this data was that 100% of students have mastered Basic alphabet knowledge, 82% of students have moved to grade 1 and the balance have moved to grade 2 and made great gains in skill set. It will be important to track those students who have had tutoring all 3 years to see how their tutoring have assisted in their progress compared to their peers. There was a discussion around progress and other assessment modules being utilized and how results vary based on the type of assessment testing being used. The group discussed the current state budget and how there have been cuts to funding lines that would historically provide this service through grant funds.
- B. **Fire Marshal Visit** - Erica Girgenti has the agenda ready and will orchestrate the day. Fred explained what the Fire Marshal's day will look like - including a presentation to grades 6-12 with question and answer sessions with the company of the Fire Chiefs from both Adams and Cheshire. There will be walk-throughs of the middle and elementary schools and finish with a walk through at St. Stans. Fred mentioned that both selectboards are aware of the event and were invited to attend. Rep. Barrett will not be in attendance as he already is committed to another function at that time. Aaron mentioned that he will contact the press to make sure there is presence to cover the day's events. Aaron was asked to draft a letter to Mr. Davine's parents invited them to the event.

MOTION: On Motion of Fred Lora and second by Jen Solak

VOTED: To instruct the superintendent to draft a letter to the Fire Marshal's parents inviting them to the day's events while the Fire Marshal visits the school. The vote was unanimous

- C. **Retiree Recognition** - 3 retirees this year - would like to have them recognized at either class night or graduation. Aaron suggested that graduation night be the night of recognition due to attendance. Larger discussion around annual recognition for those that have been with the district 5, 10, 15, 20 years. Opening day would be a good time to recognize these individuals. There were suggestions around potential gifts based on years of service and a plaque for teachers retiring. Potential of bringing back no entry fee for retirees for games and school events such as musicals and plays.

MOTION: On Motion of Fred Lora and second by Jen Solak

VOTED: To recognize retirees at the 2026 graduation and present them with a token of appreciation. The vote was unanimous.

104458 **Report of Superintendent**

- A. **2026-2027 Meeting Calendar** - Calendar presented to committee for review and record keeping. Fred revisited his suggestion to make the budget presentation a joint meeting with towns. The superintendent is advising against that as we do provide both towns an opportunity to come to Finance committee meetings and school committee meetings. Jen and Erin both felt there were benefits to keeping these meetings separate. Adam also agreed that we are an independent unit

as the school committee and are tasked with approving a budget and that should be encouraged moving forward to keep our presentation to the committee alone. It was also noted that greater engagement of the public would be beneficial as they are the ones who cast their vote. Attendance at meetings is minimal as of late. Tracey mentioned that she is committed to first monday of the month for her school obligations with Savoy and asked if Decembers' meeting could be moved. Aaron will amend to change the date to December 14th.

- B. Savoy Tuition Agreement Renewal** - Aaron presented the committee with the new agreement with Savoy extending the tuition to grades 6-12. Current agreement runs grades from grade 7-12. We have historically increased tuition rates 4% each year and this will continue with that calculation. Tracey spoke to the enrollment numbers at Savoy and why the board made the decision to move to adding grade 6.

MOTION: On Motion of Adam Emerson and second by Jen Solak

VOTED: To approve Savoy Tuition Agreement Renewal. The vote was 6 yes with Tracey abstaining.

104459 **Chairman's Report** - Erin wanted to recognize Adam and Jen for their service on the committee as their terms are coming to an end. Adam has been on the committee for 9 years holding the role of vice chair and chair for 2 years each.

104460 **Unfinished Business** - Fred inquired about who presents awards on class night. He would like to add additional members to present other than the chair. Aaron felt that doing so is more operational and not appropriate for the board to be making decisions around. Currently the principal, superintendent and school committee chair give out awards. Graduation is entirely student run and the chairman signs and hands out diplomas. The committee is invited to graduation. Aaron offered Colleen to be present at the next meeting to talk about class night and graduation and the logistics of these events and how they have evolved over the years.

104461 **New Business** - Fred - EPRI 10 am on monday - 15 students attending as part of a pathways career immersion field trip for engineering. This will be the first time they have opened their doors to the public since before COVID.

104462 **Action Items - None**

104463 **For the Good of the Order** - Tracey mentioned that she is seeing a lot of Hoosac publicity in the media and a lot of positive PR which is great. Fred spoke to the JV softball team which we have not had for several years. Team is made up of 7th and 8th graders and its great to see them out there competing. Bob commended Adam and Jen for their time on the board. And thanked them. Erin noted that MASC has published a means for advocacy with legislators and encouraged the board the advocate for the funding our schools need, Adam spoke to his tenure on the board and his experience as part of the committee. He challenged the board to give voice to the voiceless. To represent and be the voice for the silent majority. He asked for the board to think about these students as they make their choices on the board. John thanked Jen for stepping up and was a great addition to the board and hopes to see her again. He told Adam he has made a profound impact on the students and has been a great leader for the other members. Jen spoke to her time as a volunteer at the book fair and what a great experience it was seeing all of the kids. She also noted the adaptive games taking place on May 21st and invited the committee to attend.

MOTION: On Motion of Adam Emerson and second by John Duval

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Erika Snyder, Recording Secretary