



**DISTRICT COMMITTEE
OPEN MEETING MINUTES
MEETING #1914
April 27, 2026**

<u>Members Present</u>	Thomas Hatem	Methuen	Chairperson
	Julio Mejia	Lawrence	Vice Chair
	William Tarbox	North Andover	Asst. Treasurer
	Zoila Disla	Lawrence	
	Bradley Jones	Methuen	
	Annemarie Faris	Andover	

<u>Members Absent</u>	Edison Mercedes	Lawrence
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<u>Others Present</u>	John N. Lavoie	Superintendent-Director
	Melissa Martel	Director of Finance
	Gerry DiStefano	Treasurer
	Cheryl Dennis	District Recorder

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hatem called the meeting to order at 6:00PM Roll *Call by District Record: Ms. Faris (present), Ms. Disla (present), Mr. Jones (present), Mr. Mejia (present), Mr. Mercedes (absent), Mr. Tarbox (present), Mr. Chair Hatem (present).*

2. MINUTES

a. Minutes of March 24 and April 7, 2026

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to approve the minutes of March 24, 2026

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19153

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to approve the minutes of April 7, 2026

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19154

3. FINANCE REPORT

a. Cash Balance Report

Mr. DiStefano informed the District Committee that both the March Cash Balance Report and Reconciliation would be presented at the next meeting.

b. Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report

c. Revolving Fund Report

d. Budget Report

e. Budget Transfers

Ms. Martel presented the Budget Transfers stating the first one was to cover athletics for the nationals, the second covered unexpected invoices for snow plowing, another represented a budget adjustment for electrical and fire equipment, she was requested to process interdepartmental adjustments and end of the year supplies for Cosmetology and the last was for additional funding for facilities for invoices from February to April snow removal.

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to approve the Budget Transfers as presented.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

VOTE: Unanimously approved

#19155

f. Grants Update

Supt. Lavoie and Melissa Martel updated the District Committee on Grants: To approve moving \$425,081.37 from the Skills Capital Expansion Grant to Capital.

Supt. Lavoie stated that two days before the grant ended, the state moved money and the state was short. They indicated we'd have to wait to receive the money owed to us, Skilled Capital Grant. The state is working on sending us the final payment. To close the books, a vote is required to move the money from the Skills Capital Expansion Grant to the Capital Improvement line item to cover that funding – reimbursement is expected. Ms. Faris questioned the four million dollars to which Supt. Lavoie responded it was received two years prior to build the aviation hangar and purchase equipment, the last payment to the contractor was \$425,817.37. GLTS cannot bill the state for reimbursement until the bill has been paid. The bill was submitted on time but the state thought it wasn't and they returned the money. When we provided documentation showing that it had been submitted on time, they acknowledged that they owed us the money. Because the grant is reimbursable, Mr. Mejia asked if once the transfer is completed will the money have to be spent by the end of this fiscal year to which Supt. Lavoie responded it was already spent.

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to accept the movement of \$425,817.37 from the Skills Capital Expansion Grant to Capital Improvement.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19156

4. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Donations

b. Articles

Greater Lawrence Technical School Superintendent Visits State House: Highlight GLTS as “Living Lab” for Clean Energy Innovation.

Supt. Lavoie noted the Clean Energy Center had requested he present to the legislators at the State House for funding relative to their new budget. He stated he spoke about the funding received by GLTS for clean energy projects.

c. Public Participation

5. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

a. Update on Special Ed., Multilingual Learner Initiatives

Chet Jackson, Principal, Dr. Panagiota Athinelis, Director of Teaching and Learning, Tina Nutter, Director of Special Education, Dr. Johanna Fawcett, Director of Language, Culture and Equity presented to the District Committee on Special Education and Multilingual Learner Initiatives.

Principal Jackson briefly reviewed the line items approved by the District Committee the funding of which has allowed for very tangible outcomes. Ms. Athinelis addressed District Committee members relative to special education and the multi learning department acknowledging it was their third time this year they were before the DC relative to our instructional work. Ms. Nutter reviewed special education program updates via slides relative to the special education reading specialist stating it consisted of three core programs: Wilson Reading System, Read Naturally (ReadLive) and Language! Live. We have 68 students receiving reading services on their IEP. Chair Hatem questioned if any of sending schools have Wilson Reading, Reading Naturally and ReadLive in place to which Ms. Nutter responded yes. Ms. Faris questioned how many students make up the Special Ed Department? Ms. Nutter responded over 200 - 68 are receiving reading services. Ms. Faris questioned how it's delivered to which Ms. Nutter indicated it's not one on one, it's typically a group of three students. One specific student is working one on one with dyslexia. Ms. Faris voiced her approval. Mr. Tarbox questioned if any students were staying beyond their senior year? Ms. Nutter stated GLTS currently does not have that program. A parent did want to reject a student's diploma so they could have more learning but parents don't want students to leave without a diploma. Given the lottery, we'll need to look at some of that programming.

Supt. Lavoie commended Ms. Nutter for her work stating she advocates for every single student and works hard to implement the transitional and reading programs. Mr. Tarbox questioned how the lottery will affect the students? Ms. Nutter indicated we're looking at that today. We're currently looking at hirer numbers, 90 students coming in with IEP's. Mr. Mejia asked in terms of the transitional support, how GLTS is streamlining the transitional support in-house with MassHire and internships? Ms. Nutter responded that GLTS only received seven jobs for the summer due to budget cuts. There is a high need for students in foster care and homelessness. We want to partner more with MassHire next year for a yearly program as opposed to only the summer. Workforce development is separate, not the specialist. Mr. Mejia questioned how many special ed teachers are assigned and by grade to which Ms. Nutter responded we partner with blue engineer who works with three pairs of teachers – concentrate teachers with one teacher – moving forward 9th and 10th grade students will be working with the same teacher - developing open sequence. We have students from so many places that received different services which are all run differently. Mr. Lavoie stated that GLTS' co-teaching program has grown immensely under Ms. Nutter's leadership. Dr. Fawcett reviewed the staffing increases, the curriculum material and the programs running as a direct result of the support received from the District Committee.

Upgrades: paraprofessionals, educators, and curriculum. GLTS currently has eight paraprofessionals, two of which graduated from GLTS, assigned to seven of the twenty-one shops. Department upgrades: one additional teacher for a total of seven specialized educators. In the second year of using National Geographic within the curriculum. Reviewed the evening ESL Program. Mass State Seal of Biliteracy celebration taking place on Thursday at GLTS at 5:30 honoring 31 students who received the reward this year.

Mr. Mejia asked how the seven teachers are divided between the different grades? Dr. Fawcett responded three teachers are working just with freshmen right now and the rest are spread out among 10th, 11th and 12th grade. Students are also organized by their overall proficiency level. Mr. Mejia asked if the ELA teachers were bilingual or multilingual to which Dr. Fawcett responded that four are bilingual and two are working on their proficiency levels. Supt. Lavoie stated that Dr. Fawcett was another outstanding administrator who works hard for students and new programming – co-teaching has thrived under her as well. Chair Hatem thanked Principal Jackson for bringing everyone to present this evening – everyone touched base on how the District Committee has supported them which members value.

b. School Choice

To approve/not approve School Choice at Greater Lawrence Technical School as presented.

Supt. Lavoie stated that the District Committee has to vote whether to take school choice students or not. Chair

Hatem said GLTS is presently not school choice. Supt. Lavoie recommended not to approve school choice.

MOTION: Mejia made motion to reject school choice.

2ND: Mr. Jones

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19157

c. Child Care Program Follow-up

Supt. Lavoie stated the presentation relative to early childhood at the last meeting included some misinformation. It was reported that GLTS wanted all three programs under Chapter 74 but that is not the case. We have to continue to support EEC staffing which concerns our toddlers. We contacted EEC to make the change to oversight by the District Committee and learned we have to continue to work under EEC for the toddler and infants. Students who want to work with infants and toddlers must be fingerprinted. We're going to put a plan in place to have our students fingerprinted before the end of the school year.

d. Out of State Travel (5)

1. Out of State Travel for Manuel Malave to travel with students to Chevrolet, Salem, NH to expose students with new experiences, May 14th & May 21st, Estimated Cost: \$669.00 per day-total \$1338 for buses.

MOTION: Ms. Faris moved to approve the Out of State travel as presented.

2ND: Mr. Mejia

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19158

2. Out of State Travel for Mike Ouellette, Lead AutoTech teacher and all teachers to travel with students to visit NHRA Youth & Education Services (YES Program), located in Epping, NH. On June 5, 2026. Estimated Cost: \$1,329.00 for two buses.

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to approve the Out of State travel as presented.

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19159

3. Out of State Travel for Colleen Belley, Math Instructor to travel to New Haven, CT to attend Building Thinking Classrooms Conference on 6/28-7/1/26. Estimated Cost is: \$1853.50.

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to approve the Out of State travel as presented.

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19160

4. Out of State Travel for Scott Donald and David MacDonald, Electrical Instructors plus students on May 1, 2026 to travel to Whole Foods, Salem, NH to visit an active job site so students can see the day in the life of an electrician, see agenda attached. Estimated Cost is: \$0.00.

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to approve the Out of State travel as presented.

2ND: Mr. Mejia

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19161

5. Out of state Travel for Nicole DiCecca, Health Assisting Instructor to travel to Rivier University's Nursing Department with Juniors to tour their nursing facility and partake in guided simulations on May 1, 2026. Estimated Cost is \$0.00.

MOTION: Ms. Faris moved to approve the Out of State travel as presented.

2ND: Mr. Jones

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19162

e. Admission's Report

Supt. Lavoie directed District Committee members to the packet containing a list of students and the town they came from. Mr. Mejia questioned the process relative to students who applied through the lottery process and the status of students required to respond with commitments. Supt. Lavoie responded it is an ongoing process. Mr. Mejia questioned when would we begin tapping into the lottery waitlist? Supt. Lavoie responded it's after the accepting students have received more time stressing there are not a lot of available seats. Ms. Faris questioned if the process is typical to which Supt. Lavoie responded yes, it is typical. Ms. Faris voiced her concern about the large number of students that don't have a shot yet we're allowing individuals to take weeks to say yes or no. Supt. Lavoie indicated they're called after 10 days and then we begin going to the other students; however, nothing went out during the recent school vacation. I will email the exact numbers as of tomorrow's date to District Committee members. Ms. Faris was skeptical of the listing of only 19 students in Andover have confirmed when there's a 25 allotment. Mr. Mejia said this admission conversation comes up at every meeting and it's an important one. We voted as a committee to send a letter stating we are against the lottery. I haven't seen that letter and I want to remind you of that - it should be sent out with all District Committee members names on it. Supt. Lavoie stated that there is a bill in the Senate now to rescind the lottery and we're looking at how to support it. I will ask our legislative body when we meet on Friday as to where they are in terms of supporting the bill and advocate for parents to send letters for or against it. As a District Committee, Mr. Mejia requested the letter be sent. Mr. Jones questioned the possibility of handing letters to legislators at Fridays breakfast about the lottery to which Supt. Lavoie responded yes.

f. Bond Vote

Supt. Lavoie stated a revote on specific language was necessary this evening for a state qualified bond for the addition – “That the appropriate officials of the District are authorized to file an application with The Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ Municipal Finance Oversight Board to qualify under Chapter 44A of the General Laws any and all bonds or notes of the District authorized as of the date of adoption of this vote and in connection therewith, to provide such information and execute such documents as the Municipal Finance Oversight Board of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts may require.” Mr. Mejia asked if this was the bond the DC had discussed at the last meeting to which Supt. Lavoie responded it was. It involves a technicality that will have a positive impact. Mr. DiStefano went on to say that our rates are much better having this language than not.

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to approve the Bond Vote as presented.

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19163

6. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. District Committee Priorities

b. Policy

8. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Mejia asked to add an item to address a return to the original seating chart. Chair Hatem indicated this would be discussed at the end of the meeting.

9. TABLED MATTERS

10. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT

a. Resignations

- Rachel Giammasi, Early Childhood Assistant, Effective June 22, 2026

c. Retirements

- Suzanne Ouellette, Administrative Assistant, Effective June 15, 2026
Chair Hatem acknowledged Suzanne's long employment and wished her well.

d. Appointments

- Daniel McLeod, IT Hardware and Operation Systems Instructor, Effective April 6, 2026
- Sothea Kim, Finance Specialist, Effective March 23, 2026

e. Job Postings

- **Intensive English Language Institute for Freshmen ML Caregivers**-Instructors, (up to two), paraprofessionals (up to two) and clerical (up to one) for Summer 2026, per Teachers, Para and Clerical Contracts, July 13-July 30, 2026, New Position, Details Attached. Mr. Mejia questioned if this were a temporary position to which Supt. Lavoie responded that it was.

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to approve the IT Hardware and Operations Systems Instructor as presented.

2ND: Mr. Jones

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19164

- **Business Office Specialist**, Clerical Contract, New Position (Details Attached).

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to approve the Business Office Specialist as presented.

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19165

- Custodian, 2nd shift, Custodian Contract, New Position. Mr. Mejia questioned if this was an additional position or was current – Supt. Lavoie indicated it was for the upcoming school year. Ms. Faris noted that the handout was not included within her packet.

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to approve the Custodian 2nd shift as presented.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19166

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to enter into Executive Session at 7:30PM.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19167

ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

ENTER OPEN SESSION

MOTION: Ms. Faris moved to proceed to move the Facilities Administrative Assistant in the clerical unit to the Specialist column.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Mercedes	Absent
Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Ms. Faris	Yes
Ms. Disla	No
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Mejia	Abstained
Mr. Chair Hatem	Yes

#19170

Mr. Jones requested seeing a list of what department requests were fulfilled? Supt. Lavoie stated that most of the requests of facilities - it has a monetary value without specifics as to what they actually want. Any requests that were written, we're working on and we'll be able to purchase. Supt. Lavoie said I will provide you with that once I have the description broken out. Mr. Jones voiced his concern about the house being built outside and questioned what it will be? Supt. Lavoie responded that it's for clean energy - some walls will be left open; a lot will be reused - it will be a clean energy teaching lab. It will probably be a two year project. Mr. Jones stated that once that house is done it will leave a void for the construction trades in general, we've always had a house program and we need to find another source. Supt. Lavoie said I have thoughts for a proposal to address that and will possibly bring it to the meeting after next.

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to revert back to the original seating chart.

2ND: Ms. Faris

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Mejia	Yes
Mr. Mercedes	Absent
Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Ms. Faris	Yes
Ms. Disla	Yes
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Chair Hatem	Yes

#19171

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to adjourn at 8:47PM.

2ND: Mr. Jones

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#19172

Respectfully Submitted



Cheryl Dennis
District Recorder

Minutes Reviewed



John N. Lavoie
Superintendent-Director