Ashland School Committee Minutes
June 10, 2026

Ashland Town Hall
101 Main Street
Select Board Meeting Room

Hybrid meeting: recorded on Zoom

Present:	Marc Terry, Chair Marcy Culverwell, Member Tina Fitanides, Secretary Chantal Kokaram, Member James Adams, Superintendent Michael Caira, Assistant Superintendent
Absent:	Chris Mathieu, Director of Finance Paul Kendall, Vice-Chair

Agenda Review and adoption
Mr. Terry opened the meeting, took attendance, and read through the agenda.
Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Ms. Kokaram: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE

Public Comment
None

Recognition of Retirees
The Principals of each school spoke in honor of the faculty and staff who are retiring this year: Bob Burgess, and Colleen Sherman from AHS, Portia Pisello, Mary Soderberg and Stephanie Balukonis from the Mindess School, Cathy Canney from Warren, and Sonya Choinski from AMS.

Science Symposium at Mindess School
Erin Krashin, Mindess School teacher and Kate Altman, Principal invited four students to talk about their experiences with a recent Science Symposium. The students studied and explored the topics of Physical Therapy, Chemistry, Water Engineering.

Field Rental Update and Requested Positions
As of July 1, 2026, the Ashland Public Schools will take over the administration and maintenance of the sports fields at the schools. (Middle School, High School, Warren School, for example)

In the past 12 years the town's Department of Public Works has been maintaining the fields and supervising the rentals of the fields. Coordination will be needed between the Ashland Youth Sports organizations and the School District.

In order to take on this additional work, Mr. Adams is requesting funding for two additional positions, Assistant Athletic Director, and Assistant Facilities Director for $85,000 each. These two positions would be funded out of the Town Enterprise Funds, not out of the Town Appropriated School Operations Budget.

Current field rental rates will need to be reviewed by the School Committee. Current field renters are club sports teams, youth sports, cricket club, adult soccer, etc.

Ms. Fitanides moves to approve the job description and the creation of the new position of Assistant Athletic Director. Mr. Terry seconded the motion. Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Ms. Kokaram: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE

Ms. Fitanides moves to approve the job description and the creation of the new position of Assistant Facilities Director. Mr. Terry seconded the motion. Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Ms. Kokaram: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE

Middle School Athletics - Removal of Specific Sports for SY 2026-2027
Peter Connery, Athletic Director, presented a proposal to eliminate AHS Boys and Girls Soccer, Boys and Girls Basketball, and Baseball and Softball for the school year 2026-2027. In each of these sports there are current youth programs available for students to participate. The sports that students will be available to participate in at AMS will be: Football, Field Hockey, Girls Volleyball, Cross-Country running.

Mr. Adams will communicate this change through an email to all parents. Parents and families should have enough time to register their children for the Fall session of the town youth soccer program, if they so choose.

Mr. Terry moves to approve the proposal to make reductions to the Ashland Middle School sports program for SY 2026-2027. Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Ms. Kokaram: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE

Update of Staffing and Reinstate the Special Education Coordinator position for Ashland Middle School
Mr. Adams is asking the School Committee to put this position back into the School Department's budget. He has been able to find some salary reductions in several other positions:
A Music Teacher wants to go from full-time (1.0) to part-time (.6). An EL teacher has a reduced case-load of students, and will go from full-time (1.0) to .8.
In addition, grant funds can be used to pay the remaining balance of the salary of this position. The School District has also recouped some savings with new hires to replace retiring teachers.

Ms. Fitanides moves to reinstate the Special Education Coordinator position at Ashland Middle School. Ms. Kokaram seconded the motion. Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Ms. Kokaram: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE

Warrant Approvals
These were skipped, as Mr. Kendall was not in attendance.

Superintendent's Report
Mr. Adams congratulated the Class of 2026. He is very proud of the students and all of their achievements.
He is working on the hiring process of two key positions within the District: an Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment and a Director of Student Services. He has 9 qualified candidates for the Assistant Superintendent position that he would like to bring in for interviews.

Assistant Superintendent's Update
Dr. Caira wanted to publicly thank a group of educators for their work on finding two new literacy programs for the District to pilot next school year for grades K-5. Kathy Ferreccia, Suzanne Roddy, Peter Regan and Kate Altman have done great work. The District will be piloting two programs, Amplify CKLA and EL. Two teachers at each grade level will be trying each program. 2 teachers will be using CKLA and 2 teachers will be using EL.

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

Reports of School Committee Members
Ms. Culverwell reported that all the senior events leading up to graduation were a success. Ms. Fitanides reported that her son, who was a graduating senior, especially liked the school walkthrough, where he got to see many of his former teachers. Ms. Fitanides also attended a recent ASHPAC meeting. Ms. Kaveney, who has served as the chair of ASHPAC, will be moving on, and the group was able to appreciate all her work over her tenure. Mr. Terry noted that the graduation speakers were phenomenal.

At 7:47pm, Mr. Terry moves to go into Executive Session to discuss Educator Evaluation Process MOA, and not to return to open session. Vote:
Ms. Culverwell: AYE
Ms. Fitanides: AYE
Ms. Kokaram: AYE
Mr. Terry: AYE

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen King
Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

Documents used during the meeting
Assistant AD and Assistant Facilities Roles
Copy of AMS Sports Recommendation
Copy of Assistant AD and Assistant Facilities Roles
Copy of Assistant Athletic Director Job Description
Copy of Final Assistant_Facilities_Director_Updated
Copy of Mindess Science Symposium
FY 26 06.10.26 School Committee G&D Acceptance Log
Memo_ AMS Sports Recommendation
Minutes - June 3, 2026
Retiree Recognition - Spring 2026
School Committee Agenda June 10, 2026 (2)
Special Education Coordinator AMS
TVL Middle School Sports Offerings 26'