

**Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board/ Budget Committee Meeting Minutes**

May 19, 2026

Monadnock Regional Middle/High School, Swanzey, NH

School Board Members Present: Kristen Noonan, Edmond LaPlante, Rachel Vogt, Hannah Blood, Scott Peters, Christina Pierce, Melissa Diven, Brian Bohanna, Lisa Steadman, Jeff Cesaitis and Betty Tatro. **Absent:** Jennifer Strimbeck and Gina Carraro

Budget Committee Members Present: Jack Gettens, Edward Sheldon, Robert Audette, Steven Sawyer, Nancy Carney, Jon Hoden, Theresa Morin and Diane Benoit-LeBlanc. **Absent:** Wayne Lechlides, Bruce Murphy, Sara Burgess, Ann Marie Osheyack and Unassigned Rep. from Roxbury.

Administration Present: J. Rathbun, Superintendent and J. Morin, Business Administrator.

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER at 7:00 PM: S. Peters called the meeting to order.

a. Budget Committee Roll Call:

b. School Board Roll Call

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS: K. Noonan commented on the recent bus accident. She said she heard from many people that the bus driver did a wonderful job with the students.

R. Audette commented that the Swanzey Selectboard is meeting with the Energy Commission and that might be something the Board might look into.

3. MATTERS FOR JOINT MEETING INFORMATION & DISCUSSION:

a. Special Education Review: S. Betit-Hancock is presenting the Special Ed. Review by Zoom. S. Betit-Hancock thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and is honored to represent her team. She explained that there are 13 education disabilities. Special Ed. is designed with support and services in the least restrictive environment. She explained an IEP and the evaluation process. She explained MRSD has a 45-day limit to complete the evaluation process. There is an annual review and a 3-year reevaluation. There are 336 IEPs. There are many entries and exits on a day to day basis that might change the number. Section 504 Plans are to ensure students with disabilities have access to accommodations. There are 111 students on a 504 Plan. Under the 504 there is no need for special designed education plans. S. Betit-Hancock explained the compliance highlights, she explained the indicators and the survey which took place. The district received a gold star from the State for being 100% in compliance with Indicator #13. She explained the results are from the 2024-25 data. She is proud of her team and the Mozaic Program. There are currently 21 students out of district, there are 2 court ordered students and 12 Charter Schools students who receive services under their IEP. S. Betit-Hancock was asked by J. Rathbun to explain why students are sent out of the district, why we are not able to meet the students' needs and the need to find a specialized education or environment Program. There are a number of students who the district has brought back due to the Mozaic Program and

we also have the Life Skills Program. The students in the Mozaic Program are at a Level Three Autism. S. Betit-Hancock listed the members of her team. She mentioned that there are 1619 students enrolled in the district, 20.7% are on IEPs and 9% of the students are on a 504 Plan. She had a huge thank you to the Board for their shared commitment for our students and a huge thank you to her dedicated exceptional team where students come first.

b. Elementary Renovation Project Update: J. Rathbun explained that the district is in great shape. Emerson and MTC are complete with a punch list for this summer. Troy is moving ahead at record speed. We are very impressed. We are on track and there is a major move for this summer. The Troy School 1895 section will be gutted and renovated. A small amount of asbestos was found. A moving company is being hired to empty the school which is expected to take 3 days. Troy will be closed for the summer and the students will be moving into the new section in August and then in December everyone will return. It is great news. They broke ground in Gilsum but are working around the Rock Swap. Gilsum will be the shortest renovations. J. Rathbun explained that he is very happy with the progress and very happy with Hutter. We are on time and on budget.

c. CIP for SAU & MRMHS Campus: The CIP for the elementary schools is complete but the Board would like to create a 5-year, 10-year and 15-year plan. H. Blood explained that the Fin/Fac Committee met with T. Breen and J. Morin regarding the CIP and that will be on a future agenda. S. Peters explained that the district has been working on the roofs and getting bids for paving. The district has renovated wings within the MRMHS but has not addressed the heart of the school, the offices and conference areas. The SAU is in need of renovations. The SAU is not in ADA Compliance. The Board would like to complete a study on the SAU to explore the needs and cost.

d. 2026/27 Budget Calendar: The budget calendar was handed out to the Board and the Budget Committee. At the next meeting the Board will suggest ideas that the administration might be asked to explore for the next budget. The Board would like to ask the Budget Committee to suggest ideas for the Union Contract in the form of a motion.

e. Staffing & Vacancy Update: J. Rathbun presented the committees with the list of vacancies within the district. He mentioned that the positions are being filled and interviews are going on. He is conducting exit interviews for everyone. Most people are relocating. There are 8 retirements this year.

f. SPECIALISTS Contract Overview: L. Steadman explained that the negotiations for any contract is done in a non-meeting. There are no minutes and it is not open to the public. There are 3 Board Members on the Negotiations Committee as well as a legal representative. There are 5 employees currently in the Specialists Union and 7 vacancies. J. Rathbun had a list of the members and commented that some of the current staffing spots are contracted services. The cost of the contract is \$824,064.00 and does not include benefits. Currently none of the Specialists take the insurance buyout. J. Hoden mentioned that receiving the contracts sooner than later helps the Budget Committee. E. Sheldon and J. Hoden feels strongly about having only 1 contract each year to negotiate.

4. S. Peters calls for a RECESS and E. Sheldon takes over the Budget Committee Meeting.

5. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BUDGET COMMITTEE ACTION:

a. Approval of April 28, 2026 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes: MOTION:

J. Hoden **MOVED** to approve the April 28, 2026 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** N. Carney **VOTE:** 9.839/0/0/3.161. **Motion passes.**

b. Monthly Reports, Transfer/expenses and Budget Tracking Report: E.

Sheldon asked the members if there were any questions that were not answered tonight. There were no additional questions.

c. Budget Committee Adjourn: The Budget Committee will not be meeting this month due to the Joint Meeting.

S. Sawyer asked about the weighted vote due to the fact that B. Tatro does not vote anymore. That information is in the Bylaws and needs to be corrected.

d. Motion to adjourn: MOTION: N. Carney **MOVED** to adjourn the Budget Committee Meeting at 8:21 PM. **SECOND:** S. Sawyer. **VOTE:** 9.839/0/0/3.161. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary