

S.C. MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee

School Committee Meeting

June 15, 2026 - 6:30 p.m.

Hoosac Valley High School, Resource Center, 125 Savoy Road, Cheshire, MA

PRESENT: Erin Milne, Robert Tetlow, Fred Lora, Tracey Tierney, Daniel Barnes

ABSENT: Kyle Malloy, John Duval

OTHERS: Aaron Dean, Kristen Palatt

104475 Call to Order

Chairman Fred Lora called the meeting to order at **6:31 p.m.**

104476 Public Comment or Questions

There were no public comments or questions.

104477 Approval of Minutes – May 18, 2026

MOTION: On motion of Erin Milne and second by Tracey Tierney

VOTED: To approve the minutes of May 18, 2026. The vote was unanimous.

104478 Report of Business Manager

A. Spending Summary

The Business Manager presented a preliminary year-end spending summary and reviewed adjusted budget figures, projected expenditures, revenues, and anticipated year-end balances. She explained that expenditures will continue to be processed through mid-July before final budget transfers are completed.

The Business manager also reviewed budget variances related to personnel, special education, transportation, utilities, school choice, charter tuition, and grant funding. She noted that budget transfers would be made to balance accounts where necessary and reported that the district remains on track to finish the fiscal year within budget. Discussion also included anticipated Excess and Deficiency (E&D) balances, rural aid funding, and quarterly financial reporting to the School Committee. Committee members asked questions regarding grant funding, rural aid, and year-end projections.

104479 Report of Subcommittees

A. Fire Marshal Summary

Chairman Lora thanked the administration, faculty, staff, students, and community members for their efforts in making the recent Fire Marshal visit a successful event. He recognized Erica Girgenti and district administrators for coordinating the program and noted the positive impact it had on students by highlighting career opportunities within the fire service and related professions.

B. Retiree Recognitions Summary

Chairman Lora also recognized the district's retirees who were honored during graduation ceremonies and expressed his appreciation for their years of service. He stated that the Committee will work toward establishing a formal employee recognition program to acknowledge milestone years of service in future years.

C. Subcommittee Assignments

The Committee reviewed the proposed subcommittee assignments. No changes were requested, and the assignments will be finalized and distributed by email. School Council liaisons will coordinate through the building principals, and a volunteer was requested for the Wellness Committee.

The Public Relations Subcommittee will develop a staff service recognition program for milestone years of service.

104480 Communications

MOTION: On motion of **Fred Lora** and second by **Robert Tetlow**,

VOTED: To move Communications ahead of the Report of Subcommittees. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Lora distributed copies of graduating senior Noah Reno's commencement speech and commended its thoughtful message reflecting on the graduating class and their Hoosac Valley experience.

Superintendent Dean introduced Christine Macros-Guerrero, who will join the district as the new Associate Director of Student Services. Christine shared her background in student services and mental health and expressed her enthusiasm for supporting students and staff in Hoosac Valley.

Erica, our Community and Pathways Coordinator presented an update on the district's college and career readiness initiatives. She reported on the successful implementation of **MEFA Pathways** for students in grades 5–12, recognition by the Massachusetts School Counselors Association and MEFA for the district's innovative work, participation in statewide presentations and a MEFA podcast, and the district's selection as one of ten pilot districts for MEFA's new work-based learning platform.

Erica also summarized the district's Pathway Field Trips, highlighting successful visits to Amazon Fulfillment Center, Berkshire Medical Center, Ramblewild, the Montessori School, and EPRI. Several field trips were rescheduled to the fall due to scheduling conflicts and low permission slip returns. She noted that future pathway experiences will begin earlier in the school year and will include greater teacher involvement to increase student participation.

Superintendent Dean commended Erica for her leadership in career readiness programming and recognized her statewide contributions through MEFA and the Berkshire Workforce Board. The Committee congratulated Mrs. Gent on the recognition and thanked her for expanding career exploration opportunities for Hoosac Valley students.

104481 Report of Superintendent**A. Maintenance Update**

Superintendent Dean provided a facilities update and reported that summer maintenance projects are being prioritized in collaboration with the Maintenance Subcommittee. Cost estimates are being obtained for several projects, including athletic field improvements and replacement of the middle school gym basketball hoops. He noted that future recommendations will be brought to the Committee as projects are prioritized.

The Superintendent also reviewed School Committee liaison assignments for subcommittees and school councils and indicated that a summary would be distributed to members. He discussed developing a formal employee recognition program to acknowledge milestone years of service and encouraged continued participation in district committees and advisory groups.

B. Principal End-of-Year Updates**Elementary School**

The Principal highlighted strong student growth in literacy and math, supported by intervention programs, professional development, and grant-funded initiatives.

Social-emotional learning, family engagement, and community events expanded throughout the year, including literacy nights, the Color Run, and transition activities.

Priorities for next year include continued literacy and math implementation, attendance improvement, expanded social-emotional supports, and enhanced family communication.

Color Run proceeds will support inclusive playground improvements at the elementary school and student activities at the middle school.

Middle School

The Assistant Principal reported success with advisory programming, social-emotional learning, and the reset room, contributing to fewer suspensions and emergency removals.

Family and community engagement increased through events such as STEAM Night, Applied Learning Night, the Pen Pal Program, and the Entrepreneur Fair.

Curriculum implementation continued with new instructional materials in math and social studies, along with a districtwide literacy focus.

Attendance remains an area of concern, with staff continuing outreach and intervention efforts to support students and families.

High School

The Principal highlighted increased student achievement, expanded Pathway Distinctions, and continued implementation of instructional strategies aligned with the Portrait of a Graduate.

Staff reported significant progress in student engagement, instructional practices, and inclusion efforts, supported by positive survey results and an external review recognizing the school's growth over the past two years.

The district continues to explore strategies to improve student attendance through family outreach, community partnerships, and flexible programming for chronically absent students.

Special Education

The Committee received a Special Education year-end update highlighting several successes, including the continued expansion of preschool programming through the CPPI grant, with six full-day classrooms serving 90 students and 87% of preschool students meeting benchmarks. The Center for Children program continues to grow, providing inclusive programming for students with significant needs and increasing opportunities for students to remain in-district.

Additional successes included strong community partnerships, Unified Athletics, the Lucas Solak Adaptive Games, and continued improvement in IEP compliance, with the district successfully meeting state requirements. The department also continued work with educators on strengthening IEP development and understanding student needs.

Focus areas moving forward include improving IEP quality, continued literacy and science of reading work for special education staff, expanding social-emotional learning and behavioral supports, and strengthening family partnerships to better support student success.

The superintendent concluded by recognizing and thanking the District's leadership team, referring to them as a "dream team" and commending their dedication and commitment to supporting students. He acknowledged the complexity of serving a student population in which approximately two-thirds of students have high needs and highlighted the strong culture, collaboration, and positive spirit throughout the District.

104482 Chairman's Report

Chairman Lora thanked the principals for their comprehensive end-of-year presentations and recognized the dedication of faculty and staff throughout the school year. He expressed appreciation for employees working throughout the summer to support students and maintain district operations and emphasized the importance of developing additional ways to recognize employee contributions and years of service.

Chairman Lora also noted that one additional Curriculum Meeting and one additional School Committee meeting would be scheduled before the start of the new school year.

104483 Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

104484 New Business

A. Teacher Negotiations Update – Executive Session

MOTION: On motion of Erin Milne and second by Daniel Barnes

VOTED: By roll call vote to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining. (required under Massachusetts Open Meeting Law) The vote was unanimous.

The School Committee entered Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining strategy. No votes were taken during the Executive Session other than those required by law.

A roll call vote was taken to exit the Executive Session at **9:04 p.m.**

104485 Action Items

Upon returning to Open Session, the Committee discussed scheduling a special meeting to address high school curriculum and collective bargaining matters.

Members agreed the meeting would focus on curriculum, including course offerings, scheduling, honors and Advanced Placement programming, and clarification of questions raised by parents regarding curriculum planning. Members also discussed the option of allowing remote participation for the meeting.

104486 For the Good of the Order

Committee members expressed appreciation to the principals for their leadership and successful completion of the school year. Tracey Tierney commended the administrative team for their outstanding work and dedication to students and staff.

Chairman Lora congratulated Kyle Malloy and his family on the recent birth of their child and extended best wishes on behalf of the School Committee.

MOTION: On motion of Robert Tetlow and second by Erin Milne

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at **9:29 p.m.** The vote was unanimous.

Executive Session: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigating position; to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel; and to conduct collective bargaining and contract negotiations with non-union personnel.

Disclaimer

The Hoosac Valley Regional School District acknowledges that, from time to time, topics may be brought forward at a posted meeting that the chair did not reasonably anticipate for discussion forty-eight hours before the meeting. The Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee will make every effort to update the meeting agenda posting so as to give the public an understanding of what will be discussed at its meeting. The Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee will act in good faith in compliance with the Open Meeting Law.