GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
JUNE 4, 2026

The regular meeting of the Greater Fall River Vocational School District Committee was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Paul Jennings, with the following persons in attendance; Richard Manuels Jr. of Fall River, Joan Menard of Fall River, Donald DiBiasio of Somerset, Jeffrey Begin of Swansea and Paul Jennings of Westport.

Also, in attendance were: Brian Bentley, Superintendent-Director, Leslie Weckesser, Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Melissa Petrasso, Director of Finance, Chace Albernaz, Student Representative, Attorney Gregory Brilhante, and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary.

Mr. Jennings called for the roll call.

Mr. Jennings led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Jennings made the following announcement: In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30A, Section 20(f), any member of the public may make an audio or video recording of this public meeting. A member of the public who wishes to record a meeting must first notify the chair and must comply with reasonable requirements regarding audio or video equipment established by the chair so as not to interfere with the meeting. *Mr. Matos provided notification of intent to record.*

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels, and voted unanimously to approve the May 12, 2026, as submitted.

A written Student Representative's Report was included in the meeting packets.

Mr. Jennings deferred to Mr. Bentley for the special recognition of Dania Felizberto who was selected as the Town of Swansea Student Youth of the Year and invited Mr. Begin to present the award. Mr. Begin congratulated Danica on her academic achievements, leadership, and dedication, recognizing her as an outstanding representative of both Diman and the Town of Swansea. Danica was presented with the Student Youth of the Year award, along with citations from the Massachusetts State Senate and House of Representatives.

There was no Citizen Input.

Attorney Flanagan joined the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

Mr. DiBiasio provided the MSBA Project update and noted that the project is on time and within budget. He reported that the project is about 92% complete. He stated that following the last day of school on June 24, the moving company will begin moving furniture, supplies, and remaining contents from the existing building into the new building. He also provided an update on construction work, noting that backfilling has begun in front of the school. Construction trailers will be relocated, and work on the next phase of the project will begin. He reported that several summer projects are scheduled, including asbestos abatement, construction of a temporary faculty parking lot, milling and repaving of the student parking lot, installation of additional fencing, landscaping, and limited blasting in preparation for the future football field.

Mr. Bentley provided an update on signage. He noted that Committee members received a packet containing a recreated version of the artwork and design elements incorporated throughout the building. He asked members to review the materials and provide any feedback or additions. Mr. DiBiasio added that a historical

timeline will be featured in the hallway leading to Room 251 Restaurant, highlighting Diman's history from Father Diman to the present.

Mr. Bentley provided a summary of Prime Contract Change Order (PCCO) No. 018, which has been approved by the School Building Committee and needs to be reaffirmed.

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Mr. Manuels, and voted unanimously to reaffirm PCCO No. 018 for a total amount of $559,457.65.

Mr. Bentley deferred to Mrs. Petrasso for the reaffirmation of the Heidelberg Proposal: Polar High-Speed Cutter. Mrs. Petrasso reported that the proposal in the amount of $12,455.68 is for the rigging and relocation of a Polar High-Speed Cutter in the Graphic Arts Shop.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to reaffirm the Decommissioning & Recommissioning of Equipment Heidelberg Proposal in the amount of $12,455.68, as submitted.

Mrs. Petrasso provided an overview of the MSBA project expenditures. Invoices from KBA and Suffolk reflect the billing for the month of May for the project. The invoice for Colliers was not received in time for the meeting.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to approve the following MSBA Project expenditures: KBA invoice #20006.01-47 dated 5/31/2026 for the amount of $140,507 and Suffolk Construction application no. 32 dated 5/31/2026 for the amount of $5,240,080.04.

Mr. DiBiasio provided the House Building Subcommittee report, and noted that the community projects work is wrapping up for the year and noted that updates on the projects are included in the materials provided and asked if there were any questions regarding projects taking place in the sending communities.

Mr. DiBiasio reported that work on the 2025/2026 Housebuilding Project house in Westport is progressing well and is nearing completion, with students completing the final finishing touches. The open house is scheduled for June 22. He noted that the project was successful and that the homeowners are very pleased.

Mr. DiBiasio reported on the 2026/2027 Housebuilding Project. He noted that the Housebuilding Subcommittee has agreed on the next project house, to be located at 25 Devol Pond Drive in Westport, Massachusetts. The proposed project is a 1,950-square-foot, single-level farmhouse-style home, which will provide valuable learning opportunities for students. The Subcommittee recommended approval of the project and authorization to proceed with legal counsel to review and finalize an agreement with the property owner.

Mr. Jennings added that two applications were received for consideration. Mr. Cabral followed up with both property owners regarding necessary revisions. The Fall River homeowner was not interested in modifying the original plans, while the Westport project owner agreed to the proposed changes. Mr. DiBiasio added that some roofing work may be completed by a contractor, while students will continue hands-on work including sheetrock and plastering.

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio, and voted unanimously to approve the 26/27 Housebuilding Project house to be located at 25 Devol Pond Driver, Westport, as presented.

Attorney Brilhante noted that Agenda Item 3.1.c., Job Description Review Sub-Committee Report, may be addressed following Executive Session.

Mr. Begin provided the LPN Sub-Committee Report. He reported that the LPN Program Administrator is scheduled to meet with the Board of Registration in Nursing (BORN) on June 10 to report out on the recent inspection and recommendations. He noted that the relocation of the program to BCC is progressing well, with the classroom substantially complete and construction ahead of schedule. Mr. Begin stated that further updates will be provided following the BORN meeting.

Mr. DiBiasio provided the Policy Sub-Committee Report. The first policy up for discussion was policy KGC-Cooperative Education Program. He reported on updates to the grading process, noting that clarification is being added regarding grading criteria and student expectations. The revised process will help students and employers better understand how grades are determined.

Attorney Flanagan asked if feedback was received from the students where they felt their grades were being misrepresented. Mrs. Weckesser explained that the previous system created an inequity where co-op students could receive no higher than a 95, while in-school students could earn a 100. She noted that the revised process will include clearer grading standards to ensure consistency and fairness.

Mr. Manuels shared that, as an employer of four co-op students, he did not consistently receive evaluations. Mrs. Weckesser explained that the district is transitioning to Job360, a software program that provides real-time communication and evaluation tracking between employers and teachers.

Mrs. Weckesser discussed transforming advisory boards to include co-op employers, emphasizing their role in providing industry feedback to strengthen curriculum. Mr. Manuels suggested offering an orientation for co-op employers to explain evaluations and expectations, particularly for first-time employers.

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Mr. Manuels, and voted unanimously to approve Policy KGC: Cooperative Education Program, as submitted.

Mr. DiBiasio, reported that the remaining policies (Policy ECAB: Access to Buildings and Grounds; Policy EEAEA: Bus Driver Examination and Training; Policy JFBB-1: School Choice; Policy JKAA: Time-out, Seclusion, and Physical Restraint of Students; Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines to Students and Policy KBG: Parent Advisory Councils (PACs), reviewed by the subcommittee were provided by MASC. The subcommittee agreed with the updated policies, with a few questions regarding the administration of medications to students. After review and discussion, all policies were approved by the subcommittee.

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio, and voted unanimously to approve Policy ECAB: Access to Buildings and Grounds; Policy EEAEA: Bus Driver Examination and Training; Policy JFBB-1: School Choice; Policy JKAA: Time-out, Seclusion, and Physical Restraint of Students; Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines to Students and Policy KBG: Parent Advisory Councils (PACs), as submitted.

Mr. Bentley reported on personnel.

Attorney Flanagan left the meeting at 6:00 p.m.; however, he remained in the room and was not within camera view.

Attorney Brilhante stated that agenda 3.1.g., Assistant Superintendent/Principal Contract – Warley Williams, will be discussed during executive session and then revisited in open session; a vote is likely.

Mr. Bentley reported on the student travel requests.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin, and voted unanimously to approve the out-of-state travel request submitted by the HVAC Program Instructors for students to participate in a training and product demonstration at United Refrigeration Inc., in Providence, RI on June 12, 2026 from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Mr. Bentley deferred to Mrs. Weckesser for the discussion of the Exploratory process. Mrs. Weckesser reported that Eric Silva, Freshman Coordinator, worked with all freshman exploratory teachers to address inconsistencies with shop makeup policies and grading practices. Teachers reviewed and revised the makeup policy and co-op rating rubric to create consistency across all shop areas. Mrs. Weckesser reported that the updated policy now outlines makeup requirements based on the number of days missed and is consistent across all shops.

Mrs. Weckesser added that freshman orientation will be held over two nights due to the move. Both students and parents will be required to attend to ensure they receive the same information. She added that detailed information will be provided, with reminders sent through ParentSquare every two weeks to reinforce policies and support an equitable exploratory process.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels, and voted unanimously to approve the revision of the Exploratory Process, as presented.

Mr. Bentley reported on the acceptance of gifts.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard, and voted unanimously to reaffirm the donation of food storage containers, with an estimated value of $3,000 by Highland Restaurant Supply in Fall River, MA.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels, and voted unanimously to reaffirm the donation of two (2) Good Year Eagle F1 All-Season Tires 245/40R18 estimated value of $424; two (2) Good Year Eagle F1 All-Season Tires 275/40R18 estimated value of $540; and one (1) set of BBK Shorty Headers #1515 estimated value of $329.99 for a total donation value of $1,293.99.

Mr. Bentley reported on the use of facilities request.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to approve the use of facilities request submitted by Jennifer DeMariano, Director of Career and Technical Education, for the use of several shops on Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the NOCTI Career & Technical Teacher Tests, and to waive all use of facilities fees.

Mrs. Weckesser reported on the surplus of equipment and materials. Mrs. Petrasso added that the auction has concluded, with pictures and information posted on the district website and social media. She also noted that outreach was made to local schools and communities letting them know of the availability of surplus items. Items from the LPN Program will also be made available. The

Culinary Arts and cafeteria equipment have been auctioned off.

Mrs. Weckesser acknowledged and thanked Myles Brilhante, Supervisor of Building and Grounds, and Alan Benevides, Lead Maintenance, for their efforts in coordinating buyer communications, pickups, and the daily removal of auctioned items. She noted that their work has been a significant coordinated effort.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin, and voted unanimously to approve the surplus of equipment and materials, as submitted.

Mrs. Petrasso provided a summary of the monthly financial report. She reported that reported that she is working with department heads to ensure funds are spent appropriately while maintaining the anticipated carryover. Technology purchases for the new school have been identified and are pending approval for delivery.

Mrs. Petrasso provided an overview of the expenditures in excess of $10,000.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to approve the expenditures in excess of $10,000, as submitted.

Mrs. Petrasso provided a summary of the FY27 encumbrances. She highlighted major contracts, including National Grid ($1.8 million), Tremblay's Bus Company ($1.2 million for bus transportation), Fall River Retirement Board ($1.02 million for FY27 appropriation), and other services including insurance, transportation, utilities, technology, and instructional programs.

Mr. Jennings questioned the Hub Technology encumbrance for FY27 and whether it was related to insurance. Mrs. Petrasso confirmed it was an estimate for the year and acknowledged that the information needed to be updated due to the change in insurance companies.

Mr. DiBiasio questioned why the encumbrances are needed when they are approved through the budget process. Mrs. Petrasso explained that they are entered as open encumbrances with a set spending cap and are paid down as expenses occur.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to approve the FY27 Encumbrances, as submitted. *Hub Technical will be changed to Alera Group.*

Mrs. Petrasso provided an overview of the transfer of funds request.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to approve the Transfer of Funds, as submitted.

Mr. Jennings asked for clarification on whether the FY27 encumbrances would be reported on the monthly financial report. Mrs. Petrasso explained that the monthly financial report includes all encumbrances. She noted that payments are made against the open encumbrance, which reduces the balance throughout the year until the amount is fully expended and recorded as an expenditure.

Mr. Bentley provided the Superintendent-Director's report, which included updates on student enrollment, cooperative education, the LPN program, and key upcoming dates. A final walkthrough event for alumni and the

general public is scheduled for July 12 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The existing student parking lot will be available for the event.

The next meeting will be August 13, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

Attorney Brilhante stated that reasons to go into executive session and noted that agenda item c. Job Description Review Sub-Committee Report – School Psychologist/504 Coordinator Position and Job Description and LPN Program Administrator, Financial Aid Coordinator, Instructor & Clinical Adjunct and agenda item g. Assistant Superintendent/Principal Contract - Warley Williams and we will be resuming into open session, with the likelihood that votes may be taken.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels, and voted on a roll call at 6:24 pm to enter into Executive Session with Mr. Jennings, Mr. DiBiasio, Mr. Manuels, Attorney Flanagan, Ms. Menard and Mr. Begin voting yes.

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio and voted on a roll call at 6:31 p.m. to rise into Open Session with Mr. Jennings, Mr. DiBiasio, Mr. Manuels, Mr. Begin, Attorney Flanagan and Ms. Menard voting yes.

Attorney Brilhante recommended a vote on agenda item 3.1.c - Job Description Review Subcommittee Report. Based on the subcommittee's review and recommendation, it is recommended that the School Committee approve the following positions and associated job descriptions: School Psychologist/504 Coordinator; LPN Program Administrator; Financial Aid Coordinator; LPN Instructor; and Clinical Adjunct.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to approve the School Psychologist/504 Coordinator; LPN Program Administrator; Financial Aid Coordinator; LPN Instructor; and Clinical Adjunct positions and job descriptions.

Attorney Brilhante recommended a vote on agenda item 3.1.g- Assistant Superintendent-Principal Contract – Warley Williams. He recommended that the School Committee approve the contract for Mr. Williams as negotiated.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to approve the contract for Mr. Williams, as negotiated.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helena S. Neves
Helena S. Neves, Executive Secretary

Materials Included:
May 12, Minutes
Student Report
Prime Contract Change Order No. 018
MSBA Project Expenditures
Community Projects List
School Psychologist/504 Coordinator Job Description

LPN Program Administrator, Financial Aid Coordinator, Instructor & Clinical Adjunct Job Descriptions
Policy KGC: Cooperative Education Program, Policy ECAB: Access to Buildings and Grounds, Policy EEAEA: Bus Driver Examination and Training, Policy JFBB-1: School Choice, Policy JKAA: Time-out, Seclusion, and Physical Restraint of Students, Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines to Students, Policy KBG: Parent Advisory Councils (PACs)
Surplus Lists
Monthly Financial Report
Student Activity Agency Accounts Report
Expenditure Report
FY27 Encumbrances
Transfer of Funds
Superintendent's Report