



Marblehead School Committee

Chair: Kate Schmeckpeper

Meeting Date, Time & Location: Thursday, September 17th, 2026, 6pm, MHS Library, 2 Humphrey Street Marblehead MA 01945

SC Members Present: A. Williams, AM. Jordan, K. Schmeckpeper, H. Gwazda, M. Clucas

SC Members Absent:

Agenda/Materials: [Link](#)

Meeting Recording: [Link](#)

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Henry Gwazda

Opening, Pledge, and Public Comment ([00:01:00–00:02:00](#))

a. The Chair called the September 17th meeting of the Marblehead School Committee to order at 6 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

- A committee member recognized Melissa McGuinness for spearheading the grant proposal for the Brown School outdoor creative play space, as reported in The Current.
- No members of the public came forward for public comment.

Student Representative Update ([00:02:00–00:05:00](#))

a. Aiden Klauber was welcomed as the first student representative to the school committee.

- Aiden Klauber and two classmates will rotate through meetings to share student perspectives.

b. The student representative provided an update on Marblehead High School activities.

- Open house is set for Wednesday, September 23rd, with National Honor Society students assisting.
- Freshman parents were invited to a school counseling presentation at 5:30 in the MHS auditorium beforehand.

c. It was reported that the school counseling department hosted Senior Parent/Guardian Night this past week.

Superintendent and District Updates ([00:05:00–00:15:00](#))

a. Superintendent John Robidoux reported that the start of the school year was going well, with students, educators, and parents engaged.

- Hispanic Heritage Month began, with age-appropriate celebrations; Rosh Hashanah was observed and no school Monday for Yom Kippur.



- Open houses at Veterans Middle School and Village Elementary were well attended; high school, Glover, and Brown open houses were upcoming.

b. Committee activity was summarized.

- The first Health and Wellness Committee meeting addressed the SERV survey, medication delegation changes, Narcan availability, and e-bike safety.
- The first Safety Committee meeting covered e-bike safety, fire drills, school evacuations, the Protect Act policy, and cybersecurity with Stephen Kwiatek.

c. Upcoming items and follow-ups were noted.

- The Anti-Discrimination Committee would meet September 30th; Robidoux will report back on the DEEP equity audit trajectory once clearer.

d. Beginning with October meetings, school leaders will share MCAS information, Assistant Superintendent Julia Ferreira will give a teaching and learning update, and METCO director Johnson will give a METCO update.

Student Services Update: Special Education Program Standardization ([00:15:00–00:40:00](#))

a. Student Services staff delivered a slide presentation on a framework for standardizing special education programs across the district.

- Goals were consistency, equity, transparency, and quality, so similar needs receive comparable services regardless of school.
- The new Assistant Director of Student Services and out-of-district coordinator was introduced.

b. Four specialized programs were described along a continuum from substantially separate to inclusion, each with distinct student profiles, instructional models, and staffing structures.

- Language-Based serves grades 2 through 12, including dyslexia, using Orton-Gillingham, Wilson, and recent Bravo training.
- Academic Skills, ABA Life Skills, and Therapeutic use multidisciplinary teams, embedded BCBAs, and continuous data collection.

c. Team chairs, special education staff, Victoria Ryan, and Julia Ferreira developed entrance and exit criteria and curriculum tools over the past two years.

- The district entered corrective action and came out six months later through team efforts; compliance remains a priority.
- Continued work included an 18-to-22 program, family-facing brochures and open houses, and curriculum maps.

d. Out-of-district placement figures were reported.



- 13 students were outplaced in collaboratives and 31 in private programming, some under 50/50 cost-share arrangements.
- 7 students, several of them language-based and therapeutic, returned in district this year, credited to Victoria Ryan and team.

e. Committee members asked about staffing and early identification, and thanked staff for transitions between grades and schools.

- The district has 4 BCBA's, a fourth added last year for elementary needs; Caitlyn Hersom covers Village and Bettes.

Consent Agenda Items ([00:40:00–00:45:00](#))

a. A motion was made by Henry Gwazda and seconded by Melissa Clucas to approve the consent agenda, including the identified schedule of bills totaling \$505,887, the meeting minutes from September 3rd, 2026 (with corrections), a donation from the Rotary Club of Marblehead in the amount of \$15,385 for SEL instruction and support at Brown and Glover, grants from the Friends of the Marblehead Public Schools totaling \$93,000, and the school committee operating protocols.

- The motion passed 5-0.

b. Discussion on the consent items covered the following:

- The Rotary Club donation would complement, not replace, existing SEL instruction, funding a dedicated day of SEL support at each school.
- Corrections to the minutes: "Gardner School" to "Glover School," "Al's and How" to "Alves," and "McFadden School" on page 3.

c. It was noted that the operating protocols being voted on had not changed from the prior version.

d. Action item:

- The Chair will send thank you notes to the Rotary Club and the Friends of the Marblehead Public Schools.

Policy ACL Third Reading and Vote ([00:45:00–00:45:00](#))

a. The committee took up the third reading of Policy ACL, Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers Engaged in Civil Law Enforcement, as presented in the packet.

- It was reported that the safety committee was in agreement that the safety meeting and existing processes made sense.

b. A motion was made by Ann-Marie Jordan and seconded by Al Williams to approve Policy ACL, Interacting with law enforcement officers engaged in civil law enforcement, as presented in tonight's packet.



- The motion passed 5-0.

Disposition of Marine Tech Materials (00:45:00–00:47:00)

- a. The committee reviewed a September 15th memo on the disposition of marine tech materials.
 - The newly hired marine tech teacher inventoried classroom equipment that was no longer needed.
 - Items included 10 gasoline and diesel engines, 1 outboard engine, 1 outboard drive, and 2 transmissions taking up classroom space.
- b. A motion was made by Al Williams and seconded by Henry Gwazda to declare the 10 gasoline and diesel engines, 1 outboard engine, 1 outboard drive, and 2 transmissions as surplus and authorize their disposal.
 - The motion passed 5-0.

FY27 School Committee Goals Discussion (00:47:00–01:15:00)

- a. The goals subcommittee, consisting of Al Williams and Ann-Marie Jordan, reported on its meeting earlier that day reviewing the FY25-26 goal areas.
 - The subcommittee assessed which of the four goal areas had been achieved and which should carry forward.
 - No final FY27 goals were approved; discussion will continue at a future meeting.
- b. The committee discussed adopting a consistent SMART goal format (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) across all goal areas, noting last year's four goals were drafted differently by different subcommittees.
- c. The committee debated retiring or reshaping the financial transparency goal into a data-informed decision-making goal.
 - The subcommittee proposed incorporating the four override-related reporting updates required of the district.
 - Concern was raised about keeping goals at the governance level rather than the operational level.
- d. The committee discussed MCAS and other data sources, including iReady, IXL, and DIBELS, as potential goal metrics, with concern about avoiding duplicative work for administration.
 - John will present enrollment and MCAS data to the committee as part of the data-informed goal.
 - Julia and her team will help articulate what data points indicate student success.
- e. The committee agreed the elevating educator voices item will not be a formal school committee goal, as the superintendent's roundtables are addressing it, and a staff member will continue developing those roundtables.



f. The committee agreed on next steps for refining the goal language.

- The subcommittee will revisit and refine the data-informed decision-making goal language before the next meeting.
- The Goals Subcommittee will review the current District Improvement Plan to inform goal development.

g. Committee members will review the revisions posted in the Dropbox before the next meeting, with consensus that any revisions must be discussed in open meeting rather than shared informally beforehand.

Cell Phone and Technology Use Policy Discussion ([01:15:00–01:26:00](#))

a. Superintendent John Robidoux presented an informal overview of the district's current cell phone and technology practices.

- K-8 policy is phones off and away throughout the day; high school phones are stored in classroom caddies during instructional time.
- High school students may use phones at lunch and between classes; newer devices like smartwatches and Meta glasses complicate enforcement.

b. The committee discussed possible changes and future updates.

- Members discussed aligning with potential state legislation banning phones, emergency contact concerns, and possibly banning phones during lunch to increase interaction.
- Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning Julia Ferreira will provide an update on AI protocols at a future meeting; a staff member noted data would be made available.

Subcommittee Updates ([01:26:00–01:29:00](#))

a. The committee received subcommittee updates, including the goals committee, liaison roles, and the policy subcommittee.

- The policy subcommittee held its first meeting and has additional meetings scheduled, as do the goal subcommittees for October and November.

b. A liaison update was given on the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC).

- Two contacts, Ann and Jennifer, were identified from the SEPAC website; no response had been received yet.
- Ann-Marie Jordan will attend a SEPAC meeting as soon as one is scheduled; meeting dates remained uncertain and CPAC membership was described as always in flux.



Adjournment ([01:29:00–01:29:00](#))

a. A motion was made by Ann-Marie Jordan and seconded by Melissa Clucas to adjourn the meeting.

- The chair called for the motion, asked whether there was any discussion, and then called the vote.
- The motion carried 5-0.

b. The meeting adjourned at 7:28pm.