



**DISTRICT COMMITTEE  
OPEN MEETING MINUTES  
MEETING #1918  
September 22, 2026**

|                               |                 |               |                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b><u>Members Present</u></b> | Thomas Hatem    | Methuen       | Chairperson     |
|                               | Julio Mejia     | Lawrence      | Vice Chair      |
|                               | William Tarbox  | North Andover | Asst. Treasurer |
|                               | Zoila Disla     | Lawrence      |                 |
|                               | Edison Mercedes | Lawrence      |                 |
|                               | Annemarie Faris | Andover       |                 |
|                               | Bradley Jones   | Methuen       |                 |

**Members Absent**

|                              |                 |                         |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| <b><u>Others Present</u></b> | John N. Lavoie  | Superintendent-Director |
|                              | Melissa Martel  | Director of Finance     |
|                              | Gerry DiStefano | Treasurer               |
|                              | Cheryl Dennis   | District Recorder       |

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hatem called the meeting to order at 6:00PM Roll *Call by District Record: Ms. Faris (present), Ms. Disla (present), Mr. Jones (present), Mr. Mejia (present), Mr. Mercedes (present), Mr. Tarbox (present), Mr. Hatem (present).*

**2. MINUTES**

***a. Minutes of August 25, 2026***

**MOTION:** Mr. Jones moved to approve the minutes of August 25, 2026.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Tarbox

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19226

**3. FINANCE REPORT**

***a. Cash Balance Report***

Mr. DiStefano presented the Cash Balance Report.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mercedes moved to accept the Cash Balance Report as reported.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Ms. Faris

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19227

***b. Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report***

***c. Revolving Fund Report***

#### ***d. Budget Report***

Chair Hatem questioned Ms. Martel concerning two items costing \$43, 273.00 to which she indicated it's for technology license.

#### ***e. FY 28 Budget Calendar***

Ms. Martel stated it was similar to the previous year - the budget will be presented for the approval of the District Committee at the March meeting.

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to approve the Budget Calendar as presented.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19228

### **4. COMMUNICATIONS**

#### ***a. Donations***

#### ***b. Articles***

- McGillivray steps up for alma mater, Eagle Tribune

#### ***c. Public Participation***

### **5. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR**

#### ***a. Admissions Policy Revisions***

Katie Hebert, Director of Admissions, Counseling & Health Services presented the proposed Admissions Policy Revisions. Noting this was their first experience with the new lottery system in place. Ms. Hebert reviewed two core policy updates which will be on the GLTS website. Mr. Mejia questioned what the deadline was previously to which Supt. Lavoie responded transfer students were accepted into the summer.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jones moved to approve the Admissions Policy Revisions.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Ms. Faris

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Mejia Yes

Mr. Mercedes Yes

Mr. Tarbox Yes

Ms. Faris Yes

Ms. Disla Yes

Mr. Jones Yes

Mr. Hatem Yes

#19229

Ms. Hebert went on to provide an admissions numbers and enrollment overview - currently stands at 1950 total enrollment. The waitlist by community for the class of 2030 was also reviewed. Ms. Hebert noted that there was a noticeable increase in the special education population admissions trend. Ms. Faris requested that District Committee receive the slides which Ms. Hebert affirmed they would. Mr. Mejia felt it important to note the 20% increase in special education students and was curious about the 8% of the student disability. Ms. Hebert stated the data is 8% of 2030. Mr. Mejia requested the statistics for the last three years which Ms. Hebert stated she would provide. Mr. Jones asked if the extra students from Andover automatically default to Lawrence which Ms. Hebert responded, yes per the policy of last year.

#### ***b. Admissions Report***

Packets provide a breakdown community by community. Ms. Faris questioned if there were any update on the continuity of the lottery process? Is it here to stay? Supt. Lavoie indicated he'd spoken with Rep. Moran who still wants to see it eliminated. The MA House voted against it, the MA Senate voted for it. Mr. Mercedes

asked if there was anything District Committee members could do? Supt. Lavoie reviewed the steps he took last year which was approved by the District Committee – he composed and sent a letter in opposition. Supt. Lavoie recommended that members personally reach out to the legislative leaders from our communities and encourage their constituents to do the same. Mr. Mejia stated he was not against anything that can make the lottery easier. Mr. Jones mentioned his unsuccessful attempt to discuss the lottery with Senators.

***c. Alumni Association Space Approval***

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on the space to be used for the Alumni Association. He reiterated the purpose and importance of utilizing that space - to honor the history of GLTS, display the history and success of the school as well as to work towards relationships to support students. There are currently only two active members. Mr. Mejia questioned where it would be located to which Supt. Lavoie responded within the main hallway where the bank and its space is still vacant. Mr. Mejia questioned the timeline if approved today? Supt. Lavoie stated his intention to build a new leadership committee that can outline a vision and mission to move forward. Mr. Mejia questioned the alumni association judiciary, is it separate? Supt. Lavoie stated it's an official, nonprofit organization. Ms. Faris feels it's a great idea.

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to approve the Alumni Association Space.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Tarbox

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19230

***d. Childcare and Early Childhood Education Changes (move to Exec. Session)***

Supt. Lavoie would like to move this discussion into Executive Session – moved, no vote required.

***e. NECC Handbook***

Supt. Lavoie reviewed the health assistant hand book for the program at Northern Essex Community College. It will keep students safe and provides teachers with a guidebook to assist our students - it aligns with the policies of GLTS. Ms. Faris questioned if a student were late to school and missed the transport, how they would get there? Supt. Lavoie responded that should a student miss the bus; a van driver and paraprofessional would be in place to transport them and their parents will pick them up at Northern Essex Community College. Parents can also transport them to Northern Essex Community College if the student will be late.

***f. Protect Act Policy***

Supt. Lavoie stated it aligns with the requirements of the state. It outlines who the individuals are that are responsible if something were to arise at the school. The bottom line is that in the event an officer arrives at the school for a civil situation, the Principal and Superintendent are to be contacted immediately – they in turn will contact our attorney. We'll meet with the staff on this policy so everyone clearly understands it and how to handle situations. Ms. Faris questioned if the leadership had been apprised of it? Supt. Lavoie responded that once the District Committee votes on it, we'll have a meeting with administrators first then with the faculty. Mr. Mejia stated the policy is modeled on the Mass Association of School Committees and it aligns with what the District Committee had voted on a couple of months ago. It ensures clear procedures are in place when dealing with law enforcement which allows students and parents to feel safe while students are attending school. Supt. Lavoie indicated that it will be share with parents as well.

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to approve the Protect Act Policy.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Mejia

Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Faris                      Yes

Ms. Disla                    Yes

Mr. Jones                    Yes

Mr. Mejia                    Yes

Mr. Mercedes                Yes

Mr. Tarbox                Yes  
Mr. Hatem                Yes  
#19231

***g. Out of State Travel (2)***

Colleen Belley, Math Instructor is travelling to Warwick, RI on October 22 & 23, 2026 to attend and present at the ATMNE (Association of Teachers of Mathematics in New England) Conference, total estimated cost is \$666.04. (See attached)

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to approve the Out of State Travel to Warwick, RI as presented.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19232

Zoraida Jordon, Executive Assistant to the Principal is travelling to New York City to attend “Strategic Skills for Administrative Professional” on October 15th and 16th , estimated cost is \$2,816.00. (see attached).

Ms. Disla questioned the source of the funds? Supt. Lavoie noted that the funding source had not been checked off on either of the documents. He assured District Committee members that it will be completed by all administrators going forward.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jones moved to approve the Out of State Travel to New York City.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Tarbox

**VOTE:** Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Mercedes            Yes  
Mr. Tarbox                Yes  
Ms. Faris                 Yes  
Ms. Disla                 Yes  
Mr. Jones                 Yes  
Mr. Mejia                 Yes  
Mr. Hatem                 Yes

#19233

***h. Review of Methuen City Council Meeting***

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on the Methuen City Council Meeting/Workshop that took place on September 21, 2026. Supt. Lavoie had requested an opportunity to speak with the city council about our relationship and the difficulties we’ve experienced. The meeting took place last night. Supt. Lavoie said he began with an opening statement taking responsibility for things that didn’t go right and that we could have done better - we missed some of their meetings – moving forward, we’ll do our best to attend all meetings. I shared our budget calendar so they’ll be aware of their assessments. They asked about our funding and I told them I’d provide them an estimated figure in October. I informed them the various programs we offer, reviewed the process for the assessments and other ways to provide opportunities for their students indicating that we may be able to offer more in the summer possibly utilizing grants. They’re welcome to attend District Committee meetings and they were provided with that calendar. It was a very positive experience for all – everyone is willing to work towards improving our relationship. Mr. Jones said they were hopeful to take advantage of some offerings of the school and spoke positively about the school’s willingness to be of assistance when asked. Chair Hatem mentioned that the Chairwoman was interested in obtaining our budget as soon as possible and Supt. Lavoie said he would accommodate her as best he could. She was also interested in grants and was provided with that information. All questions were answered by Supt. Lavoie. Cards were left for the interim Superintendent. Chair Hatem noted that the GLTS Culinary Arts Dept. had sent cupcakes and cookies that were very well received.

## **6. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE**

## **7. OLD BUSINESS**

### ***a. District Committee Priorities***

### ***b. Policy***

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

## **9. TABLED MATTERS**

## **10. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT**

### ***a. Resignations***

### ***b. Leaves of Absence***

### ***c. Retirements***

- Paula Thompson, Academic Support Specialist, November 1, 2026 – here for 32 years.

### ***d. Appointments***

- George Urena, NECC Paraprofessional, September 8, 2026
- Rosalba Mora, Speech & Language Pathologist (.5), September 8, 2026
- Jecelin Faria, Admissions and Enrollment Adm. Asst., September 14, 2026
- Cassandra Fabrizio, Social Studies Instructor, September 15, 2026
- Susan Seaquist, PT Workforce Development Program Facilitator, September 15, 2026

### ***e. Job Postings***

- PT Painter, \$45.00/hr., new position (See attached)
- PT Maintenance Electrical, \$80.00/hr., new position (See attached)
- PT Maintenance Carpenter, \$80.00/hr. new position (See attached)
- PT Maintenance Plumber, \$80.00/hr. new position (See attached)

The above Job Postings (4) were voted on as one. Ms. Disla had stepped out of the room.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mercedes moved to approve the above (4) Job Postings as presented.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Mercedes

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved (Ms. Disla was out of the room)

#19234

- PT Program Coordinator for Admin. Induction Mentoring Program, new position (see attached)

Supt. Lavoie stated that the Dept of Ed. requires us to have a mentoring program in place for new administrators which we're looking to begin. The program will not be run unless there is a new administrator but a PT Program Coordinator needs to be hired to develop the program. Mr. Mejia recalled approving stipends for coaches and questioned if this couldn't be merged? Supt. Lavoie responded that this is similar to the teacher's program. We're only putting the program together now so it can be utilized in the future. Ms. Disla requested an explanation as to what this entailed. Supt. Lavoie provided an example of a coordinator leaving who would need to be replaced. If we hire someone that's never been an administrator, they need to learn how to become

an administrator – it helps them be better at their job. Ms. Disla questioned if this would be for current employees to which Supt. Lavoie responded not necessarily - the mentor is a part time position. Ms. Faris stated I'm not in favor of this – all administrators need to already have a proven record. I'm in favor of grooming individuals. I want to show extraordinary behavior, I don't know that I can trust transferring to someone new old, bad habits. I want anyone hired by this school to come with a proven record, not to duplicate bad habits and standards, an inspirational person. Supt. Lavoie indicated an outside individual could be hired to mentor our employees. We could work with them to work with us on the program itself. Supt. Lavoie stated we will be looking to hire a consultant to help develop and deliver a program with high expectations. He will bring a company to do the mentoring and he can engage this person to help someone within already. an internal movement and someone from the outside that needs guidance from this company.

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to approve a Program Coordinator for Admin. Induction Mentoring who has experience in a mentoring program, preferably a company that delivers that type of program. Utilizing a company with a proven record in a mentoring program.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

Roll Call by District Recorder

|              |           |
|--------------|-----------|
| Mr. Jones    | Yes       |
| Mr. Mejia    | Abstained |
| Mr. Mercedes | Yes       |
| Mr. Tarbox   | Yes       |
| Ms. Faris    | Yes       |
| Ms. Disla    | Yes       |
| Mr. Hatem    | Yes       |

#19235

- After Dark Student Information System Aid, up to 30-40 hrs. per year, new position (see attached) Lavoie; person to support the after dark director in collecting data to support the instruction in learning and paperwork for the dept of ed. pt employment.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mejia moved to approve the After Dark Student Information System Aid as presented.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

**VOTE:** Roll Call by District Recorder

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| Ms. Disla    | Yes |
| Mr. Jones    | Yes |
| Mr. Mejia    | Yes |
| Mr. Mercedes | Yes |
| Mr. Tarbox   | Yes |
| Ms. Faris    | Yes |
| Mr. Hatem    | Yes |

#19236

- Electrical Instructor, Teachers' Contract, New position.  
Supt. Lavoie indicated there were two openings. HVAC instructor who has electrical license – we hired him to do that job. He does not currently have a teacher's license so we need a waiver from the Dept. of Ed. We can hire him as an electrical teacher in the Electrical Dept. but he'll be working in HVAC. Mr. Mejia acknowledged how hard it is to find HVAC teachers but we are going to hire an electrical teacher that will be in a completely different department which I find concerning. Also, that this is a union position. Supt. Lavoie said there are actually two openings. we're using plumbing teachers to do HVAC to teach some of the plumbing aspects. This electrician will be better, without him, we'll have an English teacher subbing HVAC. It doesn't mean we'll stop looking, we'll continue going to business areas to try to find an HVAC teacher. Supt. Lavoie said we're attempting to do the best we can – trying to balance through this season. Mr. Mejia said he was not placing blame for that department's vacancy, concerned about the students receiving a full experience. Supt.

Lavoie stated that we do have two very good HVAC teachers and believes that this person will be a valuable asset.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jones moved to approve the Electrical Instructor.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Ms. Faris

**VOTE:** Roll Call by District Recorder

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Ms. Faris    | Yes  |
| Ms. Disla    | Yes  |
| Mr. Jones    | Yes  |
| Mr. Mejia    | Yes  |
| Mr. Mercedes | Yes+ |
| Mr. Tarbox   | Yes  |
| Mr. Hatem    | Yes  |

#19237

## 11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

## 12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

**MOTION:** Mr. Mercedes moved to enter into Executive Session at 7:42PM.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Jones

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19238

ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

ENTER OPEN SESSION

**MOTION:** Ms. Faris moved to hire a PT CPO.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Tarbox

Roll Call by District Recorder

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| Ms. Disla    | Yes |
| Mr. Jones    | Yes |
| Mr. Mejia    | Yes |
| Mr. Mercedes | Yes |
| Mr. Tarbox   | Yes |
| Ms. Faris    | Yes |
| Mr. Hatem    | Yes |

#19241

## 13. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** Mr. Mercedes moved to adjourn at 8:50PM.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Mejia

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#19242

Respectfully Submitted



Cheryl Dennis  
District Recorder

Minutes Reviewed



John N. Supt. Lavoie  
Superintendent-Director

