



Melrose School Committee

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, 7:00 PM
562 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176
Council Chamber, First Floor, Melrose City Hall

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Dorie Withey	Chair	Present
Jennifer McAndrew	Vice Chair	Present
Jen Grigoraitis	Mayor	Present
Jennifer Razi-Thomas	Member	Present
Seamus Kelley	Member	Present
Matt Hartman	Member	Present
Margaret Raymond Driscoll	Member	Present
Cari Berman	Interim Superintendent	Present

Also in attendance: Interim Deputy Superintendent, Ken Kelley and Recording Secretary, Kristen O'Connor. With a roll call vote with seven (7) present, the meeting convened at 7:00 PM.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Without objection, the Chair opened Public Comment. With no one present and without objection, the Chair closed Public Comment.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. Report: October 1 Enrollment

The Superintendent presented the enrollment update from the packet and took questions from the committee. Ms. Razi-Thomas inquired if these were submitted to DESE, and the Superintendent responded that they were nearly complete and close to final figures.

B. Introduction to Student Representatives

The Superintendent was pleased to announce that there are seven MHS students that will be joining future School Committee meetings as representatives.

C. Other Announcements

The Superintendent announced that the district will be able to offer Orton-Gillingham reading training to interested teachers to develop instruction for diverse learners. This

training will strengthen Tier 1 support, address reading gaps, and build foundational reading skills. The funding for this was secured through the IDEA grant, made possible by prepaying some tuition costs. Discussion included: looking at ways to involve teachers who have those gaps, the importance of filling the approved reading specialist positions, and the excitement of being able to offer professional development to staff.

The Superintendent also shared some MPS club and activity highlights from the week: The football team will be playing their Thanksgiving Day game at Fenway, the Unified Basketball Team will be playing at the Boston Garden on January 18th, the MHS robotics team partnered with Revere to host their first robotics competition, and the MHS drama club will be presenting Baskerville as their fall play next weekend.

4. REPORT OF THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

There were no Student Representatives present this evening.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Matt Hartman
SECONDER:	Jennifer Razi-Thomas
AYES:	Dorie Withey , Jennifer McAndrew, Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Jennifer Grigoraitis, Seamus Kelley, Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Matt Hartman

Ms. McAndrew requested that the School Committee meeting minutes from the September 30th meeting be removed and placed under the Announcements of the Chair. All other Consent Agenda items were approved as presented.

- A. School Committee Regular Meeting Minutes - September 30, 2025 7:00 PM
- B. Donations
- C. Warrants

FY26 Refunds - [S26022](#) - \$10,179.94
FY26 School - [S26023](#) - \$594,161.22
FY26 September MVMMS Student Activity Wire - [S26024](#) - \$1,114.00
FY26 September High School Student Activity Wire - [S26025](#) - \$2,136.83
FY26 October Debit Card - [S26026](#) - \$1,625.00
FY26 September Meals Tax - [S26027](#) - \$40.99
FY26 Postage Wire - [S26028](#) - \$5,000.00

6. SUBCOMMITTEES (COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE)

- A. Educational Programs and Personnel - Jennifer Razi-Thomas/ Margaret Driscoll
 - 1 Vote: Horace Mann School Improvement Plan

Principal Milissa Churchill presented the proposed Horace Mann School Improvement Plan. The goal of this plan is to enhance literacy outcomes for all students with a focus on reading, comprehension, and written expression. She discussed two strategies they will focus on. They will focus on phonics in grades K-5, so students have the skills to read and spell fluently. She proposed using the UFLI Foundations program as the core curriculum K-2 and the linguistics program for grades 3-5. The goal is to have 90% of students at or above grade level by the end of the school year. The second strategy is to develop a school-wide scope and sequence that addresses instruction in writing in all areas, using the Writing Revolution 2.0 program and assessments will be made by looking at MCAS essay writing scores. Discussion included the excitement of educators around the UFLI Foundation program, and ways to share information with others in the district.

2 Vote: Winthrop School Improvement Plan

Principal Michael Tracy presented the Winthrop School Improvement Plan from the packet. Principal Tracy shared the school's goal to increase academic outcomes and individual levels of growth for all students and the strategies they are using to reach those goals. The first strategy being to strengthen their multi-tiered system of support, partnering with CAST Incorporated to provide instructional opportunities to maximize learning and growth for all students, and the second strategy to utilize IXL resources to implement interventions and enrichment while tracking student growth and performance results. A measure of their progress will be to see 92% of all students at or above grade level in math and 90% in literacy. Discussion included ways parents and families can support their students in math and literacy at home.

MOTION:	To approve the Horace Mann and the Winthrop School Improvement Plans
RESULT:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Seamus Kelley
SECONDER:	Margaret Raymond Driscoll
AYES:	Dorie Withey , Jennifer McAndrew, Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Jennifer Grigoraitis, Seamus Kelley, Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Matt Hartman

B. Finance and Facilities - Seamus Kelley/Jennifer McAndrew

1 Vote: Monthly Budget Summary/Revolving Accounts

MOTION:	To approve the monthly budget summary/revolving accounts
RESULT:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jennifer McAndrew
SECONDER:	Matt Hartman
AYES:	Dorie Withey, Jennifer McAndrew, Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Jennifer Grigoraitis, Seamus Kelley, Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Matt Hartman

Deputy Superintendent Kelley presented the monthly budget summary and revolving

accounts showing the district is encumbered for known expenses. Discussion included transportation costs being sometimes unpredictable as supports and services can change for special education students.

C. Policy and Planning - Matt Hartman/Margaret Driscoll

1 1st Vote: Pathways Exploration (CTE) and Vocational Education Policy

The Executive Director of Academics and Accountability, Melanie Acevedo, presented a new policy request from DESE. DESE requires districts to document how they share information about vocational programs and career and technical education with students, beginning at the middle school level. Guidance counselors compiled existing information to draft the policy, focusing on middle school students' exposure to post-secondary options beyond a college path. Ms. Acevedo sought an informational review and a first vote this evening, requesting School Committee approval before submitting the policy to DESE. A final vote requested for the 28th to meet the November 1st DESE deadline.

Discussion included: past practice of viewing and voting on new policies, how current information shared at the district is different than the new policy, the policy setting Essex Tech if students want a program the Northeast Voke does not offer, a deadline for when families are notified about these programs, what transportation there is for students who want to visit these schools, the maintenance of student records and discipline records, and changing the language on discipline records.

MOTION:	Waive the informational reading of the policy and move forward with a first vote
RESULT:	PASSED [5 to 2]
MOVER:	Jennifer Razi-Thomas
SECONDER:	Jennifer McAndrew
AYES:	Dorie Withey, Jennifer McAndrew, Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Seamus Kelley, Matt Hartman
NAYS:	Jennifer Grigoraitis, Margaret Raymond Driscoll

MOTION:	To approve the friendly amendment to change the language "and discipline records" to "and limited to records of disciplinary interactions as required by statute"
RESULT:	PASSED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jennifer McAndrew
SECONDER:	Margaret Raymond Driscoll
AYES:	Dorie Withey, Jennifer McAndrew, Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Jennifer Grigoraitis, Seamus Kelley, Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Matt Hartman

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE CHAIR

MOTION:	To approve the meeting minutes of September 30, 2025
RESULT:	PASSED [6 TO 0]

MOVER:	Seamus Kelley
SECONDER:	Matt Hartman
AYES:	Dorie Withey , Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Jennifer Grigoraitis, Seamus Kelley, Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Matt Hartman
ABSTAIN:	Jennifer McAndrew

A. Vote: MASC Delegate

Chair Withey discussed the upcoming MASC conference in November, a three-day event focused on the challenges districts face while ensuring that all students succeed. The committee proceeded with its usual vote for a delegate. Ms. Driscoll nominated Mr. Kelley to serve, seconded by Ms. Razi-Thomas. Mr. Kelley accepted the nomination and expressed interest in attending, though he noted his November schedule is subject to change, which may prevent his attendance.

MOTION:	To nominate School Committee Member Seamus Kelley to serve as a delegate for the MASC Conference
RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Margaret Driscoll
SECONDER:	Jennifer Razi-Thomas
AYES:	Dorie Withey , Jennifer McAndrew, Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Jennifer Grigoraitis, Seamus Kelley, Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Matt Hartman

B. Vote: School Committee Calendar Changes for 2025

Chair Withey presented the memo in the packet highlighting some school committee calendar changes for the remainder of the 2025 year. The memo outlines the request to cancel the November 25, 2025 meeting and instead add an additional meeting on December 16, 2025.

MOTION:	To move forward with the calendar changes outlined in the memo
RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jennifer McAndrew
SECONDER:	Margaret Raymond Driscoll
AYES:	Dorie Withey , Jennifer McAndrew, Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Jennifer Grigoraitis, Seamus Kelley, Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Matt Hartman

C. Review: School Committee Calendar for 2026

Chair Withey shared the proposed school committee dates listed in the packet for January 2026 onward. She requested that members email her with any concerns or questions prior to voting on the new calendar at the next meeting.

D. Report: Outreach

Chair Withey noted that school committee office hours are being held via zoom from 8:30 - 9:30 am on October 25th.

8. ADJOURN

MOTION:	To adjourn to Executive Session
RESULT:	PASSED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Seamus Kelley
SECONDER:	Jennifer Razi-Thomas
AYES:	Dorie Withey, Jennifer McAndrew, Jennifer Razi-Thomas, Jennifer Grigoraitis, Seamus Kelley, Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Matt Hartman

With a roll call vote, the School Committee adjourned to Executive Session at 8:06 PM and would not be returning to Public Session.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, Cari Berman