

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

February 9, 2026

School Committee Members Present:	Michael Shannon, Chair Eric Crane, Secretary Sean Doherty Joshua Kepnes Gabe Lopes
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- VOTED:** Policy IMB Teaching About Controversial Issues/Controversial Speakers for a second reading: Mr. Crane moved to approve Policy IMB Teaching About Controversial Issues/Controversial Speakers for a second reading. Mr. Lopes seconded. The vote was unanimous
- VOTED:** Policy IHAM-R Student Exemption from Instruction on Religious Grounds for a second reading: Mr. Kepnes moved to approve Policy IMB Teaching About Controversial Issues/Controversial Speakers for a second reading. Mr. Doherty seconded. The vote was unanimous
- VOTED:** Policy IJR Challenged Instructional Materials for a second reading: Mr. Crane moved to approve Policy IJR Challenged Instructional Materials for a second reading. Mr. Doherty seconded. The vote was unanimous
- VOTED:** Policy IJL Library Materials Selection, Adoption, and Reconsideration for a second reading: Mr. Crane moved to approve Policy IJL Library Materials Selection, adoption, and Reconsideration for a second reading. Mr. Kepnes seconded. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** DECA Overnight Field Trip: Mr. Crane motioned to approve the DECA overnight field trip. Mr. Kepnes seconded. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** DHS Program of Studies: Mr. Doherty moved to approve the DHS 2026-2027 Program of Studies as presented. Mr. Kepnes seconded. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** 2026-2027 School Year Calendar: Mr. Lopes motioned to approve the 2026-2027 School Calendar as presented. Mr. Doherty seconded. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Minutes - Mr. Crane moved to approve and release the minutes from the January 12, 2026 regular meeting. Mr. Lopes seconded. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Consent Agenda: Mr. Doherty moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Kepnes seconded. The vote was unanimous.
- VOTED:** Adjournment – Mr. Kepnes moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:14 p.m. Mr. Lopes seconded. The vote was unanimous.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Shannon called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The Danvers Public Schools Mission statement were recited. Mr. Shannon inquired whether the meeting was being recorded by audience members and announced that the meeting was being broadcast on DCAT.

II. ITEMS OF INTEREST

Community:

Mr. Paul Pawlak: Reminded the public the events scheduled to occur January 26th have been rescheduled to February 21 from 5-7 at Maple Street Church.

Ms. Julie Bolduc DiFilippo: Thanked the Committee for the information given at the Budget Workshop. SEPAC has received many comments from parents regarding the progress that the Special Education program has made and hopefully continues to make.

III. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Student Representatives Report: Olivia Miller updated the Committee on the recent events that occurred across the district. The middle school recently presented their play, there was a blood drive at the High School. DramaFest will be competing in February in Woburn. Best of luck to the boys and girls hockey and basketball teams as they begin their state tournament play.
- B. Danvers Electric Calendar: Anna Bond and Erica Bisconti acknowledged the students whose illustrations were chosen to be in the 2026 calendar. Congratulations to all
- C. DHS Social Studies Department Recognition: Superintendent Bauer introduced Principal Strauss and the social studies department. Mr. Strauss was proud to announce that the DHS Social Studies department has been awarded with the Department of Excellence Teaching Social Studies award from the Massachusetts Council of Social Studies. Congratulations!
- D. DHS Student Recognition - Seed of Hope Award: Superintendent Bauer introduced Senator Lovely and Representative Kerans who presented Grace Burnett with a proclamation from both the House and Senate for work with the local food pantry and being the first recipient of the Seed of Hope award.
- E. Legislative Update: Senator Lovely and Representative Kerans updated the Committee on the budget and where things stand. There has been an Early Literacy bill that has passed with the hope of raising the reading level of students. Once more information is available regarding the budget they will return to update. Superintendent Bauer thanked them for their work.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Policy IMB-Teaching About Controversial Issues/Controversial Speakers for a second reading: Mr. Crane moved to approve Policy IMB Teaching About Controversial Issues/Controversial Speakers for a second reading. Mr. Lopes seconded. As voted.
- B. Policy IHAM-R Student Exemption From Instruction on Religious Grounds for a second reading: Mr. Kepnes moved to approve Policy IHAM-R Student Exemption From Instruction on Religious Grounds for a second reading. Mr. Doherty seconded. As voted.
- C. Policy IJR Challenged Instructional Material for a second reading: Mr. Crane moved to approve Policy IJR Challenged Instructional Material for a second reading. Mr. Doherty seconded. As voted.
- D. Policy IJL Library Materials Selection, Adoption, and Reconsideration for a second reading: Mr. Crane moved to approve Policy IJL Library Materials Selection, Adoption, and Reconsideration for a second reading. Mr. Lopes seconded. As voted.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- A. DECA Overnight Field Trip: Superintendent Bauer introduced Meghan Beaulieu, DECA advisor, who presented to the Committee the proposed overnight field trip for State competition. Mr. Crane thanked her and everyone who has helped to make this program such a great success. Mr. Shannon asked if every child who wishes to participate is able to. Ms. Beaulieu explained there are a multitude of financial scholarships available to help those in need, so yes, everyone who wishes to attend may. Mr. Crane motioned to approve the DECA overnight field trip. Mr. Kepnes seconded. As voted.
- B. DHS Program of Studies: Peter DiMauro and Alan Strauss presented the proposed 2026-2027 Program of Studies. There are several new classes being offered to students for next year. Mr. Kepnes expressed his delight to see new courses in the offerings. Mr. Doherty motioned to approve the 2026-2027 DHS Program of Studies as presented. Mr. Kepnes seconded. As voted.
- C. Transportation User Fee: David Pulsifer, Transportation Coordinator, presented to the Committee a proposed update to the current transportation user fees. The fees have not been adjusted since 2012. David would like to see the fee raised to \$250 per year with an early sign up incentive rate of \$200. This would help to determine the bus routes as well as the number of actual busses needed. Mr. Shannon asked if the fee is paid upfront or on a monthly basis. David answered it is paid up front. David will look into a few different options and bring this back for another review at the next meeting.

- D. Athletic User Fee: Drew Betts, Athletic Director, presented three proposed fee increases. The fees have not been increased in over 10 years. With costs increasing the athletic fees do not offset the coaching salaries. Drew presented 3 proposals. One would offer a tiered fee structure, one is a flat fee no matter how many sports you play, and the last is a tiered fee structure with a lower family cap.
- E. Budget Discussion - planning for budget hearing - Superintendent Bauer reviewed with the Committee the budget. Some of the items are non-negotiable - salaries, etc. The staff has taken the comments from the workshop and are working on finalizing the budget. It is a tight year and the budget needs to be in line with the Town.
- F. 2026-2027 DPS School Calendar: Superintendent Bauer recommends approval of the proposed 2026-2027 School Calendar. Mr. Lopes motioned to approve the 2026-2027 School Calendar as presented. Mr. Doherty seconded. As voted.

VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Minutes: Mr. Crane moved to approve and release the minutes from the January 12, 2026 regular meeting Mr. Lopes seconded. As voted.
- B. Consent Agenda: Mr. Crane moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Kepnes seconded the motion. As voted.
- B. Communications - none
- C. Legislation - Previous given.
- D. Subcommittee/Liaison Update -
 - Curriculum & Assessment - No update
 - Policy - Previously Given
 - Safety -
 - DEEP -
 - DanversCARES -
 - SEPAC - Previously given
 - DHRIC - Previously given

The next meeting will be held on February 23, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Eric Crane, Secretary
Danvers School Committee