

DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING

August 10, 2026

School Committee Members Present:

Sean Doherty, Chair
Gabe Lopes, Secretary
Joshua Kepnes
Beth Kontos
Mike Shannon

VOTED: 2026-27 Accounts and Balances: Mr. Shannon motioned to approve the account list and balances as presented. Ms. Kontos seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: DHS Cell Phone Policy: Ms. Kontos motioned to approve the DHS Cell Phone Policy. Ms. Doherty seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Salter Bus: Ms. Kontos moved to approve the Bus Contract Adjustment. Mr. Shannon seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Minutes - Mr. Lopes moved to approve and release the minutes from the May 11, 2026 regular meeting, and May 27, 2026 Special Meeting. Mr. Kepnes seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Consent Agenda: Mr. Shannon moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Kontos seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Shannon moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:50 p.m. Ms. Kontos seconded. The vote was unanimous.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Doherty called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Danvers Public Schools Mission statement were recited. Mr. Doherty inquired whether the meeting was being recorded by audience members and announced that the meeting was being broadcast on DCAT.

II. ITEMS OF INTEREST

None

III. RECOGNITIONS

None

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. SY '26 Superintendent Evaluation Follow Up: Chairperson Doherty wanted to touch base on summarizing comments from the Superintendent's evaluation. The Committee as a whole felt great progress has been made in the district - implementation of the AP programs, MCAS scores, and Dan's overall presence in the school community. Mr. Shannon spoke to Mr. Bauer's accomplishments.
- B. Review of School Attorney Update: Superintendent Bauer anticipated the process to move quicker than it has. This does not need to be put out to bid but it was decided to do just that. Two bids were received. Mr. Bauer is suggesting to have the subcommittee review and bring back to the Committee.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- A. DPS Handbook: Superintendent Bauer explained the process to combine the handbooks into one as opposed to having 3 different ones. The attorneys were unable to review before tonight's meeting so the vote will be tabled until September.
- B. 2026-27 List of Accounts and Balances: Superintendent Bauer recommends approval

of the account balances. Mr. Shannon motion to approve the list of accounts and maximum balances. Ms. Kontos seconded. As voted.

- C. DHS Cell Phone Policy: Principal Strauss and Assistant Principal LeBlanc presented the updates to the policy. Ms. Kontos asked about the usage during lunch. Mr. Strauss explained parents have the ability to reach out to the office for any important messages that need to get to their students. Ms. LeBlanc explained there is a phone in the office for students to use if an emergency should arise. It was asked if this policy was for the district - no just the High School at this time. Ms. Kontos inquired as to how the phones are locked up. Mr. Strauss explained the process. Ms. Kontos motioned to approve the DHS Cell Phone Policy. Mr. Doherty seconded. As voted
- D. Financial Update: Pam Crum explained that this year's end of year close out was expedited and successfully completed. Moving into FY27 IDEA & ESSA grants are at or above the previous year. The hiring process is continuing. Ms. Kontos asked how Circuit Breaker works. Ms. Crum explained the reimbursement process begins in July based on the prior year's expenses.
- E. Salter Bus Contract Adjustment: Superintendent Bauer explained to the Committee that through the work of Transportation Coordinator Pulsiver the district is able to reduce the number of buses contracted with Salter by one. This was done through the consolidation of routes. Ms. Kontos moved to approve the Bus Contract Adjustment. Mr. Shannon seconded. As voted

III. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

- A. Personnel Updates: Superintendent Bauer provided an update on the new hires to date. A detailed list will be provided in September. Mr. Kepnes commended the hires at the middle school in such a short time period.
- B. 8/4 School Committee Retreat Update: Superintendent Bauer reviewed the highlights of the retreat in August. One of the outcomes was to become more streamlined in the meetings.
- C. SC Communication Tree: The proposed communication tree was presented and will be rolled out once finalized.
- D. SY 26-27 SC Meeting Planner: Superintendent Bauer presented a template for meetings to be held in the future.
- E. Summer Programming Update: Christina Ryan provided an update to the Committee on the summer program. The district collaborated with SEPAC on a summer reading challenge at the library.
- F. SY 26-27 Strategic Plan & Improvement Plan Updates: As year one of the Strategic Plan has closed we begin the focus for this upcoming year. Staff received valuable feedback from families and staff as to where to go from here. Accomplishments will be provided at a later date.

VII. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Consent Agenda: Mr. Shannon moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Kontos seconded the motion. As voted.
- B. Communications - none
- C. Legislation -
- D. Subcommittee/Liaison Update

The next meeting will be held on September 14, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Gabe Lopes, Secretary
Danvers School Committee