



BLUE HILLS

REGIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
BHR, ROOM 218
MARCH 17, 2026, 7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS:

Mark Driscoll	Canton (Chair)
Kevin Connolly	Norwood
Carl Walker	Avon (Zoom, late arrival)
Thomas Polito	Dedham (Zoom)
Eric Erskine	Braintree
Taryn Mohan	Holbrook
Marybeth Joyce	Milton
Karen Graves	Randolph
Sheila Vazquez	Westwood

ADMINISTRATION:

Jill Rossetti	Superintendent-Director
Elvio Ferreira	Business Manager
Geoff Zini	Principal
Tim Rose	Facilities Director

FACULTY AND STAFF:

Rich Spada	Culinary Arts Instructor
------------	--------------------------

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

Nissy Kahuha	Senior Class President
--------------	------------------------

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, with two members attending via Zoom—one due to geographical location and the other due to illness—and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Chair opened the meeting with a special public hearing on the FY27 Blue Hills Regional Technical School District budget, conducted in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. The notice of the public hearing was read into the record. The Chair then turned the floor over to Business Manager Dr. Elvio Ferreira, Business Manager to proceed with the budget hearing.

1.1 FY27 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Elvio Ferreira, Business Manager presented the proposed FY27 operating budget, beginning with a review of the district’s mission, vision, and core values, emphasizing Blue Hills’ dual commitment to academic excellence and high-level technical training that prepares students for both college and careers. He reported that the FY27 operating budget totals \$28,782,432, representing an approximate 3.8% increase over FY26. The increase is driven

primarily by fixed and unavoidable costs, including contractual salary increases, employee benefits, transportation costs, utilities, and debt service related to the MSBA (Massachusetts School Building Authority) renovation project. Dr. Ferreira emphasized that the budget does not include program expansion, but instead maintains current services in a high-inflation environment.

Dr. Ferreira reviewed the budget development process, noting months of collaboration among the leadership team, instructors, department heads, and the School Committee to ensure transparency and fiscal responsibility. He outlined the district's major expense categories, including operating costs, capital debt, stabilization funding, and OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) obligations. To limit the impact on member communities, the district reduced stabilization funding by 40% for FY27 and held the OPEB contribution level, helping to keep the assessment increase modest.

State aid was reviewed, including Chapter 70 funding and transportation reimbursement, which together total approximately \$8.8 million. Transportation reimbursement is projected at about 75%, which is higher than in many prior years. Dr. Ferreira explained the Chapter 70 formula and the required local contribution, noting that the state determines these figures based on enrollment, property values, and income data.

Transportation costs for FY27 are projected at approximately \$1.1 million, of which \$851,000 will be reimbursed by the state. The remaining transportation costs will be allocated among the nine sending communities based on enrollment. Dr. Ferreira also explained the use of approximately \$700,000 in excess and deficiency funds to offset the proposed budget. In closing, Dr. Ferreira stated that the FY27 budget balances rising operational costs with stable program delivery and careful financial management, while positioning the district to move forward with a new strategic plan extending through 2030.

1.2 PUBLIC COMMENT ON BUDGET

The Chair invited questions or comments from the public. One question was asked regarding the availability of printed budget booklets, and it was confirmed that copies were available from the Business Office. No additional public comments were offered.

1.3 VOTE TO APPROVE FY27 BUDGET

On a motion made by Holbrook, seconded by Braintree, it was resolved to approve the FY27 operating budget as presented by Dr. Ferreira. Motion carried unanimously.

1.4 CLOSURE OF THE PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING

A motion was made by Randolph, seconded by Milton, and it was resolved to close the public budget hearing at 7:14 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mark Driscoll led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

4. **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:**

Student Representative, Nissy Kahuha, provided an update on student activities and events. She reported that spring sports had begun, including baseball, softball, track, rugby, and lacrosse. She noted that the sophomore semi-formal was scheduled for Friday evening and that MCAT testing would begin the following week.

She also reported that eighth-grade acceptance notifications had been sent and reminded the Committee of the upcoming student acceptance reception on March 26, 2026. Nissy Kahuha highlighted the return of the Culture Fair on April 29, 2026, noting strong student participation. She also described an early-education visit to the Criminal Justice program, where students participated in hands-on activities such as fingerprinting and CPR. She concluded with a quote about kindness and thanked the Committee.

5. **FACILITIES UPDATE**

Facilities Director Tim Rose provided a comprehensive facilities report. He announced that the construction technology bus was nearing delivery after delays related to lettering and equipment installation. He also reported progress on decommissioned equipment, noting that several items had been sold, generating several thousand dollars in revenue. Mr. Rose reviewed completed and ongoing projects, including the installation of a new pool boiler, upgrades to library shelving constructed with student involvement, and significant improvements to athletic facilities, including a rebuilt pitcher's mound meeting MLB, NCAA, and high-school regulations. He discussed mitigation efforts at the softball field, including regrading, aeration, and adding sand to improve drainage.

He also reported the completion of a new salt shed, which improves environmental protection and operational efficiency. Mr. Rose described preparatory work completed in-house for the dental assisting lab renovation, saving approximately \$8,000. He outlined upcoming capital needs, including deteriorated curbing estimated at \$80,000–\$100,000, repainting stadium bleachers, replacing an aging kitchen freezer, and potential masonry cleaning and ductwork maintenance.

Committee members asked questions regarding funding sources and structural inspections, and Mr. Rose confirmed that safety inspections and routine maintenance are conducted regularly.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

6.1 **DECOMMISSION AND DONATION REQUESTS**

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Randolph, it was resolved to decommission obsolete and unsafe equipment, including a wig dryer, outdated textbooks, and a deteriorated 2004 construction technology bus. Motion carried unanimously.

On a motion made by Holbrook, seconded by Norwood, it was resolved to accept donated HVAC equipment gas furnaces and coil evaporator. Motion carried unanimously.

6.2 **SENIOR TRIP RETURN TRAVEL TIMING**

Superintendent-Director Jill Rossetti provided an update on the senior trip return, explaining that students would return close to midnight and that, due to safety and transportation

concerns, they would be excused from school the following day. She noted that EF Tours had agreed to make improvements to arrangements for future trips.

6.3 LOTTERY UPDATE

Ms. Rossetti gave a lottery update, explaining that the wait-list movement remains fluid and will continue until October 1, 2026, for enrollment reporting. She reminded members of the March 26, 2026, student acceptance reception

Ms. Rossetti provided an update on the dental assisting lab renovation, which is scheduled for substantial completion by mid-May 2026.

6.4 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO 603 CMR 28.00 DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Rossetti concluded with an overview of proposed amendments to state discipline regulations for students with disabilities, highlighting safety concerns unique to vocational programs and encouraging public comment during the regulatory review period.

7. DSC CHAIR REPORT

7.1 DONATION TO METAL FABRICATION PROGRAM, \$100.00 FROM GLENN SHANE OF CANTON

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Milton, it was resolved to accept a \$100 donation from Glenn Shane of Canton, designated for the Metal Fabrication programs. Motion carried unanimously.

7.2 DONATION TO BLUE HILLS FROM NEPONSET VALLEY SUNRISE ROTARY CLUB, MEMORIAL TREE/PLAQUE HONORING KIMBERLY POLISENO, TOM POLITO, DEDHAM

On a motion made by Randolph, seconded by Norwood, it was resolved to accept the donation from the Neponset Valley Sunrise Rotary Club and authorize placement of the Memorial tree/plaque honoring Kimberly Polisenno. Motion carried unanimously.

7.3 ZOOM DISCUSSION

The Committee discussed the potential use of Zoom for School Committee meetings. Members discussed open meeting law requirements, technical limitations, cybersecurity risks, and the importance of in-person participation. The Chair proposed forming an ad hoc subcommittee to review legal, technical, and policy considerations. A subcommittee was established to study the issue and report back.

8. TREASURER'S REPORT AND WARRANT

On a motion made by Dedham, seconded by Norwood, it was resolved to approve the following Warrants:

FY26:

Warrant No. 47 for \$104,546.06 – Voucher Numbers 1110-1111

Warrant No. 48 for \$785,986.05 – Voucher Numbers 1112-1115

Motion carried unanimously.

Report prepared by Treasurer, Patricia Leonhardt and read by Secretary, Marybeth Joyce.

9. MINUTES APPROVAL

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Braintree, it was resolved to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2026, District School Committee meeting, as amended. Motion carried.

10. BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT

10.1 BUDGET MEETINGS

Elvio Ferreira, Business Manager, reported that he and Superintendent-Director Jill Rossetti have been attending Finance Committee and community meetings in the member towns as part of the FY27 budget outreach process. Meetings have already been held in Norwood, Dedham, and Canton, with Holbrook scheduled for later that week. A meeting in Braintree is planned for May 2026, and the district is still awaiting invitations from the remaining member communities.

10.2 TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FORMS

Travel reimbursement forms were distributed for signature.

11. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

11.1 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

11.1.1 GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP REPORT

The Principal, Geoff Zini, presented the one-year graduate follow-up report, which is used for Perkins accountability and DESE (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) reporting. The report tracks post-secondary outcomes for the Class of 2025 graduates and is based on direct student responses and verified information collected through guidance counselors, vocational teachers, and other staff.

Of 215 graduates, the school obtained post-graduation information for 189 students, yielding an 88% response rate, which Mr. Zini described as very strong. He noted that response rates were slightly lower in Cosmetology and Electronics, though the overall rate exceeded typical expectations.

Mr. Zini reported a 96% Chapter 74 positive placement rate, meaning graduates were employed in their field, enrolled in post-secondary education, or enlisted in the military in a manner aligned with vocational program requirements. He also reported a 99% Perkins-positive placement rate, which includes employment, education, or military service, regardless of field alignment. He stated that the final certified breakdown of employment versus college enrollment would be submitted to DESE and shared with the Committee upon completion.

11.1.2 PROJECT PLAYHOUSE, APRIL 29, AND MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS DONATED FOR THE PROJECT

On a motion made by Norwood, seconded by Randolph, it was resolved to approve the field trip on April 29, 2026, to Bryant University and accept the donations of paint, hardware, and miscellaneous materials. Motion carried.

Mr. Zini reminded the Committee that Project Playhouse had been previously approved and was progressing well. He requested two items for formal approval:

- Authorization for an out-of-state field trip to Bryant University on April 29, 2026, for students participating in Project Playhouse.
- Approval to accept small miscellaneous donations, such as paint, hardware, and building materials, which community members have offered to support the project.

Mr. Zini emphasized that the students have been doing excellent work and that the project reveal is anticipated in the coming weeks.

11.1.3 **PROSTART CULINARY FIRST PLACE AWARD**

Culinary Arts instructor Mr. Spada introduced junior student June Killberg, who earned first place in the cake decorating competition at the ProStart Invitational. This marked Blue Hills' first ProStart medal in any category. He explained that the student had competed the previous year and returned stronger after overcoming challenges during that earlier competition. The winning cake was themed as a "Hobbit hole," and Committee members praised both the creativity and technical skill involved. The Committee congratulated the student and the Culinary Arts program for this significant accomplishment.

11.1.4 **SKILLSUSA MEDALISTS**

Principal Geoff Zini reported additional student achievements through SkillsUSA competitions. He announced that Blue Hills students earned three bronze, five silver, and eight gold medals across multiple categories at the district level.

Mr. Zini stated that all silver- and gold-medalists will advance to the state SkillsUSA competition at Blackstone Valley Technical High School on May 1, 2026. He noted that the number of qualifying students this year was particularly strong and commended both the students and instructors for their dedication and preparation.

12. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

The next District School Committee meeting is on April 14, 2026. The Chair noted that the Committee would reconvene to review administrative assistant candidates once the posting period closes.

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no Executive Session required.

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion made by Braintree, seconded by Holbrook, and carried, it was agreed that there was no further business to transact; the meeting closed at 8:22 p.m.

DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Chair

Date