

Hancock School Committee Meeting Minutes
May 5, 2026

Present: Jim Rodda, Elisa Kryskow, Bruce Weiner, Kayt Turner, Ana Bradbury
Also Present: Jay Merselis (principal), Rebecca Phillips (superintendent),

- 1) Call to order: Kayt called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.
- 2) Public Concerns: None
- 3) Correspondence: None
- 4) Review and approval of Minutes:
 - 1) Kayt made a motion to amend and approve 3/3 minutes: Changed "Home Run" bill to "Home Rule" Bill and corrected date. Jim - 2nd. No discussion, all in favor.
 - 2) Bruce made a motion to approve 4/7 minutes: Jim - 2nd. No discussion, all in favor.
 - 3) Jim made a motion to approve 4/7 Budget Hearing Meeting minutes: Kayt - 2nd. No discussion, all in favor.
- 5) Principals Report:
 - 1) Accolades and happenings:
 - 1) Thank you to HOPE for Teacher's Appreciation Lunch (5/5) and breakfast (5/6), Nurse Appreciation flowers and gift card and childcare at Town Meeting.
 - 2) Enrollment: remains steady.
 - 1) It's possible we could be opening at 41 students for 26-27 school year.
 - 2) Graduating 8, and will no longer have two Pre-K that are out of district and cannot come for K. Total: down by 10.
 - 3) Potential incoming: 1 elementary resident inquiry. Pre-K inquiries: 3 residents with 3 year olds and two non residents with 3 year olds, 1 resident with 4 year old, 1 non resident with 4 year old. Potential to gain back 8.
 - 4) Class configuration assuming above: we would have 10 in Sapphire, 8 in Ruby, 16 in Diamond, 7 Emerald.
 - 3) Attendance Update:
 - 1) 5 out of 43 students have 9% or higher absentee rate. We have noticed improvement over the school year as well as "legitimate" absences (pre-planned travel, extra-curriculars, lengthy sicknesses with doctor's notes, etc.)
 - 4) Building update:
 - 1) AC Wood has repaired sky light.
 - 2) Roof is actively being looked at by Selectboard - could be up to a year before roof, but the process is in the works.
 - 5) Upcoming Events/Schedules
 - 1) Parent/Teacher Spring Conferences happening this week
 - 2) 5/7 Pre-K to 2 to Hancock Shaker Village
 - 3) Next Monday 5/11 is a 1/2 day + voting
 - 4) Next week Math MCAS for grades 3-6
 - 5) 5/17 Plant Sale at school to benefit Dollars for Scholars
 - 6) May 19-22 Cape Cod Trip (Jay and Cahill)
 - 7) 5th graders take Science + Engineering MCAS while 6th grade is in Cape Cod
 - 8) 5/29 Tea Party in Ruby Room
 - 9) June 12th, 12:30, 6th grade graduation
 - 10) June 16, Jiminy Peak Pool Party and BBQ
 - 11) June 17, Camp Out overnight
 - 12) June 18, last day of school, 11:30 dismissal
 - 6) Cahill LeBarron will be running the summer program (4 weeks of 4 days per week, full days). Meals are currently TBD- dependent upon North Adams food service.
- 6) Superintendent's Report:
 - 1) Wellness Policy: Kayt made a motion to approve the Wellness Committee Policy as a second read. Jim - 2nd. All in favor. No discussion.

- 2) Home Rule Bill update: No update since last meeting
- 3) FY 27 Budget Discussion
 - 1) Kayt and Rebecca encouraged forming a Budget Sub-Committee with two community members in addition to two SC members.
 - 2) Operating budget is a *decrease* this year. Williamstown is up 13%, for example. We absorbed an outplacement and with inflation, we still have a decrease.
 - 3) Next year we won't be able to give back (we've been consistently carrying \$75k from the town and we anticipate that is going to be spent in FY 27-28 budget). Important to meet with Selectboard in the fall prior to beginning any formal budgeting. There will be a funding cliff with inherent challenges. Sub committee to help with transparency.
- 4) School Choice Process / Discussion about use of School Choice Revolving Account
 - 1) Funding in this account should be published in town report
 - 2) Need to earmark \$300k of the School Choice revolving account for future school choice tuitions
 - 1) This would be another example of where a budget sub-committee would be useful
- 5) Miscellaneous:
 - 1) ESSA Federal Grant Program Monitoring: Monitoring Outcomes Report indicated meeting all program review requirements
 - 2) DESE Special Ed and Civil Rights audit, 6/4 in the building. Will know findings and recommended corrections by next meeting
 - 3) Set 5/18, 5pm, School Choice Vote zoom meeting
 - 4) Bus bids will be available at next month's meeting
- 7) Special Education Director Report: No additional information
- 8) Financial Report: reviewed.
- 9) New Business: None
- 10) Adjournment: Kayt motioned to adjourn at 7:20, Elisa - 2nd. All in favor.