

DUXBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee Minutes
Wednesday, January 7, 2026
6:00 pm – Alden School, Room 104

- I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance: 6:00 pm
Present: Danielle Klingaman, Elizabeth Wilcox, Lisa Freeley, Tony Keady, B.J. McNamara, Kellie Bresnehan, Laurel Deacon, Matthew Gambino, Kathryn Marshall, Jen Weedon
Student Representative: Adeline Slimbaugh

- II. Public Comment: No Public Comment

- III. Consent Agenda:

Mrs. Bresnehan asks committee members if there are any items on the consent agenda below that should be removed for discussion prior to approval:

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes – 12/3/2025, 12/10/2025
B. Request to Approve Accounts Payable Warrants (25,27)
C. Request to Approve Payroll Warrants (24,26)
D. Policy Second Readings:

IHBHE- Remote Learning
IJNDB- Use of Technology in Instruction
IJNDC- Acceptable Use of Digital Resources
IJNDG- Student Data Privacy (New Policy)
IJNDD- DPS Social Media Policy
GBEE- Personnel Use of Technology
JICJ- Student Use of Technology in Schools
JLCC- Communicable Diseases
JLCD- Administering Medication to Students
JF- School Admissions (Changed from JFAA)
JLCA- Physical Examinations of Students

- Motion to adopt the consent agenda as a whole:

Motion: Mr. Gambino
Second: Mrs. Marshall
Motion passes 5-0

- Mrs. Weedon requests that policy JICJ, Student Use of Technology in Schools, be placed on a future agenda for discussion with the full committee.

- IV. New Business:

- A. Student Representative Reports – School Activities/Events Update

- Chandler held their annual holiday sing-along prior to the vacation break.
- Chandler has begun data collection for the mid-year mClass assessment to be followed with data meetings with interventionists and teachers.

- Prior to break, the Alden school community came together for the annual sing-along, featuring performances by our talented high school musicians.
- Thank you to Jen Burns, Alden Library Media Specialist, for thoughtfully curating topic-aligned texts that support our CKLA units for both student checkout and classroom use.
- Alden's middle of year data meetings will begin next week based on recent winter benchmark data.
- DMS have begun administering winter iReady diagnostics, and plan to wrap those up in the next couple of weeks.
- DMS term 2 ends on January 23 and report cards will be published on February 2 at the end of the day. Semester 2 classes will begin on January 26.
- The DMS Program of Studies will be published to families on Monday outlining all of the course offerings for DMS students. Parents and guardians of current sixth and seventh graders will be invited to an information session in February. Information sessions for incoming 6th grade parents and guardians will be held in late February. Our current eighth grade parents and guardians should attend the DHS Course Selection information night on January 21.
- DMS has been selected to participate in this year's NAEP assessment, which is a federal assessment process that administers assessments in reading and mathematics to a selection of eighth graders. DMS will be assessing selected students in March. DMS will be sharing more information with the families of students selected next week.
- Midyear Exams at DHS will begin on Tuesday, January 20.
- DHS Student Council and DHS National Honor Society are teaming up to help all ninth graders prepare for their first midyear exams. Ninth grade students are invited to join them for group study and review sessions on Tuesday, January 13, from 6pm to 8pm in the Breadboard.
- DHS Winter Sports are underway with all teams proving to be very successful.

B. DHS Overnight Trip: MASC Conference

- DHS Student Council Advisor, Stacey O'Brien, reviews the surrounding logistics, funding, and benefits of the proposed overnight trip to the MASC Annual Spring Conference to be held at the Emerald Resort and Conference Center in Hyannis. This conference is currently open to 16 Student Council members who will depart on Wednesday, March 4, 2026 returning on Friday, March 6, 2026.
- Vote to approve the DHS overnight trip to Hyannis for the MASC Conference

Motion: Mrs. Deacon
 Second: Mr. Gambino
 Motion passes 5-0

C. DHS Overnight Trip: 2027 Disney Music Trip

- DHS teachers, Jill Norenberg and Joe Pondaco, review the surrounding logistics, funding, and benefits of the proposed overnight trip to the Orlando, Florida for students to perform in concerts at Disney World and Universal Studios and participate in workshops where they will learn and interact with professional musicians. The dates of the trip be Wednesday, March 10th, 2027 returning on Sunday, March 14th, 2027.

- Vote to approve the DHS overnight trip to Orlando, Florida in March 2027

Motion: Mr. Gambino

Second: Mrs. Deacon

Motion passes 5-0

D. Guidance Director Report

- Mrs. Dembowski provides an update from the Guidance Department with topics including current data and trends in each school regarding college applications, college admissions, PSAT, SAT, and AP testing, college and career pathways, mental health check, and DESSA competencies.
- Please refer to the School Committee tab on the DPS website for the presentation in its entirety.

E. School Improvement Plans (Mid-Year)

- Mrs. Wieseahn provides an update of the Chandler School Improvement Plan focusing on Chandler Initiative One which states “During the 2025–2026 school year, we will lead and implement targeted strategies to improve student attendance by tracking and documenting interventions for all students approaching or exceeding 10% absenteeism. The goal is to reduce the number of students identified as chronically absent (missing 10% or more of instructional days) from 36 students in 2024–2025 to no more than 20 students by June 2026”.
- Mrs. Wieseahn shares that they have created and implemented personalized attendance improvement plans for students approaching the chronic absence threshold.
- Mrs. Wieseahn states that as of January 5, there are 36 Chandler students who are on track to be considered chronically absent. They will continue to work with those individual families in an effort to support them.
- Mrs. Long provides an update of the Alden School Improvement Plan focusing on Alden Initiative Three which states that “By June 2026, completion of the MSBA-required tasks and milestones within the 270-day Eligibility Period to ensure the district remains on track for timely approval to enter the Feasibility Study phase. This work will be guided by regular progress monitoring, and collaboration with key stakeholders to meet all MSBA deadlines and expectations”.
- Mrs. Long reports that all submission of documentation is up to date with the MSBA.
- Mrs. Long reports that Alden Building Committee have been meeting every two weeks collaborating to develop a clear and comprehensive communication plan to keep the community informed about the need for a new school.
- Mrs. Long states that the focus will shift to the feasibility phase after funding for the feasibility study is secured.
- Mrs. McGuire provides an update of the DMS School Improvement Plan focusing on DMS Initiative One which states that “During the 2025-26 school year, DMS will implement focused interventions and targeted strategies to improve student attendance with specific focus on improving the attendance of our students demonstrating “chronic absenteeism” which is defined by DESE as missing 10% of school days. We will work to reduce our number of chronically absent students from approximately 35 students to approximately 25 students over the course of the school year”.
- Mrs. McGuire states that they have identified 36 students currently demonstrating chronic absenteeism who will receive individualized support.

- Mrs. McGuire discusses the importance of ongoing communication and collaboration between school counselors, assistant principals, and families aligned with handbook language on absence protocols.
- Mrs. Cotton Herman provides an update of the DHS School Improvement Plan focusing on DHS Initiative One which states that “By June 2026, all DHS students will benefit from instruction that clearly connects classroom learning to real-world contexts, as measured by 100% of student respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “my teachers show me how our lessons relate to life outside of school” on the 2026 K12 Insight survey”.
- Mrs. Cotton Herman states that the goal is to increase student engagement by making learning meaningful and purposeful, using data from the K-12 Insight survey to measure how lessons connect to real-world situations that build critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for college and career readiness.
- Mrs. Cotton Herman states that efforts include faculty and department meetings held to discuss rigor and relevance, walk-through data from 137 classroom visits has been analyzed to identify strengths and areas for improvement, and faculty working groups are focusing on deeper learning, the portrait of a graduate, and pathways to make learning more systemic and supportive.
- Please refer to the School Committee tab on the DPS website to see the presentation in its entirety.

F. Special Education Director Entry Plan Update

- B.J. McNamara, Director of Special Education, presents an entry plan update to the committee. Topics include program evaluation update, students with disabilities enrollment data, autism disability classifications, caseload data, MCAS analysis, district-wide findings, and recommendations.
- Please refer to the School Committee tab on the DPS website to see the presentation in its entirety.

G. Q1 Financial Report

- Mrs. Freeley presented the Financial Status Report for the first quarter of FY'26. The report contains year to date information on the operating budget expenditures and encumbrances, including salary expenditures, by location and major category as of 9/30/25. Mrs. Freeley reports the following expenditures as of 9/30/2025:
 - Salary expenses \$3,708,699
 - General expenses \$873,338
 - Encumbered expenses \$2,247,296
- Mrs. Freely reports that as of 9/30/2025, the district has received \$24,117 in grant revenue and \$1,003,623 in revolving fund revenue(excluding school nutrition receipts), which help offset financial burdens to the operating budget.
- Please refer to the School Committee tab on the DPS website for the presentation in its entirety.

H. Superintendent’s Goals (Mid-Year)

- This topic is deferred until the February 4 meeting.

I. School Committee Goals (Mid-Year)

- This topic is deferred until the February 4 meeting.

J. FY’27 Budget School Committee Communication Plan

- The committee discuss the public perception issues with the 3-2 vote and its impact on the finance committee and select board's support for the school committee budget.
- Mrs. Bresnehan informs members that the school committee have been invited to the Finance Committee meeting on January 13 to discuss the recommended school budget should questions arise.
- Committee members agree to hold two public advocacy sessions to make the case for the budget to the community:
 - Advocacy Session 1
Date: January 20
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Merry Room (Duxbury Free Library)
 - Advocacy Session 2
Date: February 23
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Merry Room (Duxbury Free Library)
- The committee schedule a workshop focusing on budget communication strategies to be held on January 16 at 11:15 am in room 104 in Alden School.

V. Adjourn: 9:41 pm

Motion: Mr. Gambino
Second: Mrs. Deacon
Motion passes 5-0

Next meeting: February 4, 2026

Respectfully Submitted,
Suzanne Hughes
Duxbury Business Office