



MEETING MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD
JUNE 17, 2026
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was conducted on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 6:50 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School Library.

Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairperson, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Kate Stoll, Vice Chairperson
Amy Kellner, Secretary
Robert Mann
Tom Solon
Cindy VanCoughnett
Beth Janine Williams

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Gina Bergskaug, Superintendent
Lauren DiGennaro, Asst. Superintendent of Student Services
Dorothy Flaherty, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum & Instr.
Lance Finamore, Facilities Director
Jacob Hess, Principal, Hollis Brookline High School
Patrick West, Principal, Hollis Brookline Middle School

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

A request was made to adjust the agenda by adding, under Discussion, an update regarding the Town of Hollis Capital Expenditure Advisory Committee (CEAC).

There being no objection, the agenda was adjusted, as requested.

CONSENT AGENDA

A copy of the consent agenda is attached.

**MOTION BY MEMBER MANN TO MOVE THE CONSENT AGENDA
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL**

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-1

Member Solon Abstained

APPOINTMENT OF PROCESS OBSERVER

Chair Deurloo Babcock appointed Member Mann to serve as Process Observer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board May 13, 2026

The following amendments were offered:

Page 4, Line 17; remove the space between “under” and “enrolled”

Page 6, Line 5; replace “104” with “1-4”

Page 14, Line 44; delete “is” following “band”

Page 17, Line 19; replace “form” with “from”

Page 18, Line 36; replace “tips” with “trips”

Page 21, Line 39; correct the spelling of “that”

Page 38, Line 33; insert “Babcock” following “Deurloo”

Page 40, Line 3; replace “count” with “account”

Page 40, Line 42; delete “Page 35 of 68”

Page 41, Line 24; replace “works” with “work”

Page 42, Line 4; replace “that” with “with”

MOTION BY MEMBER STOLL TO APPROVE, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANN

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board – **Non-Public**. May 13, 2026

The following amendment was offered:

Page 1, Line 29; delete “given” following “practical”

MOTION BY MEMBER STOLL TO APPROVE, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANN

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board – **Public Hearing**. June 9, 2026

MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO APPROVE, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION BY MEMBER MANN THAT THE BOARD RECESS UNTIL THE CONCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE HOLLIS BROOKLINE MAINTENANCE EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

MOTION CARRIED

The Board recessed at 6:57 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 6:58 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Deurloo Babcock opened the floor for public input at 7:00 p.m.

Brendan LaFlamme, 8 Nartoff Road, Hollis

During the public comment period at the May 13, 2026, meeting, at least two speakers talked about scheduling and how freshmen are limited in the opportunities to sign up for electives. One speaker even stated they were encouraged by their guidance counselor not to take an elective in their freshman year. In the several days following, others took to social media and shared that either they or their children were advised, by guidance, to not take electives going into the freshman year.

He is uncertain whether this is a matter for the Administration or the Board to look into but asked that whoever has that authority look into this and determine how accurate those statements are. If found to be accurate, he believes it is a disservice to the students and denying them exploring their interests. If that occurs he is hopeful measures will be taken to rectify that.

Chair Deurloo Babcock commented she does think if guidance could attend a meeting and lay out the entire registration process it would provide people a better understanding of all the work they do and their approach.

Rebecca Hsiao, 146 Dow Road, Hollis

Is disappointed that the band director has been let go. The Board heard from a lot of community members and students on how important that individual and position is to the school, to their experience, their mental health. She believes we all need to do better, and asked that the Board do better.

The budget passed. Nobody expected this to happen. There is time to correct it and show students that their voice matters. They engaged civically, and that needs to be taken into consideration to show that there is a reason to do that; you will be heard, your voice matters. She asked that the decision be reconsidered.

Katrine Dickau, 125 Rocky Pond Road, Hollis

Sent an email the previous day and did not wish to go into all the details but wanted the Board to know she was in attendance because she cares very deeply. Last month, she did not really speak her mind; used her time at the podium to share most of the letter from the New Hampshire Music Educators Association. Since that time, the decision to release and eliminate the band director position has had more of a personal impact on her family.

Her son is music. It is part of who he is. This is his senior year, and she never thought that all these years that were put into his music education would culminate the way it is. It is heartbreaking. She understands there are

policies and rules. She gets that and wants to work with the Board and be collaborative. She does not know what can be done to salvage how next year is shaping up to be. She is extremely disappointed in that.

She does not know what the solution could look like, but hopes we would consider doing something even in time for next year, whether that is hiring a part-time position, having some shift in faculty, etc. She suggested an individual qualified in music. She asked if people were to step in for period 3 and 4, which is the only time that students who take CTE, either morning or afternoon, would be able to take a music class. Because there is now only one teacher, her son is not able to be in the honors jazz band, which is his one and only honors class. He has been the drummer for honor jazz band for many years. Next year he will likely not be taking any music classes.

She is looking into his ability to get involved in the music program at Nashua South since he participates in CTE at that location. She feels very sad that one of HB's top music performing students is being forced to look to play music in Nashua. Music should be a source of pride for our school. She now knows that the entire state is talking about how we are failing.

Karen Belmonte, 46 Truell Road, Hollis

Wished to echo the results of the previous speaker. She did make comment about the option of a part-time band director. This is also very personal to her. Music is how her child connects with the world. She thinks this should not be the end for next year. Having an endorsed music educator is not the same thing as having someone that is trained and skilled to lead an instrumental group. Checking the endorsement box, that is not benefiting the kids. This is an area that kids can't take in VLACS.

She would really like the Board to consider the enrollment policy to set a lower minimum for visual and performing arts class. It is appropriate to have a smaller class size. Students need individual instruction in person. A guitar class with 9 people is a large group.

Kendall Hood, 11 Fletcher Lane, Hollis

Thanked the Board for extending the period for public input last month understanding it made for a late night for the Board.

The previous speakers spoke beautifully about how they feel a personal connection to all of this because of their children that are in middle and high school. She has 5 kids in band programs; 2 at HUES, 1 at the middle school and 2 at the high school. She attended 3 concerts in the past 2 weeks at those schools. She spoke of how hard it was to sit there and see a gym full of eager band students, beginner band students making mostly beautiful noises, and think they won't have a future here. When they get to high school this program will not be what it should be. That makes her sad.

She is a musician herself. He is a private music instructor and understands how hard it is to learn a new instrument. Having too many musicians trying to learn instruments is a nightmare. She agrees we should consider lower class sizes.

She knows the Board has heard enough about scheduling issues and how that has been an issue for a very long time. She hopes they can work together to find a solution for this.

Chair Deurloo Babcock spoke of a Petition noting the Board would discuss that later on in the meeting.

PRINCIPAL AND ATHLETIC REPORTS

1. Athletics

The Hollis Brookline Middle School (HBMS) baseball team won their 4th Tri County championships in a row. Congratulations to all the student athletes and coaches on their tremendous success.

The middle school Boys and Girls lacrosse teams as well as the softball team earned spots in their respective tournaments. The outdoor track team also had a tremendous season; boys team finished 3rd and girls as the runner-up in their Tri County Divisional Championship.

The Hollis Brookline High School (HBHS) athletics was highlighted by a state championship appearance by the Boys Tennis team. Baseball team went 16-1 and had a great season. The Girls Tennis and Baseball teams fell in the quarter finals in their respective tournaments. The outdoor track team competed. Grace Dow represented the school at the New England Championships on June 13th. All athletes were celebrated at the annual end of year sports awards.

Chair Deurloo Babcock congratulated all the teams who really rocked it this year.

2. HBMS

Patrick West, Principal, HBMS, spoke of the end of year celebrations having been a huge success, e.g., 8th grade Luau Dance, The Outsiders Day, which included a BBQ. This event was supported by the local police and fire departments.

The end of year awards ceremony recognized outstanding student achievement, with approximately 115 students honored for their accomplishments.

The HBMS was proudly represented at the South Central District Music Festival at the Mountain View Middle School. Nine of our Band and Chorus students were selected to participate alongside other top student musicians from across the region. This experience provided our students with a valuable opportunity to further develop their musical skills while representing HBMS with pride.

The Spring Choral Concert was held on Tuesday, June 10th followed by the Spring Band Concert on June 11th. Our Chorus and Music Teacher, Alyssa Costa, led another outstanding choral performance showcasing the talents of approximately 125 students.

The Spring Band Concert, conducted by Band Teacher Liz Nault, featured a dynamic and polished program that reflected the hard work and dedication of our student musicians. In addition, Mr. Wallis's Jazz Band performed during the concert and did an incredible job, further enhancing the evening with their energy and musical skill.

Chair Deurloo Babcock extended congratulations to students who attended the Honors Music Festival and the Spring Concert.

3. HBHS

Jacob Hess, Principal, HBHS, the celebrations for the Class of 2026 capped off with a wonderful commencement ceremony on June 6th.

At the end of May/beginning of June, performing arts wrapped up with two amazing performances in the high school auditorium. On May 21st, we had our Jazz Night concert. One week later our students put on a modern-day production of William Shakespeare's *Much Adu About Nothing*.

Our very own Librarian, Christine Heaton, has been selected as the Northern New England School Librarian of the month for June.

Included in the report was the current schedule as well as the proposal for next year's bell schedule. The desire is to shift Advisory from 15 minutes on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday to 25 minutes on Monday and Friday as a way to bracket the week, and then CAV Block would still be Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday for 40 minutes, and it would be one session instead of 2 sessions. The thought is really using Advisory as a way to set up and support CAV Block, ensuring students can get signed up, create goals, set plans for the week and then Friday it is that wrap up of the week celebration, etc. It is believed that shifting the time structure will reduce transitions and the amount of "free" time back-to-back to back in the schedule.

With the shift there is a net gain of 11 instructional minutes throughout the week for teachers.

A proposal was included for an English elective; Senior Literature Seminar. The desire is to gain permission to move forward with this to continue working on it to have it ready for the Program of Studies this Fall and the 2027-2028 school year. Some of the driving ideas behind the creation of this course are being able to draw on materials that the department has acquired for other courses that run intermittently. Another goal of the development of this course is to consolidate senior electives into something that makes sense for the staffing of the department, while still bringing a modern approach to student learning that embraces student choice and literacy support. Also, the outcomes set in this course are designed to apply to any area of study, making the skills the same no matter the material the student elects to work with.

The report also identified a trip proposal from the World Language Department for a trip to Spain for April vacation 2028 for up to 45 student travelers. The job of our World Language teachers is to provide our students with what is sometimes referred to as the "Five C's": Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. Simply put, the goal is to get students to be able to communicate with others in the target language, understand foreign cultures, find connections to other subject areas, compare and contrast our two cultures, and create a global community. This trip seeks to satisfy all these goals in a way that the classroom just can't.

Requested was the opportunity to discuss returning to the rotation that was prior to COVID for how trips are proposed. Stated was an understanding that the rotation prior to COVID was a trip to Spain, trip to France, the Social Studies Department would sometimes have a trip and then they would sometimes go to Costa Rica. The desire is to return to that rotation.

Chair Deurloo Babcock stated her understanding that the building Principal can make incidental changes such as those described to the bell schedule without approval of the Board.

Member Williams spoke of appreciation for how the changes were detailed. Principal Hess responded he likes to think of it as miniscule. He is trying to play with the minutes that are there and see what we can do. He is of the belief this shift will result in improvements in both Advisory and CAV Block.

Chair Deurloo Babcock asked how staff views the potential change and was told it was presented to the staff in March and a feedback form sent out. It was discussed at the April faculty meeting. The original proposal had CAV Block down to 30 minutes. There was pushback from the teachers that there would not be enough time.

He heard that and said 40 minutes seems to be the sweet spot where we still get plenty of time to get the extra support and still adds a few minutes of instructional time during the day.

Asked about feedback from students, Principal Hess stated he had received a petition signed by about 135 students demanding that he not change the schedule. He called the lead petitioner in to discuss his concerns and learned that he had believed the class was being cut in half. After being informed that the proposal results in a 4-minute change, the student commented he felt foolish for having done all the work. Principal Hess informed the student of his availability should there be questions/concerns to be addressed.

Member Solon addressed the proposal for the addition of a Senior Literature Seminar elective. He stated his belief this is being viewed as a mechanism towards elective consolidation. Principal Hess stated that to be correct adding for some of the electives that don't always run senior year, this would consolidate a lot of the materials that are in the class and turn it into more of a seminar, one solid course.

Member Solon stated his support of the idea of taking the basics in English language, arts, etc., and using that as a foundation. If we had 800-1,000 students/class, breaking it up into all the different genres might make sense, but he has seen year-over-year different genres come and go depending on who is there, what literature is popular. He likes the approach. He asked for the presentation to be matched with what electives specifically get rolled into it so that we can see the big picture that we have this instead of this. Principal Hess responded that could be done. Chair Deurloo Babcock suggested that it could be included as part of the Program of Studies (POS) presentation.

Member Solon stated he would like to see it in advance of that so that we don't delay consideration of the POS. Principal Hess stated he could do both; get the information to the Board and discuss it again during the POS presentation.

Member Williams remarked she values travel, cultures, etc. She fully supports travel and believes it an incredible opportunity. She does not want the Board or Administration to be surprised when she probably cannot support these requests moving forward until she has a better understanding or there are changes made. It was devastating to her to watch students not be able to go on trips. Before voting on prior trips, she has asked what happens if a student cannot afford to go and was assured we have funds, students will not miss an opportunity to go based on funds, and that is not what ended up playing out in real time.

These trips are a little different. The World Language department, we have a ton of students that participate. It is a little different than a program such as visual arts when an entire band or entire choir are traveling but a small number of students cannot afford to go. What happened previously was students were asked to write their own essay on why they could not afford to go and that bothered her to her core. We have an incredible community that has a lot of affluent families, but we also have families that don't have that same background. It wasn't one student or two students, it was numerous students, and it was devastating to her to see that. She thought we would not be denying a student that opportunity based on money and that is what happened. She wished to have a better understanding moving forward. At this time, she cannot support trips.

Chair Deurloo Babcock questioned if there is policy language that could be reviewed. Member Williams stated she would like to look at the policy and procedure. We are tying the trips into our school and curriculum so to watch students not be able to attend when we are pulling that in she feels those students are missing an opportunity.

Chair Deurloo Babcock spoke of a discussion that occurred at the Policy Committee, which was more procedural. She encouraged information to be gathered for the Policy Committee. Even though we, as a Board,

do not guide procedure, sometimes we can sort of lay out some procedures we think might help. We could have conversations with the Budget Committee related to this as well.

Asked, Principal Hess stated his belief the regular approval process/timeline would work for trip approval. The desire is to hold an informational meeting in October.

Principal Hess stated he can appreciate the comments. He hears the concern and can work towards ironing out what that process looks like, being transparent about what that process looks like and moving forward so that we don't have to have any misgivings when voting on a request such as this.

Member Solon remarked this is a topic he has voiced his opinion on previously. This particular trip is now bringing it to a tipping point for him. With an expected cost, in today's dollars, of \$4,800/student, you are talking about a small group of families funding over \$200,000 for this trip. Forty students at \$5,000, \$200,000 for the trip, and we are talking about that in an environment where we look at cutting budgets to save \$20,000 here or \$15,000 there. The number of students that get to benefit from this is small. As was stated before, it isn't truly available to everyone who would be qualified to go if money was not involved.

We do a lot of other activities where we send a group. There are things such as sports where we ask the parents to pay above and beyond and even that has some limitations, but where it is relatively inexpensive. It is manageable on a certain level for the school to budget to cover the cost of students who cannot afford it. He is uncertain what the mechanism is for receiving the financial assistance.

He does not see us being able to budget to provide real equity among our students. He will not be supporting the trip simply because of the limited access he believes it offers, and it is quite possible that going forward he will have difficulty supporting the basic concept of these expensive and what he considers exclusive travel experiences. He believes them to be great experiences, but it pains him that perhaps the people who would most benefit from being able to participate through a public education system are the ones least likely to have access to it.

4. Visual and Performing Arts Committee

To be discussed during deliberations.

The public input period was closed at 7:41 p.m.

DISCUSSION

- Board follow up to community petition

Chair Deurloo Babcock stated she has taken it upon herself to respond to the Petition, which was handed to her.

Her comments and opinions are hers alone. She wished to say that even though the students aren't getting everything they asked for in the petition and everything they came to the podium regarding, they did make a difference. She does not know if they will feel like they did because when you want something so badly and you don't get that thing, it is like well nothing matters, I didn't get anything.

You, first of all, educated us so much about how important and how much of a community you are and how special that is, and we heard that. We truly heard that. It doesn't mean you will get everything you want, but there are some things that we are going to try to do over the course of the year to make it better for the future, to continue to grow the program, to make a difference.

She thanked everyone for the input believing there to have been thoughtful comments both last month and tonight. We really did listen and have made some movement on the four things that were asked for in the petition. Not everything that was asked for will be accomplished this year, and that is really hard, but your influence has been felt and will make a difference in the long run.

The first item that was requested was to pause or reconsider the elimination of the band director position for the upcoming school year. That is how it was phrased. She stated she would not get into the semantics because the Board did not eliminate the band director position. That is a stipend position that occurs after school and is extra-curricular. What we did was a Reduction in Force (RIF) of the music teacher, the second music teacher in our school. Now a RIF is technically a layoff, and that person can be recalled; not next year but in a future year if we have need for that person. He has not been let go or fired, he has been laid off for this year.

She realizes the desire was for the Board to reconsider that. We are not going to be bringing him back for this year. We have stipend positions that will be filled by people on our staff. Stipend positions are not part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Even though the first item on the petition isn't accurately capturing what you are asking for, she understood the desire, and that being said, the Administration is moving ahead with 1 music teacher to teach the 5 music classes that met the required enrollment per policy.

The decision that was made in April has been deemed both appropriate and necessary.

One significant difference that your input has made is that the Superintendent is keeping the second music teacher position in planning for the next budget. Our budget for this year is set. In July, the Superintendent and her team will begin to plan for 2027-2028. That position she believes will stay in the budget, which means it is easier to call it back if it is still in the budget. She does not know that was originally the plan. You made a difference and that is an important distinction. It may seem granular, but in our world granular matters.

Although this is not what you wanted it is an important distinction because the position is there to possibly be filled for the 2027-2028 school year if we see an increase in enrollment in music classes.

Item 3 on the petition asks for collaboration with the community for a plan to strengthen music enrollment. The Principal has recommended the creation of a visual and performing arts committee, which we will go over. It is very specific and the presentation is done very well. We can charge that committee with looking directly at what the obstacles are for enrollment in band. You made a really good point that there are quite a few students interested in music. She has seen the photos of the students in the middle school. We definitely have students interested in music and something is happening up here. We need to look at what the obstacles are and what can be done to mitigate those obstacles.

With community members, staff and student input into such a committee, programs, policies and curriculum can truly be studied, data can be analyzed and we can put some changes in place that will build the future of the program.

As for item, #4, which asks us to look at policy, we are already trying to adjust class size minimums to make it easier to run classes that have not met the 15-person minimum. In the past, there was a little confusion because of the way policy is presented. In our current policy, the minimum is 15. We have already amended it and suggested a change to 12. That amendment is reflected in today's policy discussion. We will have further discussion of the minimums and maximums.

Finally, item #2 was to explore alternate staffing solutions including part-time and shared goals. Although, at this point, we are not providing a part-time curricular instructor during the day, she believes if the

Administration comes to the Board with suggestions and recommendations for more support for the one music teacher that we will have next year, especially in extra-curricular roles, she would be open to hearing those kind of suggestions. She thinks other members of the Board are open to those kinds of suggestions. We understand this is a heavy lift for the current music teacher and want to make it as doable as possible. We want to encourage our kids after school, in their extra-curricular activities.

Chair Deurloo Babcock remarked she wrote another part to her response because her frustration is with what is happening around us in the state of education. We don't live it, they live it. As she lays it out she wished for them to know she hears their frustration and is incredibly frustrated too, but is not frustrated with the students who are choosing other electives or the administration that is in an incredibly difficult situation or even with listening because it is hard to listen to all of this. She is so glad the Board heard from those it did.

She has been on the Board for over 10 years and can honestly say she is now seeing direct negative impact from the decisions that are made in Concord. The current state leadership is making decisions that are intended to undermine public education, and public services. The State is making decisions that are taking away more and more local control from you the voters. She knows you are frustrated with this music decision. We are all unhappy that we are here in this situation. With a voucher program funding private schools and home schools without accountability for standards for those programs, open enrollment bills that threaten local control, lack of adequacy aid going to public education and more bills that jeopardize our budgets and make responsible budget planning incredibly difficult, it seems that the leadership in Concord is undermining your local schools as many of your representatives are voting against Hollis Brookline schools that have been providing an excellent education and have led to an increase in our property values. Fundamentally, we want to be in a district where our students thrive, where music and arts are revered and where our students earn and grown.

She stated her belief the situation with the music program is directly related to pressures that we are feeling from current state leadership in Concord. She asked that residents talk to the people who are so frustrated and ask them to look at how people are voting up there. We have five representatives. Pay attention to how the votes are going down because they are not voting for things that make it easier for us to do right by kids.

Member Solon stated appreciation for the remarks of the Chair. He is the proud parent of arts people. His son was in band from 4th grade through high school honors jazz band; anything he could get in band he did. He continued to play in college and now he plays with a local band in his town and arts program. His daughter is an arts person who dual majored in it in college and continues to involve herself. He has the utmost appreciation and respect for what this does for a student. The concern he has with some of the requests that have been made is that he feels there is some level of disservice being given to the other teacher in our school in the sense that when Mr. Rogers came to us as an interim teacher when Mr. Umstead took a year off, he had never taught. He was a brand-new graduate. The more senior teacher that we have in the department came in when we had an opening for a choral teacher. That was the opening because Mr. Umstead was still here. To his understanding he has a full musical background, he is a musical performer, not just a voice person, and he actually has experience as a band teacher.

His point is what we have are two distinct situations. We have a situation where we have an enrollment issue and we have one where we have a question of who should be teaching what. They are to some degree somewhat separate issues. The control that the Board has is two-fold; the ability to set policy on how we conduct classes and goals for class size and the ability to try to set the direction of our instruction going forward.

He wished to thank all who spoke. Whether he agreed with the statements made or not he does listen and does care, which he believes to be true of everyone. He is particularly interested in the point that was brought forth by Chief LaFlamme tonight because if that is in fact something going on as far as how counseling is going then

that is a new point he had not heard before and wants to understand better. He thinks a lot of this plays into the general overview of how we want to structure ourselves as an educational institutional; what we emphasize, what we value, and how we try to lead our students in making good decision.

All this information is extremely helpful in getting perspective. As the Chair stated, please don't give up if the exact solutions you seek aren't all there.

On the other side, we have people who are beating us up to cut anything that isn't part of the absolute core curriculum because that is all they think is needed. It is not even a money issue; it is philosophically that is what they want. We listen to those things too. We each have our own personal biases, but we try to set them aside and make these things work.

He stated the wish that people try to give the Administration a little bit of trust that they will act in the best interest of the students not in the best interest of the Board. We work collaboratively but they don't cow tow to us in terms of their values and their position as educators. To a certain extent he said he will defer to Administration on their decisions as to whether or not they are putting together a staffing program that is capable of meeting the needs of our students. That is an area where he does have input and explicit trust.

Member Williams remarked that she agrees and supports the Administration. The fundamental issues she has with this particular situation is we are actively looking at policy; we are actively forming a committee. We are actively seeking answers and options, but before we are getting there we are making major changes and cuts to a program. That is where she would have hoped for better for this, and a different solution for this. In the future, when we run into issues if we are actively looking at issues and policy, and actively looking for feedback from the community, our staff, and all of our resources, she hopes we are not pulling the trigger/building the plane as we fly it if we don't have to be. The State has dropped plenty of unfunded mandates and thrown things at us where we have no option but to implement pretty much immediately and without support, but she does not think this was one of them. She certainly sees the concerns on all sides; from families and students and the concerns the Administration is trying to address, but it is the urgency in it and not waiting until we gathered more information. We may have still arrived in this same situation, but she thinks they all would have had more confidence in it and more information. That is the piece where she is frustrated; wants more information before making a decision.

Member Mann remarked he is very sympathetic to the situation and very affected by the testimony received over the past few months. He wants the committee that is being formed to bring forward solutions in terms of scheduling friction. He wants to hear how we increase attendance so we are meeting policy or at least some of the policies we are thinking of changing. He is looking very specifically at this committee being put together. He wants solutions and some opportunities and recommendations.

Vice Chair Stoll added she thinks everyone knows this was not an easy decision for anyone. As of last week, all three of her children have graduated from HB. Her daughters both started choir/chorus in elementary school through middle school and chose choir and theatre as their electives throughout their high school experience. Her son started in the band in elementary school and middle school. He likes to play music but is a little less inclined, but also very interested in engineering. He had to make that choice as a freshman; music or Project Lead the Way for engineering classes and that was the choice that he made.

She is absolutely dedicated to trying to help figure out where we can retain those kids from middle school up into the high school. She wants to be a part of this committee and wants to be able to provide the answers being sought. This is not an end by any means; this is a pause. She looks forward to being able to bring a band teacher back on.

- Student Conduct

HBHS

Principal Hess remarked, when he came on board there was discussion about creating a Student Code of Conduct. It is mentioned in our student handbook, but the creation had not been finalized. He and Principal West worked this year on creating Code of Conducts that will be included with the student handbook.

In the creation of this, he took the student handbook and broke it down into expectations of students whether as learners, general behavior expectations, academic integrity, safety/wellbeing, use of technology devices, and then talked about how we approach those with our progressive discipline and due process. It is a condensed version of the student handbook where you can really look at the general expectations of students at the high school and what we expect of them as students as far as attendance at school, how they carry themselves in the building and throughout and then at the end talk about what we do in instances when those expectations are not met.

HBMS

Principal West remarked that part of this work is being driven by updates to policy, which will be discussed next month; Policy GIC - Code of Conduct and JICD, which is student discipline and due process. The Code of Conduct for the middle school is similar to that of the high school; however, it is a little longer. At the middle school, he finds helpful the more transparent we are with not only expectations but how we respond as a staff whether that is teachers or administration. He tried to build in a number of those different supports and disciplinary responses with regard to each of the sections; behavior sections, student Code of Conduct sections so that students are aware of how we will respond as adults in the building so that ideally there are no surprises. Middle school can be a fun time of growth in many different ways. Communicating this up front and in a little bit more of a clear direction from administration on how students should and how adult will conduct themselves in response to behaviors he thinks will help everyone understand how we operate regarding discipline and supportive measures in our schools.

Principal Hess added that with all the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) work, he tried to connect our supportive measures and disciplinary approaches and put them into the MTSS, which can be found at the bottom of the Student Code of Conduct.

Member Solon questioned if there is anything that is viewed as a significant change from last year in what is being captured or expected. Asked, he clarified, within the intended outcome of employing these documents, e.g., is there something that had been either previously encouraged or discouraged that is now either being eliminated or reversed?

Principal Hess stated, at the high school, nothing has changed in terms of expectation. For him the shift is intentionality. Noted was that the discipline portion is the very end and the smallest. Then we end with growth. Nothing changed from how we approach the discipline. For him, he just framed this in a way that lays out clear expectations for students. If they understand what the expectations are we can guide them if they don't meet those expectations.

Principal West stated agreement commenting he is finding each year we get more questions from parents regarding why we respond the way we do to certain behaviors. He thinks best practice has always been, as a teacher, you set expectations and you are very clear and up front at the start of the year. He thinks this might help some students and parents better understand not only the expectations of our students but how we respond

as adults to these different situations. He does not think anything has significantly changed. We are just being more intentional and clear.

Chair Deurloo Babcock commented part of the problem was the Code of Conduct had been referenced in the high school Student Handbook, but it was not a fully developed document. A lot of these pieces were in there, but they were not titled Code of Conduct. This is something that was discussed in Policy Committee because we have had some significant discipline policy changes that will be seen this summer and have taken a long time to work through. It just happened to be that they were finished with this before the committee was ready with policy changes.

Member Solon stated he knows this particular document was referenced when we were having our discussions about the cell phone ban. He wondered if the administrative leadership in regard to certain elements is changing because of the focus. For example, with the cell phone ban we have had it in the middle schools, it is new in the high school, do you view that you are going to have to change the expectations that you have of the students that will require some level of behavior modification or familiarization or is this more continuity of what we have been asking of our students up to this point?

Principal Hess responded at the high school it is a yes, and nothing is new here. However, at the beginning of a new school year and then halfway through the year are always great reminders of what our expectations are and what happens when those expectations aren't met. This is a more friendly document to reference and use with students and parents when talking about what those look like.

Principal West added a lot of times when we reference discipline people think detentions and suspensions, and it is so much more than that and has been forever, but we have not labeled that as discipline. This is really showing how we do discipline in 2026. Even though it has always been around we are saying these are our disciplinary supports and measures so that when a parent asks well you have not done anything why are they earning a detention we can say I have had 17 conversations with them about this. That is discipline; a student being sent to the Principal's office, that is a disciplinary measure of support.

Chair Deurloo Babcock stated appreciation for the difference between the middle and high school. Students are moving up to the middle school and it is the first time they are receiving a handbook that they are going to understand and it really lays things out for families.

- Capital Improvement Plan

Lance Finamore, Facilities Director, provided a presentation (can be viewed [here](#) beginning at tape counter 1:27:26).

Director Finamore stated the intent was to inform and discuss the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), begin longer-term discussion of project priorities, and inform the Board of how we go about that and how we implement and incorporate the CIP.

The evaluation methodology we conduct when discussing the CIP; what to add, fix, and prioritize includes discussions with building administration, district maintenance personnel, Superintendent, COOP Facilities Committee, outside sources and vendors, and use of the Facility Audit Tool.

The COOP Facilities Committee is comprised of SAU Administrators, School Board members, Town committee members and community members. The mission is to evaluate COOP facility areas of concern and create solutions to bring to both communities. Specific topics include energy efficiency, alternative energy solutions, and enrollment/capacity discussions. The committee meets at 4:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month in the HBMS library.

Completed - Phase I: HVAC cooling/dehumidification upgrades in FY23

Completed - Phase II - FY25:

- Replace oil piping at HBHS.
- Remove underground oil tank and install propane tanks underground.
- Replace oil burners on existing boilers and install propane boilers.

Completed - Phase III - FY26:

- Replace oil piping at HBMS.
- Remove underground oil tank and install propane tanks underground.
- Replace oil burning boilers and install new propane boilers.

Phase IV - FY27 and beyond:

- Install LED Lighting at HBHS and HBMS.
- Replace aging roof top units (RTU) with new dehumidification RTU's.
- Install and continue Solar Panel system on rooftop of HBHS and HBMS.
- Address Energy and Enrollment issues that may come up.

A facility audit tool is utilized and presented in a spreadsheet designed to capture the status of all the systems in each building. The evaluator assigns points based on functional condition and safety/compliance concerns. When sorted, the final totals bring the highest priorities to the top. The sheet has a total of thirty different criteria. Each category is graded and results in identifying what will be on the CIP and what budget items will be for the next fiscal year.

Attention Areas (for next fiscal year)

HVAC

- Duct Work Cleaning
- HVAC Components
- Adding HVAC to Specific Areas
 - Aging units in both buildings (air conditioners for main office). The HVAC work being done now is primarily hitting the majority of classroom/learning space.

Athletic Spaces

- Gym Upgrades
- Track Upgrades
- Field Upgrades
- Storage

Safety

- Fire Safety Repairs
- Emergency Lighting Upgrades
- Camera Installations

ADA Upgrades (high school)

- Exterior Curbs/Rampways
- Remaining HVAC Units

Interior Renovations

- Life Skills Kitchen Renovations
- Special Education Renovations

Exterior Work

- Roofing
- Egress Roadway

The CIP is updated annually using the same methodology (living document). Ballpark estimates are refined annually as time permits.

The Town of Hollis Capital Expenditure Advisory Committee (CEAC) has requested the CIP go beyond the five-year time when identifying large project costs. He spoke of the uncertainty regarding planning ten years out.

A chart was displayed depicting CIP totals by year: FY27; \$797,000, FY28, \$1,221,000, FY29 \$1,066,000, FY30 \$548,000, and FY31 \$602,000.

Member Williams questioned the best mechanism for an individual to obtain detailed information about specific items listed within the CIP and was told individuals could reach out to Director Finamore via email.

Chair Deurloo Babcock noted the items for 2027 have already been approved and are budgeted for. It is important to understand that this is a plan. It is not approved, it is not done, etc. It is just so that we can do planning. Member Mann requested a copy to be able to provide the information to the CEAC.

Member Solon commented that almost all these topics have been discussed in great detail during Board and/or Budget Committee meetings. He questioned whether the website is constructed in such a way that if someone searched on a topic on the website such as roof section replacement, would it get them to meeting documents and minutes where they could see the background information. He asked, if unable to do so, is there a mechanism to do a keyword search in our meeting minutes archive?

Superintendent Bergskaug stated the searchability feature with our minutes came on when we added BoardDocs and Diligent (post 2023). Archived minutes do not have that searchability.

Member Solon remarked that would provide a lot of the information as the items were discussed in past presentations to the Board and Budget Committee. Minutes from the past two years would probably provide background information on the majority of the items.

Superintendent Bergskaug stated the keyword search is available when you look in Diligent not in the keyword search on the website. When you look for a keyword search on the website you are simply looking at items that are directly linked to the site that we utilize as opposed to all of the Board stuff that is outsourced to Diligent. Member Solon suggested a tutorial may be needed.

- Revenue/Expense Report

As we get closer to the end of the fiscal year, gained is a better idea of where the budget stands. Additional dollars that had been encumbered for expenses that were anticipated are able to be released if not utilized.

In Regular Education, savings were the result of hiring savings/vacancies as well as fewer lane changes than were anticipated in the budget. The savings in the area of special education are the result of savings in out-of-district tuition costs and contracted services.

We have overspent in the vocational program resulting from increased student requests for our CTE programming.

We have underspent in co-curricular programming due to savings in coaching and extra-curricular stipends.

Savings are seen in student support services resulting from the savings in special education contracted services.

The transportation line has been underspent by \$125,343.

As of the report dated 6-11-26, on the expense side of the ledger, identified is a balance of \$1,491,536. On the revenue side a balance of \$253,094. With the transfer to food service of \$174,788, the total unreserved fund balance, prior to funding new items, is \$1,569,843.

With allocations to the Maintenance Trust of \$300,000 and Contingency Fund of \$125,000 and the placeholder for the Retained Fund Balance of \$376,443, the projected fund balance is \$768,400.

The expectation is that the Superintendent will come before the Board, after the completion of the audit, with a request for the Retained Fund Balance.

We typically hope to return about \$200,000 to the taxbase. Given that some of these expenses were related to special education changes, we wanted to ensure we would return around \$500,000 to the taxbase. The expectation is a return of \$768,400.

Chair Deurloo Babcock stated her understanding the Governor has on her desk a law that would make it so that we would have to return all retained fund balances. Superintendent Bergskaug stated that to be correct, regardless of how the community has voted.

Chair Deurloo Babcock remarked we would not be able to retain any of this for next year even though the community voted for that. That makes budgeting challenging at times when you cannot count on things the voters supported. Superintendent Bergskaug added this is a good year where we are underrunning the budget significantly, but the opposite could happen at any time.

Member Solon asked which items are potentially in jeopardy by that law and was told it would be the Retained Fund Balance (the placeholder of the \$376,443).

- Data Governance Plan

Superintendent Bergskaug spoke of mandatory updates that are required (by law) to be shared every two years.

Dorothy Flaherty, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, provided (as part of the agenda packet) a memorandum outlining the few changes that have been made since last reviewed, which included change of team member names and titles, consistency with formatting, and updating and correcting hyperlinks.

In the area of content, changes were removal of policies that are no longer current and/or applicable to the district and the addition of updating the practices regarding the Google suite and account disposal.

- Budget Committee Update

Member Solon informed the Board the Budget Committee was unable to obtain a quorum to meet. With the change in law whereby the School Board representative is no longer a voting member of the committee, obtaining a quorum can be made more difficult.

A meeting is scheduled for June 25th, which he is uncertain he will be able to attend. The committee will not meet in the month of August.

- Stipend Committee Update

Superintendent Bergskaug informed the Board that the Stipend Committee met on June 10th to review collected data from a survey that was sent to all club advisors and coaches across the district.

The survey was intended to collect data relating to the overall time commitment as well as participation numbers associated with the various clubs and sports offered at the middle and high schools. They looked to assess whether the individual clubs are listed within the appropriate category for the level of stipend.

Recommendations came about as a result. The committee feels the recommendations are necessary changes and would like them to be included in the FY28 budget cycle. Dollar figures are based on the FY27 base salaries.

Another aspect that was important for the Committee to discuss is how we budget for and support new clubs. Especially at the middle school when you have a group of students that come into the 7th grade having a huge interest and a teacher wanting to engage with these students on something new. An example provided was Spanish Club, which was new this year. There is no Spanish club stipend. It is a three-year process to move that position into the budget. Unfortunately, those students are now long gone from the middle school and maybe that interest level has died down. The proposal is to add three Tier I stipends at roughly \$550 each to each budget line and then establish a process whereby the principals at each school can evaluate the operation of a new club and determine whether the advisor is eligible to receive a stipend at the end of years 1 and 2, and then moving on from year 2 the Stipend Committee would review any pertinent information in order to determine the proper placement on the table.

Within the spreadsheet seen are notes identifying whether the stipend is new for FY27, shifted from Tier 1 to Tier 3, etc. Also provided is an overall chart for the recommendations.

The budget changes reflect about \$8,700 of increased stipend dollars from shift and new clubs both at the middle and high school and about \$12,900 in increases for coaches' stipends including weightroom management stipends (new).

Superintendent Bergskaug stated her recollection that these would be brought forward as recommendations and then put forward in the budget.

Member Solon stated that does not address the question brought forth of whether to change the policy around compensating advisors earlier in the process. Member VanCoughnett stated the building principal would have criteria and would bring it forward for approval.

Superintendent Bergskaug stated what was identified was about \$8,700 for extra-curricular stipends and \$12,900 for athletic stipends, the budgeting for a few Tier Is are not included. Her understanding is when the Athletic Director starts the budgeting process with the Business Administrator, you will see these two lines and

another for a budgeted amount for our to be determined set of clubs. If they don't come to fruition the funds would be released.

Member Solon questioned what dictates that new clubs are not stipend at the onset. Superintendent Bergskaug stated the response was that is not budgeted, we don't have the funds, so thank you for working with the students.

Member Solon stated it would entail the requirement that a proposal for a new club would either be brought forth earlier or that there be placeholders put in. Superintendent Bergskaug stated the intent there would be placeholders.

Member Solon remarked during the budget process the Board will have the opportunity to either support or oppose those placeholder positions.

- Town of Hollis Capital Expenditure Advisory Committee (CEAC)

Member Mann stated the committee is looking to establish more regular practices and begin the process of constructing the multi-entity picture for the budgeting cycle earlier. Three rounds of CIP review have been put together that may or may not fit within schedules; the first round of CIP review is the week of July 13th, next the week of September 22nd, and then December 15th.

As things get updated in the CIP the request is that the changes fall into one of these rounds of review.

Superintendent Bergskaug stated the July 13th deadline is fine. As she has shared with this and the Hollis Board in the past, she believes the committee views the CIP very differently than the way we make use of it.

What worries her about round 2 in September is that when she starts shifting things out of FY28, it is because she has the whole budget view, is looking to try to meet guidance, and receiving feedback from our meetings and making cuts. That hasn't happened in September so we can just say no change. She suggested Member Mann meet with her before the final deadline in December to engage in a discussion of what is solid, what was bumped a year, etc.

Member Mann remarked he is happy to represent that. He noted he offers the data as a plan and that it is not a project activation.

Member Solon commented he knows from watching how Brookline uses the CIP, especially where they have impact fees and have been approached for support of that activity, the big thing they are looking for that we don't currently do is sort of napkin style estimates of if these five and ten year enrollment projections were to come through would we need to add capacity to our schools. If so, how much and spitball a number whether it be \$5 million for an addition or \$30 million to construct a new school. Those are the kind of things we don't do anywhere in our process currently. He asked if there is a way for the COOP to do that keeping in mind the remarks around differentiating a hypothetical plan and something that is at the level of a project. Is there a way to support their request within the framework of what we do or can do.

Superintendent Bergskaug remarked part of the confusion with the COOP was likely because we identified an addition to the middle school on the CIP due to potential increased enrollment. That was done as a mechanism that would allow for imposing impact fees on new development in Brookline. All of a sudden the question was are you adding onto the middle school in FY29. The answer was no, but the Planning

Board needs that identified within the CIP in order to impose impact fees. That is part of what she was addressing when explaining every group uses this information differently. The spreadsheet that we give to Brookline identifies this is specific for maintenance of the building versus due to enrollment needs and therefore eligible for impact fees.

Member Mann asked if the CEAC is seeking that same kind of guesswork or want it to be more real. Member Mann stated his belief that they generally want it more real, but he is uncertain how we get to that point.

Member Solon commented that if they want it real then he believes what we are doing now is about as close as we are going to get. He had heard that Hollis was considering impact fees but did not know if this was in support of that effort.

Member Mann remarked one of the things he brought up in the last meeting he attended was that the work product of the committee has to be different when we bring the COOP view versus Hollis because we're part of a two-town entity. There may be things we need to consider when making a work product and bringing it here in a slightly different way so it is more consumable for a COOP versus a district in a town.

Superintendent Bergskaug stated a really complicated factor in looking at it through the lens of that committee was they took all of the items and then applied the apportionment percentage so that none of the figures matched any of our figures. In the middle of budget season, she was asked to clarify which ones were real and which ones already happened.

Chair Deurloo Babcock requested the agenda be adjusted by moving items 3 and 4 under Deliberations to be items 1 and 2.

There being no objection, the agenda was amended, as requested.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Visual and Performing Arts Committee

Principal Hess provided a presentation (document can be viewed [here](#)). He stated the desire was to build something that prepares a work product with a deadline of the spring of 2027 so that recommendations could be made to the School Board to move forward with a program but also address what he believes to be a larger issue. He knows the focus is often on the band position, but this is a problem with our visual and performing arts and a problem with a lot of our electives across multiple content areas. This is just a starting point of work that the Administration will be doing behind the scenes.

This is a good approach to put a lot of minds in a room together and really try to tackle and create a plan of sustainability and build a program moving forward.

The Visual and Performing Arts Advisory Committee will examine the current state of visual and performing arts education within the district and develop recommendations to strengthen student engagement, participation, enrollment, and program sustainability.

The committee will focus on understanding student interests, identifying barriers to participation, evaluating existing programming, and exploring innovative opportunities that ensure the arts remain a vibrant and valued component of the educational experience.

Principal Hess commented that he was a theatre kid in high school and college. He taught theatre in New York. He was, at one time, a certified theater teacher. The arts are pretty important to him.

The committee's work will encompass all visual and performing arts programs, including but not limited to:

- Visual Arts
- Concert Band
- Jazz Band
- Choir
- Theater
- Digital Arts
- Media Arts
- Music Theory
- Emerging Creative Arts Pathways

The committee will provide recommendations to the administration and School Board by April 2027 to support planning and staffing decisions for the subsequent school year.

Committee goals were identified as:

1. Develop a clear understanding of enrollment and participation trends across all visual and performing arts programs.
2. Gather meaningful feedback from students, families, faculty, alumni, and community members.
3. Identify barriers that limit participation in arts programming.
4. Explore innovative courses, pathways, scheduling models, and partnerships that align with student interests.
5. Develop short-term and long-term recommendations that support sustainable arts programming.

Committee membership was identified as a School Board member, high school principal, high school and middle school art and music teachers, high school theater representative, school counselor, current and former students and students not currently participating in arts programs, parents, community arts advocates, alumni, and local arts professionals.

Also identified were a meeting schedule and Action Plan identifying the focus, discussion items, data review, and desired outcome of each meeting culminating in a March final report and presentation.

The final deliverable was identified as:

"A Vision for Visual and Performing Arts: 2026-2030"

This focus will shift the narrative away from the loss of a band position and toward a broader vision for the future. It communicates that the committee is committed to supporting the arts long-term, studying the challenges honestly, and creating programs that reflect the interests and needs of today's students while remaining sustainable for the future.

Member Williams asked what the timeframe would be to be able to present to the Superintendent and School Board by April. Part of what we discussed this year was having more notice (timeline for contract renewals, etc.). She questioned if the timeline was sufficient for the Superintendent.

Principal Hess stated the reason he wanted a draft by February and presentation by March is that is usually when we are getting our enrollment recommendations and numbers.

Superintendent Bergskaug stated she would bump it up another month. Some of the work identified might benefit in January prior to course selection. To Principal Hess' point, we are looking at strategically planning long-term. If there was a quick fix that would check all the boxes we would just do that, but how do we really build something and sustain it is more long-term.

Member Williams noted typically committees consist of more than a single board member. She encouraged that. She also suggested more than 1 school counselor.

She commented on a personal experience; had 3 students come through the middle school to the high school and can remember at least 2 of them telling her they have been advised not to take an elective.

She loves the suggestion for the students and community representatives. She asked about the number of members understanding that too many can diminish thoughtful and effective communication. Principal Hess stated he would like to cast a wide net and shrink it if needed.

Chair Deurloo Babcock suggested if receiving too much of a response some could be invited to be part of focus groups that report back to the committee.

Member Williams suggested students could be assigned different months as there are different categories. She added December has a deep dive into things and not much seems to successfully get done in December.

Member Solon commented on the outstanding presentation. He fully agrees with adding more members from the Board if for no other reason than if the Board representative were absent you would not want to have a meeting without that representation as the Board relies on that feedback mechanism on a frequent basis.

Regarding the goals, he thinks all five are important, but only one should be the goal; #5. All the other items lead up to that. You want a firm actionable recommendation. Everything else supports doing that, but he would like to see all the activities of the committee viewed through the filter of will this work support this one goal.

Member Mann commented #5 is the charter and all the others are goals that feed into the charter.

Member Solon asked if there is intent to include the theater classes that are considered English work rather than arts in terms of teacher credentialing, etc.

Principal Hess remarked while all of this is happening with a committee, the other work that is happening is a review of all of the other electives and offerings. Member Solon clarified he was uncertain if Improv and Acting were being lumped into this project or if they are being kept within the English curriculum. Principal Hess responded right now he thinks he includes it under performing arts.

Member Mann commented that he thinks the goals and ultimately then charter align very well and are structured well. However, he noted the Board does not typically meet in March as that is annual meeting time.

Member Kellner suggested it might be important to get some information from the elementary schools around their offerings and enrollments of the various programs. Also, don't forget the Unified Arts program.

Chair Deurloo Babcock stated it to be important for people to understand that this would be a working committee. She has received feedback from people that it is just a committee and committees don't accomplish anything. That is not true. In this district, committees brought us Advisory, they brought us CAV Block, they changed the start time. Committees make a difference. We are not a board that just says oh we'll just put it into committee. We have a Facilities Committee that has done amazing amounts of work. From this Board if a Board member sits on a committee we do work and we accomplish things. Years ago, the Start Time Committee was started by a Student Council President who was really frustrated with the way and what time our school started, and that made a change. It didn't make the change they wanted. They wanted half an hour and got like 20 minutes, but we got something because students and others worked together to do it.

Member Mann remarked committees are formed and chartered by the Board because there is a need for a deep dive that this Board cannot do only meeting a few hours each month. Committees are needed to do that focused deep work and bring a recommendation to the Board.

Chair Deurloo Babcock added she just does not know if there are barriers to extra curriculars for students who don't take band in our school. She does not know the answer to that. She does not know if a student needs to be in the music class to be able to participate in Honors Jazz or Jazz Band after school. If there is some sort of barrier and even if not a systemic barrier but a cultural barrier she wants an understanding of that. What she has learned about music this year is that there is a conflation between our contracted position and our extra-curricular position and that there is an assumption that that all just melts together. That actually, in a semantics way, isn't the way it works.

We hire a teacher to teach band or music. That person doesn't have to be our band director. We are not allowed to hire like that. When we hire and go through contracts you cannot say to someone you only get this job if you are going to direct band after school. Yet it still gets meshed because most of the people who teach music want to work with the students after school. She is uncertain if there is a barrier for a student who maybe cannot take our class can they still go to all state from our school, can they go on the trip, etc. If those barriers exist she wishes to understand that. That is something that could change this year.

Principal Hess asked if it was possible to ask if there were questions from audience members. Chair Deurloo Babcock responded it is not what the Board does, but she would allow it.

Brendan LaFlamme, 8 Nartoff Road, Hollis

This is fantastic. Thank you. It is pretty ambitious. He wished him luck and stated a willingness to assist as a parent.

Kendall Hood, 11 Fletcher Lane, Hollis

Questioned how the district would reach out to community members seeking participation on the committee. Principal Hess stated he would have a booth at Old Homes Day where he is hoping to interact with the community and members that don't receive his newsletter. Also using current students and families that are involved in the school system as a way to help spread that information to gain input from as many people as he can.

Katrine Dickau, 125 Rocky Pond Road, Hollis

Thanked Principal Hess for the presentation and everyone for the thoughtful comments. She believes it is a great plan for moving forward and would love to be involved with it.

There is hope and a spark around creating a Booster Club. Chair Deurloo Babcock remarked the best resource for that is to talk to the high school Boster Club. Noted was that there are very specific rules that the Administration has put into place regarding fundraising. It is something to be mindful of.

Unidentified Male Speaker

There was mention of All State musicians and being unsure if students not enrolled in band classes could still participate in festivals. That is something that has happened in the past and did happen this past year as well.

Superintendent Bergskaug stated that it was looked into, and there has to be a school connection. It could be the school signing off on the individual musician or could be participation in pit work, etc. There are a number of ways. We wanted to ensure that it is not a barrier.

MOTION BY MEMBER MANN TO APPROVE THE FORMATION OF THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS COMMITTEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF GOAL #5 AS IDENTIFIED IN THE PRESENTATION

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

There being no objection, the Board took a five-minute recess at 9:26 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 9:32 p.m.

- To see what action the Board will take regarding providing the Superintendent with the authority to hire, accept resignations, and terminate staff until the August 2026, School Board meeting.

MOTION BY MEMBER MANN TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO HIRE, ACCEPT RESIGNATIONS, AND TERMINATE STAFF UNTIL THE AUGUST BOARD MEETING, AND REQUIRE NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD OF SUCH ACTIONS

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Hollis Brookline Maintenance Expendable Trust

FY27 Requested Items/Estimated Cost

HBMS	Roof Section	\$150,000 (Phase 3 of 5)
	Ductwork Cleaning	\$ 20,000
		\$170,000
HBHS	Track Resurfacing	\$130,000
Total Requested		\$300,000

MOTION BY MEMBER MANN TO AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$300,000) FROM THE HOLLIS BROOKLINE MAINTENANCE EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE MAINTENANCE ITEMS IDENTIFIED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding **Policy IIB – Class Size**
 - 1st Reading: 5-13-26 (as amended)

Given its Second Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER MANN TO ACCEPT THE SECOND READING OF POLICY IIB – CLASS SIZE

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS

ON THE QUESTION

Chari Deurloo Babcock noted last month the maximum class size was decreased from 50 to 40 and now we are suggesting 30. However, we have received feedback from our current Music Teacher. According to the version provided with the agenda, Band and Choir/Chorus would be identified as having maximum class sizes of 30, we would remove identification of Computer Based Courses because we no longer have computer-based courses with labs. We changed the preferred maximum class size for math, science, language arts, etc. We list a preferred class size of 20 students at the start of the policy. We had a rationale for that.

Assistant Superintendent Flaherty spoke of a lengthy discussion around if putting 24 the result would be automatically going to 24. We want to hold true to having smaller class sizes. We are saying we will go up to 24, but the preference is to hold it to 20, if possible.

Chair Deurloo Babcock noted the exceptions remain in place. The language states “classes **may** have fewer than 12 students if one or more of the following are met:

- The class is one specifically designed to be small, i.e., remedial classes, special education classes, etc.
- The class is designed to meet state minimum standards.
- The class is a capstone course in a series, i.e., Spanish 4 in the Spanish 1-4 program
- The class is an AP Course.”

These are guidelines for the principals and assistant principals as they are building the schedules. We kept the guidelines in. AP courses were highlighted as the desire was to gain Board feedback as to whether the desire is to continue to keep that as one of the guiding principles. She stressed the language states “may have fewer than 12 students”. It does not have to happen. We did have AP classes that did not run this year and in the past because they have been under 8 or under 7 or 5. AP Art isn’t running this year with around 3, AP Computer Science isn’t running. We wanted your feedback.

The only other change that was proposed is to have the course enrollment numbers come to the Board by December rather than October.

Principal Hess stated he specifically reached out to the music department and asked about the number of 30 for music. The response was a recommendation to keep the number at 40. Sometimes, if at 30 and we split them, then schedules move, we would not want one of those to drop below the number and then we are not able to run

it. If at the 40 number and split that still guarantees that we are running both sections even if there is movement of a few students.

Chair Deurloo Babcock remarked she also thought there was mention of the importance of ensembles and having enough musicians to be productive in the class. Principal Hess added if splitting them up you then are looking for moments where you can combine them. CAVBlock is obviously natural where that is or after school, but now students are missing out on the opportunity to connect with other teachers because they have to come together for this. The importance is really keeping them together as much as possible.

Chair Deurloo Babcock suggested the Board could approve it at 30 and take the discussion back to the Policy Committee.

Member Williams asked about the first exception that reads “The class is one specifically designed to be small....”. She is aware some are directed by law, but the way that reads is very open ended to her. She might feel a class should be small and another might believe it should be huge.

Chair Deurloo Babcock noted it was brought up via email and from Principal Hess that some folks in the music world would like us to include visual and performing arts elective under here as an exception. At the Policy Committee meeting, the decision was made not to do that. She stated her feeling to be there are a lot of electives and she does not know that we can elevate one set of electives over all others.

Member Solon stated his first concern to be with the last sentence of the first paragraph that reads: “Any exceptions to these limits must be approved in advance by the Superintendent or their designee.”. This is a School Board policy. As we have seen, the School Board, regardless of how we choose to delegate, is held responsible for many of these decisions. Exceptions should come before the Board. If that means that the Board has to be flexible enough to meet to discuss an issue that may arise during the scheduling period to support that process then so be it. He would not want monthly meetings to be the reason that the Board is not accountable for exceptions to our policy. He strongly supported it either be the School Board and the Superintendent or just the School Board. He cannot support it being simply the Superintendent’s responsibility to approve exceptions.

Member Williams commented if trying to find a compromise she would want some kind of mechanism whereby the Board would know an exception is being made before it is operating that way.

Chair Deurloo Babcock suggested consideration be given to the May timeline.

Member Solon stated ultimately, it is a Board decision to make an exception to a Board policy.

Member Mann stated it to be akin to what we just did for summer months; we passed, for a limited time, power to the Superintendent to make those decisions, but then it expires and comes back to us.

Member Solon questioned the minimum class size of 12 asking if that is the correct number to use during the scheduling period in May and June to ensure that we have a proper class size by the time we reach October. He feels the number might want to be larger just because of the difference that often we are told happens between initial scheduling and what actually comes to fruition.

Chair Deurloo Babcock stated uncertainty of how to manage that. We could have a minimum of 15 and if we have decided to run the class with 15 and it gets put in part of a schedule and 7 kids drop it, we cannot not run it because schedules are set. Member Solon remarked you can although it would be difficult. He was not saying a

particular number, just wished to have it reviewed with the focus of the goal to have a decent class size in October.

Superintendent Bergskaug pointed out when we have 26 students sign up for a course we can say we have one section and then some automatically cannot get it. If we run two sections she does not have enough for either to run. When you look at 24 and 12 numerically that is a better option. She prefers the 12 to 15. She does think potentially the committee will look at a couple of recommendations that might alleviate some of what occurs between May and October, but she wished to put her voice in for 12.

Member Solon remarked that is part of the reason why he has stated the Board should be involved with exceptions and perhaps maybe it requires that there be a scheduled meeting at some point during that process specifically to look at scheduling so that we can collectively agree that this is an exception.

On the preferred class size of 20 students, he questioned if instead of saying a preferred class size perhaps set a trigger point for looking at splitting a section so you can say if the class size is above X you will automatically consider making it two sections. He questions if that would be a more effective mechanism of avoiding the pitfall that you see with scheduling with 24.

On the exceptions, he would like to remove the last two, e.g., capstone and AP course as automatic exceptions. He would much rather have the conversation be are we moving this to an alternate year, etc. He stated concern with a decision being made in a timeframe/context where by the time the Board hears about it and may have objections, there is nothing that can be done about it.

Member Solon stated concern with the move from October to December questioning if this is early enough to incorporate in the budget process and provide community notification so that you will get the impact and feedback.

Chair Deurloo Babcock noted it would be done in May and again in December. May is the request time and December is a report out on what the final numbers were.

Assistant Superintendent Flaherty suggested a sentence could be included whereby decisions are based on enrollment when students sign up so that if you have that drop off in the fall the course still runs even if your numbers drop down. It is not really fair to the students that have started taking a course to then say we are cutting this, etc.

Chair Deurloo Babcock suggested the language in the first sentence that states in part “at the time of initial scheduling” could be amended to something along the lines of “time of requests”.

Chair Deurloo Babcock asked if other members of the Board wished to provide input. Member Solon has requested that Capstone and AP classes be removed from the exception list. That does not mean than an exception could not be made. She stated her opinion if you get rid of those, the exception is there, you give the principal a little more grace when he makes a decision to not run an AP class, it is not in the policy you are supposed to run AP classes.

Member Solon commented when he went to the CTE regional meeting they were specifically talking about the various types of course work. AP courses are seeing heavy competition from Running Start and other programs. The feedback he got at that meeting was that AP is not these days a very successful way of getting college credit. One of the things we have heard over the years is the AP curriculum is often quite restrictive. It shortchanges by a month of how long you can teach. One of the reasons he believes we have had such an emphasis on AP courses within our school community dates back to when we were very invested in the US

News rankings, which is keyed off that. There are a lot of good options. If it is a question of weighting or opportunity he would like to see us encouraging some of our other programs which actually seem to have preferred curriculum. There are a lot of factors that he thinks diminish the exceptionalism of AP classes as a group.

Member VanCoughnett stated agreement with removing them. Member Williams stated she also agrees with taking them off. She is seeing that in her own students across the board. The only other thought that popped up for her is she does not want a run away from AP coursework. She understands running it next year if it is low but as an exception not as it is written in here because if it is low one year but continues to be a successful class she does not want to see that be an excuse.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the proposed policy memo

**MOTION BY MEMBER MANN TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS IDENTIFIED IN THE POLICY MEMO, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

ON THE QUESTION

Recommendation: Third Reading and adopt (no changes)

EHB-R - Local Records Retention Schedule

- 1st Reading: 4-8-26
 - 2nd Reading: 5-13-26 (as amended)
- Given its 3rd Reading;

This is the retention policy for record storage.

Recommendation: First Reading (as amended)

Policy JICK - Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention - Bullying

Given its 1st Reading;

The proposed changes have been reviewed by legal counsel.

Policy JCA - Change of School or Assignment - Best Interests and Manifest Hardship

Given its 1st Reading;

Proposed changes have been reviewed by legal counsel.

Member Solon asked if there are any changes to the two policies that are viewed as would change how we have to operate in the schools. Assistant Superintendent DiGennaro responded no.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

Chair Deurloo Babcock informed the Board of receipt of a letter of Request for Negotiations for the teacher contract. Chair Deurloo Babcock and members Solon and Mann will serve on the committee.

MOTION BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF HOLLY DEURLOO BABCOCK, TOM SOLON AND ROB MANN TO THE HEA NEGOTIATION TEAM

MOTION SCONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

REPORT OUT BY PROCESS OBSERVER

Member Mann stated the meeting was called to order at approximately 6:50 p.m., which was a 50-minute delay from the planned start time. We had public input for the Public Hearing, which closed at 6:58 p.m. Regular public input started at 7:30 p.m. and was open for 30 minutes. We received continued input related to the music teacher position.

A lot of ground was covered during the discussion section of the agenda.

The Board entered into a very rare Q&A section with community members, which he believes was warranted and wise.

NON-PUBLIC

MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE AND (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE REPUTATION OF A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF

MOTION SCONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS

A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Holly Deurloo Babcock, Amy Kellner, Robert Mann, Tom Solon, Kate Stoll,
Cindy VanCoughnett, Beth Janine Williams

7

Nay:

0

MOTION CARRIED

The Board went into non-public session at 10:04 p.m.

The Board came out of non-public session at 10:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY MEMBER DEURLOO BABCOCKN TO ADJOURN
SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL
MOTION CARRIED
7-0-0**

The June 17, 2026, meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Submitted by: Dawn MacMillan, Recording Secretary

Draft



School Administrative Unit #41
 Hollis, Brookline & Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Districts
 603 324 5999
 4 Lund Lane, Hollis, NH 03049

June 2026
Nominations

Name	Position	Location	Lane/Step	Salary	Degree/Credentials
Linda McMakin	Nurse	HBMS	Bachelors/Step 15	\$76,833	Bachelors in Nursing - Northeastern University
Clara Vorndran	Science	HBMS	Masters/Step 2	\$61,270	Bachelors in Cultural Anthropology - Case Western Reserve University; Masters in Secondary Education - Southern NH University
Emily Scannell	English	HBHS	Masters/Step 7	\$69,322	Bachelors in English & Psych - UNH; Masters in English Teaching - UNH

Resignations/Retirements

Name	Position	Location	Reason	Notes



MEETING MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
JUNE 17, 2026
PUBLIC HEARING
MEETING MINUTES**

A Public Hearing was conducted by the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 6:57 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School Library.

Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairperson, presided:

Members of the Board Present:

Kate Stoll, Vice Chairperson
Amy Kellner, Secretary
Robert Mann
Tom Solon
Cindy VanCoughnett
Beth Janine Williams

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance:

Gina Bergskaug, Superintendent
Lauren DiGennaro, Asst. Superintendent of Student Services
Dorothy Flaherty, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum & Instr.
Lance Finamore, Facilities Director
Jacob Hess, Principal, Hollis Brookline High School
Patrick West, Principal, Hollis Brookline Middle School

**PUBLIC HEARING
HOLLIS BROOKLINE
MAINTENANCE EXPENDABLE TRUST**

In accordance with [RSA 198:20-c](#), Gina Bergskaug, Superintendent, provided an explanation of proposed expenditure(s) from the Hollis Brookline Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund.

Building and SAU administration identified several needed repairs/improvements for their respective buildings during the budget process. At the Budget Hearing for the FY27 budget, the Hollis Brookline Budget Committee recommended along with the Hollis Brookline School Board that the funding source for these particular items be the Hollis Brookline Maintenance Expendable Trust.

FY27 Requested Items/Estimated Cost

HBMS	Roof Section	\$150,000 (Phase 3 of 5)
	Ductwork Cleaning	<u>\$ 20,000</u>
		\$170,000

HBHS Track Resurfacing **\$130,000**

Total Requested **\$300,000**

Maintenance Expendable Trust Status

Current Balance:	\$160,069
To be added in FY27:	\$300,000
FY27 Expenditures:	<u>\$300,000</u>
FY27 Available Balance:	\$160,069 (Anticipated)

Special Education Expendable Trust

There are no plans, currently, to use any of these funds in FY27.

Special Education Expendable Trust Status

Current Balance:	\$291,079
To be added in FY26:	\$ 0
FY26 Expenditures:	<u>\$ 0</u>
FY26 Ending Balance:	\$291,079 (Anticipated)

The floor was opened for public comment at 6:58 p.m.

No public input was offered.

The Public Hearing was declared closed at 6:58 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan, Recording Secretary



MEETING MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD
JUNE 17, 2026
NON-PUBLIC
MEETING MINUTES**

A Non-Public meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was conducted on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 10:04 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School.

Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairperson, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Kate Stole, Vice Chairperson
Amy Kellner, Secretary
Robert Mann
Tom Solon
Cindy VanCoughnett
Beth Janine Williams

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: **Gina Bergskaug, Superintendent**
Lauren DiGennaro, Asst. Superintendent of Student Services
Dorothy Flaherty, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instr.

The Board discussed a student services matter.

MOTION BY MEMBER DEURLOO BABCOCK THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, COME OUT OF NON-PUBLIC SESSION AND RETURN TO THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS

A Viva Voce Roll Call Vote was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Amy Kellner, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Kate Stoll, Robert Mann, Cindy Van Coughnett,
Beth Janine Williams

7

Nay:

0

MOTION CARRIED

The Board came out of non-public session at 10:15 p.m.

Date: **May 14, 2026**

Signed: **Amy Kellner, Board Secretary**

Draft