

## Meeting Notice

Board/Committee Name: Orange Elementary School Committee  
Day/Date: February 10, 2025  
Time of Meeting: 6:00PM  
Location: Fisher Hill Elementary School  
Media Center  
59 Dexter St.  
Orange, MA 01364



Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/bjt-iqdi-bor>

Or dial: +1 574-241-1917 PIN: 954 978 152#

## MINUTES

1. Call To Order - Mallory Ellis called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.  
Members Present: Jessica Reske, Josefa Scherer, Yarelyn Ramos-Martinez (joined virtually)  
Members Absent: Frank Hains  
Minutes taken by Chrissy Rodriguez.
2. Pledge of Allegiance - Mallory led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Public Comment - none
4. Approval of Minutes - ***On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Jessica Reske, the committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of January 13, 2025. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.***
5. Budget Presentation (on file) - Dr. Liz explained that the initial budget requests totaled a 10% increase. However, after engaging with the school administration and the Association to gather feedback, they have adjusted the proposal to a 4% increase. She said while this still exceeds the Town's recommended 2% limit, this revised budget maintains current staff levels, neither reducing nor adding positions. This is a starting point, and the School Committee will need to collaborate with the Town to determine the final budget number.  
Dr. Lewis presented on OES Pride, new hires, accomplishments, the Otterrific award, student of the month and the 21st century afterschool program.  
Marie Cole reviewed MCAS performance (7 to 24th percentile in the last 3 years), core and supplemental programs and assessment results.  
Michele Tontodonato reviewed enrollment, revenue, net school spending, the summary sheet and preliminary cherry sheet.  
Phil Saisa discussed the special education enrollment trends.
6. Matters for Action or Vote
  - a. Regional Cost Share Agreement - Dr. Liz explained that the R.C. Mahar and the School Union have collaborated with our legal advisor to review and update the Regional Cost Share Agreement. This agreement outlines how the consolidated school districts share costs for shared positions, the membership and quorum requirements for the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Subcommittee, the process for adding a new member to Union 73, and the financial obligations of a member district if it decides to

withdraw. This agreement has an impact on the school budget for each of the member districts.

**On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Jessica Reske, the committee voted unanimously to approve the Cost Share Agreement as presented.**

b. Policies - There were no new policies for a first reading. The subcommittee is in the process of scheduling its next meeting.

- i. First Read - None
- ii. Second Read/Vote:

**On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Jessica Reske, the committee voted unanimously to approve the following policies as presented; JKAA - Physical Restraint of Students, JL - Student Welfare, JLC- Student Health Services and Requirements, JLCA- Physical Examination of Students, JLCB -Immunization of Students, JLCC -Communicable Disease, AC - Non-Discrimination Policy including Harassment and Retaliation, AC-R -Noon Discrimination Policy including Harassment And Retaliation, ACA- Non Discrimination on the basis of SEx, ACGA - Civil Rights Grievance Procedure, JJE - Student Fund-Raising Activities. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.**

c. Grants - Mallory explained that the School Committee normally approves all grants the district receives in November. However, due to the state's delayed issuance of grant funds for Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), a vote is needed now to accept all state grants received or anticipated for FY25. Marie Cole reviewed the grants we have received so far (on file).

**On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Jessica Reske, the committee voted unanimously to approve all FY 25 grants that we have received or will receive from the State or other sources. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.**

- 7. Next Meeting - March 10, 2025 - The next meeting will include the Public Hearing on the School Budget as well as the Public Hearing on School Choice. On February 24th the budget will be presented to the FinCom and Selectboard.
- 8. Items for Future Consideration - None
- 9. Adjournment - **On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Jessica Reske, the committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:45pm. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.**

Approved: 3/10/25

Signature of Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

The agenda reflects topics that the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed.

Public Comment Protocols

The School Committee welcomes public comment on items that are within the scope of the School Committee's responsibilities. The Public Comment agenda item is reserved for this purpose. Members of the public wishing to address the Committee should be aware of the following guidelines:

- ❑ The Chair will recognize those wishing to speak and give them the floor. Only persons recognized by the Chair may speak. For purposes of the minutes, speakers should identify themselves at the beginning of their remarks.
- ❑ The purpose of Public Comment is to receive input from the community, not to engage in prolonged conversation with the Committee. The Chair will ensure that any comment or question that requires a response from the committee or the School Department will be addressed in a timely manner.
- ❑ All comments should be addressed through the Chair, not any individual committee member or to others in attendance.
- ❑ Speakers are expected to respect confidentiality. This includes the confidentiality of the speaker's own child/ren as well as that of school staff and personnel.