

## Meeting Notice



Board/Committee Name: Orange Elementary School Committee  
Day/Date: November 18, 2024  
Time of Meeting: 6:00PM  
Location: Fisher Hill Elementary School  
Media Center  
59 Dexter St.  
Orange, MA 01364

[Google Meet joining info](#)

[Video call link: https://meet.google.com/zpd-krhg-kib](https://meet.google.com/zpd-krhg-kib)

[Or dial: +1 314-474-3320 PIN: 806 588 129#](#)

## MINUTES

1. Call To Order - Mallory Ellis called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. She reminded the audience that there is the option to watch the meeting live via Google Meet, but that the chat and comments are not available. If the community would like to make public comments they need to be at the meeting in person and sign in to make public comments.

Members present: Josefa Scherer, Jessica Reske, Frank Hains and Yarelyn Ramos-Martinez.

Others present: Dr. Liz, Michele Tontodonato, Kelly Therrien, Alyson Herk, Dr. Lewis, Paul Fraleigh and MASC representative, Tracy Novic.

Minutes taken by Chrissy Rodriguez.

2. Pledge of Allegiance - Mallory led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Public Comment - None

4. Approval of Minutes - September 9, 2024

***On a motion made by Frank Hains and seconded by Jessica Reske, the committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes from September 9, 2024. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.***

5. Tracy Novick, MASC (handouts on file) - Tracy Novick from MASC reviewed the policy and regulations to open meeting law as well as the process for public comment. She will be observing the rest of the School Committee meeting to provide feedback on best practices to run successful meetings. She explained that the School Committee is the governing body and there are five sections under the purview of the committee:

- Establish and monitor goals for the district
- Enact policies
- Review, approve and monitor the district budget
- Hire and evaluate the Superintendent
- Act as the employer of record for collective bargaining

6. Report of the OETA - Kelly Therrien reported that parent teacher conferences were completed last week and acknowledged great MCAS science gains. The union sent out a survey to staff and the majority of staff said communication has been much better this year. Their concerns were class sizes and poor behavior management and inconsistencies with discipline. Both teachers and paras voiced concerns over paras being pulled from their positions. Alyson Herk continued the statement, acknowledging Marie Cole's upcoming retirement and explained that they are weary that the current administration already has plans for filling this role. She explained that this person has been paid to rewrite the handbook and they are apprehensive that this staff member is being trained for the role, leaving other potential candidates at a disadvantage. They vocally declared that they need and want a curriculum coordinator with elementary experience. They are looking forward to meeting with Michele regarding the budget soon. Lastly, grant money is being used to pay a reading specialist who now lives hundreds of miles away and they do not agree with paying someone who is not local.

7. Principals Report - Dr. Lewis reported that 318 students attended the Monster Mash Bash and Fall Festival. The PTO vending machine has been installed and students can receive an Otterrific Award which will get them a special token to use on the vending machine. A Veterans Day assembly was held to honor Veterans and was facilitated by the Grade 6 Teachers. Parent Square is working and improving engagement and posting immediate alerts. MCAS training is underway for changes made by DESE (Suzor IT is involved). Fish Hill will be celebrating the MCAS growth with a school wide pep rally. The book fair was a big success and literacy is increasing. Open house and parent conferences were both well attended. The first round of fire drills and lockdown drills have been completed

8. Glimpse into the Classroom - Anna Coburn presented on the ELL program at Fisher Hill (report on file). Her report highlighted the requirements for being an ELL student and the home languages of the OES ELL students. OES currently has 16 active students and 7 FEL students. She reviewed testing and DESE guidelines for instruction and how a student qualifies to exit the program.

#### 9. November Items

a. MCAS Data Results - Marie Cole presented the latest OES accountability results (report on file). Her report highlighted a MCAS increase from the 7th - 24th percentile, the new science curriculum, KnowAdam, and the district review. They will continue to look at support and family and community engagement. Parent Square has just been implemented to help with that. Mallory suggested scheduling a JLMC meeting with a possible topic of coverage and Paras being pulled to sub.

b. Oct. 1 Enrollment - Michele presented the October 1st numbers (which set expected funding for next year). She explained foundation enrollment (all children in the elementary age group that are eligible to go to FH) and actual enrollment. For Orange Elementary that number is 506. Last year it was 524. Dr. Liz explained that the decrease could be because of demographics (people having fewer children).

February has normally been a month where we have seen more students enrolling, so this number will most likely go up.

c. Student Version of Handbook - Mallory explained that there has been a small group working on creating a student friendly version of the parent/student handbook. The draft handbook was presented (on file).

d. Policy/Law of the Month - Mallory reviewed policy KCB (on file) - Community Involvement in Decision Making.

10. Matters for Action or Vote

a. Policies

i. First Read - The committee completed a first read of the following policies:

GBGE, Domestic Violence Leave Policy

JH, Student Absences and Excuses

JHD, Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance

JIC, Student Discipline

JICE, Student Publications

JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing

JIH, Searches and Interrogations

JJ, Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities

JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities

JJF, Student Activity Accounts

ii. Vote

JH Student Absences

JHD Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance

JIC Student Discipline

JICE Student Publications

Frank requested that policy JH go back to the subcommittee to review language due to the three day absence rule.

***On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Yarelyn Ramos-Martinez, the committee voted unanimously to approve the following policies; JHD, JIC, JICE. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.***

b. Superintendent Goals - Mallory reviewed the Superintendent's draft goals of:

Student Learning Goal 1: Early Literacy Enhancement

Student Learning Goal 2: Mathematics Curriculum Enhancement

Personal Practice Goal: Improving Budget Literacy

District Goal: Emergency Preparedness

***The committee voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent's goals as listed. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.***

11. Sub Committee / Liaison Updates

a. Report of Union #73 Committee - The next meeting is 11/26.

b. Report of the R.C. Mahar Representative - Frank reported that the street light has been turned off that was affecting the neighbors. There are three current

vacancies (a Grade 4 Teacher position is being covered by long term sub). Budget worksheets are due soon and more teacher input will be happening. The next meeting is on Dec. 5th.

- c. Report of the Leadership, Accountability & Measurement Subcommittee
- d. Report of the Communications & Policy Subcommittee - November 25th is the next meeting.
- e. Report of the Resources & Capacity Subcommittee
  - i. Journal Entries for Approval - ***On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted unanimously to approve the journal entries as presented.***
- f. Report of the CES Representative - No meeting/update
- g. Report of the CAPS Representative - Dr. Liz reported the audit report was reviewed and approved by the board.
- h. Report of the School Building Committee - Josefa reported that the solar project is in the final contract review (a contract with the national grid will be signed soon) and the engineer is working on outdoor classroom plans. She mentioned the idea of a wildflower garden dedication to Dianne Salcedo.
- i. Report of the SEPAC Representative - Yarelyn reported that students' input regarding IEP and forms look better than before.

- 12. Next Meeting - January 13, 2025
- 13. Items for Future Consideration - Wildflower garden dedication, a discussion about how Chapter 70 and budget presentations have gone.
- 14. Adjournment - ***The committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:52pm.***

Approved: 1/13/25

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.