



Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee

Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of September 25, 2025

Governor Healey has extended pandemic-related authorizations thereby allowing remote and hybrid meeting options for public bodies through June 30, 2027.

Mayor Barrett read the following statement published for the record: those attending tonight's meeting should be aware that the meeting is being audio and video recorded by HCTV, Eagle Tribune and WHAV. Any audience members who wish to record any part of the meeting must inform the Chairperson who will announce the recording. This is to comply with the MA wiretap statute.

Roll Call.

Mayor Barrett, Chairperson called the meeting to order (7:08 pm) and requested a roll call vote:

Ms. Collins	Absent	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Absent
Ms. Diaz	Present (in-person)	Dr. Story	Present (remote)
Ms. Ferguson	Present (remote)	Ms. Sullivan	Present (in-person)
Dr. Grannemann	Present (in-person)	Attorney Rosa	Present (in-person)
Mrs. Lalumiere	Absent	Mayor Barrett	Present (in-person)
Attorney Magliocchetti	Present (remote)		

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

Public Comment (In-person and remote).

Mr. Andrew Herlihy, City of Haverhill, Community Development Office, thanked the superintendent and staff for promoting lead awareness; and acknowledged the helpfulness and cooperation of HPS staff. Additionally, he thanked Jeanne Irvwin, HPS Grants Manager for her efforts in the successful grant application from the Merrimack Valley Workforce Development Board. Mr. Herlihy noted that Haverhill had difficulty procuring funds from this Board. He noted that a funding cliff was forecasted for next year which would impact initiatives for the youth workforce.

Student Advisory Council Report.

Ms. Molly Jordan, reported on the student council's efforts regarding increased school spirit by trying new incentives during lunch beginning tomorrow and continuing for future Fridays. She reported that Mr. Downs would be meeting with all clubs in the near future. Molly announced the upcoming Powder Puff event which will be held around Thanksgiving (instead of in the Spring) along with other activities during this event. Molly stated planning was underway for another event in October.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to suspend the rules to allow for the following item: Financial Forecast by City of Haverhill Chief Financial Officer Angel Perkins. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Ferguson	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

8 members voted in the affirmative

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Motion passes

Mrs. Perkins referenced the importance of the city's bond rating AA+. She reviewed information that had been distributed to the committee this evening.

In reference to Attorney Rosa's question, Mrs. Perkins explained the process.

Mrs. Perkins noted that new growth was the only unknown in the levy calculation including the cap. She stated that stabilization of the tax levy was a key factor in budgeting.

Attorney Magliocchetti expressed appreciation to both the mayor and Mrs. Perkins for their efforts. He commended them for their transparency in the city's financial situation. Attorney Magliocchetti asked about financial projections within the next three (3) years.

Mrs. Perkins replied that there would be improvement in financial benchmarks along with the stabilization of the tax rate. She stated that the conservative approach would be a difficult one for both the city and schools.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked if the financial perspective applied to only the city, not the school department. He asked if the school department would be held to the same standard, i.e., 2 ½% increase for all departments. Attorney Magliocchetti offered the delicate balance between city and state funding. He thanked Mrs. Perkins for the transparency.

Superintendent Comments/Reports.

Introduction of Mr. Andrew Herlihy, Division Director, Community Development, City of Haverhill, to discuss the City's Youth and Mental Health Funds awarded to multiple Haverhill Schools, along with extending congratulations to the Haverhill Public Schools for the receipt of WIOA funds and funding challenges for the 2026 Summer Youth Program.

Mr. Herlihy noted that many programs had previously been federally funded by the American Rescue Act. He commended the work of the city council, mayor's office staff and other community members who met during the summer. Mr. Herlihy appreciated the mayor's leadership efforts and commitment regarding these programs.

Attorney Rosa thanked the city for their efforts in obtaining additional funds for the schools.

Superintendent Marotta extended appreciation to Mr. Herlihy for his endeavors on behalf of the students of Haverhill.

Introduction of HHS Principal Michael Downs and Associate Principal Victoria Lu to highlight important curriculum and instructional changes designed to raise expectations, expand opportunities, and ensure every student is prepared for success beyond high school.

Both Mr. Downs and Mrs. Lu provided a brief summary of the 2025-2026 Haverhill High School Improvement and Innovation Program.

Mr. Downs expressed appreciation to Ms. Victoria Kelley for her stewardship of the CTE Program.

Attorney Rosa thanked the high school principal and associate principal for their hard work. He was impressed by the Freshman Cohort, which provided targeted support for high-needs students through smaller classes, incentives, and college/career readiness focus.

Attorney Rosa inquired about the parent complaints regarding tardiness.

Principal Downs answered that it was reinforcing a life skill and noted the improvements that had resulted from its implementation.

Attorney Rosa asked about attendance issues.

Principal Down provided some examples including after-school work and family issues (student working until 1:00 am-2:00 am) for not attending school.

Mr. Downs commended Don Davoli for his long-term efforts for students.

Dr. Grannemann commented on the many opportunities for student engagement. He stated the importance of high expectations and support for both students and teachers.

Mr. Downs replied there was something for everyone at HHS (the emphasis on connecting the kids).

Mrs. Lu highlighted the many departments and teachers who supported these efforts, especially the importance of teacher/student connections and engagement.

Dr. Grannemann asked about the Odell program and its implications for reading, especially does it include long-form books.

Mrs. Lu recognized the successful grant application by Ms. Jennifer Peterson, ELA Curriculum Supervisor which allowed for actual novels to be purchased for the students at all grade levels.

Ms. Sullivan inquired about methods of teaching for critical thinking skills.

Mrs. Lu responded that it was an ongoing effort at the high school, with training for teachers. She noted that efforts were underway to embed in the curriculum several skills that were not typically measured in the classroom, such as punctuality, critical thinking, and communication and providing regular feedback across all disciplines and grade levels.

In response to Ms. Sullivan's question in good source material, Ms. Lu replied that it was part of the school's efforts.

Ms. Diaz commented on the importance of listening to students. She commented on recent work with Ms. Collins as part of the Diversity Subcommittee.

Attorney Rosa thanked Ms. Sullivan and Dr. Grannemann for participating in "Portrait of a Graduate" committee.

Attorney Rosa: Discussion of the current Haverhill Public Schools mobile phone policy and An Act to Promote Student Learning and Mental Health, passed by the Massachusetts Senate.

Attorney Rosa noted the recent passage in the state senate on limitations on cell phone usage during the school day (bell-to-bell ban). He stressed the significance of acting as soon as possible and not waiting for the passage of the legislation. Attorney Rosa informed Principal Downs on the school committee's actions on this matter. He noted the negative mental health impact of cell phone usage and asked for the high school principal's feedback.

Mr. Downs was in favor of limitations on cell phone usage and questioned the implementation method (logistics) and enforcement. He remarked on the impact on mental health. Principal Downs stated that there were many options for implementation if a cell phone ban was implemented in the district.

Ms. Sullivan seconded Attorney Rosa's comments and recommended reading the book "The Anxious Generation". She mentioned the book provided startling and depressing effects on kids' mental health and suggested the importance of limiting screen time.

Ms. Diaz agreed with the proposed implementation and wanted to ensure proper support for students during the roll out.

Review of HPS Summer Learning and Enrichment Programs.

Superintendent Marotta introduced Mrs. Dianne Connolly, Director of Title I and Community Outreach to report on the summer programs (end of year summaries). She stressed the abundance of offerings available to students, parents and families in Haverhill (2,000 students) and thanked the numerous staff members who supported the summer programs.

Attorney Rosa asked for clarification since it was his understanding that there had been cut-backs.

Superintendent Marotta responded that the amount of time had been altered (shortened length), but not the student participation number.

Mrs. Connolly stated that the math accelerated program had been sustained after the conclusion of the grant funding, due to planning and leadership in the district.

Superintendent's Recommendation for acceptance of a \$45,000 gift by the late Pauline Hairian made payable to the Byron B. Haitian Scholarship Fund, as included in the agenda material.

Dr. Marotta referenced a recent letter informing the school committee of the passing of Pauline Hairian (age 100) and in her estate planning documents expressed wishes for the scholarship to continue as previously stipulated along with an additional gift of \$45,000 for the scholarship fund. She expressed condolences to the Hairian family and thanked them for their generosity.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to accept the \$45,000 gift for the Byron B. Haitian Scholarship Fund and to continue the distribution of funds subject to the same terms and conditions as all other money held in the fund. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Ms. Ferguson	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Dr. Story	Yes		

7 members voted in the affirmative

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Motion passes

School Committee Reports/Communications.

Subcommittee Reports.

Attorney Magliocchetti: Teacher Negotiations Update. There was no report at this meeting.

Dr. Grannemann: Budget/Finance Subcommittee Meeting Update.

Dr. Grannemann reported that a subcommittee meeting had been held on September 24, 2025 subcommittee meeting with the following topics: budget monitoring {FY2025 budget closeout, meeting required city contribution, FY2026 budget}; budget projection needs {projections for multi-year planning, budget projections to inform collective bargaining agreements/negotiations} and FY 027 budget development including: funding outlook (city, state, grants) and budget priorities for FY 2027. He emphasized the importance of long-term financial planning.

Dr. Grannemann: Elect representative(s) to MASC Delegate Assembly.

Dr. Grannemann encouraged participation at this valuable conference (November 12-14, 2025), and informed his colleagues on his planned attendance. He would be happy to serve as the voting delegate.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to appoint Dr. Grannemann as the voting delegate at the Massachusetts Association of School Committee's conference. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Dr. Story	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Old Business.

Mrs. Lalumiere: Recommendation for Policy [BEA-School Committee Member Participation Policy](#) for a [third reading](#), which includes an **action item (vote)**, approval or rejection.

Attorney Rosa commented that Mrs. Lalumiere had requested tabling due to her absence.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to table Policy [BEA-School Committee Member Participation Policy](#). Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Dr. Story	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Ms. Collins: Recommendation for Policy JA -1 Belonging Policy for a [third reading](#), which includes an action item (vote) approval or rejection.

Mrs. McGillicuddy read Policy JA -1 Belonging Policy into record.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve Policy JA -1 Belonging Policy. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Dr. Story	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

School Committee Community Announcements.

Mayor Barrett announced the Haverhill Art Walk this Saturday from 2:00 pm-6:00 pm which would include bands and such activities as button making, silk screen, mural tour and vendors. She stated that several downtown would have in-house artists.

Attorney Rosa announced on behalf of Ms. Collins an Ozzie Kids event free Halloween costume (new costumes and accessories) give-away in the basement of City Hall on Saturday at noon

Ms. Sullivan publicized two new opportunities from Team Haverhill: Haverhill Paddles and Haverhill Walks. She noted the recent successes of “Hike Haverhill” and “Paddle Haverhill (Lake Gardner) and recommended participation by the community at these activities. Ms. Sullivan noted that both of the recent events were “sold out” and that many Haverhill residents wanted to participate in outside events with community members.

New Business.

Superintendent’s Recommendation to approve Warrant Number EV20250926 totaling \$6,932,641.52, as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve Warrant Number EV20250926 totaling \$6,932,641.52, as indicated in the agenda material. Ms. Diaz seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Dr. Story	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Items by Consensus.

Superintendent’s Recommendation for approval of the Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of September 11, 2025, as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve the Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of September 11, 2025, as indicated in the agenda material. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Dr. Story	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Superintendent’s Recommendation for approval of the use of facilities as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve the use of facilities as indicated in the agenda material. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes

Dr. Story	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
6 members voted in the affirmative		Motion passes	
0 members voted in the negative			
0 members abstained			

Executive Session (City Hall, Room 206)/Adjournment: The School Committee will go into executive session, pursuant to (M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(2) and (3), to discuss matters related to the teachers' negotiations, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares. After concluding the closed session, the public body may return to an open session to publicly approve any votes taken relative to any business discussed in executive session, if necessary.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to go into executive session (8:54 pm), pursuant to (M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(2) and (3), to discuss matters related to the teachers' negotiations, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares. After concluding the closed session, the public body may return to an open session to publicly approve any votes taken relative to any business discussed in executive session, if necessary. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Dr. Story	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
6 members voted in the affirmative		Motion passes	
0 members voted in the negative			
0 members abstained			

Documents reference in the meeting: [HSC Portfolio Binder 09.25.25.pdf](#)