MARLBOROUGH BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 27, 2026
Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School –Library Annex
6:30 p.m.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call:** Chip Morris, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m..

BOE Members Present: Chip Morris, Amy Kuhrt, Louise Concodello, William Guzman, and Jamie Smigel. Linda Earley arrived at 6:38pm.

Administration Present: Paula Graef, Principal
Jennifer Renkiewicz, Assistant Principal
John Mercier, Director of Operations

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Celebrations:** Paula Graef highlighted the successful start to the new school year, noting that the transition has been smooth and that it has been wonderful to welcome Paul Smith and Jennifer Renkiewicz to the district.

4. **Public Comment:** None

5. **Additions to the Agenda:** Amy Kuhrt requested two additions to the agenda: Board Goals under 8.2, Unfinished Business, to continue the discussion from June; and Superintendent Goals under 9.2, New Business. The Board unanimously approved the additions. MOTION CARRIED**.** Linda Earley was not present for this vote.

6. **Consent Agenda:**
   - 6.1 Minutes of 6/4/26 BOE Regular Meeting, and 6/16/26 Special Meeting, 7/9/26 Special Meeting, and 8/13/26 Special Meeting;
   - 6.2 Personnel Actions – none;
   - 6.3 Monthly Enrollment Report.

R. Morris requested that the minutes of the 6/16/26 Special Meeting (Encl. 6.1B) be amended to reflect that Mr. White was approved as Acting Superintendent by Connecticut State Department of Education Commissioner Charlene M. Russell-Tucker on July 6, 2026.

R. Morris also requested that the minutes of the 8/13/26 Special Meeting (Encl. 6.1D) be amended to reflect that the background check for Paul Smith was completed with no issues identified, and that the Board subsequently approved Mr. Smith as Superintendent.

L. Concodello made a motion to amend the minutes of the 8/13/26 Special Meeting (Encl. 6.1D) to reflect the completion of Mr. Smith's background check. The motion was unanimously approved. **MOTION CARRIED.** Linda Earley was not present for this vote.

R. Morris made a motion to amend the minutes of the 6/16/26 Special Meeting (Encl. 6.1B) to reflect Mr. White's approval as Acting Superintendent by the Commissioner of Education. The motion was seconded by J. Smigel and unanimously approved. **MOTION CARRIED.** Linda Earley was not present for this vote.

R. Morris made a motion to approve the amended Consent Agenda items 6.1 – 6.3, including the revisions noted above, seconded by A. Kuhrt. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED. Linda Earley was not present for this vote.

7. Oral Reports:

7.1 Advisory Groups

- **PTO** – Paula Graef reported that the principals met with the PTO co-presidents over the summer to review planned events and discuss plans for the upcoming school year. The next PTO meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2026.
- **SAC** – Paula Graef reported that there was no meeting in August. The next meeting will be held in September, with the date to be determined.
- **Operations, Wellness & Safety** – John Mercier deferred his report to avoid duplication with his Operations report later in the meeting.
- **Board of Finance Liaison** – William Guzman reported that the Board of Finance held two meetings over the summer. At the July 20, 2026 meeting, Tony Genovese was introduced as the Town's new Finance Director. At the August 17, 2026 meeting, Mr. Genovese reported that the 2024-25 audit was nearing completion. The Board of Finance also discussed the start of the 2025-26 audit, with completion anticipated in April 2027.
- **AHM** – Chip Morris reported that AHM (https://ahmyouth.org) provides mental health and positive youth development services, programs, and events for children, youth, and families in Andover, Hebron, Marlborough, and Columbia. He highlighted upcoming QPR and Narcan training sessions scheduled for September, October, and November, as well as the Dancing with the Stars fundraiser scheduled for September 19, 2026, at the RHAM Auditorium with tickets still available. Chip also shared that AHM's **HERE4YOU podcast** is now available on YouTube and Spotify.

7.2 Subcommittees:

- Policy Committee - None
- Personnel - None
- Communications - None

7.3 Chairperson: Chip Morris acknowledged and thanked the MES custodial staff, Marlborough Department of Public Works, teachers, administrators, and other professionals for their efforts in preparing the building for the new school year and ensuring it was in excellent condition. He also recognized the Popsicles on the Playground event, the End of Summer Reading event at the library, and the Meet and Greet held prior to the start of school.

Chip expressed his appreciation to everyone who worked throughout the summer to prepare the building and grounds. He also thanked Dr. Mary Broderick for her work with the Superintendent Search Committee throughout the search process and expressed the Board's enthusiasm for the selection of Paul Smith as Superintendent.

7.4 **Superintendent and Administrative Team:** Paul Smith reported that the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) confirmed receipt of Marlborough Public Schools' 2026-27 Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (ESP) Checklist, indicating the continued use of the most recent CSDE-approved ESP for the 2026-27 school year.

Paul also informed the Board that the District would be updating the authorized signers on three Liberty Bank accounts. The following individuals will be removed as authorized signers: Holly Hageman, Dan White, Kim Kelly, and Kristen Trahan.

The following updates to authorized signers will be made:

Paul Smith, Superintendent of Schools, will be added as an authorized signer to all three accounts: Food Service Account, Grant Account and the Student Activity Account

Michele Demicco will be added as an authorized signer on the Food Service Account and Grant Account.

Paula Graef and Jennifer Renkiewicz will be added as authorized signers on the Student Activity Account.

- **School Opening/Summer Work Update**
    - **<u>Extended School Year (ESY)</u>** - Paula Graef reported that the 2026 Extended School Year (ESY) program served 20 students in Grades K–5 and ran for four weeks, Monday through Thursday. The majority of staff were MES employees, including teachers, related service providers, paraeducators, and two Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs). Related services included speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and school psychology/BCBA services. The primary goal of ESY is to minimize significant regression of skills during the summer break, and the 2026 program successfully met this goal.
    - **<u>Summer Professional Development and Curriculum Work</u>** - Staff worked throughout the summer to refine literacy pacing and assessments, update writing pacing guides and rubrics, review and select Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) for administration, and become familiar with the new math curriculum materials. In preparation for the transition from four teachers to three teachers in Grade 6, staff worked to integrate social studies into science and ELA units. The Essential Arts team also continued to revise and update curriculum.

- **Opening of School Preparations and Events** - Jennifer Renkiewicz reported that the Meet and Greet was a great success, with strong attendance and many students and families were excited to visit their classrooms before the first day of school. She noted that the event helped contribute to a smooth and successful first day of school.
  Paula also reported on a change to the literacy schedule that provides classroom teachers and literacy specialists with dedicated one-on-one collaboration time every two weeks. The time will be used to review student data, discuss student needs, and co-plan instruction.
- **Summer Building Projects/Facilities Update** - John Mercier provided the Board and community members with a detailed list of the completed 2026 summer projects. He reviewed the facilities, technology and food service projects which included preparation and installation of the grant-funded greenhouse; completion of the southwest two-story egress and Community Room drainage project; building, grounds, and playground maintenance; flooring and classroom cleaning; boiler, generator, HVAC, roof, plumbing, fire safety, and elevator maintenance and inspections; and various repairs and upgrades throughout the school.

  Technology projects included configuring new Chromebooks; network, Wi-Fi, security, door access, and camera system upgrades; software and licensing renewals; and updates to PowerSchool, testing platforms, and other online systems.

  Food Service projects included implementation and configuration of the new LINQ point-of-sale and parent self-service system; coordination with RHAM and the State of Connecticut regarding food service operations; annual kitchen inspections and maintenance; and replacement of the large coffee brewer/filling station.

- **Summary of Education-Related Legislation Enacted in the 2026 Regular Session** - Paul Smith reviewed Enclosure 7.4, which provided brief details on eight policies requiring minor wording adjustments to reflect legislative changes. He noted that the last policy listed on page 1 should be Policy 5141.213, not 5141.231. The policies will be brought to the Policy Committee in September for review. Three of the 8 need more guidance from the state before an action is taken

8. Unfinished Business:

8.1 Discuss and Review FY 2025-26 Year-End Financial Report and Financial Transfers - Paul Smith informed the Board that the closeout for the 2025-26 fiscal year is expected to show a surplus of $48,486.45. This surplus is anticipated to be deposited into the 2% Fund following the completion of the FY26 audit.

Paul Smith also reviewed the FY26 transfers for Board approval.

Louise Concodello noted that on Enclosure 8.1B the last line stating “Total Fiscal Year 2024” should be changed to “Total Fiscal Year 2026”.

L. Early made a motion that the Board approve the FY 2025-26 financial transfers as presented with the final balance of $48,486.45, seconded by W. Guzman. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

8.2 Board Goals - The Board Chair distributed the current 2024–2026 Board Goals, along with a draft of proposed Board Goals for 2026–2028 and a draft of the Superintendent Goals shared by Paul Smith. Paul explained that he would like to align the Superintendent's Goals 2026-27 with the Board Goals so that both are working toward the same priorities. He noted that his draft Superintendent Goals are organized around the same four categories identified in the draft Board Goals. The Superintendent Goals will support and complement the Board Goals.

Chip Morris requested that each Board member submit any goals, ideas, or suggestions they would like considered by Thursday, September 17th.

The Board agreed to table the discussion and revisit the Board and Superintendent Goals at the next Board meeting.

8.3 MES Facilities Project Update - William Guzman reported that eight proposals were received for the Owners Project Manager position. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8th, at 6:00 p.m. in the MES Library to review the proposals, vote on one or two companies to invite for interviews, and establish a schedule of regular meetings moving forward.

9. New Business:

9.1 Review August Financial Report - No report at this time.

9.2 Superintendent Goals - Superintendent Goals were discussed in conjunction with the Board Goals under Agenda Item **8.2**. The Board will revisit the goals at the September Board meeting.

10. Communications:

10.1 Monthly Staff Vacancy Report - Submitted

10.2 2026-27 Staff Listing- Submitted

11. Future Meetings & Topics:

- Policy Committee Meeting, Thursday, September 24 2026, 5:45 p.m.
- Next Regular Business Meeting, Thursday, September 24, 2026, 6:30 p.m.
- All Boards Meeting, Tuesday, September 29, 2026
- CABE/CAPSS Convention, November 20-21, 2026

12. Public Comment:

Hal Whitney, 20 Ogden Lord Road - asked when the Board anticipates the Building Project will begin. He expressed concern about the delay in completing the audits and how this may affect bonding for the major building project.

Carmen Howe, 65 Emily Rd - PTO Co-President, commended the building maintenance staff, teachers, and Board of Education for their hard work over the summer, noting that the building looks “sparkling.” She expressed her appreciation for everyone’s efforts and said she looks forward to the upcoming school year and continuing a great partnership with the school and Board.

Carmen also clarified that the PTO’s first meeting will be Monday, September 14th, and that PTO meetings will now be held on Mondays.

13. Adjournment:

A.Kuhrt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m., seconded by J. Smigel. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully Submitted,
Carmela Monte