MASCONOMET REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

March 9, 2026

MEMBERS' PRESENT: M. Alexander, Middleton, Chair A. Heaphy-Tenney, Topsfield, Vice Chair
T. Currier, Middleton K. Petrone, Middleton
M. Ogden, Topsfield L. MacInnis, Middleton
W. Hodges, Topsfield M. Giberson, Boxford
J. McLean, Boxford J. Horrigan, Boxford

MEMBERS ABSENT: C. Bolzan, Boxford

OTHERS PRESENT: M. Harvey, Superintendent

A. **Call to Order** – M. Alexander Chair, called the School Committee Meeting of March 9, 2026, to Order at 7:05pm, at the High School Library.

B. **Comments from the Audience** –
Krista Hoey, HS Science Teacher, spoke regarding the elimination of the Asst. Superintendent of Finance position upon Jeff Sand's retirement and the elimination of the World Language Dept. Head.

Michelle Voner, Topsfield, spoke regarding the increase of professional salaries and the increase of Professional Development. She spoke against combining the Art and Language Departments.

Dipti Shreyakar, Boxford, spoke in support of the Chinese program and how it applies in the real world and against an online Chinese class.

Amy Hussey, Middleton, spoke in support of keeping the Chinese teachers and program and how they impact the students and spoke regarding the size of the Administration at Masco.

Samia Lalikos, student, spoke in support of the Chinese program and ways to boost the program enrollment in the middle and elementary schools.

Katie Townes, Topsfield, spoke in support of the Chinese program and against cutting the MS Team.

Edmund, parent, spoke in support of the Chinese program and the impact it has on the students.

John Meyer, Boxford SC member, asked the level of service the School Committee will be putting out compared to just hitting a target number.

Mason Carbone, student, spoke against cutting the MS Team and the impact his team had on his learning experience and the impact on the MS students.

Jess MacDonald, Boxford, spoke in support of the Chinese program and lower class sizes. She spoke against reducing the MS Team and that Masco's biggest asset is the school and education.

Lisa Suh, Topsfield, spoke regarding student academic performance and the high-quality educators at Masco and the importance of the Chinese language on college applications.

Anthony Carbone, Boxford, spoke regarding the cutting of Administration and not cutting teachers.

Rose Leon, student, spoke in support of the Chinese program and how it also teaches the Chinese culture and the Chinese teacher's appreciation for a different culture.

Kaylen Zhao, student, spoke in support of the Chinese program and her experience in embracing her culture in the classroom.

Weston, Student, spoke in support of the Chinese program and against online learning to continue the program.

Colin Moran, student, spoke in favor of the Chinese program. In the 6th grade, there are only 3 languages to choose from, and Chinese was the most difficult, which is why he chose it.

Bella DiCarlo, spoke regarding areas where the budget can be reviewed, including itemized expenses and line items.

Ai Li, Chinese Teacher, spoke in support of the Chinese program and provided comments from residents regarding the cutting of the program.

Shane Steffens, Topsfield, spoke regarding Masco being the most globally progressive school district and offering the Chinese language is an example of that.

Nicholas Ely, Masco School Counselor, read a statement from Leah Campbell against cutting of a school adjustment counselor/guidance counselor as the mental health crisis continues to grow and we need to provide students the help they need.

Nicholas Ely, spoke against cutting the school counselor and spoke to the school performance ratios and out of district placements making the counselor's job much more difficult.

Ella Blaus, student, spoke in support of the Chinese program and ways to boost enrollment to retain the staff.

Gary Baker, Boxford, spoke in support of the Chinese program.

C. Remarks from the Chair – M. Alexander thanked the students for speaking tonight and thanked the people who sent emails. He has met with the Executive Leadership Team, Teachers, and Department Heads and has gone through every line item in the budget. The SC needs to balance the needs of the students and what the Towns can afford. These are difficult decisions to make.

D. FY27 Budget Deliberations

M. Harvey presented the FY27 District Budget with the updated Scenario 3, which included the reduction of one FTE HS School Counselor and added the reduction of 2 shared bus routes. Assessments per Town were reviewed. T. Currier does not recommend eliminating a school counselor position after speaking with the appropriate parties.

Transportation – there are currently 24 routes and if the routes are reduced to 23 it will save $107,000. The average run is 32 minutes in the morning with 24 drivers.
A.Heaphy-Tenney added that the bus company handles the logistics when a bus is out of commission. T. Currier supported the reduction to 23 routes as presented.
M. Alexander supported the reduction and will work with the bus company.

World Language Department Head – there have been many emails received and M. Alexander has spoken with educators at Masco. There will be a restructuring of the Department Heads in the fall. A.Heaphy-Tenney is in favor of keeping the Chinese program with the elimination of the Department Head as the program provides a sense of culture and belonging. T. Currier added that he is looking at the Chinese program based on the enrollment numbers. K. Petrone reminded the SC that the Dept. Head for Visual Arts was discussed combining with Fine Arts a few years ago. She is concerned with the number of students impacted. Katie DiNardo added that both Dept. Heads for Fine Arts and Visual Arts are completely different and very important. J. McLean suggested eliminating the Dept. Heads and allowing the Administration to figure out how to make it work with the remaining Dept. Heads. M. Giberson stated that the decision on which Dept. Heads are to be eliminated should be made by the new Superintendent who will have a structural vision for Masco.

M. Ogden asked for clarification of need to meet the needs of the students or a budget to avoid an override. She added that because some residents are struggling, we should not underfund public education.
A.Heaphy-Tenny asked that the Director of Teaching and Learning role be reviewed. M. Alexander responded that the Director of Teaching and Learning is under contract and he is committed and passionate about continuing his work at Masco. T. Currier agreed and the Strategic Plan is centered around the Director of Teaching and Learning. L. MacInnis added that the Director of Teaching and Learning will take on some of the responsibilities of the eliminated Dept. Heads.

M. Alexander spoke with School Administrators, class sizes will increase from 19 to 21, with some classes eliminated. T. Currier stated that an increase of 19-21 students is a reasonable increase.

A.Heaphy-Tenney discussed class sizes according to the Masco policy and the impact on student learning. Accountability data was discussed.

Discussion took place with each SC member speaking his or her thoughts on the Chinese program.

M. Alexander presented a spreadsheet of options for cuts to the budget. He reviewed the baseline and scenarios. Baseline plus Scenario B reduces the following positions: HS Social Studies teaching position Social Studies Dept. Head, HS English teaching position, Visual Arts Dept. Head, keeping the Chinese program at HS and MS. Reduction of MS Math teaching position, MS English Teaching position, MS Science Teaching position, MS Special Education Teaching position, Principal Consolidation, reduction of Assistant School Nurse, addition of a Certified School Nurse. Savings between current and future Superintendent, savings between current and future Asst. Superintendent, Non-Salary Operating cost reductions, reduction of bus routes, and E&D Threshold reduction of $443,483.00. Discussion followed regarding various Scenarios with Baseline and the impacts on each Town. Baseline plus Scenario B makes overrides unlikely.

M. Ogden supports Baseline plus Scenario B because there are no changes in programs and this shows the SC has listened to the Towns.
M. Giberson does not like that positions are attached to the cuts.
Discussion followed regarding a part-time consultant with the extra $42,000 to help the visual arts department.
Discussion regarding an online Chinese program which will not include seven and eighth graders took place and the phasing out of the program moving forward. T. Currier made a motion to have the Administration prepare a motion for the School Committee to vote at the next meeting with Baseline and Scenario B, W. Hodges seconded and motion approved 7-0-3.

MOTION: Administration to prepare a motion based on Baseline and Scenario B.
VOTE: 7-0-3, Motion Passed.

FY27 Capital Costs Scenario 2

1.	Replace 900 Chromebooks	$342,000
2.	Replace 30 Chromebook Carts	$ 33,310
3.	Renovate MS Front Sidewalk and ADA Ramp	$17,844
4.	Design & Permitting Softball, T&F, Tennis	$194,000

Discussion regarding reducing the number of Chromebooks to be replaced took place. It was agreed to reduce the number of Chromebooks to be replaced to 300 and reduce the number of Chromebook carts to be replaced to 20. The FY27 Capital Costs would be reduced to $359,154.00.

T. Currier made a motion to reduce the replacement of Chromebooks to 300 and reduce the number of Chromebook carts replaced to 20. W. Hodges seconded and motion unanimously approved 10-0.

MOTION: Reduce replacement of Chromebooks and Chromebook carts.
VOTE: 10-0, Motion Passed.

A motion was made by T. Currier to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy relative to negotiations with non-union personnel, Superintendent Elect Heather Galante, Executive Purpose #2. The School Committee will not return to Open Session. W. Hodges seconded the motion and unanimously approved by Rollcall vote:

M. Alexander – yes	**M. Ogden – yes**	**A. Heaphy-Tenny – yes**
T. Currier – yes	**L. MacInnis – yes**	**J. Hodges – yes**
W. Hodges – yes	**K. Petrone – yes**	**M. Giberson – yes**
J. McLean - yes		

Meeting adjourned at 11:05pm

Submitted By: _____ Approved: _____
Lynn Viselli, Recording Secretary Date

Per the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, the list of documents that distributed to the Masconomet School Committee before the meeting in the packet or at the meeting.

1. Agenda
2. FY27 Budget Deliberations and Presentation