

**Woburn School Committee
Woburn Public Schools
55 Locust Street
Woburn, MA 01801**

A regular meeting of the Woburn School Committee was held on May 28, 2025, in the Conference Room of the Joyce Middle School located at 55 Locust Street, Woburn, Massachusetts, starting at 7:00 p.m.

For the purposes of simultaneous viewing, the School Committee arranged for the live stream of the meeting via the Woburn Public Media YouTube Channel.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Mr. Austin- Present, Mrs. Chisholm-Present, Ms. Cormier-Present, Mr. Lipsett-Present, Mr. Mulrenan-Present, Ms. Wetzal-Present, Chair Crowley-Present

Ms. Cormier made a motion to take Goodyear Elementary School out of the agenda order. The motion was seconded, all in favor. The motion passed 7-0.

Goodyear Elementary School Post Office Project

Ms. Patrissi, Ms. Williams, Mr. Norden, and students came before the committee to tell them about their postal service, which is run by and for the students.

This program strengthens community and connection, promotes positive behavior, gives students meaningful leadership roles, and fosters writing skills and authentic communication.

Mr. Norden, who is a teacher in the GAIN program, came to Principal Patrissi, and Vice Principal Williams with the idea to run a school mail system. He got this idea from the previous school where he worked.

They had 60 applicants from grades 4 & 5 who had to fill out an application and interview. 30 students were offered the job and trained over the course of 2 days. The school offered the unhired students a position on the Kindness Committee.

Postal Workers Dominic, Tyler, Dezi, Reese, and Joshua told the committee about their responsibilities.

Mail Room Clerks

- Receive and sort incoming mail

- Track the mail that each student receives on a spreadsheet. They make sure all students are receiving mail.

- Stamp and prepare mail for delivery

- Assist in keeping the mailroom neat and organized

- Work closely with mail carriers to ensure proper mail distribution

- Follow all school rules; respectful, responsible, and safe

Mail Carriers' Responsibilities:

- Collect mail from designated drop-off locations

- Start and organize mail for delivery

- Deliver mail to classrooms, offices, and other school locations

- Work as a team with other mail carriers and mailroom workers

- Follow all school rules; respectful, responsible, and safe

The students told the committee they are part of the Lion Pride Postal Service because they love to help their school. They all love to take on extra responsibilities and like helping others.

Mr. Lipsett made a motion to return to the regular order of business.

The motion was seconded, all in favor. The motion passed 7-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Cormier made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

The motion was seconded, all in favor. The motion passed 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Emily Peters spoke of the idea of putting the ECP in the high school. She thanked Dr. Crowley and Ellen Crowley for their receptiveness to the idea, citing its successful implementation in Burlington and Billerica.

Mr. Mulrenan made a motion to enter Ms. Peters' document into the public record.

The motion was seconded, all in favor. The motion passed 7-0.

Rachel Kuberry addressed the unresolved issue of threshold numbers for adding bubble rooms to grade levels, including the number needed to add a fourth classroom to a grade, in her comments tonight. She would like the threshold numbers to be equitable.

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Mr. Viola was attending a city council meeting.

REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS OF SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF

Facilities Update, Director Len Burnham

Mr. Burnham began by telling the committee about some district-wide initiatives working with the DPW. Some of those things include drainage system cleaning and some vegetation management. Doing these projects, in conjunction with the DPW, allowed them to get more done by using fewer funds.

Mr. Burnham, along with Dr. Crowley, Ms. Young, and Ms. Ryan, went through the security audits, which took a tremendous amount of time. The administration and the committee have seen the reports. Maintenance crews changed locks in four buildings, and the team is currently evaluating security vendors, intrusion alarms, and fire alarms. They are revamping some vendors.

The district focused on essential infrastructure maintenance and upgrades, including pest management, roof evaluations, and solar inspections.

A new work order management system showed significant progress, and water testing is 30% complete. Other district-wide efforts included implementing recycling dumpsters, a load shedding program, and updating Building Management System (BMS) schedules.

Mr. Burnham went through some school-specific projects. Individual schools saw a range of targeted improvements.

Altavesta: Improvements focused on site access (rear road paving), internal space construction, roof repairs, and handicap parking redesign.

Goodyear: Major BMS system upgrades and repairs were undertaken, boiler alarm correction, and general BMS fixes. Workers completed the fence repairs.

Hurld Wyman: Projects included shades, addressing a sprinkler pipe flood, and lighting controls.
Linscott: Hallways were painted, the assessment center was upgraded, and fence repairs were completed.

Malcolm White: Workers constructed a new parking lot, and they improved drainage to handle stormwater infiltration. A new BMS controller was installed, and an ASHP is being replaced.

Reeves: Significant HVAC and drainage work was done. They completed sprinkler and fence repairs, as well as installing a handicap door opener.

Shamrock: Chiller repair, fire sprinkler repairs, a playground security light, and fence repairs were completed.

Joyce: Focused on IT infrastructure, auditorium floor, painted offices, new rugs in the central office, fire escape roof replacement, and gas leak repairs.

Kennedy: Auditorium AV doors, bathroom lock, and stall door replacements. Roof repairs, drainage, and parking lot repairs.

WMHS: Rebuilding chilled water pumps, various roof leaks, replacing faulty fire alarm power supplies, and elevator dialers. HVAC improvements, electrical work, and ground vegetation were trimmed.

Bleacher underwent numerous repairs and pressure washing,

Chair Crowley thanked Mr. Burnham for all of his work with the modular situation.

Ms. Wetzel thanked Mr. Burnham for his collaboration with him and the DPW throughout the city.

Mr. Lipsett asked about the roofs that they are looking at, as this has been a persistent capital request. He participated in that discussion last year when they discussed this with the mayor. He would like to know the number of roofs Mr. Burnham thinks are truly necessary right now, and there are others that we are able to patch.

Mr. Burnham, in his estimation, and from the reports, said two of our roofs are critical: Shamrock and Linscott. The Joyce and Kennedy are newer, and we probably have 15–20 years left on those with regular maintenance. The White, Reeves, and the high school are going to need roofs. Your standard commercial roof has a 25-year lifespan. Mr. Burnham feels that if we can come up with a plan and funding, some options would be less expensive than a full roof replacement. If we could do a fleece back fluid coating possibly on them, that would buy us another 20 years. We can't do that on a roof that's been leaking consistently and has more than 2% damp, wet insulation.

Mr. Lipsett thanked Mr. Burnham for all the work he is doing. He believes we desperately need funding for this and is hoping the council recognizes that this is part of maintenance, and we can't do all this ourselves. We need some support from the city,

Mrs. Chisholm asked about the solar panels.

Mr. Burnham responded by saying we have dashboards for all of our solar systems except the high school. The high school is only a 30kw system, and it's currently not functioning. We have someone working on getting a PO to fix it, but that's one system that we own. The other ones are all PPAs, so we pay out what we get a return on our electric bills. We have usage of production dashboards for all of them up and running, so we know what we're getting, which we did not know 6 months or a year ago. Mr. Burnham told the committee we know what we're producing, but the issue is he can't show it to them on an Eversource bill because they can't get an accurate Eversource bill. Last June, Eversource changed its billing system, resulting in chaotic bills that fail to display credits correctly. He has sat through half a dozen webinars and Zoom meetings with Eversource, and they are not much further than

they were a year ago. He hopes to get more traction with this, and he mentioned the city has the same exact problem on their side

Mrs. Chisholm asked if a July 1st capital list could be given to the committee and city council members.

Mr. Mulrenan asked Mr. Burnham if he could add the Altavesta roof to his list. He also brought up the mold at the Altavesta and asked him to check that out and get back to the committee with his readings that he finds.

Mr. Mulrenan asked about the Shamrock roof.

Mr. Burnham said there is no funding for this.

FY26 Update

Dr. Crowley began by saying they presented the budget to the city council last night.

It is a \$440,000 difference from what the mayor sent down to the city council. He understands last year's investment in the schools was record-setting.

At last night's budget presentation, they went through a series of questions with the city council.

They didn't ask the committee to take any action tonight, necessarily, but one of the things that did come up was the \$440,000 between what the school committee voted on April 30th and what the mayor sent down to the city council.

Tonight, Dr. Crowley told the committee he wanted to prepare them if they did need to close that gap.

Dr. Crowley presented the committee with a list of potential deductions to close the discrepancy. He also told the committee it was hard to come up with this list because we need all of these things on this list.

Culture Specialist	\$ 68,898.00
1 Assistant Superintendent	\$185,000.00
2 ML Paras	\$ 62,245.00
Staff Mileage	\$ 900.00
Legal	\$ 25,000.00
Totals	\$440,043.00

Dr. Crowley noted a vacant ML Para position and that they will relocate the other; no job losses will occur.

Chair Crowley told the committee that what is in front of them tonight is not the school committee's budget but the mayor's budget. She also told them that it's possible, but it's a super extraordinary measure that the council would add to the budget.

Mr. Lipsetts does not think it is necessary to take action at this meeting.

He didn't get the sense that the council would give them any more money than what the mayor's budget said. He doesn't think they can anticipate having any more money.

Mr. Lipsett wants to make sure we are not moving backwards and asked Ms. Young to talk about why ML Para is an option.

Ms. Young said the ML Para position was very helpful, but they don't, from a compliance end, provide ESL direct services. They have maintained them because they understand their value. They believe other avenues can provide that support.

Ms. Wetzel commented that we need to keep the conversation going, and it is a reality. We need to look at what we might have to cut from our budget. She spoke on the collaboration piece and suggested that, similar to how the city council has a liaison to the school committee, she thinks it would be helpful if the school committee had a liaison to the city council. This liaison could go to monthly meetings and give an update on what the school committee is doing and what the priorities are. This would give the council a better understanding of where the school committee is coming from. This liaison could also help with organizing quarterly meetings where the entirety of both committees gets together.

Mr. Lipsett said since this is not a position the committee has ever had, they would need to define the position, and then the Chair would have the power to appoint.

Chair Crowley asked Vice Chair Chisholm to define this position through the Personnel subcommittee.

Vice Chair Chisholm asked Mr. DiZio if the \$900 staff mileage cut is contractual.

Mr. DiZio replied, No. It is \$3,000 right now, and they have never come close to that, so that shouldn't be an issue.

Vice Chair Chisholm commented that with the \$440,000 cut from what the mayor submitted, we also have to remember we're a million dollars cut from what the committee had originally presented. We're a million and a half from what we thought we needed to run our schools.

Vice Chair Chisholm would like the substitute job to be defined by next budget season because there was a city councilor who spoke in support of this position and the value of having someone in the building every day that the kids would know, for her, this is a hard position to cut. Also, when teachers have their meetings, it is important to have consistency in the building each week.

She also feels strongly about the legal line, as there could be problems with negotiations. We will need to have representation so things run smoother and don't linger as long as they have in the past.

Vice Chair Chisholm said the committee's number has to meet with what the Mayor has submitted by the public meeting.

Chair Crowley informed the public that some budget positions remain unrecommended for removal from the budget. Special education mandated positions, Nurse psychologist, five teachers, high school associate principal, and center registrar staff are still up for funding. These positions are not on Dr. Crowley's list, but things could change. Chair Crowley wanted to make sure people understood this for those who are following along.

Mr. Lipsett asked for clarification from Mr. DiZio on the staff mileage. There is a contractual element to that, but we have tended to budget beyond that. So, Mr. DiZio feels comfortable reducing that by \$900.00.

Mr. DiZio replied yes, he feels comfortable reducing by \$900.00.

Mr. Mulrenan asked Dr. Crowley to speak of the importance of the Associate Principal position at the high school and the Central Registrar.

Dr. Crowley spoke to the Associate Principal. With four classes at the high school and three assistant principals, one class is then taken and covered by the principal.

The initial ask earlier on was for an assistant principal, which has been elevated to an associate principal role. As Mr. Qualey has become more versed at the high school, his vision is for his team to be front-facing with students and staff, and that includes taking on the role of the culture specialist. Mr. Qualey also recognizes that he is not in the building at various times, and the associate principal would be the person in charge when he is not available. He also recognizes the curricular changes at the high school, and having someone who potentially has a strong curricular background would be beneficial in that role as well. Not just having someone for tier one, low-level discipline, but thinking more systematically about the alignment of curricular resources.

Ms. Young spoke to the Central Registrar positions. The committee has talked a lot about the adopted phased approach of redistricting and how it's going to be incredibly difficult to maintain without a central registration. This has been a long-standing need.

Mr. Mulrenan commented that, from the tone of last night's meeting, he does not see the council adding anything to the current budget. He asked Mr. DiZio about retirements.

Mr. DiZio said there are 21 that will be coming out for FY 26, which is already reflected in this budget.

Chair Crowley told the committee that Darlene Mercer-Bruen had asked her to pass along some requests to the committee.

1. She would like a revised budget with the staff's names; our budget just states teacher and the position. This was causing some confusion because the council is seeing "teacher" move here and then "teacher" move there. She would like the committee to consider handing the Council a budget with names in it.
2. Councilor Mercer-Bruen would also like to know if there have been any shifts in these numbers since the committee voted on the budget. The example of Mr. Qualey's move to the high school, occurring after the committee's budget vote, illustrates a change not reflected in the budget. She asked the committee if they could provide a running list of updates.
3. Chair Crowley also commented on the rationale as to why salaries might change; this might look confusing to someone who's not used to seeing an education budget.

Dr. Crowley and Mr. DiZio will work through these requests.

Ms. Young told the committee that personnel aren't always public for a lot of reasons. A staff member may be moving but might not have mentioned it to their building yet, for example. The administration is keeping track of the money and these moves, but Ms. Young wants to caution. Administration has adjustment lines in which they anticipate the changes in salaries, like Mr. Qualey, for example. In terms of personnel, they have contracts to sign, and they also have to plan when they will be telling their staff about their move from one building to another. However, it isn't always that easy to show because there are a lot of nuances. They are putting it in the lines and accounting for the changes that will happen and journaling it through finance to make those adjustments. Oftentimes, they need to wait to move them until the entire domino is done because if they don't, there are problems that will occur.

Ms. Young believes it should be shared, but is cautious about over-promising and under-delivering. She doesn't want to say we can do this because she doesn't know that they totally can.

Dr. Crowley mentioned he has tried to explain the position control idea, both last night and on phone calls, and in an email.

He gave the following example: If they are interviewing this afternoon for a position at Malcolm White, someone from the Reeves could take that position. The Reeves opens and posts that position internally for 24 hours before posting it externally for 5 days.

This request could be produced, but it won't be accurate. There is a litany of moves that happen. Schools are not stagnant. They are moving all the time. It's an extraordinarily complicated system and hard to understand if you're not living it every day.

Dr. Ryan spoke to Darlene Mercer-Bruen, and what she asked is if she would just give her where we're at today. Dr. Ryan made it clear that it would not be an accurate representation of what you would see over the years. It would be very difficult to do because of just how fluid things are.

Dr. Ryan also mentioned to her that there will be some money that is returned to the city, and that is because of some positions that were vacant at some point in time. That is money that the city will be seeing back where the positions weren't staffed, whether it's for weeks, days, or a month.

For special education, you can't just eliminate a position. You have to make a good-faith effort to fill every position that we know a child needs because it is our legal obligation to do that.

Mr. Mulrenan, being a firefighter, knows the fire chief would submit his budget with each firefighter's name and salary to the council. He asked the Administration to explain to the public why the school department does not submit its budget to the city council in that way.

Dr. Crowley said they received advice from MASBO; the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials. They recommended best practice statewide is not to do so. If you look at all the surrounding communities, there is not a school district that he can find that doesn't do it this way. Dr. Crowley will provide what was asked, but at MASBO's recommendation, best practice in part because when you're putting a budget together, for reasons just explained, things are moving all the time.

Vice Chair Chisholm said she thinks they wanted to know the names to attach to the salaries. She suggested that after the budget is done, they could provide them with names, per school.

Ms. Cormier made a motion to adjust the school committee budget to \$95,962,440, as presented to the city council by the mayor, with the cuts recommended by administration.
The motion was seconded.

On the motion, Mr. Lipsett thinks it's important to note that when we look at the assistant superintendent position, it's a mistake to describe this as a requested position. We have lost central administration in the budget already. We are reduced by a tech director and a curriculum coordinator. Those are jobs that have responsibilities that need to be filled, and they are now going unfilled because we cannot hire a position that the Administration needs in order to fill those gaps.

On the motion, Mr. Mulrenan asked if the previous principal, Dan Rasanen, would be in this budget. Dr. Crowley told the committee that he is not in this budget; he's working in the curriculum department on special projects right now.

On the motion, all in favor. The motion passed 7-0.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance & Personnel Subcommittee

Mrs. Chisholm said they have not met.

Community Relations Subcommittee

Mr. Austin said they have not met.

Curriculum and Data Trends Subcommittee

Mr. Lipsett said they have not met

Policy Subcommittee

Ms. Cormier said they are meeting tomorrow morning, but there are policies on the table for Action at this time.

For Adoption

GBGE - Domestic violence leave

- was added to the MASC in 2022 and recommended for adoption by Mr. Wyman

GBGF - Family and Medical Leave

- 4 separate policies that now encompass this altogether and recommended by Mr. Wyman

JF - School Admissions

JFE-1 and JFE-2 are two example policies with more language behind them

Ms. Cormier would like to move forward and adopt the following policies:

GBGE, GBGF, JF, JFE1 and JFE2.

The motion was seconded, all in favor. The motion passed 7-0.

For Removal

BDC, which is due to an update of a previous policy and is no longer needed, and then the four that the family medical leave replaced: GCCC, GCCC-E, GDCC, and GDCC-E.

Ms. Cormier made a motion to remove those policies from the manual

The motion was seconded, all in favor. The motion passed 7-0.

Resources & Capital Planning Subcommittee

Ms. Wetzel said they met twice.

May 14, 2025

Information To Know:

- Redistrict link on WPS website: <https://sites.google.com/woburnps.com/redistricting/home>
- Redistrict email: redistrict@woburnps.com
- Approved capital budget FY 2025:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZMTc1Le7farSbluTxVB_ez4Kvj7vipv/-edit
- Current proposed capital budget FY 2026:
adsheets/d/1gd9dD5EbQxI0NmBHoz5hLyrlqLfRjv1S8ukGMVZELFU/edit?gid=296555766#gid=296555766
- Current capital budget five-year plan:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ofgsdwlk2kfdhgGpwKmqggQwrCUFEUq0qT8ZvZ-ZEXM/edit?usp=sharing>

May 20, 2025

- Ms. Young provided the following updates. We will continue to have this discussion at upcoming Resources and Capital Planning meetings.
- Family Notification:

- All impacted families have been notified and confirmed receipt of redistricting communications.
- Support and Implementation:
 - Building Principals and Student Services are actively supporting affected students and families.
 - Rania is managing support for Multilingual Learners (ML) and staffing adjustments.
- Engagement Activities:
 - Hurd-Wyman to Malcolm White Tour successfully completed.
 - March 23: Half-day—school buildings will be open in the afternoon for family visits.
 - March 28: Additional engagement planned.
- Ongoing Planning:
 - Initial draft plan in progress to address:
 - Grey areas in boundary lines
 - Current and projected enrollment
 - Transportation logistics
 - Building capacity
 - Draft will be shared first with this subcommittee, then forwarded to the full School Committee.
- Review Current Transportation Policy: Woburn currently provides bus service to students living within 1.5 miles of their school, which is more generous than the DESE recommendation of outside 2 miles.

Modular Update

- Status Update from Dr. Crowley: Modular units from Nauset Public Schools are planned to remain in use through October. They remain a viable option for Woburn.
- Cost Considerations:
 - Modular unit specifications and costs remain unchanged from prior estimates.
 - Primary expenses are transportation and installation.
- DiNisco Design:
 - Estimated cost of proposal: \$30,000
 - Suggested Action: Consider having Donna with DiNisco conduct a site visit and presentation to the School Committee to demonstrate feasibility and potential support for the study.

Ms. Cormier commented that because Nauset is going to be using the modulares through October, if there is a chance that we can get them, we would want to start that process sooner rather than later. Dr. Crowley will reach out to Donna DiNisco, She was able to provide the quote that was given to the committee back in February pretty quickly.

Ms. Wetzel asked Dr. Crowley to see if Donna DiNisco could attend the Resources subcommittee on June 11th.

Chair Crowley said she did our feasibility study, and she has expertise in MSBA, and obviously, she has expertise in space capacity issues.

Chair Crowley is in support of this and will talk to the superintendent about her coming to a resource subcommittee meeting.

Student Services and Achievement Subcommittee

Mr. Mulrenan said they have not met.

CORRESPONDENCE

The committee received an invitation to the WMHS Class of 2025 Graduation

The committee received an invitation to the Senior Scholarship Assembly on June 4th

Dr. Crowley, next Thursday, June 5th, is the Above and Beyond Ceremony

Adam Chapman - as of May 27th, SEPAC has elected a new executive board

Emily Peters - the chart regarding the ECP

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Donna DiNisco invites

Mr. Lipsett made a motion to enter into the executive session.

The motion was seconded, all in favor. The motion passed 7-0.

Roll Call

Mr. Austin-yes, Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Ms.

Wetzel-yes, Ms. Crowley-yes

Entered into the Executive Session at 9:15 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and/or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Chair Crowley announced we were back in regular session at 9:53. No votes were taken,

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Mulrenan made a motion to adjourn.

The motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean MacLeod

Jean MacLeod

Recording Secretary