

MASCONOMET REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

December 10, 2025

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: M. Harvey, Superintendent
J. Sands, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
C. Bolzan, Boxford

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael White, Boxford Finance Committee
Barbara Jessel, Boxford Select Board
Michelle Merceir-Link, Topsfield Select Board
Che Elewell, Boxford Finance Committee
Dan Volchok, Boxford Finance Committee
Kosta Prentakis, Middleton Select Board
John Erickson, Middleton Finance Committee
Heidi Fox, Topsfield Finance Committee
Rafael McDonald, Topsfield Select Board

A. **Call to Order** – M. Alexander Chair, called the School Committee Meeting of December 10, 2025, to Order at 6:06pm, in the High School Library.

B. **Comments from the Audience** – Fred Glore, Boxford, spoke regarding the Turf project. He said residents were told it would be privately funded. He is concerned with the environmental impact of the turf fields. He spoke about the original NOI filed and then second NOI filed which has been continued to January 2026 with the Boxford Conservation Commission. He wants the NOI withdrawn and the funds spent on other items.

C. **Remarks from the Chair** – M. Alexander thanked the Finance Committee and Select Board members who are attending tonight's meeting. He asked that this be a collaborative and constructive dialogue. On the Agenda for discussion are Class Offerings, Administrative Services and Central Office

D. **Discussion of FY27 Budget with Town Officials**

CLASS OFFERINGS

K. Prentakis asked that funding of the budget be discussed and transfers from E&D. He believes the Administration needs to be provided guidelines for the budget.

M. Alexander reviewed the Department Head presentations the Committee has heard to date.

T. Currier added that academic class sizes are 14 to 24 per our policy. Some classes run smaller due to scheduling conflicts. The smaller classes should be reviewed for the budget. Discussion followed regarding changing the class size policy.

A. Heaphy-Tenney agreed that scheduling is an issue, however the SC has no control over scheduling. Discussion followed as to how classes and electives are filled.

M. Ogden added that HS students have to take 7 classes and teachers are needed to teach other sections even if programs are dropped. AP offerings are Masco's strongest asset, and we need to make sure the students who are not in AP classes are taken care of and funded. Kosta Prentakis offered to limit the number of AP classes a student can take. Discussion followed regarding the benefits of AP classes to our students.

J. McLean added that the SC needs to investigate the demand for classes.

M. Giberson stated that there is value in piloting AP courses with 8/9 students.

Kosta Prentakis suggested the SC look at what a program looks like with "X" less staff and is it an acceptable level of programming.

M. Ogden added that the impact on all populations of students needs to be included in reasoning for removing a program or reductions in staff etc.

Dan Volchok suggested MS teams can be reviewed and possibly reduced to 2.5 teams.

M. Ogden stated that MS operations should be a greater discussion and not part of the budget discussion.

Heidi Fox added that numbers only tell part of the story and the Town Representatives need to be able to recommend something reasonable to their residents.

John Erickson would like non-teaching positions reviewed as well.

K. Petrone added that efficiency is important, and she asked how scheduling could be improved.

L. MacInnis stated that changes are going to have to be made but we need to make sure Masco remains an excellent school.

W. Hodges reminded the Committee that every tax increase is a burden for a number of residents and must be taken into consideration.

M. Alexander asked if Masco is running the most financially efficient school, we could. We need to ask for the data to minimize the impacts to our students.

A. Heaphy-Tenney agreed and added that she has repeatedly asked for the data but has not received it.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

M. Alexander reviewed the items to be covered; Single Principal, Director of Teaching & Learning/Department Heads, and Central Office Organization.

T. Currier stated that since both schools are on the same campus, we could manage with a single principal if there was a strong vice principal at the MS and 2 strong vice principals at the HS.

Discussion followed regarding the role of Department Heads evaluating teachers and the Director of Teaching and Learning evaluating Department Heads. The Committee will compare other Districts who use this model and discuss what can be gained vs. what is lost moving to a single Principal model. It was discussed that the Director of Teaching and Learning and Department Heads are needed. Department Heads also teach classes.

M. Giberson believes the Department Head model is outdated and we should move to Directors so there is no teaching schedule. It was discussed how the Department Head model is working at Masco.

Dan Volchok suggested the Director of Teaching and Learning assume some of the Department Head responsibilities freeing them up to teach another section.

M. Ogden would like to know if the Director of Teaching and Learning is meeting his goals and how he has impacted the roles of the Department Heads.

K. Petrone added that she is not sure what role the Director of Teaching and Learning plays and she thought he would be providing data to make informed changes.

M. Alexander replied that the Director of Teaching and Learning has only been here for 1 school year, he needs time to implement data collection. He added that the Administration has supported the SC and have run every scenario in the budget asked for.

CENTRAL OFFICE ORGANIZATION

M. Alexander reviewed the structure of the Central Office.

W. Hodges suggested checking with other Districts to see how their Central Offices are run.

It was suggested an audit take place of the Central Office.

Nicko, Masco Teachers President, stated that any avenue that does not impact losing educators should be first evaluated and losing teachers should be a last resort.

M. Giberson agreed and added that more should be asked of the Administration. She also stated that Masco should be doing more to keep Special Education students at Masco.

Brad Denton informed the SC that Masco does not outplace many students. Students are outplaced prior to coming to Masco. Masco has great programs and we are working towards bridging the problem. Staff is reaching out and visiting with schools and building relationships with the elementary schools.

Dan Volchok asked if there are services which can be shared or work that can be contracted out or contracted services brought in. Are there any systems that would make Masco more efficient.

A. Heaphy-Tenney asked if the position held by Jeff Sands was necessary. Could it be combined with other services.

M. Alexander added that everything was on the table and that Jeff Sands had a year left on his contract.

GEORGETOWN UPDATE

M. Alexander informed the SC that Georgetown approached Masco and met with Mike and Jeff to discuss their enrollment struggles and their options for next year. Accepting them into Masco would have to be financially beneficial to us.

J. McLean added that there are 10 teachers who will be retiring within a few years, which will result in a large savings. With a new Superintendent coming on board why cut teachers and/or programs now.

T. Currier made a motion to adjourn at 9:05 PM, seconded by L. MacInnis and unanimously approved.

MOTION: Adjourn meeting

VOTE: 10-0, Motion Carried.

Submitted By: _____
Lynn Viselli, Recording Secretary

Approved _____
Date

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