

Mt. Blue Regional School District - RSU 9



COMMUNITY | CULTURE | CURRICULUM

"Working together to provide high-quality educational opportunities for all."

227 Main Street, Farmington, ME 04938
(207) 778-6571 | (Fax) 778-4160

Chesterville | Farmington | Industry | New Sharon | New Vineyard | Starks | Temple | Vienna | Weld | Wilton

Board of Directors Board Meeting Agenda Minutes

DATE: March 24, 2026
PLACE: The Forum - Mt. Blue Campus
TIME: 6:30pm
LIVESTREAM LINK: <https://boxcast.tv/channel/unvoa3ijkfnyp9oufole>

Board Members Present: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Patty Hastings, Greg Kimber, Wayne Kinney, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner

Board Members Absent: Josh Robbins

Student Reps Present: Brynne Fournier, Reed Cousineau, Rowan Shanti

Student Reps Absent: Julian Reynolds

Staff Present: Christian Elkington, Monique Poulin, Alison Gamache

Other Staff Present: Kevin Bremner, Richard Joseph, Cynthia Bernstein, Mike Hanson, Joel Smith, Galen Dalrymple, Katie Duchesne, James Black, Carol Kiesman, Nichole Goodspeed, Keith Acedo, Stacey Gilbert, John Logan, Katie Joseph, Amanda Barker, Melanie Prescott

- I. **Call to Order** - Chair Gwen Doak
 - A. Chair Doak called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

- III. **Adjustments to the Agenda**
 - A. New Business
 1. Robotics Field Trip

- IV. **Report of the Chairperson** - Chair Doak
 - A. [BCA - Board Member Code of Ethics](#)
 1. "K & L"

- V. **Communications**
 - A. [School Funding Formula News](#)
 1. FY28 implementation
 2. Questions

- a. This should be a positive if it passes
- b. This has been approved by the State Ed Committee unanimously, and now would need to go through the budget process at the state level before future implementation.
- c. This would not be enacted any earlier than 27-28
- 3. Today was School Board advocacy day in Augusta
 - a. Well received and EPS funding formula was hot topic
 - i. Seems likely to pass with 27-28 enactment.

VI. Good News Stories from the Board or Administrators

- A. Student Rep: This past Thursday, 6 MBHS students went to the PBS Maine Trivia which aired on tv. Brynne and Julian were 2 of the students who participated.
- B. FCTEC & FBLA
 - 1. Competition: The event went very well.
 - a. Students asked lots of questions
 - b. Regina Savage selected as instructor of the year for FBLA
 - c. Travel: The trip left a day early due to weather concerns and team collaboration.
- C. MBHS / MBC
 - 1. Theater: Highlights included the One Act Festival at Lawrence.
 - a. 3 of our students got recognition and the whole cast got recognized for their "Accents"
 - b. Now practicing for Little Women to be performed in May
 - 2. Electrical: Instruction is going well. Students are learning a lot.
 - 3. Athletics: Unified Basketball played the Farmington PD. The PD lost to the Unified team. Great turnout
- D. MBMS
 - 1. Literacy: 8th graders did Buddy Reading at WGM and Sweatt-Winter.
 - 2. Wrestling: Hundreds of students competed in the regional wrestling meet at MBMS.
 - 3. STEAM: The Grade 3–8 GATE night was well-attended.
 - 4. Culture: The staff held a Chili Chowder Challenge and a March Madness spirit week.
- E. District-Wide
 - 1. Music: "Music in Our Schools" month featured many impressive performances.
 - 2. Facilities: As leaks appear they are being fixed. Thanks to custodians, maintenance, and contractors for their hard work.

VII. Public Comment

- A. Policy [BEDH: Public Participation At Board Meetings](#)
 - 1. Dillon Burnham - from Farmington spoke

VIII. [Superintendent's Report](#) - Superintendent Christian M. Elkington

- A. New Hires, Transfers, Resignations, and Retirements
- B. Openings as of 3/24/2026
- C. LD 1892 School Construction
- D. FCCTF RSU 09 21st CCLC Annual Site Visit and Progress Monitoring Report 2026
- E. RAISE Maine - Letter of Support 3.10.26

- F. BARR Letter of Support
- G. Titcomb Mountain Letter of Support

IX. Administrator Reports

- A. [Transportation](#) - Director Richard Joseph Jr.
 - 1. Director Joseph reviewed the highlights of his report and answered questions.
 - 2. Recognition & Appreciation
 - a. Shout-out to support staff for their hard work.
 - b. Gratitude to the Superintendent for driver safety concerns during bad weather.
 - c. Condolences expressed at the passing of driver Carolyn Boyker.
 - 3. Training & Operations
 - a. Driver Dynamics class scheduled for all drivers on 3/20.
 - b. Provided support for the WMEC professional day shuttle.
 - c. All transportation staff will attend upcoming conferences (April and TBD).
 - 4. Culture & Community
 - a. Department meeting team building via potlucks.
 - b. Charity collection for the local animal shelter.
 - 5. Fleet & Equipment
 - a. New bus features: Feature a Driver-side air bag.
 - b. All buses currently equipped with safety gates.
 - c. Discussion on future safety tech (e.g., side stop cameras for red-light runners).
 - d. New propane bus cost: \$150,000 (projected average).
 - 6. Budget & Fuel
 - a. Three months remaining in the fiscal year.
 - b. Diesel and propane prices locked through 6/30.
 - c. Daily monitoring of fuel costs for FY27 planning due to price increases.
- B. [Special Education](#) - Director Cynthia Bernstein
 - 1. Director Bernstein and Assistant Director Hanson reviewed the highlights and answered questions.
- C. PEERS Program:
 - 1. Additional details were shared regarding the early elementary curriculum.
 - 2. Occupational Therapy (OT)
 - 3. Spaces are well-structured across all district buildings.
- D. Service Transitions:
 - 1. Students can and do transition out of services.
- E. Primary objective: Gradual reduction of services leading to eventual discharge.
 - 1. Extended Eligibility & Adaptive Skills:
 - 2. Focus on students staying beyond 12th grade.
- F. Current Stats: Five 12th graders are set to graduate; one student currently enrolled in the extended program.
 - 1. Transition planning is an ongoing discussion throughout the high school years.
- G. [Technology](#) - Director Kevin Bremner
 - 1. Director Bremner reviewed the highlights of his report and answered questions.
 - 2. Network Security
 - a. Firewall Status: It is extremely difficult for students to bypass the internal firewall.

- b. Current Challenge: Managing personal devices brought from home remains an ongoing focus.
- 3. Screen Time Tracking
 - a. Status: Not currently monitored, but MDM (Mobile Device Management) potential is being explored.
 - b. Target: The district will investigate tracking capabilities for Grade 5 and up.
- 4. Usage Philosophy
 - a. Quality vs. Quantity: Focus is on differentiating "endless scrolling" from purposeful educational use.
 - b. Goal: Utilizing devices specifically to expand student opportunities rather than just increasing time on screen.
- 5. Device Comparison (iPad vs. NEO)
 - a. Evaluation: NEO devices currently show higher performance metrics than iPads.
 - b. Strategy: Data will be compared over the coming years to inform future purchasing decisions.
- 6. Technical Benchmarking
 - a. Performance: Currently matches M1 standards (original goal was between M1 and M2).
 - b. Concern: Long-term durability and longevity are the primary variables still under review.

X. Field Trips

A. Field Trips

1. [Class of 26 Senior Trip](#)

- a. Review
 - i. Amanda Barker reviewed the trip details.
- b. Discussion/Questions
 - i. 80 attending and 164 are in the class
- Motion/Vote

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Motion to approve the Senior Class Trip as presented.</i> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Patty Hastings, Greg Kimber, Wayne Kinney, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner</p> <p>Nays:</p> <p>Abstain:</p> <p>Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau</p> <p>Student Nays:</p> <p>Student Abstain:</p> <p>970/0/0</p> | <i>Motion: Rich Ruhlin Second: Jeff Barnum Motion: Passed</i> |
|--|---|---|

2. [National Speech & Debate Tournament in D.C.](#)

- a. Review
 - i. John Logan reviewed the details of the trip.
- b. Discussion/Questions
 - Motion/Vote

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p><i>Motion to approve the Field Trip as presented.</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Patty Hastings, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Wayne Kinney Nays: Abstain: Wayne Kinney Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau Student Nays: Student Abstain: 886/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Debbie Smith Second: Scott Erb Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|--|--|---|

3. [Robotics UVM Trip](#)

- a. Review
 - i. Katie Joseph reviewed the details of the trip.
- b. Discussion/Questions
 - Motion/Vote

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p><i>Motion to approve the Robotics Field Trips as presented.</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Patty Hastings Nays: Abstain: Wayne Kinney Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau Student Nays: Student Abstain: 886/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Scott Erb Second: Rich Ruhlin Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|--|--|--|

4. [Robotics District Championship](#)

- a. Review
 - i. Katie Joseph reviewed the details of the trip.
- b. Discussion/Questions
 - Motion/Vote

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p><i>Motion to approve the Robotics Field Trips as presented.</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Patty Hastings Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau Student Nays: Student Abstain: 886/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Angie LeClair Second: Lance Harvell Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|--|---|--|

XI. Presentations

A. FY 27 Proposed Budget

1. Review
 - a. Superintendent Elkington
2. Questions
3. Possible vote later under New Business

XII. Consent Agenda

- A. New Hires/Resignations etc.
 - B. Board Minutes - [3/10/2026](#)
 - C. Committee Report Outs and Minutes
 1. Operations Committee - None
 2. Personnel & Finance - None
 3. Educational Policy - None
- Motion/Vote

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p><i>Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Patty Hastings, Greg Kimber, Wayne Kinney, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner</p> <p>Nays:</p> <p>Abstain:</p> <p>Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau</p> <p>Student Nays:</p> <p>Student Abstain:</p> <p>970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Patty Hastings Second: Scott Erb Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|--|---|---|

XIII. New Business

- A. [FY 27 Proposed Budget](#)
 1. Review
 - a. Superintendent Elkington reviewed the document with the overview of the district budget.
 2. Discussion/Questions?
 - a. Rich Ruhlin, member of the budget committee, spoke and requested support as the proposed budget balances student and community needs. He gave a shout out to all involved in creating the budget.
 - b. We are allowed to carry forward 9% and we have 6.5 %.
 - c. \$250,000 will be pulled from the reserve account to cover some Maintenance needs. If oil prices spike, the cost of heating and busing will jump along with it. Since no extra money was set aside for fuel during the recent budget meeting, those rising costs might force us to take money away from necessary building repairs. To plan better for the future, we may need to consider "common sense" savings, like slightly lowering the heat in our buildings or pausing non-essential spending.
 - d. Can we access further carryforward in an emergency situation? This can happen and as necessary, we can bring the budget back to the taxpayers.
 - e. Some think that the fuel situation is not a long term crisis,
- Motion/Vote

a. This it to move it forward to the community meeting

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p><i>Motion to the move the proposed budget forward to the community forum</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Patty Hastings, Greg Kimber, Wayne Kinney, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau Student Nays: Student Abstain: 970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Rich Ruhlin Second: Amanda Caruso Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|---|---|--|

B. [Policy Work](#) -

1. Brand New (second of two readings)

- a. [JJIAB draft public charter school students participation in activities](#)
- b. [JJIAB-E1 Public Charter-School-Student-Application-for-Participation](#)
- c. [JJIAB-E2 Public Charter-School-Student-Application-to-Participate-in](#)
- d. [JJIAB-E3-Public Charter-School-Verification-of-Eligibility-to-Part](#)
- e. [JJIAB-E4-Public Charter-School-Student-Verification-of-Eligibility](#)
- f. These follow the same expectations as our private school applications
- g. Discussion/Questions
- Motion/Vote

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p><i>Motion to approve the Policies as presented.</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Wayne Kinney, Patty Hastings Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau Student Nays: Student Abstain: 970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Wayne Kinney Second: Debbie Smith Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|--|---|--|

2. Replacement (second of two readings)

- a. [IHBK DNR Draft replacement](#)
 - i. There were concerns around clarity of the old policy.
 - ii. MSMA provided new language.
 - iii. This is the policy that nurses and school physician are recommending.
- b. Discussion/Questions
 - i. MSMA or nursing staff
 - (a) MSMA and nurses compared it; we used the one recommended by MSMA and the nurses agreed.
 - (b) The second to last paragraph's last sentence is better than what we had.

- Motion/Vote

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p><i>Motion to approve the Policy as presented.</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Wayne Kinney, Patty Hastings Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau Student Nays: Student Abstain: 970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Wayne Kinney Second: Patty Hastings Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|--|---|--|

XIV. Executive Sessions

A. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(D) - For the purpose of discussing Labor Contract Negotiations with the Professional Association

- Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(D) - For the purpose of discussing Labor Contract Negotiations with the Professional Association.

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p><i>Motion to go into Executive Session for discussion of Labor Contract Negotiations</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Wayne Kinney, Patty Hastings Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Brynne Fournier, Rowan Shanti, Reed Cousineau Student Nays: Student Abstain: 970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Angie LeClair Second: Jeff Barnum Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|---|---|--|

We took a short break and entered into Executive Session at 8:25

Exited Executive Session at 8:45

- Motion to extend the meeting until 9pm

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p><i>Motion to extend the Meeting until 9pm.</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Patty Hastings, Greg Kimber, Wayne Kinney, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Student Nays: Student Abstain: 970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Rich Ruhlin Second: Patty Hastings Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|---|---|---|

B. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(A) - For the purpose of discussing Duties of Officials/Employees

- Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(A) - For the purpose of discussing Duties of Officials/Employees

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p><i>Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss duties of officials/ employees</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Wayne Kinney, Patty Hastings Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Student Nays: Student Abstain: 970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Rich Ruhlin Second: Patty Hastings Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|---|---|---|

Entered Executive Session at 8:46

Exited Executive Session at 8:48

C. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(A) - For the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's Contract

- Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(A) - For the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's Contract

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p><i>Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the superintendent's contract</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Wayne Kinney, Patty Hastings Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Student Nays: Student Abstain: 970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Rich Ruhlin Second: Patty Hastings Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|--|---|---|

Exited Executive Session at 8:50

Exited Executive Session at 9:04.

- Possible action

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p><i>Motion to continue the Superintendent's contract for another year (2nd year, with no changes).</i></p> | <p>Yeas: Jeff Barnum, Amanda Caruso, Gwen Doak, Scott Erb, Lance Harvell, Greg Kimber, Angie LeClair, Gloria McGraw, Katie Martikke, Gerald Provencher, Rich Ruhlin, Debbie Smith, Dina Spenciner, Wayne Kinney, Patty Hastings Nays: Abstain: Student Yeas: Student Nays: Student Abstain: 970/0/0</p> | <p><i>Motion: Amanda Caruso Second: Lance Harvell Motion: Passed</i></p> |
|--|---|--|

XV. Adjourned without objection at 9:06.

NEXT SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 - 6:30pm - The Forum - Mt. Blue Campus

- *Board Reports - AHS, GDCS, CCHS*
 - *Tentative Presentation Schedule*
 - *District & School Attendance Data*

Tuesday, April 28, 2026 - 6:30pm - The Forum - Mt. Blue Campus

- *Board Reports - WGMS, CBS, MBMS*
 - *Tentative Presentation Schedule*
 - *TBD*

Tuesday, May 12, 2026 - 6:30pm - The Forum - Mt. Blue Campus

- *Board Reports - School Nutrition, McKinney Vento/FESS*
 - *Tentative Presentation Schedule*
 - *TBD*

NEXT SCHEDULED COMMITTEE MEETINGS -

Operations - April 7, 2026 - 5:00pm - The Holman House, District Office

Personnel & Finance - April 7, 2026, - 6:00pm - The Holman House, District Office

Educational Policy - April 7, - 7:00pm - 8:15pm - The Holman House, District Office

Budget Meetings & Other Important Budget Dates

Community Forum - Tuesday, March 31, 2026 - 6:30pm - The Forum - Mt. Blue Campus

Annual Budget Hearing - Tuesday, May 26, 2026 - 7:00pm - Bjorn Auditorium - Mt. Blue Campus

Budget Referendum - Tuesday, June 9, 2026 - Individual Polling Hours and Locations by Town