

## Meeting Notice

Board/Committee Name: Orange Elementary School Committee  
Day/Date: January 26, 2026  
Time of Meeting: 5:00PM executive session, 6:00PM general session  
Location: **Fisher Hill Elementary School**  
**Cafeteria**  
59 Dexter St.  
Orange, MA 01364



[Google Meet joining info](#)

[Video call link: https://meet.google.com/eco-vdxv-nyu](https://meet.google.com/eco-vdxv-nyu) (this link will be used if school is cancelled due to inclement weather)

[Or dial: +1 609-459-3012 PIN: 527 080 187#](#)

## MINUTES

1. Call To Order - VIRTUAL MEETING - Mallory called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.  
Members present: Frank Hains, Crystal Clarke, Josefa Scherer, Jessica Reske
2. Pledge of Allegiance - Mallory led the Pledge of allegiance.  
Mallory made a statement regarding the passing of Melissa Stevens, former Paraprofessional at OES. A moment of silence was held.
3. Public Comment - None
4. Approval of Minutes - ***On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2025 School Committee meeting.***
5. Report of the OETA - David Mastroianni read a statement on behalf of the OETA which expressed condolences to the family and friends of Melissa Stevens. They appreciate the time and efforts of everyone involved in negotiations. They are excited about the launch of the ambassador program at FH for 6th grade students organized by Cryslyn Newton (with Deans Beans as a sponsor). Over 50 students signed up for the chess club with Mr. Newton. They thanked all staff whose efforts go above and beyond each day to support the children of OES.
6. January Items
  - a. Late Attendance Practice (Cont. from November) - (language on file)  
At the last School Committee meeting a draft document related to late attendance practice was distributed. A revised document is being presented. The final revised document will be incorporated in the student handbook. Feedback from the School Committee is appreciated.
  - b. Recess Concerns (from November meeting) - Mallory explained that at the previous School Committee meeting, concerns related to recess were raised. In response, two follow-up meetings/forums were scheduled. One forum was held with staff to gather input, concerns, and ideas for improving recess practices. A second forum was held with parents and other community members to solicit additional feedback.  
Dr. Lewis stated that safety is the top priority. They are meeting again in February to address each suggestion that has been made. They reviewed nurse visits and protocol for injuries at recess (specifically head injuries, bee stings

fractures/broken bones). Some solutions: no equipment from home, timers on the swings, 6th grade ambassadors as volunteers, mediation and less competition, monitors to have zones and stay in their zones. Bullying: immediately addressed with an investigation. Consequences vary depending on severity. They reviewed what age appropriate playground equipment is and how age impacts student safety needs. Preschool is requesting some additional equipment/revisions of the outdoor playground (moving swings and tricycles etc.).

Josefa wondered about having fewer kids on the playground at one time. Dr. Lewis explained that they have broken up the recess yards up into A days and B days to help with the number of students on the playground at once. Jessica asked about a rotating schedule for staff in case there are not enough monitors. Dr. Lewis stated that contractual PLCs and lunch will not allow them to do that. Paras are tied into their classes and their students so there are not many of them that could go out. Dr. Liz explained that the structure of the school day is governed by state regulations. Frank asked about removal of the plants causing bees to sting? Michele said they will start looking at the landscape and come up with a plan.

- c. Charter Discussion - Josefa requested that this topic be included on the agenda. There is some concern about the timeline and being paired up with Mahar and their efforts to the town of Orange. Request for the future: whenever it makes sense to represent the school separate from Mahar (much different budget).

## 7. Matters for Action or Vote

- a. Ratification of job descriptions and new evaluation instruments for ESP - Dr. Liz explained that the JLMC met multiple times over the course of the past year. A significant focus of this work included the development and negotiation of updated job descriptions and evaluation instruments for ESP Unit members (on file). The Association has ratified both the job descriptions and the evaluation tools. In order for these documents to become official, School Committee ratification is also required. The JLMC also began discussions regarding a new evaluation instrument for secretarial staff. However, now that the contract is open, further discussion of this item will transition from the JLMC process to the formal negotiations table.

***On a motion made by Frank Hains and seconded by Crystal Clarke, the committee voted unanimously to approve the following Food Service Job Descriptions:***

[w](#) FY25 Cook Job Description.docx ,

[w](#) FY25 General Worker Job Description.docx ,

[w](#) FY25 Head Cook Assistant Manager Job Description.docx

- b. Policies - In August, the Massachusetts Board of Education implemented updated regulations regarding vocational-technical schools. As a result, School Committees are now required to adopt a policy, in our case, outlining how information about Vocational-Technical education opportunities is shared with middle school students.

***On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted unanimously to adopt policy IJJA as provided. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.***

- c. Transportation Bid - Michele reported that transportation bids were due in December. Swift River Bus was the only bid received (on file). They are a local company and they work with the district with a level funded contract.  
***On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Crystal Clarke, the committee voted unanimously to approve the Transportation bid as presented for the next 5 years, 2027 - 2032. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.***
- d. Journal Entries - Michele stated there is one journal entry to be approved, a deposit correction.  
***On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Crystal Clarke, the committee voted unanimously to approve the journal entries as presented. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.***

8. Sub Committee / Liaison Updates

- a. Town of Orange Liaison Report - Tom Smith reported that they met with state reps last Wednesday and are asking for more support. Their budget will be forming over the next 3 to 4 weeks.
- b. Report of Union #73 Committee - No meeting
- c. Report of the R.C. Mahar Representative - Frank reported that there is an open house on February 3rd and the science fair was a success.
- d. Report of the Leadership, Accountability & Measurement Subcommittee - Josefa reported that they are meeting in February to prepare documents and hopefully get them out in May.
- e. Report of the Communications & Policy Subcommittee - no meeting (policy vote above)
- f. Report of the Resources & Capacity Subcommittee - Frank reported that they were waiting on solar but that is now done. February 3rd is the next meeting but Frank may not be able to attend.
- g. Report of the CES Representative - Mallory reported that CES has been in the process of selecting a new director. They selected an outside agency from Texas to assist them. They started with five candidates and narrowed it to the top 3. The executive board interviewed the final 3 and offered the position to someone (pending successful contract negotiations). They also discussed the annual audit (on file).
- h. Report of the CAPS Representative - Crystal reported that no meeting was held in December or in January. The CAPS program at Mahar will be moving out in February since they now have their own building.
- i. Report of the School Building Committee - This Committee has been dissolved by the Board of Selectman
- j. Report of the SEPAC Representative - Crystal reported no SEPAC meetings have been held since our last meeting. They are currently planning the yearly required training for parents on knowing their Special Education rights.

9. Next Meeting - February 9, 2026 - This will be the first look at the budget.

10. Items for Future Consideration - Job descriptions, FY27 school calendar along with the budget presentation.

11. Adjournment - ***On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Jessica Reske, the committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:27pm. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.***

Approved: 2/9/26

Signature of Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

The agenda reflects topics that the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed.

Public Comment Protocols

The School Committee welcomes public comment on items that are within the scope of the School Committee's responsibilities. The Public Comment agenda item is reserved for this purpose. Members of the public wishing to address the Committee should be aware of the following guidelines:

- The Chair will recognize those wishing to speak and give them the floor. Only persons recognized by the Chair may speak. For purposes of the minutes, speakers should identify themselves at the beginning of their remarks.
- The purpose of Public Comment is to receive input from the community, not to engage in prolonged conversation with the Committee. The Chair will ensure that any comment or question that requires a response from the committee or the School Department will be addressed in a timely manner.
- All comments should be addressed through the Chair, not any individual committee member or to others in attendance.
- Speakers are expected to respect confidentiality. This includes the confidentiality of the speaker's own child/ren as well as that of school staff and personnel.