

Meeting Notice

Board/Committee Name: Orange Elementary School Committee

Day/Date: November 10, 2025

Time of Meeting: 6:00PM

Location: Fisher Hill Elementary School
Cafeteria

59 Dexter St.

Orange, MA 01364

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/eup-hywr-jbe>

Or dial: +1 336-448-3241 PIN: 550 989 429#b



MINUTES

1. Call To Order - Mallory called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.
Members present: Jessica Reske, Josefa Scherer, Crystal Clarke & Frank Hains.
Others present: Dr. Liz, Michele Tontodonato, Danielle Boucher, Dr. Lewis
Minutes taken by Christine Rodriguez.
2. Pledge of Allegiance - Mallory led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Public Comment - Mallory reviewed the public comment policy/protocol.
Alyson Herk read a statement written by Danae OBryan. The statement said that she was hired at the beginning of the school year, and had a class of 27 students, many needing support. She reached out for support multiple times with no support or guidance offered. Her evaluator conducted several evaluations but provided no feedback. Her mentorship was discontinued and she was terminated suddenly with the only reason being that they have 90 days to terminate.
Beth Weissman, FH Nurse, spoke about some safety concerns she has. The outside landscaping is attracting bees and there were 15 bee stings in Sept. She said that recess is "a free for all", and sends kids to hospital, sometimes once a week from head injuries, broken bones, sprains etc. She proposed that a committee be formed to revamp recess because it is really important (safety is always reactive, not proactive) There are only two monitors who take their role and safety seriously. She also suggested that first aid be mandatory for recess monitors. One School Committee member filed to take her nursing license because of a harmless error which she apologized for.
Frank Hains spoke as a resident of Orange. He is curious about how many are on duty outside at recess and would like recess concerns put on a future agenda.
4. Approval of Minutes - September 8, 2025
On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted to approve the minutes from the September 8, 2025.
Josefa Scherer abstained. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.
5. Report of the OETA - The OETA read a statement thanking Danielle for joining the team, being visible and contributing. They are concerned about stress and overall morale. There have been 10 licensed teachers not renewed, and have already lost four staff members who probably would have stayed with more support. A teacher was terminated in the first 90 days and had no time to prepare for her exit (parent teacher conferences etc.). They are worried about OES being able to attract and retain staff. Staff and student safety should be a major priority, certified

staff are best, once a district decides to hire someone the district has responsibility to train, staff morale has an impact on the well being of students.

6. Principals Report - The Veterans Day assembly went well and was student led. The book fair is underway and parent teacher conferences begin Wednesday evening. Dr. Lewis acknowledged the students who participated in MassCue. Students who participated in Fisher forward explained what their favorite parts were.
7. November Items
 - a. Policies - First Read - Policy IJJA, Career and Technical Education Admissions, was presented for a first read.
 - b. Oct. 1 Enrollment - OES has a total enrollment of 511.
 - c. Policy/Law of the Month - Mallory read policy JH - STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES.
 - d. Gaga Pit - Fisher Hill students gave a presentation requesting School Committees approval for installing a Gaga Pit. Their presentation explained what Gaga ball is and that it will be paid by fundraiser (there would be no cost to the district). The committee brought up safety concerns. Karen Perkins stated that PreK will not be taught how to play, Kindergarten will be limited and they use a soft inside foam ball. She said safety wise, it is not like dodge ball. The committee also asked about insurance. Michele stated that the committee would need to vote this in and once that happens it would be covered by our standard insurance policy.
On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted unanimously to approve the Gaga Pit. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.
 - e. Late Attendance Practice - The district is trying to build a policy about how late students can arrive and what documentation they will need when coming in late. The committee decided to review this and add it to the next agenda.
 - f. MCAS Data Presentation - Danielle Boucher met with the LAM subcommittee on November 3rd to review all three districts current MCAS as well as growth data from other assessments. ([Link to presentation](#))
8. Matters for Action or Vote
 - a. Updated Calendar - Dr. Liz explained that it has been brought to our attention by DESE that the approved yearly calendar is out of compliance because it does not also contain five additional days post the “anticipated” last day of school. The five days are for “weather related” closures. This has been corrected and the committee will need to approve the updated calendar.
On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Crystal Clarke, the committee voted unanimously to approve the updated calendar with five days added for weather related closures. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.
 - b. Policies
Second Read/Vote
On a motion made by Josefa Scherer and seconded by Crystal Clarke, the committee voted unanimously to approve the following policies; IKFE - Competency Determination, JJE -Student Fund Raising Activities , KBE - Relations with Parents/Boosters, ECAB - Access to Buildings and Grounds, KI -Visitors to the Schools , EFBA -School Food and Nutrition - Meal Modifications , KBG -Parent Advisory Councils , JICDA - Academic Integrity,

IMBC -Curriculum Opt Out , and JB - Equal Educational Opportunity. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.

- c. E-waste - There is some surplus of technology that is outdated and/or broken. The School Committee needs to authorize that this surplus be disposed of (e-waste). **On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Josefa Scherer, the committee voted unanimously to approve the disposal of e-waste in accordance with applicable e-waste procedures. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.**
 - d. Journal Entries - **On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted unanimously to approve the journal entries as outlined. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.**
 - e. Revised handbook language - Dr. Liz explained that during a recent pre-review by DESE it was brought to our attention that we needed to update some handbook language to ensure we are in compliance with State and Federal regulations. The language has been updated in the handbook and can be found on pg. 70. **On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted unanimously to approve proposed handbook language.**
 - f. Emergency Plan - A new emergency plan was presented to the Committee. Administration has worked with our local emergency officials to ensure we have a plan that meets all of the state requirements as well as the local needs. **On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted unanimously to approve the Fisher Hill Elementary Emergency Plan. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.**
9. Sub Committee / Liaison Updates
- a. Town of Orange Liaison Report - No statement received from the Town Manager. Mallory stated that she received a disheartening response from a Selectboard member. Josefa plans to attend a Sectboard meeting to discuss having another liaison to come to SC meetings.
 - b. Report of Union #73 Committee - No meeting held.
 - c. Report of the R.C. Mahar Representative - The Mahar School Committee is meeting this Thursday.
 - d. Report of the Leadership, Accountability & Measurement Subcommittee - Josefa reported that Danielle attended the meeting and presented helpful information regarding the MCAS data and an update on graduation pathways.
 - e. Report of the Communications & Policy Subcommittee - This committee met Friday regarding the CTE policy.
 - f. Report of the Resources & Capacity Subcommittee - Frank reported that solar was finalized, room temp seems to be consistent and the sun sails will be taken down before the first snowfall.
 - g. Report of the CES Representative - Mallory reported that they went through a bidding process to search for a new Executive Director and went with a firm out of Texas. They have had their first meeting with them. The posting has been finalized and they will be collecting applications through the end of November. They will have a final candidate to present to the board in January.
 - h. Report of the CAPS Representative - Crystal stated that there is a meeting on Wednesday
 - i. Report of the School Building Committee - No report.

- j. Report of the SEPAC Representative - No meeting has been held.
- 10. Next Meeting - January 12, 2026
- 11. Items for Future Consideration - Recess concerns and students coming in late.
- 12. Executive Session - **8:00pm - On a motion made by Crystal Clarke and seconded by Frank Hains, the committee voted to enter executive session: M.G.L. Chapter 21(a)(2), to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. And M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair declares, and not return to regular session but to adjourn from executive session. Roll call taken by Mallory Ellis.**

Approved: 1/26/26

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.