

Barrington School Committee
Barrington Middle School
261 Middle Highway, Barrington
Thursday, September 10, 2026

Roll Call:

School Committee: TJ Peck, Frazier Bell, Tim McNamara, and Karen Rasnick, were present.
Liz Signh arrived at 7:30 PM
Student Representative, Andrew Taxiarchos was present

School Administration: Superintendent Holly Hageman, Assistant Superintendent, Ruth Corley, Matthew Bobola, Heidi Harris, and Rebecca Trahan were present.
Attorney Aubrey Lombardo was present

School Committee Business:

Meeting called to order at 6:42 PM

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. Peck requested to seal the executive session minutes. Mr. Bell moved, Mrs. Rasnick seconded. The motion passed 4-0 with Mr. Peck, Mr. Bell, Mrs. Rasnick, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

Mr. Peck announced no votes were taken in the executive session.

Public Comment:

None at this time

Superintendent Report

Dr. Holly Hageman began by introducing and announcing Deena St. Angelo as the District Teacher of the Year. Dr. Hageman spoke about Ms. St. Angelo's accomplishments and contributions to the district. Ms. St. Angelo thanked the School Committee for the recognition, and the School Committee congratulated her and thanked her for her contributions to Barrington Public Schools.

Dr. Hageman congratulated Mr. Ashley, Principal of Barrington High School, on Barrington High School being ranked among the nation's Best High Schools in U.S. News & World Report's 2026–27 Best High Schools rankings.

Dr. Hageman also congratulated all Barrington schools and families for the district's high ranking in the Rhode Island Department of Education's Attendance Matters Recognition.

Dr. Hageman reported that the opening of schools and the district convocation were very successful. She noted that students were happy to be back and that the school year was off to a positive start.

Financial Analysis Month of August:

Mr. Bobola reported on the district's revenue and expenses. He noted that the current budget surplus is \$1.37 million, which represents less than 2% of the overall budget. He reported that Medicaid revenue and proceeds from the sale of East Bay Collaborative contributed to the additional revenue.

Mr. Peck thanked Jerilyn Mitchell for her work on Medicaid and noted the \$644,000 in unexpected revenue.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Peck began by asking if any school committee members had concerns about any items on the consent agenda. Mr. McNamara requested that items (l) and (m) be moved to the agenda. Peck requested a motion to move consent agenda items (l) and (m) to the end of School Committee business. Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded the motion passed 4-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mr. Bell and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to approve the consent agenda items a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, and n. Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mrs. Singh seconded. The motion passed 4-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

School Committee Business:

Establishment of School Construction Project Working Group:

Mr. Peck explained the purpose of this group is to keep the project moving forward. He noted that when decisions need to be made, the group can meet to discuss and make the necessary decisions. Mr. Peck reported that he met with Superintendent Hageman and Mr. McNamara to determine the members of the working group.

The working group will consist of Tim McNamara, Holly Hageman, Matt Bobola, Alex Prignano, TJ Peck, Mark Hatchner, Jason Malafronte, and from LeftField Chris Dunphy and Mike Meehan. The group will hold a weekly 30-minute call to receive high-level updates on the project.

Mr. Peck felt it was important to discuss the working group in public with the school committee members.

Mr. Peck made a motion to establish a construction project working group consisting of Holly, Tim, Chris Dunphy, Mike Meehan, Alex Prignano, Matt Bobola, Jason Malafronte, and Mark Hatchner.

Monthly Enrollment Report:

Dr. Hageman reported that this enrollment report is separate from the report that is submitted to the state and represents the official enrollment for the beginning of the school year. Total district enrollment amount is 3,150 students, with enrollment broken down by grade level.

The School Committee engaged in a discussion regarding enrollment among the schools. It was noted that Sowams has fewer students and is a smaller school.

Dr. Hageman stated that the new schools will serve grades PK–5 and that the district is closely monitoring enrollment in relation to classroom capacity. She noted that the school buildings are being designed with the capacity to accommodate enrollment needs, while recognizing that some schools may be smaller by design. Dr. Hageman stated that it is too early to provide additional information, but that enrollment relative to classroom capacity at all three schools remains a priority and is being closely monitored.

Dr. Hageman also shared that, based on her professional experience with school districts that have undertaken redistricting, these discussions can generate strong feelings within communities. She emphasized that she was not suggesting that redistricting is necessary at this time. However, if it were to become a consideration in the future, she raised the possibility of exploring some form of voluntary methodology.

First Read Budget Policy (Budget Timeline):

Mr. Peck suggested that the School Committee develop a Budget Policy. As the First Read of the policy was not ready for this meeting, the Committee reviewed the Budget Timeline instead.

Mr. Peck requested that Aubrey format the timeline as a policy and present it for a First Read at the next meeting.

Dr. Hageman led the discussion of the Budget Timeline. She noted that a detailed budget draft will be available by November 30. Prior to that date, and throughout the budget development process, the Administration would like to receive input from the School Committee as the budget is developed and is formalized on February 25.

Mr. Peck stressed the importance of maintaining communication with the School Committee throughout the process. He expressed a desire for the budget presentation to occur before January and for the Committee to have additional information and time to review and refine the budget.

The Committee expressed concern regarding the January 28 through February 25 timeline, noting that the Committee of Appropriations (COA) made significant cuts during the previous budget cycle, leaving the School Committee with very little time to respond and get ahead of the changes.

It was suggested that the draft budget be sent to the School Committee by email on November 30 for review. The Administration would then present the budget to the Committee on December 3. On December 17, the Committee would have an opportunity to provide feedback and work with the Administration to further refine the budget.

Dr. Hageman and Mr. Bobola will work on refining the Budget Timeline. Aubrey will work with Mr. Bobola to develop the timeline into a formal Budget Policy.

WB Community Health Reserve Transfer:

Mr. Bobola reported that the District's insurance had previously been managed through The Trust and has since transitioned to WB Community Health. He explained that approximately ten years ago, The Trust provided the District with \$1,378,541., which was placed in a medical reserve account designated for the Schools and is currently held by the Town. The District would like to transfer these funds to the WB Community Health's Premium Offset Account (POA) so that they can be utilized for future healthcare costs and rate stabilization.

The School Committee engaged in a discussion.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to transfer the health reserve account from the Town ledger to WB Community Health's POA to establish a health insurance reserve. Mrs. Rasnick moved. Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

School Safety Working Groups:

Mr. Peck explained that the school safety plan includes many components. Captain Igoe and Lieutenant Osser obtained a \$36,000 grant to purchase seven radios. Mr. Peck recommended purchasing an additional seven radios, with the purchase funded through the Capital Reserve account. Attorney Lombardo and Captain Igoe discussed Motorola's inclusion on the NPA. Attorney Lombardo stated that the funds from the Capital Reserve can be used to purchase the radios.

Mr. Peck made a motion to request the Barrington Police Department to proceed with the grant application for seven Motorola radios for less than \$40,000. Mrs. Rasnick seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

Mr. Peck made a motion to fund the purchase of seven Motorola radios from the capital reserve account at an amount not to exceed \$40,000. Mrs. Rasnick seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative. Mr. Peck thanked Captain Igoe and Lieutenant Osser for their work on applying for the grant.

Behavioral Threat Assessment:

Mr. Peck inquired about the Behavioral Threat Assessment Working Group and requested an update on its development. Dr. Hageman spoke on behalf of Mrs. Matthes and the School Safety Group. She reported that the next step is implementing the Sandy Hook Promise program. The District is developing and refining a centralized risk-screening assessment and tracking system through the Aspen platform, along with a district-wide protocol for behavioral threat assessment and risk screening. The process will include collaboration and training for mental health professionals serving on the schools' MTSS behavioral teams, with the goal of identifying and flagging students who may require additional support or assessment. The District's timeline is to implement the system and protocol within the next two months.

Cyber Security:

Ms. Trahan provided an update on the Cybersecurity Working Group. She reported that two-factor authentication has been implemented. At the group's last meeting, three areas of need were identified. Mario provided recommendations for potential vendors, and the Technology Team is now reaching out to those vendors to determine which can assist the District in implementing the recommended improvements.

District-Wide Security Training:

Dr. Hageman and Ms. Corley met with Steve O'Donnell to discuss safety training for staff. The professional development (PD) days were discussed. Dr. Hageman reported that many of the safety training are state-mandated and that staff spend approximately 2.5 -- 3 hours participating in safety training during the August PD days. Mr. O'Donnell suggested a two-hour training session for staff.

Emergency Response Communications:

Mr. Peck stated that Dr. Hageman could establish a working group once she becomes more familiar with the district. The group would address internal and external emergency communications, as well as building-specific emergency response plans.

Dr. Hageman reported that the building-specific emergency response plans have been completed and are currently at the printers. The administration team reviewed the plans during the summer retreat.

Engagement Agreement GP Law + Consulting:

Mr. Peck asked the committee if there were any questions on the agreement. Seeing none.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to approve the engagement agreement with GP Law + Consulting.

Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

Operations Coordinator Agreement:

Mr. Peck asked the committee if there were any questions on the Operations Coordinator Agreement. Seeing none.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to approve the engagement agreement with GP Law + Consulting.

Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

Facilities Manager Agreement:

Mr. Peck acknowledged Jason's amazing work.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to approve the engagement agreement with GP Law + Consulting. Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

School Calendar Amendment:

The graduation date has been set to June 6, 2027.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to approve the School Calendar Amendment. Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

School Committee Meeting Calendar 2026-2027:

The committee engaged in a discussion. They would like the SC calendar to align with the budget timeline. They requested the July meeting be marked "if needed".

Mr. Peck requested a motion to update the School Committee Calendar per the conversation and approve the School Committee Meeting Calendar.

Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

Elementary Bus Eligibility Policy:

The School Committee and Dr. Hageman engaged in a discussion regarding current transportation policies and protocols. The School Committee expressed interest in expanding bus eligibility to include Grade 2 students who reside within the same established radius currently used for Kindergarten and Grade 1 students.

Mrs. Singh also requested Jerilyn, Transportation Coordinator, provide data regarding the number of students who are eligible for the bus and how many students ride the bus.

Mr. Peck made a motion for Liz to work with the Administration to develop a first draft of the bus eligibility policy. Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative. Mr. Peck abstained from the vote.

Heartland Contract with School Lunch Processing Fee:

Attorney Lombardo explained that the General Assembly passed legislation providing that food service collection providers may only impose fees that directly correspond to the actual cost of collecting payments, with fees capped at 2%. Previously, some providers had been charging fees of up to 5%.

Attorney Lombardo reported that, in response to the legislation, companies such as SchoolBucks and Heartland are now charging families a 2% fee when they use a credit card to pay for school lunches. The companies are also seeking to charge the remaining 3% to school districts as a processing fee. She stated that the providers have indicated that, if districts do not agree to pay the additional fee, the payment systems would be discontinued, preventing families from using credit cards to pay for school meals.

We need to be very clear with families that they can pay for school meals with cash or checks. The agreement with Heartland is for one year, to give us time to figure out a solution. The School Committee and Administration engaged in a discussion.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to approve the Heartland Contract with School Lunch Processing Fees. Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

First Read Academic Integrity Policy:

Ms. Corley gave an overview of the policy. The School Committee had many questions regarding the use of AI in schools and specific classes. This policy will replace two current policies Academic Honest and Integrity and Acceptable Uses of AI in Written Work and Academic Assignments.

The School Committee had many questions and concerns. The Administration and School Committee engaged in a lengthy discussion. Mr. Peck wants to be sure we are not taking teacher rights away regarding when AI is not permissible.

Student Representative Andrew expressed that students should be involved in the discussion.

Second Read/Amendment - Student Use of Cell Phones & Other Personal Electronic Devices:

Mr. Peck asked if anyone had questions or comments. Seeing none.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to approve the Second Read/ Amended Student Use of Cell Phones & Other Personal Electronic Devices. Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

First Read Responsible Use Policy:

Ms. Trahan spoke on the policy. The School Committee did not have any questions or comments.

Consent Agenda Items:

(l) Maxim Healthcare Services:

Attorney Lombardo explained the contract was redlined and not yet returned from the vendor with accepted changes.

(k) ECA Science Kit Rental Contract:

Ms. Corely explained the contract was placed in the packet late due to back and forth redlines with Attorney's.

Mr. Peck requested a motion to approve the ECA Science Kit Rental Contract. Mrs. Rasnick moved and Mr. Bell seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mrs. Rasnick, Mrs. Singh, Mr. Bell, and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

Public Comment

None at this time.

Superintendent Announcements

Dr. Hageman read the new hires and welcomed new staff to the district.

Agenda Setting

Hampden Meadows Building Use, Report regarding bussing - space, opt out, open seats. First Read Bus Eligibility Policy, Cyber Security Update and allocating funds.

Adjournment

Mr. Peck made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Rasnick seconded. The motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Peck, Mr. Bell, Mrs. Singh, Mrs. Rasnick and Mr. McNamara voting in the affirmative.

Adjournment: 9:10 pm

Approved: October 1, 2026