Warwick School Committee
Open Session Minutes
Tuesday, May 12, 2026
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The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Veterans Middle School on Tuesday, May 12, 2026. Chairman Galligan called the meeting to order at 5:36PM.

Roll Call
Shaun Galligan, Chair, Present
Leah Hazelwood, Vice Chair, Present
Michelle Kirby-Chapman, Present
David Testa, Present
Sean Wiggins, Present

Recognitions
Employee Spotlight

- Pilgrim High School Competition Cheerleaders won the Division 2 State Championship but deferred recognition to June as they were cheering for the unified team.
- Warwick Air Current Technical Center (CTC) Students earned multiple medals at Skills USA:
    - 12 gold medalists advancing to nationals in Atlanta, including Damen St. Laurent, Sophia D'Angelo, and Haley Clem (who also competed at the Project MFG National Competition in San Diego).
    - Overall, 22 Warwick students received medals (gold, silver, bronze) at the state level.
- ProStart National Competition participants were recognized, including Anthony Morales, Gianna Jaffreda (also a state officer for Skills USA), and others.
- The Electrathon Competition team from Warwick earned first place in the novice category at the Lakeville, Connecticut event.
- Division 1 Rhode Island Girls Ice Hockey State Champions (2025-26) were honored, representing a co-op team formed by Pilgrim, Toggate, LaSalle, and West Warwick (TRPW). The team overcame challenges including initial losses and scheduling a demanding out-of-state schedule to win the championship.

Pilgrim High School Competition Cheerleaders Division 2 State Champions - moved to June 9, 2026 School Committee Meeting

Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins to go into closed session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under General Laws of Rhode Island, RIGL 42-46-5 (a(1),a(2),a(4),a(8),a(9))

Motion Passes (5-0)
Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

6:38PM Return to Open Session

Vote to seal minutes of Executive Session - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins to seal the minutes of Executive Session

Motion Passes (5-0)
Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Votes taken in Executive Session - There were no votes taken in Executive Session

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Michelle Landry - Toll Gate Science Department Chair. Spoke against proposed science staffing cuts. Warned AP and elective science classes could disappear

Rachel O'Leary - Toll Gate science teacher and parent. Discussed environmental science electives and community partnerships. Warned cuts would disconnect students from authentic STEM learning

Melanie Donoian - DPT (Diagnostic Preschool Teacher) - Opposed elimination of a DPT position at WELC. Warned of increased workload and compliance risks.

Stephanie Catanzaro - Toll Gate science teacher, Discussed repeated cancellation of AP Physics classes. Criticized increasing enrollment thresholds.

Joshua Myers - Parent of three Warwick students. Spoke about loss of AP opportunities and impact on college admissions.

Darlene Netcoh - President of Warwick Teachers Union. Opposed layoffs and program reductions. Criticized inadequate city funding.

Jacob Madore - Warwick resident/educator. Highlighted strong AP exam performance and argued against cuts.

Stephanie Whitaker - Parent of a child at WELC. Shared emotional testimony about her daughter's developmental progress through special education services.

Frank Galligan - Director of Warwick Area Career & Technical Center. Supported review of Warwick CTE programming. Highlighted student success and state/national achievements.

Amber Perry - Parent of a child at WELC. Opposed cuts to integrated preschool programming and support staff.

Gary Perry - Parent/community member. Criticized city priorities and warned cuts discourage young families from staying in Warwick.

Recommended Actions

Moved by Mr. Testa and Ms.Hazelwood seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval of Minutes of Public Session - April 14, 2026

Motion Passes (5-0)
Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Moved by Mr. Testa and Ms. Hazelwood, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval of Minutes of Executive Session - April 14, 2026

Motion Passes (5-0)
Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Moved by Ms. Hazelwood, Ms. Kirby-Chapman and Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval of Minutes on Public Session - April 16, 2026

Motion Passes (5-0)
Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Moved by Mr. Testa and Ms. Kirby-Chapman, seconded by Mr. Wiggins and Ms. Hazelwood approval of Minutes of Executive Session - April 16, 2026

Motion Passes (5-0)
Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Moved by Ms. Hazelwood, seconded by Ms. Kirby-Chapman, Mr. Wiggins and Mr. Testa approval of Warrants - May 12, 2026

Motion Passes (5-0)
Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Announcements-Personnel-As Presented - Personnel Announcements

Retirements and Resignations: Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins and Ms. Hazelwood approval

Motion Passes (5-0)

Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Coaching Recommendation(s) - March Coach Appointments May Coach Appointments

Donations and Correspondence - none

Adoption of Policies

1st Read - None

2nd Read - All three policies taken as a group

- **COPY OF DLC - GENERAL FUND AND GRANT EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS**
- **DRAFT OF DJE - BUILDING COMMITTEE CHANGE ORDERS APPROVAL PROCESS**
- **COPY OF BCF- ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval

Motion Passes (5-0)

Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

- Chair Updates from the Policy Sub-Committee - officially changed policy meeting to the end of the month

New Business

1. Discussion/Presentation/Update: High Schools Update - Power Point Presentation
   - Pilgrim and Toll Gate construction remain on schedule.
   - Structural steel erection is about two-thirds complete with an average installation rate exceeding expectations.
   - The new gymnasium and auditorium framework are progressing well.
   - Despite severe winter weather, the project remains on schedule and within the $350 million approved budget, which covers Pilgrim and Toll Gate projects, including multi-purpose turf fields and demolition of old buildings.
   - Additional funding required for alternates such as baseball and softball fields.
   - A detailed cost update will be provided over the summer between July and August.

2. Discussion/Update: FY26 Budget Update
   - The FY26 budget is tight, constrained by a 2.68% appropriation increase with an expectation to return 0.5% to the city during the fiscal year.
   - Some budget lines are tracking under, others over; special education billing delays affect projections.
   - Transition to new financial software is planned for July 8, 2026.
   - No FEMA reimbursements yet for blizzard-related costs; city consultant manages this process.
   - Audit services by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP continue, including a technology and client support fee

3. Discussion/Update: Superintendent Update
   - Warwick schools have had successes academically, athletically, and in CTE programs.
   - Women Middle School earned NEASC accreditation, Veterans Middle School anticipates accreditation in June.
   - Students earned 22 Skills USA medals; Tollgate Robotics team advanced to the World Championship.
   - Elementary schools show steady academic growth, family engagement, and positive culture.
   - The district operates under the guidance of the state budget commission with a lean budget.
   - Community members are encouraged to attend upcoming city council budget hearings and advocate for school funding.

4. Discussion/Update: Culinary Competition and upcoming Golf Tournament - Frank Galligan
   - Warwick Area CTC director supports a resolution to evaluate CTE programming due to concerns about students leaving for out-of-district programs.
   - Warwick CTE programs have strong student interest and high-quality instruction.
   - A new environmental science pathway launched, receiving high ratings from the Rhode Island Department of Education.
   - Challenges exist due to state policies on program approval and sharing of rubrics/metrics; transparency issues are noted.
   - A golf tournament fundraiser is scheduled for June 14, 2026, to support Skills USA national competition participants.

5. Discussion/Action: Approval of Agreement for C3Wellbeing Student Assistance Services - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins and Ms. Hazelwood approval

   Motion Passes (5-0)
   Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

6. Discussion/Action: WTU Layoffs - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval
   Roll Call Vote
   Mr. Testa - Yes
   Mr. Wiggins - Yes
   Ms. Kirby-Chapman - No
   Ms. Hazelwood - No
   Mr. Galligan - Yes

   Motion Passes (3-2)
   Ayes: Galligan, Testa, Wiggins Nays: Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman

7. Discussion/Action: Modified Legal Counsel Contract - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval

   Motion Passes (5-0)
   Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

8. Discussion/Action: Approval of Central Administration Contract Templates - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval

   Motion Passes (5-0)
   Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

9. Discussion/Action: Resolution to Authorize Programmatic Audit - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval

   Motion Passes (5-0)
   Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

10. Discussion/Action: Resolution to Evaluate Redistricting - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval

    Motion Passes (5-0)
    Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

11. Discussion/Action: Resolution Requesting Presentation of Career & Technical Education Pathways from Administration - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins and Ms. Hazelwood approval

    Motion Passes (5-0)
    Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

12. Discussion/Action: Approval FY26 May Expenditures
    a. Change Orders - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins approval

       Motion Passes (5-0)
       Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

    b. General Funded Requisitions - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Wiggins and Ms. Hazelwood approval

       Motion Passes (5-0)
       Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

    c. Grant Funded Requisitions - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Galligan and Mr. Wiggins approval

       Motion Passes (5-0)
       Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

    d. Bid Awards - Moved by Mr. Testa, seconded by Ms. Hazelwood approval

       Motion Passes (5-0)
       Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Public Comment

Joshua Myers - voted to approve those cuts and then we heard how other districts are making money off our students. Why not make our approach the district that students want to come to. What can we do besides go to the budget meeting? What else can we do to fund what you need?

Amber Perry - how can you sit there and say yay. How are you going to fill these classrooms and give these kids an education while firing everyone? How the district can attract families while reducing services.

Darlene Netcoh - Toll Gate has a bio medical pathway, our schools have pathways that need to be promoted better. Once you cut a position, we never get it back. We need to keep what we have. We need the positions back. Advocate on the city side for the schools.

Roberta Meservey - WELC cuts. Opposed use of floating TAs and warned about classroom disruption.

Caitllyn Greley - Parent of children attending WELC. TAs are essentials. Defended full-day preschool and classroom staffing consistency.

Shaun Galligan - Warwick Public Schools graduate and father of three children currently enrolled in the district, spoke emotionally about his deep frustration with how the city has handled education funding. He explained that he and his wife chose to raise their family in Warwick because of their connection to the school system and that he has devoted significant time and energy trying to improve the district. Argued that the city has failed to prioritize education, saying the real issue is not simply a lack of teachers but a lack of adequate funding to support schools properly. He criticized city leadership and the budget commission, warning that past concerns about cuts harming students had become reality. He described the current school budget as providing only the "bare minimum" for students and said many parents and community members have been pleading against further cuts. Speaking as both a parent and public official, he expressed embarrassment and disappointment in the city's decisions regarding education funding. He concluded by saying the situation has become so discouraging that he is now reconsidering whether his children should remain in Warwick Public Schools.

Gary Perry - Disagree with Mr. Galligan some people on this committee don't care as much about the future of our children. Mr. Testa you only care about numbers and not solving problems families are facing.

John Schmidt - WACTC does not have the scheduling system in place to graduate students. The scheduling system in place at the WACTC will not graduate students. Raised concerns about Career & Tech Center scheduling and graduation requirements.

Melanie Donoian - Defended Welk teacher assistants. Warned of classroom safety and compliance issues.

Docket Session
This portion of the meeting is for School Committee members to request items to be docketed for future agenda(s) or for items to be assigned to sub committees by the School Committee Chair.

Nothing to docket for next month's meeting

Future Meetings
Health & Wellness Subcommittee Meeting - Thursday, May 14, 2026 - 4:30PM
Policy Subcommittee Meeting - Tuesday, May 26, 2026 - 4:30PM
Building Committee Meeting - Wednesday, June 3, 2026 - 7:30AM
Monthly School Committee Meeting - Tuesday, June 9, 2026 - 5:30PM
Fiscal Subcommittee Meeting - TBD

Adjournment Moved by Ms. Hazelwood and Mr. Testa seconded by Mr. Wiggins to adjourn the meeting

Motion Passes (5-0)
Ayes: Galligan, Hazelwood, Kirby-Chapman, Testa, Wiggins

Meeting adjourned at 8:14PM