

Pawtucket School Committee
Meeting Minutes



**Pawtucket School Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 1, 2026**

**Pawtucket School Department Administration Building
286 Main Street
Pawtucket, Rhode Island 02860
6:00 PM**

Meeting was called to order at 6:02PM

I. Roll Call

Juan Pablo Barrera, Angeliz Rosa, James Chellel, Matthew Wildenhain, Kimberly Grant, and Joanne Bonollo were present.

Omar Reyes was absent.

II. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Joanne Bonollo.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. June 23, 2026

Motion to approve: Kimberly Grant Second: Matthew Wildenhain

Yea: James Chellel, Matthew Wildenhain, Kimberly Grant, Joanne Bonollo

Abstain: Juan Pablo Barrera, Angeliz Rosa

Motion Carried

IV. Public Participation

None signed up

V. Discussion:

A. Projected cost savings related to adjustments of schedules for student-transportation.

Randy Buck expressed appreciation for the thoughtful conversation at the last

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meeting. He explained that they worked to bring forward a fuller analysis of the proposal and an explanation of the full presentation of the study completed by RIDE. The presentation will include efforts that have been completed and recommendations that are being made.

Mark Andrade was called to the stand to make a presentation on the Transportation Optimization Initiative. The presentation summarized operational improvements within the district's transportation services as a result of several studies completed by 3rd party vendors. The initiative was presented as an effort to improve efficiency, strengthen fiscal responsibility, and maintain protections and support for students. The presentation emphasized the district's commitment to balancing operational and budgetary improvements with the need to ensure students continue to receive safe and reliable transportation services. Completed efforts included Pre-K schedule alignment, private school transportation, and routing improvements. These efforts eliminated 5 buses (a cost savings of \$600,000). The proposal to change bell times of 3 elementary schools will eliminate an additional 3 buses (cost savings of \$360,000). The total cost savings of previous and proposed transportation adjustments will be \$960,000.

Superintendent Buck clarified that in addition to the elementary schools being suggested for time change, Jacqueline M. Walsh School for the Performing and Visual Arts is also being recommended for a start change from 7:50AM to 8AM

Kimberly Grant asked about different scenarios/options for cost savings and if there were alternatives to the recommendation presented. Dr. Andrade clarified that what was being presented was a last step in a series of cost savings efforts, earlier efforts having been outlined in the presentation.

James Chellel asked if there were other options for moving school times that considered school location, servicing schools that were further away later. Dr. Andrade stated that while it would be an option, the effort was not shown to provide additional cost savings. It has been in conversation to consolidate buses that are not being fully utilized; 5 have been eliminated and there is hope for more.

Ms. Grant asked about after school programs to address concerns raised about supervision. Superintendent Buck has been proactive in meeting with administrators and feedback has been received.

Ms. Grant asked if special harnesses and services cost extra, it was stated that those resources were provided and prepared in advance. She raised a concern from constituents that these resources were not available at the start of previous school years; Dr. Andrade said that this was extremely concerning and would be reviewed prior to the start of this year.

Juan Pablo Barrera expressed gratitude for the thoughtful presentation. He also

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expressed concern with changing times and the impact on families. He asked how it was determined that the three schools be changed. The methodology was eliminating a start time tier to change from a 3 tier to a 2 tier model with 8 schools in each tier, 8 at each 8AM and 9AM. Mr. Barrera asked if parents and staff were consulted in their considerations. These conversations were had in the past, with a significant split between approval and disapproval.

Angeliz Rosa expressed concern about schools that are near each other but having a significant difference in start times. It was stated that considerations are being made to increase program times before and after school to allow for minimal impact on parent's ability to drop off students.

Joanne Bonollo continued the conversation about supervision, Dr. Andrade stated that there is a plan being developed that was provided to the committee.

Ms. Grant clarified her earlier comment that rather than the actual harnesses being missing, there were only specific seats that harnesses can be used in that have been inadequate. It was reiterated that this would be reviewed.

VI. Discussion/Action

- A. Approval of Superintendent recommendation to change opening and closing times of:
 - 1. Curvin-McCabe Elementary School
 - 2. Agnes E. Little Elementary School
 - 3. Potter-Burns Elementary School
 - 4. Flora S. Curtis Elementary School
 - 5. Nathanael Greene Elementary School
 - 6. Jacqueline M. Walsh School for the Performing and Visual Arts

Joanne Bonollo stated that Curtis and Greene were added merely as additional options to change, the proposal on the table excludes those two schools.

Move to approve Superintendent recommendation to change opening and closing times of Curvin-McCabe Elementary School, Agnes E. Little Elementary School, Potter-Burns Elementary School, and Jacqueline M. Walsh School for the Performing and Visual Arts.

Motion: Juan Pablo Barrera Second: Matthew Wildenhain

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James Chellel expressed gratitude for the thorough Transportation Optimization Initiative. He stated that he has concerns about the process and that the committee needs to have more insight on future efforts due to the impact on families. He suggested quarterly updates on how the sibling management efforts are being implemented. He suggested the possibility of creating a new subcommittee to focus on transportation. Angeliz Rosa added that in addition to families, teachers should have a say in this effort.

Kimberly Grant expressed frustration with timing and lack of clarity in the information presented up to this point. She also expressed disappointment in the provision of information in general.

Yea: all

Motion carries

- B. Approval of the Rhode Island Health and Educational Building Corporation (RIHEBC) 2026 Capital Grant Agreement [Attachment](#)

Move to Approve the Rhode Island Health and Educational Building Corporation (RIHEBC) 2026 Capital Grant Agreement

Stephanie DeMaio found the grant. This grant is to further support the Slater Middle School redesign effort.

Motion: Matthew Wildenhain Second: Kimberly Grant, Angeliz Rosa

James Chellel asked if we are moving the library. Mark Andrade stated that classroom libraries are becoming the expectation with recent evolution. There is not currently a traditional library planned. It was stated that there are several grants being braided to fund the library to CTE space transformation. The library

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has been emptied and the work is started. There are no current plans to utilize local funds. Kimberly Grant expressed concern with staying within the budget.

Yea: All

Motion carries

VII. Possible Executive Session

- A. The School Committee may vote to go into executive session for discussion and/or action pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-4 regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-5:

Pursuant to RIGL § 42-46-5(a)(1) a discussion related to the job performance and character of a District employee.

Motion to enter Executive Session: Kimberly Grant Second: Angeliz Rosa

Motion carries unanimously.

The open meeting went into recess at 7:08 PM to enter Executive Session.

The open meeting resumed at 7:58 PM.

VIII. Reconvening School Committee meeting to open session in recess

- A. Roll Call

Juan Pablo Barrera, Angeliz Rosa, James Chellel, Matthew Wildenhain, Kim Grant, and Joanne Bonollo were present.

Omar Reyes was absent.

- B. Reporting out any votes subject to disclosure pursuant RIGL § 42-46-4.

Approving to seal Executive Session minutes

Motion: James Chellel Second: Angeliz Rosa

Motion carries unanimously.

Adjournment of closed meeting

Motion: James Chellel Second: Matthew Wildenhain

Motion carries unanimously.

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IX. Adjournment

Motion: James Chellel Second: Angeliz Rosa

Motion carries unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 8:00PM

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emily Lotter".

Emily Lotter, Clerk