

**Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School
School Committee
August 26, 2025**

The School Committee met in the Conference Room on the above date. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by the Chair. Members present were Mr. Pietrewicz, Ms. Ayres, Ms. Simms George, Mr. Greenwood, Ms. Ryan. Ms. Reiniger was absent. Mr. George arrived at 7:15 PM.

Also present were Mr. Houle, Ms. Savoie, and Mr. O'Rourke. Mr. DiStefano arrived at 7:00 PM.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda including the proposed meeting minutes of 6/24/2025. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Mr. Pietrewicz Second: Ms. Ayres Status: Passed

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposed donations and surplus as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ryan Second: Ms. Ayres Status: Passed

AUDIENCE

Dan Capuano was present to report on the first teacher days and to give feedback on building preparations and PowerSchool training.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mr. O'Rourke discussed his submitted report as follows:

- Scheduled Events - Opening Days for Staff and First-Year Orientation – Discussion of building prep over the summer as well as the schedule of first days for staff and students.
- Aztec Athletics – updates on participation and the large turnout for girls' volleyball, boys' basketball and boys' soccer. The Principal made a request of the Committee to consider capping the affected excessive numbers on the sports teams at a certain number. The Principal would like to have an answer from the Committee in time to announce the decision for the winter sports season which would affect boys' basketball. The Committee will take the topic under advisement and revisit it at the September meeting.
- Personnel - Dr. Dixie Diamond was introduced as the new Special Education Director. Dr. Diamond introduced herself and gave some background information on her career.

Members were provided with a list of new personnel in the building, along with a list of positions still available.

Mr. DiStefano arrived at 7:00 PM

Ms. Simms George congratulated Mr. Houle on 10 years at AV.

CHAIR'S REPORT

- Members discussed the results of the Officers' Planning Meeting and reviewed the minutes.
- A review of the meeting norms for 2025-2026 was conducted by members. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting norms for 25-26. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ryan Second: Ms. Ayres Status: Passed

- Review of 25-26 meeting dates and a list of upcoming conferences

Paul George arrived at 7:15 PM

- Members reviewed subcommittee assignments for the 2025-2026 school year.
- Members were asked to review their information on the contact sheet and make any changes/updates and give Ms. Rezende any changes.
- Ms. Simms George notified the Committee of a 9/12/25 Lunch and Learn for Equity with MASC.
- Members who attended the MASC Summer Institute that was held in Springfield over the summer gave an overview of their experience. Mr. Pietrewicz, Mr. Greenwood, and Ms. Simms George attended.
- A review and vote on the School Committee Handbook will be conducted at the next meeting.
- Review of the School Committee's self-evaluation. Areas of concern will be discussed at a future meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Houle discussed his report dated 8/21/2025 as follows:

- Review of Summer 2025 at Assabet – Review of the Summer School program, the Career Discovery experience program and the MAVA Connecting for Success conference.
- Recognition of Maintenance Staff/IT Services/Support Staff/Administration: - Members were updated on all the work done in and around the building during the summer by related staff.
- Ongoing Initiatives – Members were reminded of the ongoing efforts to reduce student chronic absenteeism, enhance student focus, increase student literacy and comprehension, and integrate educational technologies as well as continued Strategic Planning efforts through the School Improvement Team.
- Assabet Technical Institute – receipt of Round 10 of the CTI grants offered through the Commonwealth Corp have been confirmed in the amount of \$1,080,000.00 for the training of 100 participants for Auto Tech, AVAC, Welding, Plumbing and Electrical positions being offered to underemployed adults in member communities.
- MA Executive Office of Education-CTE Expansion Funding Grants – The Governor's office recently announced \$100 million in CTE Expansion Capital Funding in the FY26 budget. A link was included for members to learn more information.
- Incoming Students – Members were informed of the expected count of freshmen for the class of 2029.
- Superintendent-Director SMART goals – Mr. Houle discussed his goals for FY26 and FY27. Members reviewed the document with goals broken down by standard to track progress.
- Roof – Mr. Houle recommended that the District School Committee authorize the expenditure of an amount up to \$500,000 for masonry replacement necessary to complete the roof repair project. A motion was made and seconded to approve the recommendation. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ryan Second: Ms. Ayres Status: Passed

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS REPORT

- Mr. DiStefano informed the Committee that a Collateralized Agreement has been signed with UniBank.
- Review of Cash & Balance Report – A motion was made and seconded to approve the report as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ayres Second: Mr. George Status: Passed

- Ms. Savoie reviewed the Budget Report by Department. Discussion followed. Mr. Houle suggested a special School Committee meeting to review the budget and process and a breakdown per town. Mr. Houle will send out some dates to members.
- Ms. Savoie reviewed the recommended budget transfers with members. A motion was made and seconded to approve the budget transfers as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ayres Second: Ms. Ryan Status: Passed

COMMUNICATIONS

- Review of SkillsUSA Nationals competition held in June; members received a link to pictures taken at the competition.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:52 PM, a motion was made and seconded to go into Executive Session for purposes of discussing matters pertaining to collective bargaining for non-union/union personnel, noting they would be returning to regular session. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ayres Second: Ms. Ryan Status: Passed

At 9:53 PM, a motion was made and seconded to go out of Executive Session and return to regular session. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

PERSONNEL

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Director of Special Education, Dr. Dixie Diamond. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ayres Second: Mr. George Status: Passed

A motion was made and seconded to authorize the Chair to sign the contract with the SPED Director on behalf of the School Committee. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ayres Second: Mr. Greenwood Status: Passed

A motion was made and seconded to reappoint the District Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer for the 2025-2026 school year. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Ayres Second: Mr. George Status: Passed

A motion was made and seconded to approve the FY26 salary increases for non-union members as presented and discussed in Executive Session. The motion was passed by a vote of 5-1. Voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Pietrewicz, Mr. Greenwood, Ms. Simms George, Ms. Ayres and Mr. George. Ms. Ryan noted that her no vote for the salary increases was not because of the amount proposed but because of the timing which is before a union contract has been negotiated.

Move: Ms. Ayres Second: Mr. Greenwood Status: Passed

A motion was made and seconded to approve the FY26 salary increases for the Superintendent-Director as presented and discussed in Executive Session. The motion was passed by a vote of 5-1. Voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Pietrewicz, Mr. Greenwood, Ms. Simms George, Ms. Ayres and Mr. George. Ms. Ryan noted that her no vote for the salary increase was not because of the amount proposed but because of the timing which is before a union contract has been negotiated.

At 10:05 PM, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Mr. Pietrewicz Second: Mr. Greenwood Status: Passed

The minutes herein were recorded by the Clerk and will not become official until approved by the Committee and so noted in a subsequent record.

Dawn M. Bacon, Clerk