

Board of Education Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, March 10, 2026 6:30 PM Eastern

Beman Middle School  
1 Wilderman's Way  
Middletown, CT 06457

<https://www.youtube.com/@MiddletownStream>

Kelly Bee: Present  
Chris Cardella: Present  
Sheila Daniels: Present  
Rakim Grant: Present  
Deborah Kleckowski: Present  
Dean Krupa: Present  
Susan Owens: Absent  
Harold Panciera: Present  
Kim Riordan: Present

Present: 8, Absent: 1.

Susan Owens: Present (6:40)

Present: 9.

#### I. Call to Order

Ms. Daniels called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

#### II. Salute to the Flag

Student Representative Sal Marnus Kunate led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### III. Adoption of Agenda

A motion to adopt the agenda was made. This motion, made by Harold Panciera and seconded by Deborah Kleckowski, Carried.

Susan Owens: Absent, Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea  
Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

A motion was made to move Item IX.C. Superintendent's Proposed Budget presentation before Item IV. District Highlights. This motion, made by Sheila Daniels and seconded by Deborah Kleckowski, Carried.

Susan Owens: Absent, Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea  
Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

A motion to have move Item VII. A. Report of Student Representative moved to before Item IV. District Highlights due to religious obligations. This motion, made by Chris Cardella and seconded by Deborah Kleckowski, Carried.

Susan Owens: Absent, Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea  
Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

#### IV. District Highlights

Mr. Scott Roberts gave Ms. Owens the floor to discuss the GIFTS program achievements. Ms. Owens discussed the fashion show for the GIFTS program at MHS. She discussed the talents that the students have. The GIFTS luncheon will be next week and will include guest speakers.

##### IV.A. Legacy Interim Director

Mr. Roberts introduced Ms. Vacianna Spaulding. Ms. Spaulding introduced Mark Hedrick, Interim Legacy Coordinator. Mr. Hedrick shared his experience at Legacy Academy. He is proud of the student successes and connections being made.

##### IV.B. Snow School Highlight

Mr. Peter Fragola, Ms. Alea Orcutt and Ms. Jill Garrity were introduced. Mr. Fragola reviewed the Choose Love program and why SEL matters. Students participate in SEL journals and mood meter. Ms. Orcutt shared that Ms. Lewis visited Snow School to meet with staff. Ms. Garrity reviewed the Choose Love formula, a social emotional framework designed to foster resilience, connection, and well being. They shared projects the students have completed and a video showing the practices of Choose Love.

##### IV.C. Women's History Month

March celebrates Women's History Month. Mr. Roberts highlighted Ida Keigwin and Vivian McRae Wesley, who both have schools named after them.

##### IV.D. Board Member Appreciation Month

Dr. Addley shared that Governor Lamont will be visiting MHS students tomorrow. Mr. Roberts shared a video of students thanking the Board of Education Members.

#### V. Public Session

Chair Daniels explained the rules of Public Session

Ms. Maryann Serra, 251 Sisk Rd. Ms. Serra shared that the BOE has a tremendous job in choosing the next Superintendent. She urged the BOE to make a positive decision in leadership and review candidates' history. She also spoke of the athletes at Middletown High School.

Makayla Altenburger, 180 Clover Street. Ms. Altenburger urged the BOE members not to lower the budget. She is against cuts that will affect opportunities for students. Ms. Altenburger also spoke on behalf of her classmate, Bianca.

Mr. Trevor Charles, 505 Kelsey Street. Mr. Charles spoke of the importance of small class sizes. He spoke of the opportunities they provide for students. He spoke of the negative impact that cutting staff will have on both students and staff. He spoke of the impact that a teacher had on him during his time as a student at Middletown High. He asked for the BOE to find another way to make the budget work.

Ms. Elizabeth Read. Ms. Read invited the BOE to the student exhibition at Lawrence School. Ms. Reed shared that cuts can be made within the IB program to be able to sustain it.

Ms. Natalie Altenburger, 180 Clover Street, Rabbi Altenburger shared that all students should have access to the best possible education. She urged the board to reach for excellence for students.

Ms. Janice Pawlak, Brookview Lane. Ms. Pawlak asked the board to prioritize the neediness of the students. She asked for the budget to be built around those students. Ms. Pawlak also shared information about Ms. Vivian McRae Wesley.

Ms. Emily Wangersman, staff member. Ms. Wangersman shared that cutting a position does not cut the issue, only a trained individual to address the issue. She asked the Board to reconsider the staff cuts.

Ms. Quastina Jackson, 21 Norfolk St. Ms. Jackson expressed her concern on budget cuts for teachers. She spoke of the importance of certified educators. She spoke of the increase in positions and cuts on others. She spoke of the importance of support for students.

Ms. Brooke Carta, AFSCME Local 1467 President. Ms. Carta spoke of the cuts to Union 1467. Ms. Carta spoke of the lack of working together with the administration for the budget.

Mr. Josh Heltke, 573 Atkins St. Mr. Holkey spoke about the safety and security in schools in the form of teachers. He talked about the importance of the relationship between teachers and students. He asked to invest in the staff in the schools.

Ms. Leah McMullian, 136 Lincoln St. Ms. McMullian spoke about the connections that she has had with teachers in MPS. She discussed the importance of consistency that students have with teachers.

Mr. Grant reminded everyone that the Common Council makes the final decision on the schools budget.

## VI. Communications

### VI.A. Report of Student Representative

Sal spoke of the upcoming events such as the NHS blood drive, MHS musical and the district wide art show. Students continue to excel in DECA State Competition with many winners moving on to the International Career Development Conference. The dance team won the State Championship in large hip hop and small jazz categories. Track and field and wrestling also had student athletes excel and move on to state and regional competitions.

## VII. Consent Agenda

A motion to accept the Consent Agenda was made. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Chris Cardella, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan:

Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0,

#### VII.A. Minutes of February 10, 2026

#### VII.B. Out of State Field Trip MHS ASTE MxCC Vet Class to Tufts University

#### VII.C. Grants Status Report

#### VII.D. Budget Committee

#### VII.E. Curriculum Committee

#### VII.F. Policy Committee

### VIII. Department Reports

#### VIII.A. Financial Report

Ms. Forbes shared that there is a modest surplus in February. The surplus is in salaries and benefits. There is a deficit in purchase services due to snow removal and special education transportation.

There were no questions.

##### VIII.A.1. Action on Line Item Transfer Report

Move to approve the Line Item Transfer Report was made. This motion, made by Harold Panciera and seconded by Deborah Kleckowski, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0

Ms. Forbes shared that transfers included Bielefield supply lines, food supply lines, Middletown High School science department, purchase services and Silent Sounds printing. There were no questions.

#### VIII.B. Facilities Department

Mr. Marco Gaylord shared that the new work order system is running smoothly. Hours and funds are being tracked. The Snow School roof project is moving forward. Keigwin received funds to assist with HVAC, asbestos abatement and flooring. Mr. Krupa shared that he was able to see the work done in the roofing projects. He commended Mr. Gaylord on the work being done. Mr. Gaylord recognized John Post and Jeremy Hungerford for their work with leaks and replacing ceiling tiles.

#### VIII.C. Personnel Report

Mr. Harry Snyder highlighted that HR partners with universities with student teachers. There are 18 universities that we participate with. This promotes potential in hiring these teachers and highlights employee opportunities within the district. Ms. Kleckowski asked about the rate of turnover and its decrease this month. Mr. Snyder agreed it has gone down and explained. She also asked about the soft freeze and Mr. Snyder responded. Mr. Panciera asked about the coverage for the Beman Science teacher. Ms. Cannata started that the teacher's last day has not occurred yet, however HR is working with the principal on

coverage. Ms. Owens asked where the state gets the data on staff leaving the district. Mr. Snyder explained that HR sends data to the state for the EDS report. Mr. Krupa asked if the data will be shared again and Mr. Snyder responded yes. Mr. Cardella asked if the interim principal will retain interim status through the end of the year. Mr. Snyder responded yes.

#### VIII.D. Transportation Report

Ms. Erin Stevenson reported a clean safety record for February. Springfield trip requests are coming in. After school programs are underway with additions for Macdonough and Beman.

### IX. Superintendent's Report

#### IX.A. Capital / Facilities Plan

Mr. Gaylord discussed the Five - Year Capital Improvement Plan, a strategic roadmap designed to ensure our district's facilities remain safe, efficient and conducive to a premier learning environment. He discussed the Wesley and Spencer roofing projects, oil tanks and boilers. He shared a list of the priority projects totaling \$7,894,730. The long term vision is beyond these immediate needs, the Five- Year Capital Plan services as a proactive investment strategy. By addressing the critical needs items now, we mitigate the risk of costlier emergency repairs in the future and demonstrate fiscal responsibility to our community.

#### IX.B. Legislative Updates

Dr. Addley shared an overview of the CAFE and CAPPS Legislative Updates. He explained that the ECS formula was last revised in 2016. An adjustment in the ECS formula could result in the benefit for MPS. Another bill in front of legislators is regarding homeschooling. This would add a burden to the public schools. A Senate bill proposes bio-diesel fuel which would add a significant cost to the district. Ms. Bee shared that all bills are posted on the State's website and there are many ways to advocate as a member of the community. Mr. Krupa also encouraged the public to provide feedback.

#### IX.C. Superintendent's Proposed Budget

Dr. Addley thanked everyone in attendance and thanked everyone that worked on the budget. He explained the work that was put into developing this budget. He explained the budget process timeline, which began in October 2025. He reviewed the priorities which include: provide fiscal responsibility, fulfill mandatory obligations, sustain core educational programs and support student behavioral needs. Enrollment, student achievement and accomplishments, DRG comparison, and a history of the operating budget were all reviewed. The total budget increase is 3.99%. It represents last year's budget with the core budget a decrease of 1.22%. Dr. Addley reviewed each category that there was an increase or decrease. He reviewed the budget highlights that are aligned to priorities which included specific cuts. He also reviewed the mandatory obligations of the district and sustaining core educational programs. Dr. Addley discussed supporting student behavioral needs and the staffing changes. Capital improvement priority projects were reviewed.

Ms. Daniels asked for any questions. Mr. Grant questioned the obligations that create an increase and the cuts made to create a lower budget. He made a statement that year after year the BOE is reducing the budget with mandatory obligations. Students and teachers are asked to do more with less. He suggested that the BOE be ambitious and reduce the cuts and ask for the money that the district needs. Ms. Bee asked about the funds and renewals of the grants.

## X. Action Items

### X.A. Healthy Food Certifications

Mr. Randall Mel shared that Boards of Education are to vote on the motions each year. There were no questions.

#### X.A.1. Required Vote for Participation in Healthy Food Option of HFC

MOTION: Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Middletown Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Harold Panciera, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0

#### X.A.2. Required Vote for Food Exemptions

MOTION: The Middletown Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

"Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food sales. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Kelly Bee, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0

#### X.A.3. Optional Vote for Beverage Exemptions

MOTION: The Middletown Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. The "school day" is the period from 3 midnights before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being

held and must be the same place as the beverage sales. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Kelly Bee, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea  
Yea: 9, Nay: 0

#### X.B. Certified Resolution

Resolved that Dr. Alan Addley, Interim Superintendent of Schools of this corporation, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this corporation a certain contract with the State of Connecticut, Department of Economic and Community Development, and to affix the corporate seal, if any. This motion, made by Sheila Daniels and seconded by Dean Krupa, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea  
Yea: 9, Nay: 0

#### X.C. Policy # 1260 Civility/Respectful Communications and Actions at School, on School Property, or at a School Sponsored Activity or Function -First Reading

Ms. Kleckowski explained that the policy committee received additional legal information to be added to the policy.

Motion to approve Policy #1260 Civility / Respectful Communications and Actions at School, on School Property, or at a School Sponsored Activity or Function - First Reading was made. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Chris Cardella, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea  
Yea: 9, Nay: 0

#### X.D. Policy #4010 Hiring of Certified Staff - First Reading

Ms. Kleckowski shared this policy has had robust discussion in the committee. Dr. Addley shared that administration recommended that Executive positions would sit on the interview committee, but not principals or assistant principals. Mr. Cardella asked if job titles change would an addendum have to be made to the policy. Dr. Addley stated in practice, the board would be part of the process.

Motion to approve Policy #4010 Hiring of Certified Staff - First Reading was made. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Harold Panciera, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0

## X.E. Policy # 6154 Instruction Homework - First Reading

Ms. Kleckowski thanked Ms. Colleen Fitzpatrick for her work on this policy. Ms. Kleckowski asked for an addendum that homework would go 5% for the final grade for homework on grades 9-12. Dr. Addley asked the Board to consider the professionals and their expertise and their work that went into this policy. He stated that department leaders and staff should make that decision. Mr. Grant agreed with Dr. Addley. Ms. Kleckowski shared that the policy committee did have many discussions regarding the topic.

An amendment was made that 5% of a student's grade in grades 9-12 would be from homework. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Harold Panciera, Carried.

Kelly Bee: Nay, Sheila Daniels: Nay, Rakim Grant: Nay, Chris Cardella: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 3,

Kelly Bee: Nay, Sheila Daniels: Nay, Rakim Grant: Nay

A motion to accept the policy with the amendment was made. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Sheila Daniels, Carried.

Susan Owens: Kelly Bee: Nay, Sheila Daniels: Nay, Rakim Grant: Nay, Chris Cardella: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 3,

Kelly Bee: Nay, Sheila Daniels: Nay, Rakim Grant: Nay

## XI. Future Agenda Items

Mr. Cardella asked about past BOE meetings being posted on the YouTube page. Mr. Skott responded that policy changes have affected the page. Mr. Skott will address the timeline with youtube.

## XII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made. This motion, made by Deborah Kleckowski and seconded by Rakim Grant, Carried.

Susan Owens: Kelly Bee: Yea, Chris Cardella: Yea, Sheila Daniels: Yea, Rakim Grant: Yea, Deborah Kleckowski: Yea, Dean Krupa: Yea, Susan Owens: Yea, Harold Panciera: Yea, Kim Riordan: Yea

Yea: 9, Nay: 0