



# THE MAINE EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

GOVERNOR BAXTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF  
One Mackworth Island, Falmouth, ME 04105

Board of Directors  
March 5, 2026  
Minutes

- 5:32pm I. **Call to Order and Roll Call of Board Members**
- Present:** Tommy Minch, Anna Perna, Roxanne Baker, Lisette Belanger, Jason Bubier, Beth Campbell, Claire Jeffers, Janet May, Mike Pulsifer, Dawna Thorpe, Sandra Wood
- Excused:** Janet May
- Also present:** Steve Connolly, Dean Flanagin, Kim Matthews-Hermans, Cathy Lushman, David Hillier, Megan Garrity, Kim Spencer, Amy Richardson, Evah Hallwell, Grace Cooney, Olive Paternoster, Lanet Anthony, Christy LoCicero, Lori Levesque, Jillian Thuringer, T Frederick, Rachel (captioner)
- 5:35pm II. **Adjustments to the Agenda**
- No adjustments needed  
Beth **motioned**; Jason **seconded**  
11 **in favor**. 0 **opposed**. 0 **abstained**
- 5:37pm III. **Motion to Approve the February 5, 2026 Board Minutes**
- Anna **motioned**; Dawna **seconded**  
11 **in favor**. 0 **opposed**. 0 **abstained**
- 5:38pm IV. **Public Comments**
- None
- 5:39pm V. **Executive Director's Report** Steve Connolly, *Executive Director*
- 150th/35th Dual Celebration** Upcoming event marking 150 years of Deaf education in Maine and the 35th Deaf Culture Fest, with planning actively underway.
- Deaf Professional Outreach** Contacted several Deaf/Hard of Hearing professionals (ages 18–35) — including an actress, TikTok creator, news host, and two racecar drivers — to provide inspirational video messages for youth with a "you can be anything" theme. Exploring bringing one speaker in person.
- Federal Education Funding Concerns** Monitoring IDEA funding impacts as the Dept. of Education is restructured. Maine receives ~\$70M from IDEA annually. Flat funding was approved (vs. a proposed 15% cut) — a modest win, but not keeping pace with rising costs.
- Basketball Team Success** Strong season gains; recent win over Pine Tree Academy. Notable moments: a student returned from injury, a student made her first-ever free throw (celebrated by both sides), and a student made a key steal and assist.
- Solar & Energy Efficiency** Exploring solar panels on Greenlaw and Brewster buildings (roofs due for replacement in 1–2 years). Also considering heat pumps. Currently ranked 3rd least energy-efficient state-owned facility in Maine, behind two prisons.
- 5:49pm VI. **Facilities Report** Dean Flanagin, *Director of Operations*
- Audit Status** RKO audit nearing completion; State Auditing Office has been kept informed throughout the process.



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**Frozen Pipes at Greenlaw** During the January 30th cold snap, pipes froze in rooms 107 and 110. Walls were cut open to access and thaw pipes, fittings replaced, and a new valve installed. Root cause identified as a design flaw — an open cold-air vent with inadequate wall insulation running directly beneath the pipes. Permanent sheetrock repairs scheduled.

**Brewster Library Renovation** Former library/conference room refreshed with new carpet squares, fresh paint, and window shades on order. The old circulation desk remains temporarily and will be removed in June to avoid floor damage.

**Mansion & Gateway Projects** BGS working on bid specs for chimney and roof repairs on the mansion, targeted for spring. Remaining Gateway project punch list items also to be addressed in spring.

**Energy Efficiency Initiatives** Siemens conducting an energy audit across buildings to identify usage patterns and recommend projects with the best payback. Solar panels and heat pumps are among the options being evaluated. Data collection is underway.

6:11pm VII. **Eastern Region Report** Megan Garrity, *Eastern Region and Family and Peer Programming Coordinator*

## New Business

6:37pm VIII. **Policies - 1st Read**

- AC/Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity And Affirmative Action
- ACAA/Harassment And Sexual Harassment Of Students
- ACAB/Harassment And Sexual Harassment Of School Employees
- ADC/Tobacco-Free Schools: Use And Possession Of Tobacco And Electronic Smoking Devices
- ADC-R/Tobacco Use And Possession – Administrative Procedure
- ADC/Tobacco-Free Schools: Use And Possession Of Tobacco And Electronic Smoking Devices
- ADF/School District Commitment To Learning Results
- BBAB/School Board Self-Evaluation

No changes

Mike **motioned**; Dawna **seconded**

6:41pm VIII. **Staff Nomination**

Dawna **motioned**; Lisette **seconded**  
11 **in favor**. 0 **opposed**. 0 **abstained**

6:43pm IX. **Recent Hires**

- Tosh Chebultz, Ed Tech I in Lewiston Schools
- JoAnn Diaz Bryan, Ed Tech III at Lyman Moore Middle School
- Joseph Gareri, Ed Tech III at Mackworth Island Preschool



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- 6:45pm X. **Executive Session**  
Lisette **motioned**; Mike **seconded**
- 7:47pm XI. **Announcements**
- 7:50pm XII. **Adjournment**  
Dawna **motioned**; Anna **seconded**  
11 **in favor**. 0 **opposed**. 0 **abstained**

Final