



Town of Middleton

182 Kings Highway, Middleton, New Hampshire 03887

Budget Committee Public Meeting & Public Hearing

Middleton Elementary School
116 Kings Highway, Middleton, NH 03887

January 12, 2026 6:30 PM

These minutes serve as the legal record of the meeting and are in the form of an overview of the Budget Committee meeting. It is neither intended nor is it represented that this is a full transcription. A recording of the meeting is available online at <https://www.youtube.com/@townofmiddleton9741/streams> for a limited time for reference purposes.

DRAFT: These minutes are strictly a draft copy and are awaiting amendment or approval at a subsequent, duly noticed public meeting. Amendments to these minutes will be noted in the minutes of said meeting. This draft is available for public review and the approved copy will be posted on the Town of Middleton website.

Attachments

- Sign in Sheet
- Middleton School District Proposed Budget FY 2027
- Middleton School District Warrant 2026

Committee Members

Budget Committee	Representatives
Patti Sindorf (Chair)	Bonnie Gagnon, BOS Rep
Danielle Snow-LeClair (Vice Chair)	Christine Maynard, SLVD Rep
Sierra Pawnell	Heather Cremen, School Rep
Tracy Hayes	

Call to Order

P. Sindorf opened the Public Hearing for the School Budget Review at 6:34 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

School Budget Review

R. Tufts-Keegan (resident) provided tuition statistics for some area private schools from first to eight grade.

H. Cremen said private schools have donors and get more funding than public schools. This offsets the cost of tuition. She also provided some statistics. She said the tuition cost for the elementary school was \$17,752 and for high school it was \$25,421.

B. Gagnon asked how \$19,699 was derived.

H. Cremen read the formula it's based on.

R. Tufts-Keegan said she was under the impression there are federal reimbursements available the school is not taking advantage of.

There was discussion about the cost per student compared to the level of education provided.

C. Maynard said more money continues to be spent, but the students are not getting improved services or help and there is no plan to address this.

There was discussion about the costs related to special education, which is the largest percentage of the increases.

H. Cremmen said the budget must be based on current spending and that may or may not be what is needed in the future.

There was discussion about whether special education costs should have been more accurately predicted.

H. Cremmen said the role of the Budget Committee is to review the budget, not control it, and they are getting off track.

S. Pawnell said the Budget Committee does have the authority to change the School Board's proposed numbers; it's the Budget Committee's budget that gets presented to the taxpayers.

There was discussion about the School Board's accountability to the Town for understanding and approving the dollars the SAU suggests be allocated and spent.

There was discussion about when residents will see the effect of these increases on their property tax rates.

C. Maynard said the School Board has five days to make a draft copy of meeting minutes available to the public or they are in violation of the law.

B. Gagnon asked why the financials presented at the end of 2025 by the School Board do not agree with the current proposed budget.

J. Sindorf (resident) asked if the Budget Committee received the documentation they asked for on contracted line items.

P. Sindorf said they did not and suggested they may have misunderstood what she was asking for.

There was frustration expressed that this and other financial information has been repeatedly requested and not provided.

There was discussion about the number and type of buses and drivers currently available.

H. Cremmen said one of the buses was sold. The reason the Budget Committee was not informed because the 2017 board voted to allow the superintendent to authorize the sale of non-real estate assets.

S. Pawnell said she is concerned that Medicare and Social Security are always under budgeted; a new hire will have an even greater negative effect on that situation.

There was discussion about furniture repair and replacement and if there is any plan for the future.

C. Maynard suggested cutting \$1,000 from the furniture replacement line because there is no substantiation of expenses or explanation of what may be needed. **B. Gagnon** agreed.

C. Maynard said she supports the school, the teachers and the principal, but not the way money is being managed.

There was discussion about voting requirements and deadlines.

H. Cremmen explained what some of the individual lines meant and the Board Members asked questions.

D. Snow-LeClair asked for a clearer explanation and detail of the para and teacher expenses under contracts. She said contracted services are listed in several places on the budget and it's not indicated what services they are.

C. Maynard said it may be wise to hire two more paras rather than paying triple the amount to contract these positions.

There was discussion about the school nurse position and pay.

C. Maynard asked that the breakdown of the contract for Huggins be at the next meeting.

There was discussion about how health insurance is included in the budget.

C. Maynard suggested that the line for the School Board be cut. She said no other board, with the exception of the Selectboard, is paid for their services to the town.

There was discussion about negotiating phone line costs.

There was discussion about the number of school buses, bus drivers, wages and related costs.

H. Cremmen said the principal told her they have all the staffing they need.

Frustration was expressed by the Budget Committee members as they believe the School Board is not negotiating contracts nor budgeting expenses appropriately.

There was discussion about the process for the budget review and for the final approval.

B. Gagnon made a motion to continue the Public Hearing to Monday, January 19, 2026 at the Old Town Hall at 6:30.

S. Pawnell seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Budget Committee Public Hearing (continued)

Old Town Hall
200 Kings Highway, Middleton, NH 03887

January 19, 2026 6:30 PM

Committee Members

Budget Committee Patti Sindorf (Chair) Danielle Snow-LeClair (Vice Chair) Sierra Pawnell Tracy Hayes	Representatives Bonnie Gagnon, BOS Rep Christine Maynard, SLVD Rep Heather Cremmen, School Rep
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P. Sindorf re-opened the Public Hearing for the School Budget Review at 6:31 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

School Budget Review (Continued)

MSD Proposed Budget FY 2027

The Budget Committee continued to review the MSD FY 2027 Proposed School Budget, asked questions, and made comments and recommendations.

Middleton School District Warrant 2026

P. Sindorf read Articles III, IV, V, VI and VII out loud and the committee voted on each.

Warrant Article III

Yay - 1 No - 6 Abstain - 0

Warrant Article IV

Yay - 7 No - 0 Abstain - 0

Warrant Article V

Yay - 7 No - 0 Abstain - 0

Warrant Article VI

Yay - 7 No - 0 Abstain - 0

Warrant Article VII

Yay - 2 No - 5 Abstain - 0

C. Maynard read Warrant Article II out loud as amended by the Budget Committee:

Warrant Article II:

The average cost-per-pupil for the preceding year as calculated in accordance with RS 189:75, I(a) is \$19,699.60. ELA Proficiency: 32%; Math Proficiency: 39%; Science Proficiency: 43%. Shall the Middleton School District raise and appropriate as an operating

budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$6,000,000? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$6,448,397 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Middleton School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. ***NOTE: This warrant article (operating budget) does not include appropriations requested in ANY of the other warrant articles. (The Middleton School Board recommends \$6,855,832 by a vote of 3-1-0. The Middleton Budget Committee recommends \$6,000,000 by a vote of 6-1-0.) Estimated tax impact on \$X,XXX,XXX is an increase of \$/\$1,000 resulting in an estimated tax rate of \$.**

Yay - 6 No - 1 Abstain - 0

P. Sindorf closed the Budget Committee Public Hearing for the School Budget at 8:25 p.m.

A Public Hearing on the Town Budget was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at the Old Town Hall.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 16, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the Old Town Hall.

Adjournment

B. Gagnon made a motion to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

C. Maynard seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Willis
Administrative Clerk