

**To Accompany the May 2022 Needham Town Meeting Warrant
Article 10 FY2023 Operating Budget Item 20: Minuteman Regional High School Assessment**

A Brief Update On The Minuteman Regional High School

Greetings Needham Town Meeting members! This document is a snapshot of important developments regarding the Minuteman Regional High School whose nine-member-town district includes Needham. Minuteman is a Career/Technical High School with career offerings ranging from Carpentry to BioTechnology in addition to the usual high school programs of academics, arts, sports, etc. You can find details about the Minuteman school at its website: *www.minuteman.org*.

The most important highlights of the 2021/2022 academic year follow. A more detailed presentation by the Minuteman Superintendent can be found on the Town Meeting website. Its title is: *Minuteman Presentation For Needham 2022 Town Meeting.pdf*.

Important developments for this year include:

- This is the first full year students have been in the new building since its opening in September 2019.
- Three synthetic fields (including lighting for nighttime use) have been completed. This will allow sports to be played at Minuteman for the first time in 5 years.
- There has been a continuation of the dramatic increase in enrollment by member town students.
- The addition of an Animal Science/Veterinary Assisting program.
- The anticipated enrollment from Needham for next year is 39 students, up from 31 this year.
- The School Committee/Administration have continued the process of increasing Minuteman's capacity to 800 students without any increase in debt.
- Our long-term Superintendent, Dr. Ed Bouquillon, will be retiring at the end of June 2022.
- The School Committee has completed a successful superintendent search which resulted in the hiring of Dr. Kathleen Dawson. Dr. Dawson will start as Minuteman superintendent on July 1, 2022.

Notes On Minuteman Capacity/Enrollment

The design capacity of the new Minuteman school is 628 students. Recently the number of in-district applicants has exceeded school capacity. In-district applications have risen from 147 for class of 2022, to 313¹ for the class of 2026. That is a doubling of in-district applications over four years despite the district shrinking from 16 member towns to 9 towns. It is likely that the school will not be able to accommodate in-district demand for the class of 2026. This also means it is unlikely that any out-of-district students will be admitted.

To address this new demand reality the Minuteman administration and school committee are developing a plan which would raise the school capacity to 800 students over the next few years. The proposed plan will not require further bonding from the member towns. It will be primarily financed by:

- Public/Private Partners (several of which have already expressed interest)
- A variety of grants
- The Minuteman stabilization fund

The School Committee is comfortable that the economics of the proposed expansion will make sense for the district, but significant work needs to be done in order to finalize and implement the full plan.

¹ Many of the application/enrollment numbers in this report are as of March. It is likely that these numbers have changed since then.

Notes On The Minuteman Superintendency

All good things must come to an end so we will be saying farewell to Dr. Edward Bouquillon, Minuteman's superintendent for the last 15 years. Dr Bouquillon has been instrumental in the complete revival of the Minuteman district including the design and construction of the new school building and, most recently, the installation of three synthetic turf sport fields.

With an ending comes a new beginning. On April 6 the school committee unanimously approved a superintendent's contract for Dr. Kathleen Dawson. We are delighted to have Dr. Dawson continue Minuteman's legacy of excellence. The press release announcing her hiring is below.

Final Comments

In closing I include two very brief videos in which you may be interested. The first video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhMb1oxlk0U> is a tour of the school where you will see many of the facilities and spaces that we are paying for!

In the second video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgYAQF_VD8Q students talk about their experiences at Minuteman.

These videos are short and will provide an idea of what Minuteman is really about.

Jeff Stulin
Needham Representative to the Minuteman School Committee
April 2022

Dr. Kathleen Dawson to Become Superintendent-Director of Minuteman on July 1

Apr 6 2022



LEXINGTON – Wednesday, April 6, 2022 – The Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School Committee has voted unanimously to appoint Dr. Kathleen A. Dawson as Superintendent-Director of the [Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District](#) effective July 1, 2022. The School Committee’s vote took place on January 26.

The School Committee and Dawson worked collaboratively to arrive at a three-year agreement beginning July 1.

The Minuteman district encompasses [nine member towns](#) (Acton, Arlington, Bolton, Concord, Dover, Lancaster, Lexington, Needham, and Stow) and includes [Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School](#) and [Minuteman Technical Institute \(MTI\)](#), a career technical education program for adults seeking courses in high-demand occupations.

Dawson comes to Minuteman from her most recent position as Deputy Superintendent of the Orange County School District in North Carolina. She has also served as a public school teacher or held administrative positions in Duluth, Minn., Boston, and Nashville. She received her Master’s in Education in 2001 from Harvard University and her Ed.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 2015.

“Dr. Dawson’s background working in public schools as an educator and administrator were compelling,” said Pam Nourse, Chairperson of the Minuteman School Committee, of Acton. “Her experience, passion, drive, and vision for high-quality education will be an asset to the future of Minuteman.”

“Nothing is by chance. My career has been grounded in innovation and excellence,” Dawson said. “I am honored to be joining the Minuteman community where we will continue to revolutionize career and technical education. This is our chance to ensure every student is academically strong, globally competitive, and future-ready.”

Dawson impressed the Minuteman School Committee with her variety of career experiences and creative approaches to continue Minuteman’s mission to provide a high-quality career and technical education, integrated with robust academics to all learners, including adult students who attend Minuteman Technical Institute. Dawson looks forward to challenging all students to aspire to their full potential, accelerate their learning, and achieve success in the 21st century global economy.

Dawson will succeed Dr. Edward A. Bouquillon, who is retiring after 15 years of leadership of Minuteman. Dawson looks forward to building on Bouquillon’s work that has resulted in the implementation of an [Academy Model](#), delivering advanced academic and career and technical curriculum, increased member-town enrollment, the opening of a new school building, and strategic partnerships with business, industry, and higher education. Dawson will work hand-in-hand with the member-district communities, the School Committee, the teachers and staff, the parents, and the students to create meaningful opportunities for all students.

“As Minuteman continues to move past COVID, expand its enrollment capacity and deliver high-quality career and technical education for all learners, it’s vital to ensure a smooth transition for students, teachers, staff, and families,” Bouquillon said. “I welcome Dr. Dawson into the role of Superintendent-Director.”