

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2026

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV1 or SHCTV1.com

I. Call to Order: At 6:00pm noticing a quorum, Vice Chair Danielle Cooke called to order the remote South Hadley School Committee meeting, a Zoom Meeting accessible via SHCTV15 and SHCTV.com

In Attendance: Danielle Cooke, Vice Chairperson; Jack Witkowski, Member; Charles Miles, Member; Tracie Kennedy, Member; Jennifer Voyik, Superintendent for South Hadley Public Schools; & Lyn Jacques, Assistant Superintendent for South Hadley Public Schools.

Absent: Eric Friesner, Chairperson; Amy Foley, SHEA President; Maya Thielen, Student Representative; & Zenniyah Valenzuela, Student Representative.

II. Public Comment: Kira Nichols, 34 Ridge Rd: budget cuts to electives & athletics.

III. SHEA Report: None.

IV. Routine Items

A. Approval of Warrants (VOTE)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Warrant</u>	<u>Amount</u>
January 15, 2026	Biweekly payroll	\$816,133.15

(VOTE) Vice Chair Cooke made a motion for those eligible to approve the following warrant. It is warrant dated January 15th, 2026, it is a biweekly payroll in the amount of \$816,133.15. Charles Miles seconded.

Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Cooke – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

V. Reports of Standing Committees

A. Subcommittee & Liaison Reports

- 1. Elementary School Building Project Committee:** Tracie Kennedy stated The Mosier Building Committee is reviewing seven options, including renovation and new construction models, and will soon narrow them down to the best long-term solution for South Hadley. A community tour and presentation will be held on February 5 at 5:30 pm.
- 2. Collaborative for Educational Services (CES):** Tracie Kennedy provided the following update, The organization is in the final stages of its search for an executive director, with four candidates remaining and a vote expected at next week's board meeting.
- 3. Budget Subcommittee:** Tracie Kennedy expressed that the subcommittee discussed restoring math and reading interventionists at Mosier and Skala and exploring the use of Title I funds to potentially reinstate those positions.
- 4. Budget Task Force:** Charles Miles stated There are no new updates from the Budget Task Force, as it did not meet this week due to the holiday. The third and final public listening session will be held 1/22/26 at 7 p.m. at the Senior Center, providing an opportunity for

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the community to learn more and share priorities. The Task Force expects to present its recommendation to the Select Board by February 10.

B. Report of Student Representative: None.

C. Report of Superintendent: Superintendent Voyik deferred her report but shared the following important dates: 1/22/26 Budget Task Force Forum, 2/5/26 6pm Community Conversation at Skala, 2/23/26 6pm Community Forum on the School Budget at MESMS and 3/11/26 7pm Public Budget Hearing.

D. Report of the Chair and School Committee: Tracie Kennedy reminded the community that the Harlequin's Musical Review is 1/30/26 at 7pm and 1/31/26 at 2pm.

E. Appreciations: Vice Chair Cooke – mental health supports shared by the district.

VI. Discussion of St. Patrick Day Parade Participation: The School Committee will participate this year.

VII. Initial Review of [2026-2027 Calendar](#): Superintendent Voyik reviewed the three options explaining that more than one was provided because Labor Day is later this year. Staff was also asked their opinion via survey, and she shared the responses as they stood to date. This will be voted on at the next School Committee meeting on 2/4/26.

VIII. Extracurriculars Review: Superintendent Voyik presented a slideshow which is filed with the original minutes, that highlighted the value of South Hadley's extracurricular programs while providing transparency about the financial requirements to sustain them. She stated that extracurricular activities play a vital role in student belonging, leadership, and school culture, with broad student participation across schools. However, fees cover only a portion of costs, and the district relies heavily on the local budget to sustain these programs.

IX. Specialized Transportation Mid-Year Review: Will be addressed at the 2/4/26 meeting.

X. FY27 Budget Update: Superintendent Voyik presented a slideshow which is filed with original minutes, sharing that after reviewing all schools and departments, there are no easy cuts. A deficit or \$3 million override would eliminate sports, after-school activities, and middle/high school music, reduce staff and administrators, and significantly increase class sizes. A \$6 million override would still require substantial cuts, while a \$9 million override would come closest to maintaining current services for a few years but is not a long-term solution. Superintendent Voyik expressed the importance of presenting a full budget, providing the community and the School Committee with a complete overview of the District's needs and, preparing to present alternative scenarios for consideration at the Public Budget Hearing.

XI. Facilities Usage Policy Review: The Budget Subcommittee had a conversation regarding this, motivating this initial discussion on the district's facility usage policy and rental fees, which has not been reviewed since 2014. Current fees include no charge for in-town civic and recreation groups, with hourly rates set for in-town and out-of-town nonprofits, plus custodial

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fees on weekends. Members discussed the impact of unaccounted costs such as supplies and utilities used during rentals and considered whether to implement a flat custodial rate or an additional fee to help offset those expenses. This discussion will continue at future meetings.

XII. Information Only: Budget Task Force Community Forum 1/22/26, 7pm, hybrid and accessible via zoom or in-person at the Council on Aging.

XIII. Unfinished Business: None.

XIV. New Business: None.

(VOTE) Vice Chair Cooke entertained a motion to adjourn.

Jack Witkowski so moved.

Charles Miles seconded.

Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Cooke – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kiesha Keitt, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.

Reviewed and approved by the School Committee on March 4, 2026.