

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2026

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV1 or SHCTV1.com

I. Call to Order: At 7:01pm noticing a quorum, Chair Eric Friesner called to order the hybrid South Hadley School Committee meeting, in-person at the SH Council on Aging, accessible via Zoom, SHCTV15 and SHCTV.com

In Attendance: Eric Friesner, Chairperson; 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; Maya Thielen, Student Representative; & Zenniyah Valenzuela, Student Representative.

Guests: Amy Foley, SHEA President.

II. Public Comment: None.

III. SHEA Report: SHEA President, Amy Foley, expressed appreciation for the Budget Task Force, the Selectboard, the School Committee, Lisa Wong, and Jennifer Voyik for their effort, transparency, and communication. SHEA members will be taking to Town neighborhoods to share facts about the school and town needs.

IV. Routine Items:

A. Approval of Warrants (VOTE)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Warrant</u>	<u>Amount</u>
February 3, 2026	Warrant #2026-208	\$125,146.22
February 10, 2026	Warrant #2026-214	\$380,489.23
February 12, 2026	Biweekly Payroll	\$835,907.97
February 17, 2026	Warrant #2026-220	\$162,954.80
February 26, 2026	Biweekly Payroll	\$846,496.63

(VOTE) Vice Chair Cooke made a motion for those eligible to approve the following five warrants. The first is warrant dated February 3rd, 2026, it is warrant #2026-208 in the amount of \$125,146.22; the second is warrant dated February 10th, 2026, it is warrant #2026-214 in the amount of \$380,489.23; the third is warrant dated February 12th, 2026, it is a biweekly payroll that is in the amount of \$835,907.97; the 4th is dated February 17th, 2026, it is warrant #2026-220 in the amount of \$162,954.80; and the fifth and final is warrant dated February 26, 2026, it is also a biweekly payroll in the amount of \$846,496.63.

Charles Miles seconded.

Cook – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner - Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes, 1/7/2026, 1/21/2026, & 2/4/2026 (VOTE)

(VOTE) Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept the minutes as presented.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

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Jack Witkowski seconded.

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

This motion passed unanimously.

V. Reports of Standing Committees

A. Subcommittee & Liaison Reports

1. **Elementary School Building Project:** Update provided by Tracie Kennedy. She stated the project has been narrowed from seven options to Design #5, which proposes building a new school on the current Mosier property where the fields are located and serving grades 1–5. Community feedback from a recent hybrid meeting largely supported this model, giving the committee confidence to move forward. The project will use a design, bid, and build approach to help manage costs, and the committee is currently awaiting additional information from MSBA while a recorded tour of Mosier is available on SH15.
2. **Budget Subcommittee:** None.

B. Report of Student Representative: Provided by Maya Thielen & Zenniyah Valenzuela.

- Read Across America Week (March 2–6): Celebrating the National Education Association theme, *“Celebrating a Nation of Diverse Readers,”* with guest readers from the school and local community visiting classrooms to share favorite stories and promote kindness and a love of reading.
- March Reading Challenge: Students will participate in a school-wide reading log, tracking the number of minutes they read at home throughout the month of March.
- SHHS Winter Athletics Recognition: Congratulations to all winter athletes and indoor guard participants for their accomplishments this season.
- Grade 10 MCAS testing begins this month, with AP testing scheduled for May as the school continues through Semester 2.
- National Honor Society Spring Sports Drive (March 9–13): As part of a service project, gently used spring sports equipment and clothing, such as cleats and other items in good condition are being collected. Donation bins are located outside the Public Library, Mosier Elementary School, the Middle School, and Skala Elementary School.

C. Report of Superintendent: Superintendent Voyik shared that federal funding for Title I will decrease by \$30,000 next year. District Administration will review how this affects the district’s plans. Assistant Superintendent Jacques worked closely with Principal Martinez and MESMS 8th grade Social Studies Staff to apply for a civics curriculum Grant and she read a letter awarding the district this grant.

D. Report of the Chair and School Committee: Chair Friesner announced that the School Committee voted last week, 2/24/2026, to support the \$11 million override and it will be an option on the Town Election Ballot in April as decided by the Selectboard on 3/3/2026

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E. Appreciations: Danielle Cooke – School Social Workers; Lyn Jacques – Skala School’s *Read Across America* activities; Eric Friesner – Selectboard & the community; & Jenn – District Administrative Team.

VI. Donation to SHHS Carpentry Department (VOTE): Assistant Jacques read a letter from SHHS regarding the donation.

(VOTE) Chair Friesner, with gratitude for the donation, entertained a motion to accept. Jack Witkowski so moved.

Tracie Kennedy seconded.

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

This motion passed unanimously.

VII. Superintendent Entry Findings: Superintendent Voyik reviewed her prepared report stating that although her name is on it, it was a team effort, including District Administration, staff, and community stakeholders. The full report is available online and filed with original minutes. The next steps involve taking the findings and using them as a guide towards a strategy for the future.

VIII. FY27 Budget Information: Superintendent Voyik presented an update, discussing class size averages, Specialists caseloads, overall student needs, operational capacity, transportation, a significant gap between the deficit budget and the funding needed to sustain services, staffing needs and next steps. She went on to share a potential scenario with the Committee regarding a possible temporary closure of Mosier, combining other grades with each of the remaining schools and how it would be helpful over the next few years. She also mentioned opening school choice on the Kindergarten level. These topics are very early in discussion.

IX. ADDA-E-1 & ADDA-E-2 (VOTE): Assistant Superintendent Jacques presented these two items to recommend that they be removed from the District Policy Manual as they are more procedure than policy based on legal counsel and cross-referencing the MASC Policy Reference Manual. The related policy ADDA was recently reaffirmed by the School Committee.

(VOTE) Chair Friesner entertained a motion to remove these two items.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

Tracie Kennedy seconded.

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

This motion passed unanimously.

X. Superintendent Mid-Year Review: Superintendent Voyik presented a mid-year review of the progress in her first year. She highlighted three key goals: strengthening leadership through participation in the New Superintendent Induction Program, reestablishing administrator evaluations, and launching a bilingual family newsletter. While demonstrating on-track progress,

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the Superintendent identified a future need for increased classroom observation time with principals. The full presentation has been filed with original minutes.

XI. Information Only: School Committee Public Budget Hearing, 3/11/2026 at 7pm, a hybrid meeting at the Council on Aging or via zoom.

XII. Unfinished Business: None.

XIII. New Business: None.

(VOTE) Chair Friesner entertained a motion to adjourn.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

Tracie Kennedy seconded.

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

This motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 9:19 pm.

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

Reviewed and approved by the School Committee on March 25, 2026.