

**South Kingstown School Committee
Executive Session and Business Meeting
South Kingstown High School Cafeteria
215 Columbia Street
Wakefield, RI 02879
Tuesday, January 13, 2026**

1. Executive Session

A. Executive Session

Ms. Vetter called the meeting of the South Kingstown School Committee to order at 4:31 PM. Ms. Vetter asked for a motion to convene into Executive Session for Discussion and/or Action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under RIGL 42-46-4 and A: Discussion: Job Performance - Superintendent Mid-Year Review (RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)); B: Discussion: Job Performance - BRMS Administration (RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)). Individuals had been notified, including their right to have any discussion held in open session.

MSV(1) – Motion made to recess into Executive Session

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Kate Macinanti

Motion passes 5-0 (Michelle Brousseau and Brad Shear absent at time of vote)

MSV(2) – Motion made to adjourn Executive Session and Reconvene Open Session

Motion made by Kate Macinanti

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 6-0 (Brad Shear absent at time of vote)

2. Call to Order

A. Call to Order/Roll Call

Ms. Vetter called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM and led the roll call:

Member	Present	Absent	Notes
Carol Vetter	X		
James Restivo	X		
Michelle Brousseau	X		Arrived at the start of Executive Session
Paula Whitford	X		
Kate Macinanti	X		
Bradley Shear		X	
Stewart Lander	X		
Other Attendees			
Michael J Podraza Superintendent	X		
Daniel P Seger Assistant Superintendent	X		
Patricia Proctor Chief Financial Officer	X		
Michael Polak Legal Counsel	X		

B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Ms. Vetter led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

C. Moment of Silence in Remembrance of Antimo “Andy” DiBiasio

A moment of silence was held in remembrance of Antimo “Andy” DiBiasio.

D. Motion to Seal Minutes of the Executive Session

MSV(3) – Motion made to Seal the Minutes of the Executive Session.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 6-0

E. Disclosure of Votes Taken in Executive Session

Ms. Vetter stated that there were no votes taken in Executive Session.

3. Comments from the Community

A. Comments from the Community

Ms. Vetter closed Community Comments as no community members wished to speak.

4. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Executive Session Minutes - 11/12/2025; 1/5/2026

B. Approval of Open Session Minutes - 12/16/2025; 12/18/2025; 1/5/2026; 1/6/2026

C. Financial Update

D. Purchases Over \$10,350

E. Homeschool Requests - SY 2025-2026

MSV(4) – Motion made to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 6-0

MSV(5) – Motion made to move item 6D from School Committee Business to before the Superintendent's Report.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 6-0

6. School Committee Business

D. Discussion/Action: Food Service Contract

Mr. Podraza provided a brief overview of the contract's status, stating that the existing food service contract is set to expire this school year. Ms. Proctor had expected to issue a multi-year RFP this cycle, but the State-level RFP timeline was delayed. In addition to other outlying budget uncertainties, Mr. Podraza and Ms. Proctor have brought this forward to the Committee to explore the possibility of a one-year rollover/extension of the current contract. Mr. Podraza invited Ms. Proctor to the podium at this time. Discussion ensued regarding the district's current food service company, with Ms. Proctor stating that there is a good working relationship with the current vendor's leadership. They have been responsive and proactive. Ms. Whitford stated that she herself has received multiple complaints regarding the quality of food being served, its presentation, and the overall choices being offered. Ms. Proctor will look into this. Mr. Podraza emphasized that the district's core values now include student voice, and student survey feedback on food must be incorporated into any long-term service decision. A suggestion was made that these issues could also be brought before the Wellness Committee since nutrition and wellness fall under its purview. Discussion ensued regarding the difference between a one-year extension and a 3-year rebid. The Committee was not ready to take a vote on this and directed Mr. Podraza to investigate the parameters of a one-year rollover with the current vendor.

No vote was taken on this item.

5. Superintendent's Report

A. Superintendent's Report Presentation

Mr. Podraza shared his Superintendent's Report Presentation.

B. Personnel Updates - Non-Exempt/At Will Employee (For Information Only; No Board Action Required)

Mr. Podraza stated that there were three requests for extensions on leaves of absence; one request for leave, and three retirements.

C. Calendar Survey Update

Mr. Podraza reviewed the results of the recent Calendar Survey for the next school year. Students (353), Families (371), and Faculty,

Staff, and Administration (183) participated in the survey. Starting after Labor Day is now the least important factor. This is a shift from past practice, where historically starting after Labor Day was a priority. Ending the year before Juneteenth is more important than the start date for all groups. Week-long vacations are the top priority overall, with April vacation ranking highest in importance for families and staff. These results will be used in crafting next year's school calendar.

D. Suspension Trends Analysis

Mr. Podraza gave an overview of suspension trends over the past three years. The data covered the range of school years 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025. Out-of-school suspensions declined approximately 43% from 2022-2023 to 2024-2025. In-school suspensions have stayed roughly similar and are being looked at more closely. The data presented was only at the district level, not by school, to avoid identifying individual students. The subgroups reviewed were: American Indian/Alaska Native; Black/African American; Hispanic; Two or More Races; White; Economic Disadvantage; English Learners; and Students with Disabilities. Most subgroups saw a drop in out-of-school suspensions, but Black/African American students remained disproportionately suspended and are still above state accountability thresholds. Other subgroups are below accountability cut points but are still disproportionate when compared to all students or to white students. Students with disabilities historically had particularly high suspension rates; those rates have decreased significantly lately. Discussion ensued regarding accountability, with Mr. Podraza explaining that the out-of-school suspension rate is a 'Student Success Factor' in RIDE's accountability system. Because overall and subgroup out-of-school suspension rates have fallen below key thresholds, the district currently earns 3 out of 3 suspension points for most groups. Mr. Podraza also shared recent actions within the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years that the district has taken in the importance of restorative practices and the role of discipline in encouraging positive behavior, and in professional development and relationship building between teachers and students. Mr. Podraza stated the district will continue to monitor suspension data through the RIDE Discipline Dashboard and District Accountability Report Card, with particular attention to equity metrics.

MSV(6) – Motion made to accept the Superintendent's Report.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Stewart Lander

Motion passes 6-0

6. School Committee Business

A. Discussion: Review of SY 2026-2027 RIDE Recommended School Calendar - DRAFT

MSV(7) – Motion made to table the review of the SY 2026-2027 RIDE Recommended School Calendar to a future meeting.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 6-0

B. Discussion/Action: Rhode Island Student Survey

Mr. Podraza gave an overview of the Rhode Island Student Survey. It is a statewide, Rhode Island Department of Health/Education-endorsed electronic survey that focuses on student health, risk behaviors, and well-being. The data is used to support and evaluate the Student Assistance Counselor grant and related prevention work. The test is administered during the school day. South Kingstown students' responses are part of a statewide result. Although the results have not been broken out per district in the past, Mr. Podraza will inquire as to whether or not this is an available option.

MSV(8) – Motion made to approve the administration of the Rhode Island Student Survey.

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by Kate Macinanti

Motion passes 6-0

C. Discussion/Action: Augusta Hazard Scholarship Application - DRAFT

Ms. Brousseau gives an overview of the history and development of the Augusta Hazard scholarship process. Committee members review the draft of this year's student application.

MSV(9) – Motion made to approve the Augusta Hazard Scholarship Application.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 6-0

D. Discussion/Action: Food Service Contract

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting. Please see above.

E. Discussion: School Building Committee Update

Ms. Macinanti provided an update on the school building project. The Final Guaranteed Maximum Price for the building of the new high

school, demolition of the current high school building, and the new athletic fields have come in at \$114.6 million. This is approximately \$1.94 million under the \$116 million construction budget. The Guaranteed Maximum Price is locked under the Construction Management at Risk agreement; the base price cannot later increase due to normal cost changes. Ms. Macinanti stated that the site work and foundations are underway; steel erection starts around January 27, 2026. This process should reduce disruption for neighbors. She then gave an update on the Curtis Corner Fields project. There is a separate field budget of \$11 million. The stakeholder working group (school, town, athletics, and design team) is defining needs and scheduling, and will then move to design - bid - contractor selection. Demolition RFP includes options for full demolition and partial retention of the building; no decision has been made yet. The next School Building Committee meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2026.

At this time, Ms. Vetter reopens Comments from the Community.

3. Comments from the Community

A. Comments from the Community

Dorald Beasley, Resident - Mr. Beasley spoke to the following items:

- Access to high school during construction - He is concerned, as it is hard to walk from the front lot around the high school to the back/auditorium because of fencing. He suggested that a safer pedestrian route be considered.
- High School Administrator listing - He reported that he was unable to find the listing for the assistant principal at the high school in the current faculty listing.
- Suspensions - He urged the Superintendent and School Committee to analyze suspension data more finely, by school/grade/teacher internally, and to focus more help on high needs subgroups.
- Teacher Attendance - He stated that he believes teacher attendance matters as much as student attendance because one teacher's absence affects many students.

7. Adjournment

A. Adjourn

MSV(10) – Motion made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by Kate Macinanti

Motion passes 6-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM.