

**South Kingstown School Committee
Executive Session and Business Meeting
South Kingstown High School Cafeteria
215 Columbia Street
Wakefield, RI 02879
Tuesday, June 23, 2026**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

A. Call to Order

Ms. Vetter called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

B. Roll Call

Ms. Vetter led the roll call.

Members present: Stewart Lander, Paula Whitford, Michelle Brousseau, James Restivo, Carol Vetter

Members absent: Kate Macinanti

Others present: Michael Podraza, Superintendent; Daniel Seger, Assistant Superintendent; Andrew Henneous, Legal Counsel

2. Executive Session

A. Executive Session

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 - Henneous Carroll Lombardo/Andrew Henneous - Legal Fee Agreement Proposal (RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)); B: Discussion: NEASK Appeal Update (RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2)); and C: Discussion: SKESP Negotiations Update (RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2)).

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

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 5-0

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

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 5-0

3. Open Session - Business

A. Roll Call

Ms. Vetter called the open session to order at 6:05 PM and led the roll call.

Members present: Stewart Lander, Paula Whitford, Michelle Brousseau, James Restivo, Carol Vetter

Members absent: Kate Macinanti

Others present: Michael Podraza, Superintendent; Daniel Seger, Assistant Superintendent; Charlene Longolucco, HR Coordinator; Andrew Henneous, Legal Counsel

B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

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

C. Motion to Seal Minutes of Executive Session

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

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by Stewart Lander

Motion passes 5-0

D. Disclosure of Votes Taken in Executive Session

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

E. Celebrations and Recognitions

Mr. Podraza, Mr. Seger, Mrs. Longolucco and the School Committee members celebrated this year's retirees: Rachel Cruz, Anne Morgan, Jayne Brassil, Margaret McGuire, Laurette Vitello, Priscilla Petrarca, Terry Lynch, Stephen Vincelette, Eric Swanson, Fritz Benz, Marilyn

Henderson, Lisa Josephson. Congratulations to all!

4. Comments from the Community

A. Comments from the Community

Dorald Beasley - Mr. Beasley addressed the following topics:

- Previous discussion on offering weight-loss medications as an employee benefit, noting both their emerging health benefits and significant long-term cost implications, and indicated he would send related articles to the superintendent to inform future decisions.
- The rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI), including tools such as ChatGPT, urged the district not to wait for federal or state regulation, and recommended integrating AI literacy and responsible use into the curriculum as early as the coming fall, including consideration of a future AI-focused CTE program and enrichment opportunities like Stanford's summer AI program.
- Concern about the lack of parent attendance at school committee meetings, aside from evenings with student recognitions, and suggested the School Committee address strategies to increase parent engagement at its upcoming summer retreat.

Ms. Vetter closed public comment.

5. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Executive Session Minutes - 6/9/2026

B. Approval of Open Session Minutes - 6/9/2026

C. Purchases Over \$10,350

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

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 5-0

6. Superintendent's Report

A. Superintendent's Report Presentation

Mr. Podraza shared the Superintendent's Report.

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

Mr. Podraza shared the district's personnel updates (Separation of Employment (1); Superintendent Appointments (3))

C. District Closed - June 24 and June 25, 2026 for Professional Development

Mr. Podraza shared a reminder that the district would be closed on June 24 and June 25 for mandatory professional development for faculty and staff.

D. Administrator Search Update

Mr. Podraza provided an update on the search for the following positions:

- Principal, Broad Rock Middle School - Interviews will be held the week of July 6, 2026.
- Assistant Principal, South Kingstown High School - Interviews are scheduled for this week.
- Preschool Coordinator - Peace Dale Elementary School - Interviews were held last week.

Mr. Podraza is hopeful that decisions will be made shortly and announcements will follow shortly, possibly taking place at the School Committee meeting on July 28th or at a special meeting, if needed.

MSV(5) – Motion made to accept the Superintendent's Report.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Stewart Lander

Motion passes 5-0

7. School Committee Business

A. Discussion/Action: Henneous Carroll Lombardo/Andrew Henneous - Legal Fee Agreement Proposal

MSV(6) – Motion made to accept the Legal Fee Agreement Proposal.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Paula Whitford

Motion passes 5-0

B. Discussion/Action: Bid Award - RFP #2472 - Allied Health Program Partnership (CNA & EMT)

Mr. Podraza explained that the bid was for the out-of-district clinical instruction and experience component tied to the district's Allied Health CTE program, that two bids had been received, and that Dr. McGair and his team recommended American Safety Programs and Training, Inc., which is the district's current vendor. He noted there were no substantial changes to the services compared to the existing contract and that the program is grant-funded with federal Perkins dollars, not from the general fund.

MSV(7) – Motion made to accept the Bid Award - RFP #2472 - Allied Health Program Partnership with American Safety Programs and Training, Inc.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 5-0

C. Discussion/Action: Bid Award #SK0027FAC - Groundskeeping - Dimeo Properties

Mr. Podraza explained that this was a joint town-school bid for landscaping services, issued by the town but listing school properties separately. He noted that the recommended vendor is the district's current provider and also the successful bidder for the town, and that the key difference between the town and school portions is the number of mowing "cuts" (the town bid assumed 26–27 cuts, while the schools will use 21 cuts, with the cost prorated accordingly for the school budget). The amounts listed in the bid materials represent the school district's share only.

MSV(8) – Motion made to accept Bid Award #SK0027FAC - Groundskeeping - Dimeo Properties

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by James Restivo

Motion passes 5-0

D. Discussion/Action: Bid Award - Food Services - Statewide Contract - Chartwells

Ms. Vetter stated that this item is not ready to move forward at this time. She noted that ongoing language on the agenda might appear as "Discussion/Action," but it will not always mean that action will be necessary. She then turned this item over to Mr. Podraza.

Mr. Podraza reported that the state awarded the contract to Chartwells on June 12. District administration is comfortable with the state contract, but due to the use of an outside operator, specific legal language previously required by town bond counsel in the current local Chartwells agreement will need to be added. The language has been sent to Chartwells' legal team, but the district has not yet received formal confirmation or a revised contract, and as such, there was no document ready for committee action. Mr. Podraza confirmed that summer food service will continue without interruption under existing safeguards despite the contract delay.

No vote was taken on this item.

E. Discussion/Action: Resolution in Support of Bill S3015 and H8351

Ms. Brousseau noted that when the legislature reconvenes in January, the bills may have new numbers, so it would be more effective to revisit and resend updated resolutions at that time. She also read portions of a communication from the Rhode Island Foundation regarding the Blue Ribbon Commission's work on the funding formula, highlighting that a special legislative commission will continue that work and that RIDE, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Division of Municipal Finance must submit a report by October 1 tied to the FY27 budget. Committee members expressed encouragement that the legislature appears focused on implementing the Blue Ribbon recommendations rather than redoing them. The Resolution will be brought back for consideration in the next legislative session once new bill numbers and updated information are available.

No vote was taken on this item.

F. Discussion/Action: Policy #8425 - Residency (SECOND READ)

Mr. Restivo and Mr. Seger spoke to the revisions, stating they were primarily technical and driven by RIDE monitoring feedback to ensure clearer alignment with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The changes did not alter the substantive intent of the existing Residency policy, but added appropriate cross-references to the new McKinney-Vento Policy. Mr. Seger confirmed the draft reflected the minor edits requested by the Committee at the previous meeting.

MSV(9) – Motion made to accept Policy #8425 - Residency

Motion made by Stewart Lander

Motion seconded by James Restivo

Motion passes 5-0

G. Discussion/Action: Policy - NEW - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (SECOND READ)

Mr. Restivo reviewed that this new policy largely reflects existing practice and Federal requirements when identifying, enrolling, and supporting students. He also stated that this is a stand-alone policy that can be cross-referenced from related policies (such as

Residency) to ensure full compliance with McKinney-Vento.

MSV(10) – Motion made to approve the new Policy with regard to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by James Restivo

Motion passes 5-0

H. Discussion: Khan Academy Update

Mr. Podraza provided an update on Khan Academy usage at South Kingstown High School, which is currently funded by RIDE for this year and next. He explained that all students in grades 9–12 have access, with structured use concentrated in grades 10 and 11 for PSAT/SAT preparation and in some AP courses, and that 96% of students activated accounts and 83% began at least one activity. Among active users, 59% demonstrated proficiency or mastery in the SAT Math course (with another 25% “familiar”), and 54% demonstrated proficiency or mastery in the SAT Reading course (with another 23% “familiar”). He noted that accountability test results are not yet public, so the district cannot currently report on impact on scores or break results down by grade, but plans to revisit this when data are released and conduct a deeper cost–benefit analysis before any local funding decision after RIDE support ends. Committee members asked that more information (detail on how many teachers are assigning Khan Academy, how it is used for review or initial instruction, and how many students are actively encouraged to use it) be provided in a future update.

I. Discussion: School Building Committee Update

Mr. Podraza reported that steel and major concrete work for the new high school is essentially complete and that recent interior photos strongly match the original design renderings. He noted ongoing planning for security at the site for the 4th of July. Regarding Curtis Corner, he stated that abatement is nearly complete, demolition will follow with a target of late August for the building to come down. An abutters’ meeting is scheduled for July 9 at 6 p.m. at district offices. The next School Building Committee meeting will take place on July 16. Mr. Podraza also shared plans for a proposed roundabout and new access road to better manage traffic for the upper fields, athletic complex, and bus parking. Mr. Podraza will get clarification for a future meeting whether Curtis Corner demolition is being submitted to RIDE as a separate project and what reimbursement rate applies. Committee members shared their appreciation that the overall high school project remains on time and under budget, with capacity to add solar to the building due to favorable financial performance.

8. Adjournment

A. Adjourn

MSV(11) – Motion made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by Stewart Lander

Motion seconded by James Restivo

Motion passes 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 PM.