SMITHFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER
THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026
6:30 PM
MINUTES

Members present: Mr. Richard Iannitelli Chair, Mrs. Jessica Sala, Vice-Chair, Mrs. Amanda Fafard, Secretary. Mr. Jeffrey LeBlanc and Dr. Ashley Hogan. Also present: Lisa Odom-Villella, Superintendent, Wendy Amelotte, Assistant Superintendent, John Ward, Interim Director of Finance and Student Representative Kaya Gaffney.

1. Meeting called to order. Mr. Iannitelli called the meeting order at 6:30 pm.

2. Salute to the Flag. Mr. Iannitelli conducted a Salute to the Flag.

3. Emergency Evacuation and Health Notification. Mr. Iannitelli read the Emergency Evacuation and Health Notification and notified the public regarding the public comment sign up sheet as well as notification to the public to speak at the podium when addressing the committee.

4. Consent Agenda Items:
   Mrs. Sala moved to approve Consent Agenda Items:
   - 4.1 Minutes
     - A) Open Minutes of the April 16, 2026 School Committee Meeting
     - C) Approval of Executive Session Minutes of April 2, 2026
   - 4.2 Bills:
     - A) Regular Bills totaling $366,366.59
     - B) Direct Checks from April 24, 2026 through May 5, 2026 totaling $23,961.03
     - C) Lunch Bills totaling $119,661.42
   - 4.3 Non-renewals (List included in packets)
   - 4.4 Homeschooling: (As presented).

   Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

   Mrs. Fafard moved to approve Consent Agenda Item 4.1 (B) Approval of Executive Session Minutes of March 19, 2026. Mr. LeBlanc seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-1 vote. Mrs. Sala abstained.

   Mr. Iannitelli clarified from the last meeting, the approval of the Superintendent's contract was a three-year contract from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029.

5. High School Representatives Report.
   Kaya reported:
   - May 8th marks the halfway point through this year's AP Exam schedule for high school students. Through Advanced Placement classes, students can earn college credit in math, science, social studies, English, and art. Testing ends on the 15th, with make-up exams taking place the following week, and scores will be released in early July.
   - The induction ceremony to the National Language Honor Societies took place on Tuesday, May 5th. To be eligible, students had to be enrolled in French or Spanish II or higher and have qualifying grades. After the oath was administered in French, Spanish, and English, the French 4 and Spanish 5 classes performed plays in their respective languages.

- Fourth and Fifth grade students at Pleasant View Elementary School have been working hard to prepare for their upcoming show: The Wizard of Oz. You can see the Panda Players on May 14th and 15th in the High School Auditorium.

6. Recognition of high school student representative. Senior student representative, Kaya Gaffney will be graduating from SHS and the school committee presented her with a gift from the school committee for her dedication and work to the school committee during the past few years. Superintendent Odom-Villella highlighted all the great accomplishments of Kaya.

7. Update on Capital Reserve Funds. Interim Finance Director John Ward provided an update on the district Capital Reserve Funds as of June 30, 2025. Mr. Ward clarified the previously submitted Capital Reserve report presented to the school committee contained inaccuracies. He reviewed the Capital Restricted analysis and explained the school department's Capital Reserve funding accounts. He noted the summary presented to the school committee this evening is the correct reflection of the Capital Account. He reported that the balance in the Capital Restricted account is approximately $549,482, although that amount still includes outstanding invoices that have not been paid. The school department's Capital Reserve funds is approximately $299,272. Mr. Ward further explained that the Capital Restricted analysis reflects one-third of a three-payment reimbursement from the state. Two additional state reimbursements of $300,000 are expected over the next two years.

8. Discuss Review and Approve renewal of contract for YMCA after school program for OCRS for the 26-27 school year. Mrs. Sala moved to approve the contract for YMCA after school program for OCRS for the 26-27 school year. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. This is beginning August 25, 2026 through the end of the school year in June 2027. YMCA utilizes our schools for after school programs and during school vacation weeks.

9. Discuss Review and Approve renewal contract for YMCA before and after school program at Pleasant View Elementary School for the 26-27 school year. Mrs. Sala moved to approve renewal contract for YMCA before and after school program at Pleasant View Elementary School for the 26-27 school year. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. This is beginning August 25, 2026 through the end of the school year in June 2027.

10. First read & discussion of district transportation policy EEA. Superintendent Odom-Villella informed the committee the policy subcommittee reviewed the policy and suggested changes had been incorporated into the policy. A summary of key changes includes:
    - Alignment to Law and Expanded purpose emphasizing on safety, equitable and efficient access to transportation, expanded eligibility definitions, clear administrative authority, detailed bus stop and routing guidelines, new ridership expectations and accountability, structured bus stop change procedures, introduction of an appeals process and updated operational flexibility.

    The policy will be brought to the next meeting for approval and the approved policy will then be posted on the district's website. Suggested changes pertaining to parental permission for students to get off the bus alone up to a certain grade for elementary students will be incorporated into the policy. Neighborhoods with no sidewalks for walkers was also a point of discussion. As a safety concern, these neighborhoods are reviewed by the police for safety and will continue to be evaluated.

11. Discuss Review and Approve the revised school calendar for the 2025-2026 School Year. Mrs. Sala moved to approve the revised school calendar for the 2025-2026 school year. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Superintendent Odom-Villella informed the committee that the last day for seniors will be June 9th vs. June 5th. Seniors are required to have 171 days. In the

approved calendar, seniors only had 169 days. Senior exam days will now be full days instead of half days to make up this time. The calendar was updated to reflect this change.

12. Discuss Review and Approve the revised school calendar for the 2026-2027 School Year. Mrs. Sala moved to approve the revised school calendar for the 2026-2027 school year. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Superintendent Odom-Villella informed the committee that Statewide Primary Election Day has been moved from Tuesday, September 8th to Wednesday, September 9th. The calendar was updated to reflect this change. Also, the NEA has approved Professional Development day on Primary Day, this will be moved from March to September, which will reflect the last day of school being moved up to June 15th. Open House for SHS will be September 8th.

13. Award RFP for elevator repair at the middle school. Mrs. Sala moved to Award RFP for elevator repair at the middle school to Atlantic Elevator South Co. Inc. not to exceed $145,000 with options 1 and 2. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Mr. Mencucci was present to answer questions. One vendor bid on the project. Mr. Mencucci stated this vendor has been working on this elevator for 20 years. He elaborated on his support of Option 1 and Option 2 as presented. This will be identified as an emergency project in our Stage II submission. The project is cited to start after July 1, but the supplies will be ordered as soon as possible in an effort to be sure the project is completed on time.

14. Award RFP for Boiler Cleaner Services. Mrs. Sala moved to award RFP for Boiler Cleaner Services to Commercial Heating Services not to exceed $23,600. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Mr. Mencucci answered questions. Two vendors bid on the project. The second vendor that bid still has not completed the project from this year and Mr. Mencucci does not recommend that vendor.

15. Award RFP for Transportation Services. Mrs. Sala moved to award RFP for Transportation Services to First Student. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Mr. Mencucci answered questions regarding the proposed five-year transportation contract. He stated that negotiations focused on achieving consistent cost savings and noted that the agreement is a unified contract developed in consultation with the district's attorney. The cost differential over 5 years was discussed. Mr. Ward reviewed the cost differential between Dattco and First student explaining it is $188,000 less. Mr. Mencucci added that, at baseline with a unified contract structure, the district anticipates savings exceeding one million dollars. He explained that an outside company will be required to conduct a route analysis for Smithfield, and the committee reviewed potential cost savings associated with Smithfield and Lincoln working together. Additional discussion focused on contract details related to bus routes and vehicle age requirements. Mr. Mencucci noted that the RFP requires buses to be no more than seven years old within one year, eventually transitioning to a maximum age limit of five years.

16. Award RFP for used Ford-350 pickup truck (grant funded). Mrs. Sala moved to award RFP for used Ford-350 pickup truck (grant funded) to Workload not to exceed $45,000. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. Mrs. Sala amended the motion to award the RFP for the Ford 350 pickup truck to Workload for the grant portion not to exceed $45,000 with an additional $1800 from the facilities operating budget for a total of $46,800. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The amended motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Mr. Mencucci informed the committee the RFP was issued for a used Ford pickup; however, Workload submitted a bid for a brand new truck. He noted that another vendor had also submitted a bid, but later withdrew after selling the vehicle. The new truck will include a plow package. Mr.

Mencucci answered questions regarding the cost of adding a plow to the truck, estimating the expense at approximately $8-$10,000 in addition to the possible cost of adding toolboxes, if permitted.

17. Discuss and review of snow plowing RFP. Mr. Mencucci was present to discuss this and answer questions. He reviewed the five year analysis. Mr. Mencucci sought guidance from the committee regarding the potential consolidation of snow removal services with the town. The committee discussed the snow plowing services the town could offer the school department, including the overall feasibility of combining services. It was noted that further dialogue with the town is necessary to determine next steps and solidify any potential agreement. Mr. Mencucci stated that he plans to present the proposal to the town council at a future town council meeting. If the town does not agree to the consolidation of services, the school department will pursue the bids it has already received for snow removal services.

18. Overbrook Academy discussion. The committee had a general discussion regarding the Overbrook Academy purchased by the town. Mr. Iannitelli noted he attended a Town Council meeting where Overbrook Academy was discussed. He reiterated that he is not opposed to the project, but expressed concern that the facility was purchased before the needs of the building were fully assessed. Discussion included opinions that the building appears to require substantial work. Mr. Iannitelli suggested the school department conduct a self-assessment of the school department's square footage needs should the Administrative Offices be relocated to this site. Committee members also discussed general thoughts and ideas regarding other potential uses for the buildings and grounds at the Overbrook location. The committee agreed the building has possibilities, but appears to require significant renovations that the school department is not currently in a financial position to afford.

19. School Building Committee Update. Mr. Iannitelli reported that the school building committee will be meeting on May 20th at 5pm to finalize the last of the invoices.

20. Communications:
    A) A copy of resignations/retirements/new hires in the district
    B) A copy of Budget Transfers

21. Superintendent's Report. Mrs. Odom-Villella reported:
    New Assistant Superintendent: Wendy Amelotte, beginning July 1, 2026: Superintendent Odom-Villella read a statement about the process. Wendy Amelotte was the unanimous choice of the interview committee. The Finance Director position is posted on SchoolSpring.com and the school department is looking to fulfill this position.
    Senator Tikoian visit to PVES:
    Senator Tikoian visited PVES to see the newly installed communication board at the playground. This communication board supports Smithfield's commitment to include everyone, everywhere. Superintendent Odom-Villella expressed gratitude to Senator Tikoian, PVES PTO and families, and the school committee for their generous support of this project.
    Sr. Demonstration Day @ SHS was 4/29th
    Superintendent Odom-Villella and Asst. Superintendent Amelotte had the honor to participate and judge senior presentations on April 29th. They were impressed with the level of reflection taken by each student as well as their many accomplishments and life lessons that they obtained while at Smithfield HS. Seniors are one stop closer to graduation.
    Ocean State Star Awards
    Sunday night, Superintendent Odom-Villella attended the Ocean State Star Awards at the Providence Performing Arts Center where SPS musical theatre students took stage with incredible talent and

passion. Superintendent Odom-Villella noted that Mrs. Kerissa Roderick and all those from SHS were incredibly proud.

In addition to the previous awards mentioned in past reports, Sunday night SPS had two amazing awards presented.

- **Juliette Correia: The Evolve Award** - Juliette was the sole recipient of this award, which recognizes the student who demonstrated the most growth and artistic evolution during the intensive, week-long rehearsal process. Along with this honor, she received a $1,000 scholarship.
- **Ethan Kerwin: New York Film Academy College of Film, Media, and Performing Arts Scholarship & Jimmy Award Alternate** - Ethan secured a life-changing $80,000 scholarship to the New York Film Academy. Furthermore, he was selected as an alternate for the Jimmy Awards. To put this in perspective: only two students are chosen to represent the entire Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts region in New York City. As an alternate, Ethan stands ready to step in for this national competition—a truly remarkable achievement and a testament to his hard work.

Deerfield Path

Mr. Mencucci met with Smithfield DPW to assess the student walking path from Deerfield Park. There is a plan in place to address the issue raised at the last school committee meeting relating to the student concerns of lack of parking at the high school. There will be a 6 foot wide path from the high school parking lot to Deerfield Park. Crushed reprocessed asphalt will be used and it will be plowable and there will be designation for a crosswalk and signage at the departure point for safety. The path will be installed once school lets out. Superintendent Odom-Villella expressed appreciation for the ongoing collaboration between the Smithfield DPW and Smithfield Public Schools.

SHS World Language Honors: May 5, 2026

The World Language Honor Society Induction ceremony was held on Tuesday. Superintendent Odom-Villella thanked the World Language department for a wonderful evening. The performances were fantastic.

SHS Honors Night: Thursday, June 11th @ 6pm

Teacher Appreciation Week 5/4-5/8

Superintendent Odom-Villella recognized and expressed deep gratitude to the educators across Smithfield Public Schools in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week. Each day, our teachers show up with steady commitment, professionalism, and care for our students—often in ways that go unseen, but never without impact. Their work requires not only expertise, but patience, resilience, and a genuine dedication to the growth and well-being of every child they serve.

In a world that often moves quickly and unpredictably, our teachers remain constant—grounded in purpose and focused on what matters most: supporting students in their learning and development. For that, we are profoundly grateful.

Also, thanks to the PTOs at each of our schools for the thoughtful and generous ways they celebrated our staff this week. From meals and treats to small gestures of appreciation, these acts of kindness remind us that strong schools are built through partnership and community care.

As we reflect on this week, we are reminded of a simple truth: while we cannot always control the challenges we face, we can choose to recognize and honor those who meet them with integrity and heart. Our teachers do this every day, and she thanks them for it.

22. Public Forum: Arlo Tibbetts spoke about the non-renewal letter issued to his band teacher at the high school. Arlo spoke highly about the teacher and his experience with SPS and the impact the teacher had on his experience at the high school. Mrs. Sala commented that the final budget approval is not done, and explained that by law, the committee is obligated to send out non-renewals before a certain date. She encouraged the student to share thoughts with the town council as well. Mr. Iannitelli reiterated that the notices have to be sent out by a certain date, and went on to comment about his understanding of the impact on the student. He further explained this is the initial phase and a reversal is possible, but not promising at this time. Dr. Hogan commented on a similar situation she experienced and empathized with the student, and encouraged the student to share his thoughts with the town council.
    Alana Blakley - commented on the music program at the high school. She supports the students and the music department. She comments on the loss of a teacher in the music department and the stress the students already have felt. She witnesses the love and joy back in the students at the high school since that time and speaks highly of the teacher and the music program.

23. Consider Items to Add to Future Agendas: Mr. Iannitelli, cell phone policy will be coming forward. Mrs. Sala asked for an update when the handbook policy will be on the agenda, as the subcommittee has been meeting and stressed the importance of having this done before the next school year. She would also like an update on the advertising policy. Mr. LeBlanc would like to see an agenda item regarding a naming rights request.

24. Consider and Vote on Motion to Adjourn. Motion to adjourn made by Mrs. Sala; Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Petrone
Secretary