

**SMITHFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER**  
**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2026**  
**6:30 PM**  
**MINUTES**

Members present: Mr. Richard Iannitelli Chair, Mrs. Jessica Sala, Vice-Chair, Mrs. Amanda Fafard, Secretary, Mr. Jeffrey LeBlanc. Excused absence: Dr. Ashley Hogan. Also present: Lisa Odom-Villella, Superintendent, Wendy Amelotte, Assistant Superintendent, Eileen Crudele, Director of Special Education, Stephen Mulcahey, Finance Director.

1. Meeting called to order. Mr. Iannitelli called the meeting order at 6:30 pm.
2. 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 August 20, 2026 School Committee Meeting
  - 4.2 Bills:
    - A) Regular Bills totaling \$108,233.37
    - B) Direct Checks from August 1, 2026 to August 31, 2026 totaling \$17,732.38

Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.
5. High School Representatives Report.
6. Recognition of high school Girls Lacrosse Team. SHS (Undefeated) Girls Lacrosse team won their 2026 Division III State Championship game against Toll Gate High School. Coach Joseph Areson was present with the team for recognition by the school committee.
7. Discuss Review and Approve My SchoolBucks/Heartland Invoice and Service Agreement. Director of Finance Stephen Mulcahey explained there was legislation a cap no more than 2% was put on student's accounts as a result heartland came back with additional fees. The district negotiated with Heartland to finalize an agreement to offer the online convenience again. The cost was proposed at approximately \$9500 per year to the district. The district was able to negotiate with Heartland. The fee was lowered in a Heartland agreement from \$9,000 to \$8,476 annual fee that the district is proposed to absorb. The fees are for use of the software for families to utilize credit cards online. The committee had a discussion about the cost to the district. Mrs. Fafard moved to approve the My SchoolBucks/Heartland Invoice and Service Agreement in the amount of \$8,476. Mrs. Sala seconded the motion. The motion failed with a 2-2 vote. Mrs. Sala and Mr. Leblanc voted nay.
8. Discuss Review and Approve to award RFP #26629 High School Lavatory Renovations. Mrs. Sala moved to award RFP #26629 High School Lavatory Renovations. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote. Mr. Mencucci was present; he said seven bids were received. Tower Construction Corporation was the lowest bidder. Mr. Mencucci recommended removing A,B,C in the proposal and moving forward on a base bid of \$484,000. Not to exceed \$10,000 allowance to be used towards items A, B and C unit pricing. Mrs. Sala moved to award

RFP #26629 to Tower Construction Corporation not to exceed \$10,000 allowance to be used towards items A, B and C unit pricing. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

9. Second reading and approval of District Artificial Intelligence Policy IJNDA. Mrs. Sala moved to approve the District Artificial Intelligence Policy IJNDA. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote. The committee did a first reading at the last meeting and there were no further changes. The policy guides responsible AI use by students and staff, emphasizing digital literacy, ethical standards, and data privacy laws. It prohibits plagiarism, impersonation, and unauthorized AI-generated work, with levels of AI use and disclosure requirements. Training focuses on AI literacy, bias, privacy, and oversight, with monitoring, enforcement, and disciplinary measures to ensure integrity and equitable access. District Technology Director David Burrows was present to answer questions.
10. Discuss Review and Approval of Virtual Learning Plan 26/27 SY. Mrs. Sala moved to approve the district's Virtual Learning Plan 26/27 SY. Mr. LeBlanc seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 3-1 vote with Mrs. Fafard voting nay. Superintendent Odom-Villella explained the Virtual Learning Days, and their purpose and intent. They are intended to be used only for extenuating circumstances. Superintendent Odom-Villella reiterated the district will only use virtual learning days in a strict manner for the extenuating circumstances as the school committee does not favor the virtual learning days. A Virtual Learning Plan is mandatory by RIDE for districts to have and approve annually.
11. Discuss Review and Approval Town Council and School Committee Proposal. Mrs. Sala moved to table the Town Council and School Committee Proposal to the next meeting. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion to table passed with a 4-0 vote.
12. Communications:
  - A) A copy of resignations/retirements/new hires in the district
  - B) A copy of FY27 Budget Transfers
13. Superintendent's Report:

**Welcome back**  
Both staff and students returned for the 26/27 School Year. Staff returned on August 24th, students returned on August 25th.

**Athletics:**  
SHS Cross Country will be hosting the Injury Fund Run at Deerfield Park on Saturday morning at 10 am. Smithfield football will be hosting Scituate tomorrow night at 7pm.

**Schedule Updates:**  
As a reminder, schools are closed Monday for Labor Day holiday and Wednesday for Primary Day. Educators will be engaging in Professional development on Wednesday.  
SHS is holding their Open House on Tuesday, September 8th at 5:30 pm and Pleasant View Elementary is holding theirs on Thursday, September 10th at 5pm. Please check school calendars for other upcoming events.
14. Public Forum:

Robert DiChiardo of Westerly, spoke on the Title IX policy. He spoke about Transgenders in schools as it relates to the District's Transgender Policy. He spoke about gender identity as it relates to sports and the allowance of boys identifying as girls participation in girl sports. He urged the school committee to revisit and change the district's transgender policy to protect female athletes.

Dr. Luis Munoz, spoke about the liability issue. He gave his perspective on the Title IX policy as it relates to diversity.

15. Consider Items to Add to Future Agendas: Mr. Iannitelli - the sub policy committee looked at students rights policy, still awaiting a response from the Attorney General's Office on input on the policy. Student conduct and discrimination policies will be forthcoming.
16. Consider and Vote on Motion (by roll call vote) to convene Executive Session pursuant to RI Gen. Laws 42-46-5(a). Mrs. Sala moved to convene an Executive Session regarding matters pertaining to legal advice in accordance with the Open Meeting Act RI Gen. Laws 42-46-5 (a)(2); Student matters in accordance with the Open Meeting Act, RI General Laws 42-46-5(a)8. Review executive session minutes of June 4, 2026. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. This requires an individual vote. The individual vote was 4-0 vote polled by Mr. Iannitelli, Chair. Mr. Iannitelli stated: Any individual who is subject to the discussion has been notified in advance of this meeting in writing and has been given an opportunity to have that discussion in open session. The Committee has not received such a request. Review executive session minutes of June 4, 2026.
17. Executive Session (Closed) pursuant to RI General Laws Section 42-46-5(a) to discuss:
  - A) Matters pertaining to legal advice in accordance with the Open Meeting Act RI Gen. Laws 42-46-5 (a)(2);
  - B) Student matters RI General Laws 42-46-5(a)8(ii).
  - C) Review executive session minutes of June 4, 2026
  - D) Consider and Vote to approve parent request
  - E) Consideration and Vote to convene into open session

Returned to open session at 8:53 pm.

18. Declare any votes taken in the executive session . Mr. Iannitelli reported there was one vote taken in the executive session.
19. Vote to seal minutes of executive session. Mrs. Sala moved to seal the minutes of the September 3, 2026 school committee meeting. Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.
20. Consider and Vote on Motion to Adjourn. Motion to adjourn made by Mrs. Sala; Mrs. Fafard seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Petrone  
Secretary