

**South Kingstown School Committee
Executive Session and Business Meeting
South Kingstown High School Cafeteria
215 Columbia Street
Wakefield, RI 02879
Tuesday, September 8, 2026**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

A. Call to Order

Ms. Vetter called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM.

B. Roll Call

Ms. Vetter led the roll call.

Members present: Carol Vetter, James Restivo, Michelle Brousseau, Kate Macinanti

Members absent: Paula Whitford, Stewart Lander

Others present: Michael Podraza, Superintendent; Michael Polak, Legal Counsel

2. 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: SKESP Negotiations Update (RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2)); B: Discussion: Personnel /Job Performance- Potential New Chief Financial Officer (RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)) and C: Discussion: Personnel/Job Performance - Superintendent Annual Evaluation (RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)).

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

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Kate Macinanti

Motion passes 4-0

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

Motion made by Kate Macinanti

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 4-0

3. Open Meeting/Roll Call

A. Roll Call

Ms. Vetter called the open session to order at 6:04 PM and led the roll call.

Members present: Carol Vetter, James Restivo, Michelle Brousseau, Kate Macinanti

Members absent: Paula Whitford, Stewart Lander

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

B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Ms. Vetter led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Motion to Seal the Minutes of 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 4-0

D. Disclosure of Votes Taken in Executive Session

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

4. Comments from the Community

A. Comments from the Community

There were no community members present at the meeting.

MSV(4) – Motion made to move School Committee Business Item 7D ahead of the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Kate Macinanti

Motion passes 4-0

7. School Committee Business

D. Discussion/Action: Personnel - Approval of Contract - Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Podraza shared the proposed contract for Mr. Timothy McGrath and reviewed his qualifications and experience for the Chief Financial Officer position prior to making his recommendation for hire.

MSV(5) – Motion made to approve the Contract for the Chief Financial Officer as presented by the Superintendent.

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by Kate Macinanti

Motion passes 4-0

Ms. Vetter then invited Mr. McGrath to the podium. Mr. McGrath gave his thanks to the Superintendent and the School Committee and shared his excitement about joining the district.

5. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Executive Session Minutes - 8/25/2026

B. Approval of Open Session Minutes - 8/25/2026

C. Approval of Purchase Orders Over \$10,350: (4117) J.A.TRUDEAU MEMORIAL CENTER(4117) J.A.TRUDEAU MEMORIAL CENTER(4117) J.A.TRUDEAU MEMORIAL CENTER(8787) THRIVE BEHOVIORAL HEALTH INC(9068) TIDES FAMILY SERVICES INC(9068) TIDES FAMILY SERVICES INC(9068) TIDES FAMILY SERVICES INC(3117) HANDS IN HARMONY(3117) HANDS IN HARMONY(9215) AMERGIS HEALTHCARE STAFFING INC(9215) AMERGIS HEALTHCARE STAFFING INC(5482) MOMENTUM, INC.(9328) CONNECTED HEALTH CARE LLC(6466) RI ALTERNATIVE ACADEMY(3883) SARGENT REHABILITATION CENTER(3883) SARGENT REHABILITATION CENTER(5458) CHARTWELLS(9480) TRIVAD INC(2951) EPLUS TECHNOLOGY INC(2951) EPLUS TECHNOLOGY INC(9182) FIRE SYSTEMS INC

D. Approval of Homeschool Requests - SY 2026-2027 (Student 51-58)

MSV(6) – Motion made to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 4-0

6. Superintendent's Report

A. Opening of Schools SY 2026-2027

B. Transportation Update - In District Private School - Email Notice to Parents 9/3/2026

Mr. Podraza presented his Superintendent's Report. The following items were reviewed and discussed:

- Opening of Schools - The following items were reviewed and discussed:
 - Faculty & Staff Orientation - All faculty and staff participated in the District Orientation Day on 8/31/26. Everyone is ready to get started.
 - Transition Grades - Transition-Grade activities helped students become familiar with buildings, teachers, and routines; this practice received positive feedback from faculty and staff.
 - All Grades - All grades reported for the first day of school on September 2, 2026. It was a very successful and smooth start to the school year.
 - Transition to Qmlativ - The District is still adjusting to the upgraded Skyward student-information system. There were some initial growing pains; however, attendance and information-access processes are improving daily.
 - Thanks to Commissioner Angelica Infante-Green - Commissioner Infante-Green visited Matunuck Elementary School and presented Principal McGuire with a book to read to students - one she had used previously in classrooms. The visit was a beautiful event to start the school year.
 - Professional Development Day on 9/9 - The district-wide professional development day is taking place on September 9, 2026. There will be a district-wide session hosted at the high school which will focus on classroom best practices and continued training in trauma-informed practices, including physical and psychological safety. Mr. Podraza stated

that there would be a report on the professional development work at a future meeting.

- Transportation Update - Mr. Podraza announced that the district would return to Ocean State Transportation for private-school transportation to The Prout School and Monsignor Clarke School beginning September 14, replacing the regional transportation model because it did not meet the service levels required by district policy. Ocean State routes were expected to comply with district transportation guidelines. Notices were sent to registered families and distributed through the private schools, with follow-up communication and a registration link provided to ensure all families received the information.

MSV(7) – Motion made to accept the Superintendent's Report.

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by James Restivo

Motion passes 4-0

7. School Committee Business

A. Discussion/Action: Motion to Seal Minutes of Executive Session - July 28, 2026

Ms. Vetter shared that items A and B were procedural only, as they were not completed at the School Committee Executive Session, Business Meeting, and Annual Summer Workshop on July 28, 2026.

MSV(8) – Motion made to Seal the Minutes of the Executive Session of July 28, 2026.

Motion made by James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 4-0

B. Discussion/Action: Disclosure of Votes Taken in Executive Session

Ms. Vetter stated that there were no votes taken in the Executive Session on July 28, 2026.

C. Discussion/Action: Approval of One-Year SKESP Contract Extension SY 2026-2027

MSV(9) – Motion made to approve a One-Year SKESP Contract Extension

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by Kate Macinanti

Ms. Vetter led a roll call vote:

Kate Macinanti - Aye

Michelle Brousseau - Aye

James Restivo - Abstain

Carol Vetter - Aye

Motion passes 3-0-1.

D. Discussion/Action: Personnel - Approval of Contract - Chief Financial Officer

This motion was made earlier in the meeting. Please see notes above.

E. Discussion/Action: Superintendent Recommendation for Staffing Increase in FY 2027 as follows: A: .1 Increase to School Psychologist; B: 1.0 Increase to SKESP at Peace Dale Elementary School; and C: .5 Increase to Social Worker

Mr. Podraza reviewed his recommendations for staffing increases. Positions reviewed and discussed as follows:

- School psychologist: Increase an existing 0.9 FTE position to 1.0 FTE to equalize staffing across the district and support equitable service to Title I schools. This increase would be supported by federal funding.
- Peace Dale Elementary School. Add 1.0 FTE due to preschool enrollment, full fourth- and fifth-grade classes, and projected enrollment needs.
- Social worker: Restore a position from 0.5 FTE to 1.0 FTE. The additional capacity was justified by students' social-emotional needs and demand related to MTSS/RTI and IEP or special-education services

MSV(10) – Motion made to approve the Superintendent's Recommendations for Staffing Increases.

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by James Restivo

Motion passes 4-0

F. Discussion/Action: Joining the Efforts of Henneous Lombardo et al in a Request for a Joint Advisory Opinion from the Rhode Island Attorney General - School Committee Agendas

Ms. Vetter explained her reasoning for asking that this item be placed on the agenda. She invited Attorney Polak to give further background on the ask. Discussion regarding joining other Rhode Island school committees in requesting a joint advisory opinion from the Attorney General regarding the level of detail required on agendas under the Open Meetings Act. Members said recent guidance has made agendas lengthy and time-consuming to prepare, particularly because detailed information must appear directly on the agenda rather than only in linked supporting documents. The goal is to clarify what constitutes sufficient—and excessive—detail while maintaining transparency, readability, and public access. The request would not be a complaint or appeal, and the legal costs would be shared among participating districts

MSV(11) – Motion made to Join the Efforts of Henneous Lombardo et al in a Request for a Joint Advisory Opinion from the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office.

Motion made by Michelle Brousseau

Motion seconded by James Restivo

Motion passes 4-0

G. Discussion: School Building Committee - Status Update of New South Kingstown High School and Athletic Field/Stadium Complex at Curtis Corner

Ms. Macinanti provided an update on the new South Kingstown High School and Athletic Field/Stadium Complex at Curtis Corner. Demolition of the Curtis Corner Middle School building is scheduled for the following Thursday and is not expected to affect the project's timeline or budget. The project remained on schedule and under budget, with the new high school expected to open in September of 2027.

8. School Committee Workshop

A. Discussion/Action: School Committee Goals (SY 2026-2027)

Discussion ensued regarding the School Committee's Goals for the current school year. Goals focused on:

- Improving community engagement
- Redesigning the budget process
- Removing barriers to learning opportunities
- Strengthening data-driven decision-making

The budget-process discussion included adjusting the timeline to obtain updated surplus figures and considering additional meetings with the Town Council to review the budget and improve transparency. Ms. Macinanti recommended addressing one goal at a time in future meetings so the committee could refine each goal and ensure it was realistic. Members agreed.

There was no vote taken on this item.

9. Adjournment

A. Adjourn

MSV(12) – Motion made to adjourn

Motion made by: James Restivo

Motion seconded by Michelle Brousseau

Motion passes 4-0

Meeting is adjourned at 7:02 PM.