



Springfield Public Schools
Office of the School Committee
1550 Main Street, 2 FLR
Springfield, MA 01103-1410

SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAPTER 74 VOCATIONAL MEETING

Thursday, February 26, 2026

LOCATION

Roger L. Putnam Vocational Technical
Academy, 1300 State Street,
Conference Room, Springfield, MA

I. CALL TO ORDER – CHAPTER 74 VOCATIONAL MEETING – ROLL CALL

Mayor Sarno called the Chapter 74 Vocational Meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Roll Call Attendance:

Ms. Valentin - Absent
Ms. Crawford - Present
Ms. Hurst - Present
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Present
Ms. Gresham - Present
Ms. Monroe-Naylor (Vice Chair) - Present
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Present

A. Invocation

The meeting began with a moment of silence.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mayor Sarno.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

- A. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Regular Meeting on January 29, 2026.

With no further questions, a motion was made by Ms. Monroe-Naylor and seconded by Mr. Gomez, Jr.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Absent
Ms. Crawford – Yes
Ms. Hurst - Yes
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Yes



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Ms. Gresham - Yes
Ms. Monroe-Naylor (Vice Chair) - Yes
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Regular Meeting on January 29, 2026.

III. VOTING ITEMS:

- A. Vote to approve Conservatory of the Arts' same day field trip request to the Southern CT A Capella Festival in Wilton, CT on March 7, 2026.

With no further questions, a motion was made by Ms. Monroe-Naylor and seconded by Ms. Gresham.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Absent
Ms. Crawford – Yes
Ms. Hurst - Yes
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Yes
Ms. Gresham – Yes
Ms. Monroe-Naylor (Vice Chair) - Yes
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve Conservatory of the Arts' same day field trip request to the Southern CT A Capella Festival in Wilton, CT on March 7, 2026.

- B. Vote to approve Central High School's overnight field trip request to the Air Force Nationals in Fairborn, OH leaving March 5, 2026, and returning on March 8, 2026.

With no further questions, a motion was made by Ms. Monroe-Naylor and seconded by Ms. Hurst.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Absent
Ms. Crawford – Yes
Ms. Hurst - Yes
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Yes
Ms. Gresham – Yes
Ms. Monroe-Naylor (Vice Chair) - Yes
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve Central High School's overnight field trip request to the Air Force Nationals in Fairborn, OH leaving March 5, 2026, and returning on March 8, 2026.

- C. Vote to approve Central High School's overnight field trip request to the Worlds Competition in Bridgeton, NJ leaving April 25, 2026, and returning on April 27, 2026.



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With no further questions, a motion was made by Ms. Gresham and seconded by Ms. Crawford.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Absent
Ms. Crawford – Yes
Ms. Hurst - Yes
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Yes
Ms. Gresham – Yes
Ms. Monroe-Naylor (Vice Chair) - Yes
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve Central High School's overnight field trip request to the Worlds Competition in Bridgeton, NJ leaving April 25, 2026, and returning on April 27, 2026.

- D. Vote to approve Sci-Tech's overnight field trip request to the SkillsUSA Vocational State Conference and Competitions in Marlborough, MA leaving April 30, 2026, and returning on May 2, 2026.

With no further questions, a motion was made by Ms. Hurst and seconded by Ms. Crawford.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Absent
Ms. Crawford – Yes
Ms. Hurst - Yes
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Yes
Ms. Gresham – Yes
Ms. Monroe-Naylor (Vice Chair) - Yes
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve Sci-Tech's overnight field trip request to the SkillsUSA Vocational State Conference and Competitions in Marlborough, MA leaving April 30, 2026, and returning on May 2, 2026

- E. Vote to approve Zanetti's overnight field trip request to Red Gate Farm in Ashfield, MA leaving June 3, 2026, and returning on June 5, 2026.

With no further questions, a motion was made by Ms. Monroe-Naylor and seconded by Ms. Crawford.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Absent
Ms. Crawford – Yes
Ms. Hurst - Yes
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Yes



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Ms. Gresham – Yes
Ms. Monroe-Naylor (Vice Chair) - Yes
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve Zanetti's overnight field trip request to Red Gate Farm in Ashfield, MA leaving June 3, 2026, and returning on June 5, 2026.

IV. PRESENTATIONS:

A. Report of the Chapter 74 Advisory Committee

The School Committee received a comprehensive presentation on Chapter 74 Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming from administrators at Putnam Vocational Technical Academy and the High School of Science and Technology (SciTech). Superintendent Dr. Dinnall opened the discussion by emphasizing the importance of hands-on, real-world learning opportunities and the district's continued investment in state-recognized CTE programs that prepare students for post-secondary success and career readiness.

Principal Johnson and the Putnam team outlined the school's mission to provide a high-quality academic and technical education that equips students with the skills, knowledge, and character needed for success in a global workforce. Instructional priorities include purposeful teaching and culturally responsive practices, with a focus on high expectations, student engagement, and inclusive learning environments.

Student outcome data highlighted continued progress. Graduation rates have remained high, with expectations of returning to approximately 97%, while dropout rates have significantly decreased to 0.4%. Attendance has improved, and chronic absenteeism has declined, reinforcing the connection between student presence and academic success.

Administrators reported that all 23 vocational programs at Putnam are now fully Chapter 74 certified, providing students with a wide range of career pathways. Students have demonstrated strong performance in SkillsUSA competitions, earning multiple district and state medals, and individual student achievement was recognized through the selection of a Student of the Year.

The co-op and internship program continues to be a significant component of student experience. While over 650 students may be eligible, 122 students were placed this year in co-op or internship positions. Placement is based on criteria including technical competency, academic standing, attendance, and employability skills, as well as employer availability. Partnerships with local businesses, unions, and organizations provide students with paid work experiences, industry exposure, and in some cases direct employment opportunities after graduation.

The committee also heard about innovative programming, including a pre-apprenticeship partnership with local labor unions, career exploration opportunities in healthcare settings, and collaborations with community organizations and municipal departments. These



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partnerships have resulted in job placements, certifications, and career advancement opportunities for students.

An overview of the ninth-grade exploratory program was provided, highlighting a structured process where students rotate through all vocational shops before selecting their preferred pathway. Students are evaluated through a point-based system and ultimately matched to programs based on interest and performance. The majority of students are placed in one of their top choices, contributing to stronger engagement and school climate.

SciTech administrators then presented on the expansion of vocational programming, including both “After Dark” evening programs and newly approved daytime Chapter 74 programs. Current offerings include fields such as advanced manufacturing, health assisting, information technology, and cosmetology, with additional programs in development. The school is working toward further Chapter 74 approvals and increasing capacity to serve more students across the district.

SciTech also highlighted efforts to increase awareness and access through middle school outreach, recruitment events, and community engagement. Early indicators show growing student interest in these programs. Additionally, students in SciTech programs are earning industry credentials and participating in internships and co-op placements with local partners.

During committee discussion, members raised questions about equity and access to co-op opportunities, noting that while outcomes are strong, not all eligible students are able to secure placements due to employer-driven limitations. The committee expressed interest in exploring strategies to expand partnerships, diversify funding sources, and ensure equitable access to work-based learning experiences for all students.

Overall, the presentation highlighted strong student outcomes, program growth, and meaningful partnerships, while also identifying opportunities to expand access and continue improving CTE programming across the district.

On a motion made by Ms. Hurst and seconded by Ms. Monroe-Naylor, it was voted to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call Vote to Adjourn:

Ms. Valentin - Absent
Ms. Crawford - Yes
Ms. Hurst - Yes
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Yes
Ms. Gresham - Yes
Ms. Monroe-Naylor (Vice Chair) - Yes
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Triny Vargas
Executive Assistant to the School Committee