



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 REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, June 18, 2026

LOCATION

City Hall, 36 Court Street, 2 FLR,
Room 220, Springfield, MA

I. CALL TO ORDER – REGULAR MEETING – ROLL CALL

The Chair, Mayor Sarno called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

Roll Call Attendance:

Ms. Valentin - Present
Ms. Crawford - Present
Ms. Hurst - Present
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Absent
Ms. Gresham - Absent
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 the Chair, Mayor Sarno.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

A. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on April 29, 2026.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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



S P R I N G F I E L D P U B L I C S C H O O L S

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

III. VOTING ITEMS:

- A. Vote to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between the Springfield School Committee and Springfield Public Health Nurses, Professional and Health Care Division, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 1459 for the term of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between the Springfield School Committee and Springfield Public Health Nurses, Professional and Health Care Division, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 1459 for the term of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028.

- B. Vote to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between the Springfield School Committee and National Association of Government Employees on behalf of the Springfield School Bus Monitors for the term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between the Springfield School Committee and National Association of Government Employees on behalf of the Springfield School Bus Monitors for the term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029.



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- C. Vote to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between the Springfield School Committee and National Association of Government Employees on behalf of the Springfield School Crossing Guards for the terms of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, and July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between the Springfield School Committee and National Association of Government Employees on behalf of the Springfield School Crossing Guards for the terms of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, and July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029.

- D. Vote to approve the amended District Wellness Policy.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the amended District Wellness Policy.

- E. Vote to approve the expenditure of \$2,665,000.00 from the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) for the Transforming Energy in Schools Initiative (TESI).

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Yes



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

Motion passes to approve the expenditure of \$2,665,000.00 from the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) for the Transforming Energy in Schools Initiative (TESI).

- F. Vote to approve the expenditure of \$8,735,000.00 from the Eversource (Mass Save Sponsor) for the Transforming Energy in Schools Initiative (TESI).

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the expenditure of \$8,735,000.00 from the Eversource (Mass Save Sponsor) for the Transforming Energy in Schools Initiative (TESI).

- G. Vote to approve the expenditure of \$30,000.00 from Siemens Industry Inc., for the Siemens Empower+ Grant.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to Vote to approve the expenditure of \$30,000.00 from Siemens Industry Inc., for the Siemens Empower+ Grant.

- H. Vote to approve the FY 2027 Tuition Rates for the Public Day and Alternative School Programs.



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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the FY 2027 Tuition Rates for the Public Day and Alternative School Programs.

- I. Vote to approve the new position, including job description, of Director of Specialized Curriculum and Instruction (323105757).

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the FY 2027 Tuition Rates for the Public Day and Alternative School Programs.

- J. Vote to approve the new position, including job description, of Senior Compliance Analyst (323105878) from the Exceptional Learning and Related Services Department.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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



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Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve the new position, including job description, of Senior Compliance Analyst (323105878) from the Exceptional Learning and Related Services Department.

- K. Vote to approve the new position, including job description, of Director of Related Services (323105856) from the Exceptional Learning Department.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the new position, including job description, of Director of Related Services (323105856) from the Exceptional Learning Department.

- L. Vote to approve the new position, including job description, of Secondary Exceptional Learning Coach (323105759) from the Exceptional Learning Department.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the new position, including job description, of Secondary Exceptional Learning Coach (323105759) from the Exceptional Learning Department.

- M. Vote to approve the new position, including job description, of Supervisor Autism Specialists and Programming (323105758) from the Exceptional Learning Department.

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



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Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the new position, including job description, of Supervisor Autism Specialists and Programming (323105758) from the Exceptional Learning Department.

- N. Vote to approve the extension of the provisional innovation status for the Springfield Renaissance School for the 2025-2026 year.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the extension of the provisional innovation status for the Springfield Renaissance School for the 2025-2026 year.

- O. Vote to approve the 5-year plan for the Springfield Renaissance School innovation status 2026-2031.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to approve the 5-year plan for the Springfield Renaissance School innovation status 2026-2031.



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- P. Vote to approve the decommissioning of the vacant lot at the end of Marion Street.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion passes to Vote to approve the decommissioning of the vacant lot at the end of Marion Street.

IV. PRESENTATIONS:

- A. Recognize the Springfield Ballers. Coach Gee and the Springfield Ballers were recognized by the Mayor and School Committee for their outstanding commitment to the youth of Springfield and the lasting impact of their volunteer-driven organization. Committee members praised Coach Gee for his dedication to mentoring young people both on and off the court, highlighting the program's success in developing confidence, sportsmanship, academic excellence, and leadership while helping countless student-athletes earn college scholarships, including Division I and Division II opportunities. Members also commended the organization's expansion beyond basketball to include golf, track and field, lacrosse, and softball, providing greater access and opportunities for youth throughout the city.

Several speakers reflected on Coach Gee's long-standing commitment to Springfield, his accomplishments as Central High School's championship coach, and his decision to invest in the community rather than pursue opportunities elsewhere. They emphasized that the Springfield Ballers have become a respected and valued organization because of the dedication of its volunteers, strong partnerships, and unwavering focus on the success of young people.

In accepting the recognition, Coach Gee expressed gratitude on behalf of the organization's volunteers, parents, educators, and community partners, emphasizing that the honor belonged to everyone who contributes to the program. He shared that Springfield Ballers has served the community for more than 20 years, supports more than 1,000 families, maintains an exceptional graduation rate among its participants, and has helped female athletes earn more than \$5 million in college scholarships. He also credited Springfield Public Schools for providing access to facilities that allow the organization to offer safe, structured programming during after-school hours.

Several student-athletes introduced themselves before Coach Gee concluded by thanking the School Committee, parents, volunteers, and supporters for their continued partnership in



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developing successful students, athletes, and responsible members of the Springfield community.

V. INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A. Chartwells Dining Services update. Chief Financial Officer Patrick Roach provided the School Committee with an update on the district's transition from Sodexo to Chartwells as Springfield Public Schools' new food service provider. He reported that the transition is progressing smoothly and is on schedule to take effect on July 1. The district, Sodexo, and Chartwells have been holding weekly coordination meetings to ensure a seamless handoff, addressing operational details such as summer meal planning, food ordering, software access, employee identification badges, and other logistical needs.

Mr. Roach shared that Chartwells has received applications from approximately 98% of the current hourly food service employees and is finalizing the hiring process through orientations and onboarding sessions. In addition to retaining existing staff, Chartwells has received numerous applications from community members to fill remaining vacancies.

For the first summer school session, students will continue receiving meals using the existing menus previously developed under Sodexo and the Home Grown Springfield program. During the second summer session, Chartwells plans to introduce new menu items and gather student feedback before determining which offerings should be incorporated into the regular school-year menu. Roach also noted that Chartwells is placing a strong emphasis on staff development by providing extensive training aimed at enhancing customer service and overall meal quality.

Committee members asked whether the district's commitment to purchasing locally sourced food would continue under the new contract. Roach confirmed that Chartwells has already established relationships with the district's current local vendors and intends to expand the use of locally sourced products through additional partnerships from its regional network.

Mayor Sarno thanked the members who served on the food services selection committee and expressed appreciation that nearly all current employees chose to remain with the program, recognizing the importance of continuity for students and staff.

Committee members also discussed the importance of informing families and the broader community about the new food service provider. They suggested hosting a community open house or similar event once the transition is complete to introduce Chartwells, showcase the Home Grown Springfield program, and highlight improvements to school meals. Members also recommended expanding public outreach through district communication channels and social media so families are aware that a new provider will be serving students beginning in the upcoming school year.

In response, district staff explained that planning has already begun for a coordinated communications campaign. A joint press release from Springfield Public Schools, Home Grown Springfield, and Chartwells is expected to be released in the coming weeks, with additional outreach efforts to follow as the new partnership is implemented. Overall, district leadership expressed confidence that students and families will experience a smooth transition with little disruption when school resumes.



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- B. Communications Department Awards. Superintendent Dr. Dinnall enthusiastically introduced the presentation by congratulating the Springfield Public Schools Communications Department for receiving national recognition for its outstanding work. She praised the team's dedication and professionalism, noting that the awards are a reflection of the district's commitment to excellence and the department's ability to tell the story of Springfield Public Schools in meaningful and impactful ways.

Director of Communications Azell Cavaan announced that the district received six national awards from the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), the nation's leading organization for school communications professionals. The district submitted six entries in the publications and digital media categories and earned recognition for all six submissions. Springfield Public Schools received Merit Awards for a single video, a video series, and a podcast, along with the organization's highest honor—the Award of Excellence—for branding, social media, and photography.

Ms. Cavaan credited the accomplishments to the talented members of the Communications Department, introducing Multimedia Manager Christian Polanco and Multimedia Analyst Julia Cole. She emphasized that the recognition reflected not only their creativity and technical expertise but also the collaboration of students, staff, families, and schools throughout the district.

Christian Polanco highlighted the district's award-winning "Believe" music video, which premiered during Convocation. He explained that the project was designed to showcase the district's students, educators, and school communities while highlighting the unique culture of each school. The production was a collaborative effort involving schools across every grade level and local creative partners, resulting in a video that celebrated school pride and student engagement.

Mr. Polanco also discussed the district's "Read to Believe" video series, which evolved from the earlier *Storytime Stars* initiative into a literacy-focused program supporting one of the district's strategic priorities: early reading. The series features students reading to younger students and has grown through partnerships with several schools that provided student readers and recording spaces. He noted that the district continues to expand its digital storytelling through initiatives such as SPS Spotlights, Student Showcases, and the Deeper Dive series, all aimed at highlighting the achievements and innovation taking place across Springfield Public Schools.

Julia Cole presented the district's Award of Excellence-winning social media campaign supporting the implementation of Springfield Public Schools' new school selection process. Recognizing that the transition represented a significant change for families, the Communications Department developed a multilingual and highly accessible outreach campaign that included a dedicated webpage, frequently asked questions, instructional videos, social media updates, and step-by-step tutorials. The campaign was designed to ensure that parents and guardians could easily access information through multiple platforms and navigate the new process with confidence.

Ms. Cole also described the district's Award of Excellence-winning photography submission, which captured student Logan Nunez celebrating his second consecutive victory in the district's



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Future Chefs competition alongside his mentor. She explained that the photograph was selected because it conveyed genuine emotion, pride, mentorship, and student achievement, qualities that reflected the district's mission and values.

The presentation also highlighted the district's award-winning "Believe It. Be It." podcast, formerly known as *SPS: The Podcast*. The featured episode profiled the Carrasquillo family, whose twin daughters maintained perfect attendance from pre-kindergarten through graduation. The episode explored the family's commitment to education and attendance while serving as an inspirational story for students and families across the community.

Finally, Ms. Cavaan described the district's Award of Excellence for its "Believe" branding campaign, explaining that the theme originated from Superintendent Denal's first Convocation address, during which she encouraged the district to embrace the power of belief. Since then, the Communications Department has woven the message throughout district communications using initiatives such as Stories of SPS, Students That Spark Belief, Belief by the Numbers, Voices of Belief, and numerous multimedia projects that celebrate the accomplishments of students, educators, and community partners.

The presentation concluded with the Communications Department expressing gratitude to the superintendent, School Committee, district staff, students, families, and community members whose willingness to share their stories made the award-winning work possible. The department emphasized that the recognition belongs to the entire Springfield Public Schools community and reflects the collective effort to showcase the district's successes on a national stage.

VI. REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES:

A. Student and Parent Concerns (Ms. Gresham, Chair)

- a. No report.

B. Buildings and Maintenance (Mr. Gomez, Jr., Chair)

- a. No report.

C. Legislative and Contracts (Ms. Crawford, Chair)

- a. Ms. Crawford reported that the subcommittee held a productive and thorough meeting focused on the work of the Exceptional Learning Department. The discussion included a detailed review of the personnel recommendations that were later presented to the full School Committee for approval.

The Chair noted that subcommittee members engaged in thoughtful discussion, asked meaningful questions, and carefully examined each proposal to ensure that the recommended positions aligned with the needs and priorities of Springfield Public Schools. She emphasized the committee's commitment to exercising due diligence throughout the review process and ensuring that all recommendations brought forward



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would best support students and the district.

The Chair concluded by thanking the members of the subcommittee for their dedication and collaborative approach, as well as Superintendent Dr. Dinnall for presenting the information and responding to members' questions. She expressed appreciation for the partnership between district administration and the subcommittee in advancing initiatives that strengthen services for students with exceptional learning needs.

D. Curriculum and Programs (Ms. Hurst, Chair)

- a. No report.

E. Budget and Finance (Ms. Monroe-Naylor, Chair)

- a. Ms. Monroe Naylor reported that many of the items presented to the full School Committee for action had been reviewed in detail during the subcommittee meeting. In addition to those agenda items, the subcommittee received an informational presentation from Chief Financial Officer Patrick Roach regarding district expenditures aligned with key strategic priorities.

The Chair highlighted the committee's discussion surrounding the district's investment in student mental health services, noting that mental health has remained a significant priority in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic. Chief Roach reported that Springfield Public Schools has invested approximately \$52 million in mental health supports, representing an increase from approximately \$48 million in the previous year.

The Chair emphasized the importance of sharing this information publicly to ensure the community has an accurate understanding of the district's commitment to supporting students' social, emotional, and mental well-being. She encouraged anyone seeking additional details about the district's mental health investments to view the Budget, Finance and Operations Subcommittee meeting, where the presentation was discussed in greater depth.

The report concluded with appreciation for Chief Roach's comprehensive presentation and the committee's continued diligence in reviewing the district's financial priorities. No additional questions or comments were raised following the report.

F. Career Technical Education (Mr. Gomez, Jr., Chair)

- a. No report.

G. Technology (Ms. Monroe-Naylor, Chair)

- a. No report.

H. School Safety (Ms. Gresham, Chair)



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a. No report.

I. Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (Ms. Crawford, Chair)

a. No report.

J. Innovation School (Ms. Valentin, Chair)

- a. Ms. Valentin reported that the subcommittee met to review the Springfield Renaissance School request to renew its Innovation School status and to examine the school's proposed five-year innovation plan.

The Chair commended the thoroughness of the presentation, noting that it clearly demonstrated the school's continued commitment to its expeditionary learning model and its ongoing record of academic success. She remarked that the five-year plan was exceptionally detailed and comprehensive, addressing anticipated questions in advance and providing committee members with a clear understanding of the school's goals, strategies, and future direction.

Following the review, the School Committee approved both the renewal of the school's Innovation status and the accompanying five-year plan. The Chair concluded by thanking committee members for their thoughtful review and continued diligence throughout the process.

VII. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:

- A. Superintendent Dr. Dinnall presented her monthly report by first directing the School Committee's attention to the May Contract Report, noting that it had already been reviewed in subcommittee and that members' questions had been addressed. She then highlighted a number of district accomplishments, achievements, and celebrations that reflected the continued success of Springfield Public Schools.

Dr. Dinnall began by acknowledging the recent loss of a Springfield Public Schools student, expressing heartfelt condolences to the student's family, friends, classmates, and school staff. She assured the committee that the district continues to provide support to everyone affected by the tragedy.

She also corrected a statement she had made during a previous subcommittee meeting regarding summer programming at the High School of Science and Technology. While elevator construction is underway at the school, she clarified that several summer school programs are being held there and emphasized that district and city officials have implemented safety measures to ensure students and staff remain protected throughout the construction project.

The superintendent proudly showcased a varsity jacket presented to her by Lynch Elementary School as part of the school's new 500 Club Initiative. The program recognizes students who earn a scaled score of 500 or higher on the MCAS in English Language Arts, mathematics, or science.



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Dr. Dinnall praised the initiative for celebrating academic excellence and motivating students to achieve proficiency and prepare for postsecondary success.

She next celebrated the district's continued growth in early college programming, highlighting the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's recognition of Springfield students who earned at least 12 college credits before graduating high school. Dr. Dinnall explained that the district is working to ensure this accomplishment is reflected on students' transcripts as a formal distinction. She noted that some graduates completed more than 60 college credits before earning their high school diplomas, resulting in significant college tuition savings and positioning many students to enter higher education with junior-level standing.

The superintendent recognized several additional accomplishments across the district, including Springfield educators honored at the Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards, where the district's Ignite Band provided the evening's musical entertainment. She also thanked the School Committee for attending teacher recognition events and demonstrating appreciation for educators throughout the district.

Dr. Dinnall highlighted the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new amphitheater at the High School of Science and Technology, describing it as a state-of-the-art performance venue that will serve the district's performing arts programs while showcasing the talents of Springfield students.

She also announced that Springfield Public Schools had successfully earned an Early College designation after a highly competitive two-year application process. She commended district leaders, principals, staff, and higher education partners for their collaborative efforts, explaining that the designation will expand college-level opportunities and further strengthen students' college and career readiness.

Recognizing the district's continued commitment to diversity, inclusion, and racial equity, Dr. Dinnall praised the work of Springfield Public Schools' DIRE (Diversity, Inclusion, and Racial Equity) teams. She thanked the School Committee for maintaining its support for these initiatives even as other districts reduced similar programs, emphasizing that Springfield has remained committed to advancing equity throughout the school system.

The superintendent also highlighted the district's annual Computer Science for All Showcase, commending students for demonstrating advanced coding and programming skills while recognizing the educators who continue expanding STEM opportunities throughout the district.

Among the evening's most inspiring recognitions was the celebration of Harena Elementary School student Israel Payne, whose quick thinking and courageous actions helped save lives during an apartment fire. Dr. Dinnall recounted how Israel called 911 and assisted in evacuating all twelve residents from the building before emergency responders arrived. She noted that he had been recognized by the Mayor and Fire Department and announced that he would also serve as Superintendent for a Day in recognition of his extraordinary leadership and heroism.

Dr. Dinnall also celebrated several students who received statewide recognition through the Massachusetts Civics Project. She congratulated Dylan of Springfield Public Day Middle School



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for earning statewide recognition for his project advocating for expanded use of therapy dogs in schools. She also recognized students from the High School of Science and Technology for their “Keep Eyes Open” project promoting responsible decision-making among students, as well as Renaissance School students whose “Safe Routes to School” project proposed strategies to improve student safety while traveling to and from school.

Reflecting on the recently completed graduation season, Dr. Dinnall thanked the School Committee for its exceptional attendance and participation in commencement ceremonies across the district. She noted that members attended nearly every graduation and highlighted a historic milestone achieved during the Emergence Academy commencement, where simultaneous translation services were provided in five languages, making the ceremony more accessible to multilingual families.

The superintendent also spoke about attending graduation ceremonies and recognition events hosted by the district’s higher education partners and community organizations, emphasizing the importance of maintaining strong partnerships that support Springfield students through scholarships, dual enrollment opportunities, and postsecondary success.

She concluded by recognizing the Springfield School Volunteers organization for its longstanding commitment to literacy initiatives, school read-aloud programs, library partnerships, and family engagement. Dr. Dinnall thanked the organization for its unwavering support of Springfield Public Schools and noted that it remains a unique nonprofit dedicated exclusively to serving the district.

Closing her report on a personal note, Dr. Dinnall became emotional as she expressed sincere gratitude to the School Committee for its leadership, encouragement, and unwavering support over the past two years. She reflected on the unity that has developed among committee members, praising their shared commitment to students and their collaborative approach to governance. She thanked the committee not only for supporting the district’s work but also for the personal encouragement they have shown her throughout her tenure, describing the School Committee as an exemplary governing body whose unity has helped move Springfield Public Schools forward.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Ms. Valentin expressed appreciation to fellow committee members and district leadership for their continued collaboration and support throughout the year. As a gesture of gratitude, Ms. Valentin made a motion to present each committee member with a flan as a token of appreciation, symbolizing the sharing of culture and fellowship. The motion received a second and was warmly received by those in attendance.

The exchange concluded on a lighthearted and celebratory note, with members expressing their thanks and appreciation for the thoughtful gesture. Superintendent Dr. Dinnall remarked that this was the kind of “new business” she enjoyed seeing before the meeting concluded.

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



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S P R I N G F I E L D P U B L I C S C H O O L S
meeting.

Roll Call Vote to Adjourn:

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Triny Vargas
Executive Assistant to the School Committee