



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, August 27, 2026

LOCATION
Springfield 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 6:31 PM.

Roll Call Attendance:

Ms. Valentin - Present
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 the Chair, Mayor Sarno.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

- A. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on May 7, 2026, at 5:00 PM.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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



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Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on May 7, 2026, at 5:00 PM.

- B. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on May 7, 2026, at 5:30 PM.

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

Motion passes to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on May 7, 2026, at 5:30 PM.

- C. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on May 21, 2026.

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

Motion passes to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on May 21, 2026.

- D. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Regular Meeting on May 21, 2026.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – 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

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 the Minutes of the School Committee's Regular Meeting on May 21, 2026.

- E. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on June 8, 2026.

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

Motion passes to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on June 8, 2026.

- F. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on June 18, 2026.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Yes
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 the Minutes of the School Committee's Special Meeting on June 18, 2026.

- G. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee's Regular Meeting on June 18, 2026.

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



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Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Yes
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 the Minutes of the School Committee’s Regular Meeting on June 18, 2026.

- H. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee’s emergency Special Meeting on June 24, 2026.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – Yes
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 the Minutes of the School Committee’s emergency Special Meeting on June 24, 2026.

- I. Vote to approve the Minutes of the School Committee’s Special Meeting on August 19, 2026.

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

Motion passes to approve the Minutes of the School Committee’s Special Meeting on August 19, 2026.



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III. VOTING ITEMS:

- A. Vote to approve the request to the School Committee that Shia Anyce Carelock be awarded a City of Springfield Diploma.

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

Motion passes to approve the request to the School Committee that Shia Anyce Carelock be awarded a City of Springfield Diploma.

- B. Vote to approve Central High School's Girls Basketball overnight field trip request to the Nike Tournament of Champions in Phoenix, AZ leaving on December 17, 2026, and returning December 23, 2026.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 Girls Basketball overnight field trip request to the Nike Tournament of Champions in Phoenix, AZ leaving on December 17, 2026, and returning December 23, 2026.

- C. Vote to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250008 Agreement for School Bus Transportation Services for 72 Passengers Buses, 83 Passenger Busses, and Type A Minibuses for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$30,000,000.00.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin – No



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Ms. Crawford – Yes
Ms. Hurst – Yes
Mr. Gomez, Jr. - Yes
Ms. Gresham - Yes
Ms. Monroe Naylor (Vice Chair) - No
Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250008 Agreement for School Bus Transportation Services for 72 Passengers Buses, 83 Passenger Busses, and Type A Minibuses for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$30,000,000.00.

- D. Vote to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250523 Agreement for Student Transportation Services on Public Mass Transit and Student Bus Pass System for Springfield Public Schools 2024-2027 in the amount of \$800,000.00.

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

Motion passes to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250523 Agreement for Student Transportation Services on Public Mass Transit and Student Bus Pass System for Springfield Public Schools 2024-2027 in the amount of \$800,000.00.

- E. Vote to approve City Contract No. 20270020 Agreement for Out of District Tuition for Special Education Students as required by 603 CMR 28.06(3) and Special Education Services for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$4,500,000.00.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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



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Motion passes to approve City Contract No. 20270020 Agreement for Out of District Tuition for Special Education Students as required by 603 CMR 28.06(3) and Special Education Services for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$4,500,000.00.

- F. Vote to approve Amendment No. 1 to City Contract No. 20230851 Agreement for Professional Development Services for Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$1,152,874.00.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 Amendment No. 1 to City Contract No. 20230851 Agreement for Professional Development Services for Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$1,152,874.00.

- G. Vote to approve Amendment No. 1 to City Contract No. 20250023 Agreement for the Purchase of Educational Materials and Professional Development Services for the Springfield School Department in the amount of \$2,000,000.00.

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

Motion passes to approve Amendment No. 1 to City Contract No. 20250023 Agreement for the Purchase of Educational Materials and Professional Development Services for the Springfield School Department in the amount of \$2,000,000.00.

- H. Vote to approve City Contract No. 20270032 Agreement for Out of District Tuition for Special Education Students as required by 603 CMR 28.06(3) in the amount of \$1,500,000.00.

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



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Gresham.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 City Contract No. 20270032 Agreement for Out of District Tuition for Special Education Students as required by 603 CMR 28.06(3) in the amount of \$1,500,000.00.

- I. Vote to approve Amendment No. 4 and Notice of Exercise of Renewal Option No. 4 to City Contract No. 20230148 Agreement for Out of District Tuition and Special Education Services for the School Department in the amount of \$3,000,000.00.

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

Motion passes to approve Amendment No. 4 and Notice of Exercise of Renewal Option No. 4 to City Contract No. 20230148 Agreement for Out of District Tuition and Special Education Services for the School Department in the amount of \$3,000,000.00.

- J. Vote to approve City Contract No. 20270042 Agreement for the Rising First Grader Daily Reading Program for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$2,232,500.00.

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

Roll Call Vote:

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



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Mayor Sarno (Chair) - Yes

Motion passes to approve City Contract No. 20270042 Agreement for the Rising First Grader Daily Reading Program for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$2,232,500.00.

- K. Vote to approve the Notice of Exercise of Renewal Option No. 1 to City Contract No. 20260497 Memorandum of Understanding Gateway to College Program at Holyoke Community College in the amount of \$272,000.00.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 the Notice of Exercise of Renewal Option No. 1 to City Contract No. 20260497 Memorandum of Understanding Gateway to College Program at Holyoke Community College in the amount of \$272,000.00.

- L. Vote to approve City Contract No. 20270015 Agreement for Sole Source Science Curriculum Materials, Digital Licenses and Professional Development for the Springfield Public School Department in the amount of \$2,608,715.60.

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

Motion passes to approve City Contract No. 20270015 Agreement for Sole Source Science Curriculum Materials, Digital Licenses and Professional Development for the Springfield Public School Department in the amount of \$2,608,715.60.

- M. Vote to approve Amendment No. 3 and Renewal No. 2 to City Contract No. 20240923A Agreement for Educational Material and Professional Development Services for Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$300,000.00.



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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 Amendment No. 3 and Renewal No. 2 to City Contract No. 20240923A Agreement for Educational Material and Professional Development Services for Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$300,000.00.

- N. Vote to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250021 Agreement for Nursing Services for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$300,000.00.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250021 Agreement for Nursing Services for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$300,000.00.

- O. Vote to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250095 Agreement for School Bus Transportation Services for McKinney Vento Students for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$3,000,000.00.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
Ms. Crawford - Yes
Ms. Hurst - Yes



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

Motion passes to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250095 Agreement for School Bus Transportation Services for McKinney Vento Students for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$3,000,000.00.

- P. Vote to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250088 Agreement for School Bus Transportation Services for Special Education in/OOD for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$10,500,000.00.

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

Motion passes to approve Renewal Option No. 2 to City Contract No. 20250088 Agreement for School Bus Transportation Services for Special Education in/OOD for the Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$10,500,000.00.

- Q. Vote to approve City Contract No. 20270089 Agreement for Lease of Copiers/Printers for Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$2,155,006.08.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 City Contract No. 20270089 Agreement for Lease of Copiers/Printers for Springfield Public Schools in the amount of \$2,155,006.08.



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- R. Vote to approve Assignment and First Amendment to City Contract No. 20240600 Agreement between American International College and the Springfield Public Schools.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 Assignment and First Amendment to City Contract No. 20240600 Agreement between American International College and the Springfield Public Schools.

- S. Vote to approve City Contract No. 20270012 Agreement for Springfield Public Schools Copy Center Operations/Sales Services Mail Courier with Xerox Business Solutions, LLC in the amount of \$3,337,221.60.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 City Contract No. 20270012 Agreement for Springfield Public Schools Copy Center Operations/Sales Services Mail Courier with Xerox Business Solutions, LLC in the amount of \$3,337,221.60.

- T. Vote to approve the Notice of Renewal Option No. 4 for City Contract No. 20230453 Agreement for Alternative School Transportation for Special Needs Students on an "As Needed" Basis in the amount of \$600,000.00.

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

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Valentin - Yes



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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 the Notice of Renewal Option No. 4 for City Contract No. 20230453 Agreement for Alternative School Transportation for Special Needs Students on an “As Needed” Basis in the amount of \$600,000.00.

IV. PRESENTATIONS:

- A. Second Grade Literacy. The School Committee received an update on the district’s early literacy priority, which aims for students to become proficient readers by the end of second grade. District literacy leaders emphasized that the goal builds upon Springfield’s investment in Universal Pre-K and reflects the importance of strong literacy skills as a foundation for future academic and postsecondary success.

The presentation reviewed the science of reading, noting that effective literacy instruction extends beyond phonics and includes word recognition, handwriting, spelling, comprehension, and composition through structured, explicit, systematic, and data-driven instruction. Early literacy screening data showed encouraging progress during the 2025–2026 school year. Kindergarten students at or above benchmark increased from 30% at the beginning of the year to 60% at year-end; first grade increased from 40% to 60%; and second grade increased from 44% to 54%. Year-over-year comparisons also showed improvements across all three grade levels. Gains were also reported among exceptional learners and multilingual learners, although staff stressed that the data remains urgent and continued improvement is necessary.

Staff outlined the district’s early literacy strategy beginning in Pre-K, including multiple assessments used to monitor developmental, literacy, writing, and kindergarten-readiness skills. The information is intended to create a literacy profile for students before they enter kindergarten and inform districtwide instructional planning. Professional development for Pre-K educators includes evidence-based literacy instruction, oral language development, emergent literacy, social-emotional skills, self-regulation, and inclusive instructional practices. Elementary educators and administrators are also receiving continued training on literacy screening, data-informed instruction, intervention strategies, and structured literacy. Additional work is occurring in collaboration with the Exceptional Learners and Multilingual Learners departments.

The School Committee also received an update on high-dosage literacy tutoring through Ignite Reading. The district will have approximately 1,643 first- and second-grade tutoring seats, including 750 first-grade seats funded by DESE and 893 second-grade seats approved by the Committee. Students receive approximately 15 minutes of individualized tutoring each school day from trained Ignite Reading tutors. Staff reported that of the 849 first graders who began the program last year, approximately 90% started at least a year behind. By year-end, 72% had progressed into middle- or end-of-first-grade skills, 8% had advanced into early second-grade skills, and 9% had completed the program after demonstrating mastery of second-grade standards.



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Staff noted, however, that approximately 1,900 students were identified as needing intervention, meaning available tutoring seats currently do not meet the full identified need.

School Committee members asked how students with dyslexia or other reading disabilities are identified and supported. Staff clarified that the district's literacy screener does not diagnose dyslexia but identifies students who may be at risk for reading difficulties. Structured literacy benefits students with dyslexia, while additional evaluation and intervention are coordinated with the Exceptional Learners Department. Continued attention to appropriate Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions was identified as important.

Questions were also raised regarding the distribution of tutoring seats, student mobility, and access for newly enrolled students. Staff confirmed that tutoring is available across elementary schools and that efforts are made to have a tutoring seat follow a student who transfers between schools. If that cannot occur, the vacated seat may be reassigned. Students who progress sufficiently can also graduate from the program, allowing seats to be made available to other students. District-funded seats provide greater flexibility regarding grade level and student eligibility than the DESE-funded first-grade seats.

The School Committee further discussed the Pre-K screening timeline, with staff confirming that the Early Screening Inventory must be administered within 45 days of a student's enrollment. Members also asked about Ignite Reading tutors, language support, and when tutoring takes place. Staff explained that tutors are hired and extensively trained by Ignite Reading, may be matched with students who share their home language when possible, and provide tutoring during the regular school day. Staff highlighted the strong relationships students have developed with their tutors and noted positive effects on confidence and social-emotional well-being.

Finally, members asked about increasing family engagement in literacy development. Staff reported that Ignite Reading and the district have family resources available and identified stronger home-school connections as a goal for the coming year, including the possibility of family literacy nights and informational sessions for families of participating students.

V. INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A. Discuss current date of the first Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, October 22, 2026. The School Committee discussed plans for the upcoming public town hall meetings, including the first town hall scheduled for Thursday, October 22, 2026, at Central High School, with a second town hall tentatively planned for the spring at Van Sickle/Renaissance to provide opportunities for engagement across different areas of the city. The Vice Chair reported that she had been working with the School Committee Clerk, FOCUS Springfield, and district staff to identify appropriate school locations and develop the format for the town halls.

The School Committee discussed the structure of the meetings and the need to comply with the Open Meeting Law and the School Committee's remote participation policy. It was proposed that members of the public submit questions in advance so that the School Committee and appropriate district staff or subject-matter representatives could prepare informed responses. The School Committee discussed establishing a submission deadline, potentially one to two weeks before each town hall, and clearly communicating the process and expectations to the public. A



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moderator and interaction guidelines were also recommended to facilitate discussion, manage time, address clarifying questions, and ensure the meeting remains focused.

The School Committee clarified that the town halls would not be limited to a single topic. Rather, the purpose would be to provide the public with an opportunity to raise policy-related concerns and other matters affecting students and families. Members emphasized that advance submission of questions would allow the Committee to research issues and have appropriate staff available to provide information during the meeting. The Committee also discussed how questions submitted in advance would be addressed while avoiding deliberation or formal action during the town hall.

The School Committee discussed accessibility and language access for families whose first language is not English. It was confirmed that interpretation services, including multiple languages and sign-language interpretation, could be provided based on advance requests, consistent with the district's prior experience conducting multilingual public meetings.

The Vice Chair also raised a potential scheduling conflict that could prevent her from attending the October 22 meeting in person. The School Committee discussed maintaining the October 22 date and allowing her to participate remotely, if necessary, subject to applicable remote participation requirements. Following discussion, the School Committee agreed to proceed with the October 22, 2026 town hall date. The date will allow the district to begin publicizing the event and developing the registration, question-submission, accessibility, and communication processes.

- B. Influence 100 School Committee Representative. The School Committee received an overview of the Influence 100 Fellowship, a leadership development program established to increase the number of leaders of color pursuing superintendent and district-level leadership positions across Massachusetts. The Superintendent explained that the district had previously participated in the program and that implementation had been refined to meet the program's expected components, including a two-year commitment from a School Committee member to serve as the district representative.

Imani Hines-Coombs, a current district principal and Influence 100 participant, provided an overview of the fellowship and shared her leadership experience and interest in developing the skills necessary to lead systems-level change. She described her work strengthening schoolwide systems in areas including culture, family engagement, discourse, and literacy, and expressed interest in learning how successful practices can be effectively scaled across the district. She identified developing systems-level leadership knowledge and supporting district priorities, including middle school transformation and college and career readiness, as goals of her participation.

The School Committee discussed the commitment required of the School Committee representative, which includes a two-year term and four virtual meetings per year, as well as optional participation in fellowship events and a graduation celebration. The School Committee was informed that a representative had been requested by the program earlier in the year and that a decision was needed following the Committee's first meeting of the school year.

The Vice Chair stated that the position should not automatically be assigned to the Vice Chair because of the two-year commitment and recommended that any interested School Committee



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members self-identify before the matter is placed on the agenda for a vote. Members discussed scheduling considerations and agreed to revisit the matter after the Influence 100 orientation on October 8th, with the selection of the School Committee representative scheduled for consideration at the October 10th meeting.

VI. REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES:

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

- a. Ms. Gresham provided an update regarding the subcommittee meeting, which consisted of an informational discussion concerning Meta AI. The subcommittee noted that Meta AI was the sole topic addressed during the meeting. The subcommittee briefly discussed the broader implications of artificial intelligence, including references to Instagram and other related platforms. No action was taken during the discussion, and the matter will return to the full Committee for further consideration.

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

- a. No report.

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

- a. Ms. Crawford provided an update regarding the subcommittee's review of 20 contracts. The contracts were reviewed by the subcommittee and subsequently brought before the full School Committee for consideration and vote. The subcommittee also engaged in discussion regarding the contracts, including addressing concerns raised during the review. No further questions or comments were raised.

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

- a. No report.

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

- a. No 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)

- a. No report.



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

a. No report.

J. Innovation School (Ms. Valentin, Chair)

No report.

VII. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:

- A. Superintendent Dr. Sonia Dinnall welcomed the School Committee back for the new school year and provided an overview of district accomplishments, student outcomes, and priorities for the 2026–27 school year. She reported that the August 13th administrative meeting was well received following adjustments made in response to administrator feedback and noted that school leaders are prepared and supported to begin the year successfully. She also recognized the School Committee’s participation in Convocation and highlighted the importance of unity and collaboration across the district.

The Superintendent highlighted several academic accomplishments, including schools and students achieving scores of 500 or higher on MCAS and MCAS-Alt assessments. She recognized schools that demonstrated significant improvements in student performance and emphasized that continued work is necessary to increase achievement across the district. She also reported significant decreases in chronic absenteeism at several schools and credited school leaders and the district attendance team for their efforts to improve student attendance.

The School Committee was updated on FAFSA completion, noting a districtwide nine-percentage-point increase and strong completion rates at several high schools. The Superintendent emphasized the importance of FAFSA completion in providing students access to college financial aid, career pathways, and Pell Grant funding, including opportunities related to technical education. She also reported an increase in advanced coursework completion from 46.4% in 2024 to 50% in 2025 and an increase in MCAS completion from 53% in 2025 to 58% in 2026. A two-percentage-point increase in immediate postsecondary enrollment was also noted.

The Superintendent recognized the district’s Career and Technical Education accomplishments, including numerous industry-recognized certifications earned by graduating students in areas such as OSHA, CPR/First Aid, CNA, Microsoft, Google Digital Marketing, Adobe Photoshop, refrigeration, CompTIA, barbering, and early childhood education. She emphasized that these credentials provide students with additional opportunities for postsecondary education and employment.

The Superintendent also recognized the accomplishments of Springfield Public Schools student-athletes, including Western Massachusetts and state qualifiers, championship and runner-up teams, individual wrestling champions, swimming achievements, and baseball accomplishments. Visual and performing arts programs were also highlighted, including the district’s efforts to provide rigorous, enriching, and meaningful music and performing arts opportunities across all 71 schools. The Superintendent recognized the leadership of the district’s visual and performing arts team and the contributions of Ignite mentors and SPS graduates who return to support current



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students.

Looking ahead, the Superintendent reported that the district will continue focusing on Tier 1 instruction and will present its Strategic Growth Plan at a subsequent meeting. She explained that the plan was informed by data and input gathered through focus groups, subcommittees, community members, district staff, and other stakeholders, with an emphasis on ensuring equitable access to rigorous educational opportunities for all students.

The Superintendent further announced the districtwide implementation of the Diane Sweeney coaching model to strengthen Tier 1 instruction. She explained that the model was selected following research and stakeholder input and that implementation will begin across schools in the coming month. The Superintendent emphasized the importance of consistent, intentional implementation to strengthen instructional practices and improve outcomes for students and families.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. The School Committee discussed several items of unfinished and new business. The Vice Chair, Ms. Monroe Naylor requested that the appropriate subcommittees consider revisiting the policy governing student transfers when families move and students must be assigned to their boundary school, noting that the policy had been identified for review during the previous year. She also requested an update on the completion timeline for the elevator at Sci-Tech and information regarding when planning for the following school year's calendar will begin so that community members can be engaged in the process.

Ms. Crawford requested a follow-up regarding previously raised concerns about the transportation holding center. Staff had indicated that they would inspect the facility and identify potential modifications or improvements, particularly in response to concerns involving special education students who had been held at the location. The School Committee requested an update on the assessment and any recommended improvements.

The School Committee also discussed the possibility of establishing a plumbing program within the district. Members noted the potential career opportunities in plumbing and other building trades and discussed the requirements involved in creating a Chapter 74 vocational program, including program approval, credentialing, qualified instructors, equipment and materials, funding eligibility, and required industry experience. The Committee discussed the existing electrical program as a point of comparison and noted that students may complete a portion of required apprenticeship hours while enrolled in school, with additional hours generally required after graduation. Staff indicated that the requirements vary by trade and union and that additional information could be gathered regarding the feasibility of incorporating more apprenticeship hours into coursework.

Follow-Up Items:

- Student Transfer Policy: Identify the appropriate subcommittee and schedule a review of the policy governing student transfers and boundary-school assignments.



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- Sci-Tech Elevator: Provide an update on the elevator's current status and anticipated completion date.
- 2027–28 School Calendar: Provide information on when the calendar-planning process will begin and how community members can participate.
- Transportation Holding Center: Report on the staff assessment of the facility, including any recommended modifications or improvements, particularly concerning special education students.
- Plumbing Program: Research the requirements and feasibility of establishing a Chapter 74 plumbing program, including certification, instructor qualifications, equipment, funding, and apprenticeship-hour requirements.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

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

Roll Call Vote to Adjourn:

Ms. Valentin - Yes
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 9:31 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Triny Vargas
Executive Assistant to the School Committee