

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2026

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV1 or SHCTV1.com

I. Call to Order: At 7:00pm noticing a quorum, Chair Eric Friesner called to order the remote South Hadley School Committee meeting, a Zoom Meeting accessible via SHCTV15 and SHCTV.com

In Attendance: Eric Friesner, Chairperson; Danielle Cooke, Vice Chairperson; Jack Witkowski, Member; Charles Miles, Member; Tracie Kennedy, Member; Jennifer Voyik, Superintendent for South Hadley Public Schools; Lyn Jacques, Assistant Superintendent for South Hadley Public Schools; Maya Thielen, Student Representative; & Zenniyah Valenzuela, Student Representative.

Guests: Amy Foley, SHEA President.

II. Public Comment: Meghan Aucoin, SHPS ETL, chronic underfunding & student needs. Pamela Stawa, 10 Richview Ave, the importance of public schools.

III. SHEA Report: Amy Foley, SHEA President, raised concerns about the school budget's impact on students, educators, and the school community. She noted that South Hadley is losing qualified educators to neighboring districts with stronger contracts, making recruitment and retention increasingly difficult. The potential elimination of sports and extracurricular activities is also highlighted as harmful to student well-being, engagement, and family decisions to remain in the district. Amy emphasized the negative effects of recent and proposed cuts to student support services, particularly the loss of elementary reading and math interventionists, which undermines early learning and leads to higher long-term costs. Additional staffing cuts and larger class sizes would further strain students and schools. She concluded with a call for community advocacy and a question about how the district plans to develop a budget amid uncertain funding scenarios, including the possibility of an override.

IV. Routine Items

A. Approval of Warrants (2 VOTES)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Warrant</u>	<u>Amount</u>
December 9, 2025	Warrant #2026-153	\$168,324.36 (2)
December 16, 2025	Warrant #2026-161	\$400,423.09 (1)
December 31, 2025	Biweekly Payroll	\$843,060.46 (1)

(VOTE #1) Vice Chair Cooke made a motion for those eligible to approve the following warrant, dated December 9, 2025, it is warrant #2026-153 in the amount of \$168,324.36.

Jack Witkowski seconded.

Cooke – Abstained; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed with 4 in favor and one abstention.

(VOTE #2) Vice Chair Cooke made a motion for those eligible to approve the following two warrants. The first is warrant dated December 16, 2025, it is warrant #2026-161 in

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the amount of \$400,423.09 and the second is dated December 31, 2025, it is a biweekly payroll in the amount of \$843,060.46.

Charles Miles seconded the motion.

Cooke – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of minutes, 12/4/25, 12/18/25 & a revision to 10/2/25 (2 VOTES)

(VOTE #1) Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept the minutes from 12/4/25 & 12/18/25.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

Tracie Kennedy seconded.

Cooke – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

(VOTE #2) Chair Friesner entertained a vote to accept a revision to the 10/2/25 minutes correcting the budget vote date from 3/18/26 to 3/25/26.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

Charles Miles seconded.

Cooke – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

V. Reports of Standing Committees

A. Subcommittee & Liaison Reports: None.

B. Report of Student Representative: None.

C. Report of Superintendent: Deferred to presentation later regarding the budget.

D. Report of the Chair and School Committee: Chair Friesner announced that papers for all town offices for the spring election are available in the Town Clerk's Office. Charles Miles reminded the community that the Budget Task Force has two more listening sessions, 1/15/26 at 1pm and 1/22/26 at 7pm, both at the Council on Aging .

E. Appreciations: Jenn Voyik – School Committee.

VI. MESMS Field Trip Proposals (2 VOTES): Principal Martinez proposed two fifth grade field trips, to Mystic Seaport and another to The Montshire Museum of Science on Vermont, reviewing details like cost for students, chaperones, dates and fundraising efforts.

(VOTE #1) Vice Chair Cooke moved to approve the MESMS field trip proposal for Mystic Seaport. Jack Witkowski seconded.

No further discussion.

Cooke – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

(VOTE #2) Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept the field trip as presented.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

Jack Witkowski seconded.

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No further discussion.

Cooke – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

VII. Mosier PTA Donation (VOTE): Superintendent explained that every year the elementary schools receive a check from LifeTouch that goes directly to the PTAs. The District received an email stating that the Mosier PTA would like to turn it over to cover spring field trips.

(VOTE) Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept the donation as presented.

Jack Witkowski so moved.

Charles Miles seconded.

No further discussion.

Cooke – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Policy Updates: AB, ACE & ADC (VOTE): Superintendent Voyik reviewed three policies confirming that they have all been compared to the MASC sample policies and presented them as reaffirmation as there are no major rewrites.

(VOTE) Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept all three policies as presented.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

Tracie Kennedy seconded the motion.

Cooke – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

IX. FY27 Budget Development: District Needs & 5 Year Projection: Superintendent Voyik presented an executive summary of where the district is right now, personnel requests that have been received, five-year projections, salary projections, and potential override projections. The slideshow is filed with the original minutes).

X. Information Only: None.

XI. Unfinished Business: None.

XII. New Business: None.

(VOTE) Chair Friesner entertained a motion to adjourn.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

Charles Miles seconded.

Cooke – Aye; Witkowski – Aye; Miles – Aye; Kennedy – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:11pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kiesha Keitt, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.

Reviewed and approved by the School Committee on March 4, 2026.