LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Tuesday, June 9, 2026

7:00PM **HYBRID**

Present
Cathie Bitter*, Chair;* Charles Morton, *Vice Chair*;
Maura Carty, Jason McLure, Jack Ryan (absent), Ravi Simon

Also Present
Susan Bottan*, LSRHS Interim Director of Finance and Operations*
Olivia Brady, *LSRHS Student Senate Member*
Lissette Gil-Sanchez, *LSRHS METCO Parent Representative*
Rebecca Mayer, *LSRHS Co-President of the Teachers' Association*
Tracy Ryan, *LSRHS North House Associate Principal*
Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

Call to Order
Chair Cathie Bitter called the meeting to order at 7:03PM.

Public Comment
Maura Carty, 15 Stonebrook Road, Sudbury, MA.

Maura Carty expressed gratitude for the successful "Late Night at LS" celebration, with specific praise for the volunteers who ensured a memorable evening for the graduating class. Furthermore, she offered her thanks to all those who contributed to the coordination of the graduation festivities.

Consent Agenda:
- Approval of Minutes: Minutes for May 26 LSSC Meeting
- Approval of Payroll & AP Warrant: Payroll & AP Warrant
- Approval of Donations/Grants: Donation from Boosters

Jason McLure motioned to approve three(3) items on the 'Consent Agenda'. Maura Carty seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members of the School Committee were all in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.
(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)

Student Senate Updates
Olivia Brady, *LSRHS Student Senate Member*

- The Student Senate is in the midst of planning for next year and is discussing a potential full ban on cell phones, which the Senate opposes.
  - The Student Senate believes a full ban is not plausible and prefers the current system of caddies, which they found successful in keeping students focused.
- Elections were held for new members, and goals were discussed.

METCO Program Report Updates
No METCO Updates

Teachers' Association Updates
Rebecca Mayer, *LSRHS Co-President of the Teachers' Association*

- Recent school events were highlighted by Rebecca Mayer, who noted the success of the 'Senior Service day, the literary magazine's concluding open mic night, and a 'Battle of the Bands' fundraiser that generated $2,300 for a scholarship fund.
- Rebecca also mentioned that three prominent staff members are retiring, and their absence will be deeply felt following recent celebratory "clap-outs" and retirement events held in their honor.

Presentation

Attendance - Handbook Revisions
Tracy Ryan, *LSRHS North House Associate Principal*

Attendance Language Revisions
School Committee members expressed appreciation for the handbook revisions regarding student attendance. Following a two-year data analysis comparing LSRHS policies with state and regional benchmarks, the Attendance Committee determined that chronic absenteeism—defined as 10 or more days absent—is significantly below the state average and is not a primary concern for the district. The core challenge identified is that students are missing specific classes because of the school's open-campus policy.

- The Attendance Committee noted that parent-led absence excusal was inconsistent, resulting in systemic inequities.
- The existing attendance policy, which includes the potential for credit loss for unexcused class cuts, was identified as both ineffective and inequitable.
    - The school intends to transition away from using "cut" as a term, opting instead to distinguish between absences that are verified and those that are unverified.
        - These include absences substantiated by paperwork or recognized justifications, such as medical issues.
- A major cultural shift is marked by the introduction of a new policy that establishes absence caps based on course type. Most activities, school trips among them, will now be applied toward this cap. While students might be required to prioritize their extracurricular involvements, the policy's primary focus remains on maintaining consistent classroom attendance.
    - Given that a 14-day limit per semester is a significant threshold, the school will provide support and interventions well before any student attains that cap.

A School Committee member inquired about the students mostly impacted by absenteeism. Tracy Ryan explained that many absences are attributed to health, mental health, and family responsibilities rather than truancy. The committee examined the importance of parental involvement and the need to distinguish between legitimate absences—such as college visits, transportation delays, or counselor meetings—and cases where students avoid specific classes due to discomfort. Furthermore, School Committee members discussed the challenge of supporting students who do not disclose their reasons for missing class, suggesting that current systems may need to better address these complex and nuanced situations.

Director of Finance and Operations
Susan Bottan*, LSRHS Interim Director of Finance and Operations*

Approval of Adult Lunch Increase
Increase adult lunch fee for 2026-2027 per DESE requirement.

- An increase in adult lunch fees from $4.28 to $6.00 was proposed by Susan Bottan, aligning with recommendations from the DESE review.
    - The adjustment is required because the fee has remained at the status quo for five years, falling below student lunch costs and requiring subsidies from the food service program.

Jason McLure motioned to approve 'the updated fees for adult lunches, increasing them from $4.28 to $6.00'. Ravi Simon seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members of the School Committee were all in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously. ***(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)***

Approval to establish and adjust thresholds for three revolving funds:
Food Services, Parking, and Exams.

Food Service - DESE Review of Food Services
- The recommendation is to hold three months of operating expenses, with current excess funds being used for equipment replacement, professional development, and organic food options. FY27 estimated at $220,000.

Parking - Parking Fees Revolving Fund
- The parking fund aims to accumulate $650,000 over 20 years to redo the parking lot, with the current lot being redone this summer.

Exams - Exam Fees Revolving Fund
- The exam fund threshold is set at $125,000 to cover one year's worth of expenses.

Ravi Simon motioned to approve 'the establishment of the revolving fund thresholds for the Food Service, Parking, and Exams'. Charles Morton seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members of the School Committee were all in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously. ***(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)***

Approval of EV Charger Rate Increase
[Increase EV Charger Cost]

- Due to the insufficiency of the previous 28-cent rate in covering software fees and additional expenses, the cost for EV charging is being raised to 42 cents.
  - This new rate may be subject to future adjustments, particularly when maintenance costs could potentially increase following the expiration of the warranty in 2027.
- The School Committee deliberated on the primary purpose of the charging stations, questioning whether they should function as profitable public utilities or primarily serve as an incentive for electric vehicle adoption.
  - It was clarified that charger availability, rather than pricing, remains the significant hurdle for adoption; therefore, subsidizing the costs is not expected to influence usage rates.

Jason McLure motioned to approve 'the increase of the EV charger cost per KWH from 28 cents to 42 cents'. Ravi Simon seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members of the School Committee were all in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously. ***(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)***

Superintendent/Principal Updates
Andrew Stephens, LSRHS Superintendent/Principal

- Appreciation was extended to Susan Bottan for her work over the past two days in managing the schedule and transition for the incoming Director of Finance and Operations, Dr. Susan Gilson. Dr. Gilson is scheduled to begin her new role on July 1, 2026.
- Superintendent/Principal Andrew Stephens expressed gratitude for the community's adaptability regarding the graduation ceremony, which was successfully moved to Saturday, June 6th.
- Recognition was given to the organizers of 'Senior Day Service' and 'Late Night at LS' for their efforts.
- 'The 9th-11th-grade Awards Ceremony' and the tradition of "clap-outs" for retiring faculty were observed last week.
- Final assessments are scheduled across June 16th–18th and June 22nd.
- Information regarding work permits was shared: they are accessible via the Main Office during the academic year and the Special Education Office during summer break.
- To support future enhancements, a collaborative staff and student survey has been launched to collect feedback on the "Advisory Program".
- In athletics, the Boys' Lacrosse team secured a victory in the state semifinals and will compete in the finals this Friday.

Subcommittee, Liaison, and Representative Updates

<u>Finance Subcommittee</u>
Maura Carty*, Subcommittee member*

- The Finance Subcommittee will also examine adult education, long-term substitute budgets, financial best practices, and the athletic fund balance to assess the impact of last year's fee changes.

<u>Policy Subcommittee</u>
Maura Carty, *Subcommittee member*

- The Finance and Policy subcommittees are set to work together on policies regarding fees for building and facilities use.
  - To ensure staff input is effectively gathered, the Policy Subcommittee will simplify the existing policy.
- Furthermore, the Policy Subcommittee will be presented with a proposal to re-examine the current phone policy.

<u>Regional Agreement Subcommittee</u>
Ravi Simon, *Subcommittee member*

- At the June 29th session, the committee intends to approve minutes and initiate the development of a foundation for future Regional Agreement assessments. Additionally, members will review the specific MOU terminology regarding inter-town election protocols.

Information and Discussion

<u>LSSC Summer Schedule Planning</u>
Cathie Bitter, *Chair of LSSC*

- Chair Cathie Bitter provided an overview of the upcoming summer schedule, clarifying that while the full committee will not convene during the summer months, various subcommittees may still meet.
- Regular meetings for the full School Committee are set to return in late August or early September, headlined by a workshop.
  - Members should expect a forthcoming poll to coordinate availability and provide suggestions for workshop topics, specifically regarding goal-setting and professional development.
  - This workshop, which will include provided food, is designed as a two-to-three-hour public meeting that will not be recorded or televised.

Policy Review:

- The following policy is for informational purposes only- SECOND reading and discussion:
  - BHE/Electronic Messaging by SC Members
    BHE Recommended

During the discussion, a member of the School Committee noticed that the policy utilizes outdated language, specifically citing references to "internet chat rooms" and "internet web forums". It was suggested that this phrasing likely originated from the initial language provided by the MASC.

- The following policy is for informational purposes only- THIRD reading, review, and formal vote.
  DESE Mandated updated policy
  JKAA: Physical Restraint, Time-Out & Seclusion Policy
  JKAA: Physical Restraint, Time-Out & Seclusion of Students

Ravi Simon motioned to approve 'Policy JKAA: Physical Restraint, Time-Out & Seclusion of Students'. Maura Carty seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members of the School Committee were all in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously. ***(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)***

Public Comment
No Public Comment(s)

Action Items:
-VOTE: *Jason McLure motioned to approve 'three(3) items on the Consent Agenda'. Maura Carty seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members of the School Committee were all in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.*

-VOTE: *Jason McLure motioned to approve the updated fees for adult lunches, increasing them from $4.28 to $6.00'. Ravi Simon seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members of the School Committee were all in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.*

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Adjournment

Ravi Simon motioned to adjourn the open meeting. Jason McLure seconded the motion. Five(5) out of five(5) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:05PM.