

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Tuesday, May 26, 2026**

7:00PM

REMOTE

Present

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

Also Present

Nicole Digenis, *LSRHS Science Department Coordinator*
Lisette Gil-Sanchez, *LSRHS METCO Parent Representative*
Christopher Herbert, *LSRHS Teachers' Association*
Timothy Jason, *LSRHS West House Associate Principal*
Regina Shopiro, *LSRHS Biology Teacher*
Caroline Singular, *LSRHS Earth Science & Biology Teacher*
Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

Call to Order

Cathie Bitter called the meeting to order at 7:02PM.

Announcement

Chair Cathie Bitter expressed regret that the meeting overlapped with 'Eid al-Adha'. She noted that although the Senior Awards Ceremony was successfully rescheduled, the conflict for this session was identified too late to make adjustments. Committee members extended their best wishes to those observing the holiday and hope to avoid such conflicts in the future.

Public Comment

No Public Comment(s)

Consent Agenda:

- Approval of Minutes: [Minutes for May 12, 2026](#)
- Approval of Payroll & AP Warrant: [Payroll & AP Warrant](#)
- Approval of Donations/Grants: [Donation for Photography Equipment](#)

Jack Ryan motioned to approve three(3) items on the 'Consent Agenda' with amendments to the Minutes for May 12, 2026. Jason McLure seconded the motion. Six (6) out of six (6) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)

Student Senate Updates

No Update

METCO Program Report Updates

Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

Lisette Gil-Sanchez, *LSRHS METCO Parent Representative*

- Moses Sibley, a student at LS, is highlighted in a video within the most recent METCO newsletter.
- Five videos created by student pairs (pairing one student from Boston with one from Lincoln or Sudbury) were presented at a recent screening of "Sonders" at the Dorchester Boys and Girls Club. These videos documented the students' experiences spending 24 hours in one another's homes.
 - The biggest takeaway was how much the students had in common despite their differences.
 - This initiative was carried out in partnership with 'EMA' and 'Film Builders'.

Teachers' Association Updates

Christopher Herbert, *LSRHS Teachers' Association*

- Advanced Placement (AP) testing has concluded.
- The Senior Awards Ceremony was held successfully.
- Fundraising efforts by ExecTA for the 'Paul J. Vernon Scholarship' resulted in more than \$3,000 in donations.
- New executive board members were chosen during the recent ExecTA elections.
- A mutual-respect protocol, aimed at resolving conflicts, is currently being finalized by ExecTA.

Presentations

Science Department

Nicole Digenis, *LSRHS Science Department Coordinator*

Regina Shopiro, *LSRHS Biology Teacher*

Caroline Singular, *LSRHS Earth Science & Biology Teacher*

Science Department Presentation

The School Committee expressed its appreciation for the Science Department's thorough presentation, delivered by Nicole Digenis, Regina Shopiro, and Caroline Singular. The department is guided by a philosophy that prioritizes student engagement through hands-on learning, practical laboratory work, and real-world problem-solving. By providing exposure to core disciplines—including earth science, biology, chemistry, and physics—the department seeks to cultivate global citizens capable of effective data analysis. These objectives are closely aligned with the 'Portrait of a Graduate' framework, which emphasizes intellectual curiosity, taking ownership of learning, data-informed decision-making, and global citizenship.

- The Science Department follows a sequential curriculum: Earth Science for 9th graders, Biology for 10th graders, Chemistry for 11th graders, and Physics for 12th graders.
- To accommodate varying student needs and learning styles, course levels are offered as accelerated (high honors), one-level (honors), two-level (college prep), and applied/practical (college prep with an alternative approach).
- Dual enrollment in science is a common choice for students in their junior and senior years, with options including full-year Advanced Placement courses and a range of semester-based electives depending on student demand and staff availability.

Nicole Degenis addressed a question about the 'AP Chemistry hybrid' course, noting it was established as a pilot program to combat low enrollment. The initiative permitted select first-year students, supported by weekly supplemental instruction and teacher recommendations, to learn alongside second-year students. This arrangement integrated students with varying levels of prior experience into a single classroom. Due to the pilot's success and a significant increase in senior enrollment for the upcoming year, the hybrid model will no longer be required. Members of the School Committee commended the curriculum for its flexibility, which encourages students to explore and identify new scientific interests.

Lisette Gil Sanchez proposed establishing links with community gardens, specifically those in Boston. She noted that while there are logistical hurdles to overcome, such a move offers significant opportunities for broadening the school's community reach.

2026-2027 Student Handbook: Academic Integrity

Timothy Jason, *LSRHS West House Associate Principal*

[Academic Integrity Language Revisions](#)

[Academic Integrity Slides](#)

Significant updates to the 2026-2027 student handbook are underway, specifically regarding class attendance and the transition from "academic dishonesty" to "academic integrity." This revision process is being overseen by a committee chaired by Timothy Jason, the Associate Principal of West House. The committee was established in response to a rise in misconduct cases, particularly those involving AI, highlighting the need for more contemporary guidelines.

The primary objective of these changes is to modernize the policy to reflect the shift from traditional plagiarism to AI-assisted work. Rather than maintaining a strictly punitive system, the new framework seeks to close existing procedural gaps, refine disciplinary outcomes, and embed educational interventions into the process.

- Within the program of studies, student rights and responsibilities will now be distinct sections.
- Following a thorough evaluation of the handbook, the School Council reviewed these updates, which reflect significant effort.
- By transitioning from a focus on academic dishonesty to academic integrity, the committee intends to guide AI usage while fostering student curiosity, resilience, and critical thinking.
- To enhance existing policies, the committee introduced educational interventions and redo opportunities, specifically addressing cases where students surpassed the previous three-infraction limit.
- The updated policy supports students in planning and time management to reduce errors caused by procrastination.
 - By distinguishing between formative and summative assessments, the new guidelines offer greater leniency and educational support for minor infractions compared to previous standards.

The proposed amendment introduces an additional intermediary phase, thereby extending the total number of infractions permitted before a student faces a semester-long failure. The new policy focuses on educating students about dishonesty and rebuilding missed learning due to AI.

- The initial occurrence serves as a warning, providing the student with an opportunity to resubmit the work and engage in a dialogue regarding academic integrity.
- A second occurrence results in supervised study, a possible reduction of one letter grade, and potential adjustments to the conditions of future assessments. Committee members discussed whether redoing assignments should be mandatory or optional following AI-related infractions. The committee expressed a preference for staff flexibility while strongly advocating for resubmissions, particularly in cases of significant violations. Challenges in proving AI usage due to plausible deniability were also noted, prompting many educators to return to pen-and-paper assignments. This shift highlights the importance of handwritten work in encouraging critical thinking and original thought, providing a contrast to students' inclination toward rapid task completion and quick solutions.

Director of Finance and Operations

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

ADA Self-Assessment

[Update on ADA and Capital Needs Assessments](#)

- [RFQ: Transitional Plans](#)
- [Cost Proposal](#)
- [Proposal](#)
- [Request for Quote](#)
- The Institute for Human Centered Design submitted a proposal for a three-month ADA self-assessment totaling \$33,944, which would encompass evaluations of physical, digital, and employment-related programming.
- Susan Bottan sought approval to proceed with the project.
- One School Committee member asked for clarification regarding the selection criteria for assessment agencies, specifically mentioning the 'Institute for Human Centered Design'.
 - Susan Bottan clarified that following an April request for quotes, one agency declined while another submitted a proposal. A subsequent request in May yielded no further responses. Consequently, the Institute for Human Centered Design was chosen as the most responsible bidder with the lowest quote.

- The increase in cost to \$33,000 from the original \$10,000–\$12,000 estimate was attributed by Susan Bottan to an expansion of the project scope, which now encompasses parking and grounds.
 - Funding for this expenditure is expected to be drawn from \$36,000 in electrical and general savings.

Jack Ryan motioned to approve 'the School Committee entered into an agreement with the Institute for Human Centered Design valued at \$33,944'. Maura Carty seconded the motion. Six (6) out of six (6) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)

FY27 Budget

School Committee member Jack Ryan inquired about the approach for incorporating the "required minimum contribution" (RMC) into the budget allocations for member towns, specifically Sudbury, as the topic is expected to be raised at the forthcoming budget conference. As a result, he requested a detailed explanation regarding the calculation of the RMC and its integration into the overall budget.

Susan Bottan agreed to provide the requested information.

On-Site Insight's (OSI) 20-Year Capital Needs Assessment

[OSI Capital Needs Assessment for LSRSD](#)

- On-site Insight conducted a preliminary 20-year capital needs assessment, highlighting six major projects slated for the next 5 to 15 years. These include updates to the fire alarm system, water heater replacements, locker room and restroom renovations, turf, tennis, and track improvements, roof replacement, and heat pump installations. These priorities arise as the facility's 22-year-old systems approach the end of their functional lifespans.
- The School Committee identified specific initiatives, such as roof replacements and heat pump installations, as being eligible for MSBA funding and expressed their intention to maximize collaboration with the MSBA on these efforts.

Superintendent/Principal Updates

Andrew Stephens, LSRHS Superintendent/Principal

- Andrew Stephens noted the success of the "Musicians' Union" Battle of the Bands. Additionally, senior ceremonies for the ACE, Excel, and LSA Academy programs celebrated both student achievement and community spirit.
- Anticipate the upcoming arrival of the new Finance and Operations Director, Susan Gilson, for transition meetings.
- The final day for seniors is scheduled for Thursday, May 28th, and will feature the senior countdown tradition.
- Following the Scholarship Ceremony on Tuesday, June 2, graduation is set for Sunday, June 7.
 - A rotation of School Committee members will distribute diplomas. Speakers will include LSSC member Maura Carty and Chair Cathie Bitter, both of whom are mothers of graduating seniors.

Subcommittee, Liaison, and Representative Updates

Finance Subcommittee

Maura Carty, Subcommittee member

- Anticipate a finance subcommittee meeting scheduled for Monday, June 1st.

Policy Subcommittee

Maura Carty, Subcommittee member

- A policy meeting is tentatively set for June 16th.

Chair Cathie Bitter advised School Committee members to reach out to the primary contacts for their respective committees now that the assignments are ready for assessment.

Information and Discussion

Sudbury Budget Working Group

Cathie Bitter, *Chair of LSSC*

- To manage fiscal difficulties, Sudbury is establishing a budget working group. The Lincoln-Sudbury district is required to provide two representatives, with the meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 18th.
 - The Lincoln-Sudbury School Committee selected Maura Carty and Jack Ryan as district representatives for the 'Sudbury Budget Working Group', appointing Charles Morton as the alternate in the event of scheduling conflicts.

Website summer review: Appoint SC members to work with the Superintendent

Maura Carty, *LSSC member*

Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

- The Lincoln Sudbury School Committee has designated Maura Carty and Andrew Stephens to continue managing the updates for the school's public website. This transition will involve moving the site to 'Parent Square,' a platform designed for improved user accessibility.

Review and Approve 2026-2027 LSSC Committee Assignments

Cathie Bitter, *Chair of LSSC*

[L-S 2026-2027 Committee Assignments](#)

- The committee discussed approving the '2026-2027 Committee Assignments', including a 'Sudbury Budget Working Group' with Maura Carty, Jack Ryan, and Charles Morton as an alternate.

Cathie Bitter motioned to approve 'the 2026-2027 Committee Assignments'. Jack Ryan seconded the motion. Six (6) out of six (6) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)

Policy Review:

- The following policy is for informational purposes only- FIRST reading. Anticipate a discussion at the next School Committee meeting on Tuesday, June 9th:
 - BHE/Electronic Messaging by SC Members
[BHE Recommended](#)

An update was made to the concluding paragraph of the BHE policy item, which was recently approved.

- The following policy is for informational purposes only- SECOND reading. Anticipate a discussion at the next School Committee meeting on Tuesday, June 9th.
 - DESE Mandated updated policy
JKAA: Physical Restraint, Time-Out & Seclusion Policy
[JKAA: Physical Restraint, Time-Out & Seclusion of Students](#)

Public Comment

No Public Comment(s)

Action Items:

-VOTE: Jack Ryan motioned to approve three(3) items on the 'Consent Agenda'. Jason McLure seconded the motion. Six(6) out of six(6) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

-VOTE: Jack Ryan motioned to approve 'a contract for \$33,944 with the Institute for Human Centered Design'. Maura Carty seconded the motion. Six(6) out of six(6) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

-VOTE: Cathie Bitter motioned to approve 'the 2026-2027 Committee Assignments'. Jack Ryan seconded the motion. Six (6) out of six (6) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Cathie Bitter motioned to adjourn the open meeting. Ravi Simon seconded the motion. Six(6) out of six(6) members of the School Committee were in favor via roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:45PM.