

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Tuesday, September 8, 2026**

7:00PM

HYBRID

Present

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

Also Present

Ariel Cox, *LSRHS English Teacher/Co-President of ExecTA*
Lissette Gil-Sanchez, *LSRHS M.E.T.C.O Parent Representative*
Dr. Susan Gilson, *LSRHS Director of Finance and Operations*
Rebecca Mayer, *LSRHS English Teacher/President of ExecTA*
Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

Call to Order

Chair Cathie Bitter called the meeting to order at 7:05PM.

Public Comment

Manish

The speaker expressed serious concerns regarding procedural issues and inaccurate data, while still recognizing the hard work of the team.

They pointed out unresolved figures and unaddressed requests for evidence, noting that the team had been previously made aware of these matters.

Emphasizing a commitment to accountability and regulatory compliance, the speaker stated that should these inconsistencies remain unresolved, they will take the issue to the FBI to ensure accurate government documentation.

Consent Agenda

- Approval of Minutes
 - [Minutes for June 23, 2026 LSSC Meeting](#)
 - [Minutes for July 1, 2026 LSSC Meeting](#)
 - [Minutes for July 27, 2026 LSSC Meeting](#)
 - [Minutes for August 13, 2026 LSSC Meeting](#)
 - [Minutes for August 26, 2026 LSSC Workshop](#)
- Approval of Payroll & AP Warrant
 - [Payroll & AP Warrant](#)
- Approval of Donations/Grants
 - [Friends of LS Football Donation & MetroWest Health Foundation Donation](#)

Members of the School Committee deliberated on a recently awarded grant from the MetroWest Health Foundation. The grant is designed to support consultants and strengthen educational initiatives focused on healthy behaviors. By improving the presentation of wellness data and information, the effort seeks to boost student outreach and community involvement.

Expressing gratitude for the grant funding and recognizing the effort involved in securing it, committee members outlined plans to align these new resources with existing parent and athletic programming.

Ravi Simon motioned to approve all seven(7) items on the 'Consent Agenda'. Jason McLure seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)

Student Senate Report

No Updates

METCO Report

No Updates

Teachers' Association Updates

Ariel Cox, *LSRHS English Teacher/Co-President of ExecTA*

Rebecca Mayer, *LSRHS English Teacher/President of ExecTA*

- The newly introduced Teachers' Association leadership team includes Co-President Rebecca Mayer, Vice President Jim Berry, and Treasurer Christian Latham, presented by Ariel Cox as Co-President.
- Appreciation was expressed by the Teachers' Association to staff and student leaders for a smooth beginning to the academic year, with special acknowledgement given to FYI coordinators for their mentorship, and to Melanie Mahoney for leading the 'Relay For Life' team to a national fundraising milestone.

Director of Finance and Operations Report

Dr. Susan Gilson, *LSRHS Director of Finance and Operations*

FY28 Capital Plan

[OSI Capital Needs Assessment for LSRSD](#)

[Memo: L-S FY28 Capital](#)

[Presentation Capital Plan](#)

In her presentation of the capital plan, Dr. Gilson highlighted that Lincoln-Sudbury anticipates substantial long-term costs for major facility enhancements. Although the district presently carries no debt, upcoming capital initiatives must be thoughtfully scheduled to satisfy submission timelines for both Sudbury and Lincoln.

To steer priority planning, officials are utilizing insights from district experts alongside a recent capital needs assessment. The long-term 5- to 15-year roadmap will be further refined by forthcoming ADA compliance evaluations, with the overall aim of delivering responsible, fiscally sound proposals to both town and school committees.

- The district is prioritizing two critical capital projects for FY27: replacing 314 aging heat pumps and upgrading the school phone system to meet federal 911 compliance laws.
 - The heat pumps, installed in 2024, are essential for climate control, air quality, and energy efficiency, but replacement costs total over \$8 million. To manage this expense, the district plans to replace units incrementally over five years while exploring Green Communities grants.
 - The phone system upgrade is mandatory under Massachusetts law, as it must provide precise room-level location data to emergency responders to ensure student and staff safety.

- The phone system requires replacement due to maintenance issues and part availability, with costs currently estimated at \$50,000 to \$100,000. Additionally, the mission-critical network, which supports 1,600 users, is 11 years old and requires a four-year, \$1 million replacement plan to handle modern bandwidth demands for security and educational systems.
- Additionally, the district must replace passenger vans used for student transportation with safer, multi-function activity buses.
 - Administrators are currently working to secure funding through budget reallocation and potential booster club partnerships to cover the price gap.
- The tennis courts and track facility at Lincoln-Sudbury are in need of significant care, hindering athletic competitions and practice.

Although these high-priority projects are not currently scheduled for 2028, they necessitate long-term strategic planning and could seek funding via the Community Preservation Act. Stakeholders are presently assessing whether the track can be preserved through resurfacing or if a complete replacement—costing in excess of \$1 million—will be required.

- To raise public awareness about critical long-term capital needs for fiscal year 2028 and beyond, the School Committee intends to prepare a detailed presentation. Discussions center on developing strategic solutions to address failing heat pump infrastructure, balancing phased improvements against bond issuance and grant opportunities. Additionally, members are weighing options to combine these upgrades with a comprehensive roof project, carefully evaluating rising expenses and debt service obligations.

Dr. Gilson intends to collaborate with local experts and the CEC to pursue state grant opportunities and renewable energy incentives to reduce capital expenses for school facilities. By maintaining regular dialogue and partnership with municipal committees, the district plans to prioritize and track necessary repairs, ensuring sustainable and sensible enhancements that foster a reliable learning environment for students.

Student Activity Accounts (SAA) Approval

Dr. Susan Gilson, *Director of Finance and Operations*

[Memo: L-S Student Activity List](#)

Dr. Susan Gilson requested the School Committee's annual authorization for all student-sponsored clubs and activities managing independent funds.

- To maintain compliance with state regulations, a detailed list of eligible organizations and their account balances was submitted for formal review and approval.
- Clubs currently operating without dedicated cost centers may also be formally established through a simplified approval process when necessary.

Jason McLure motioned to approve 'the authorization of the school-sponsored clubs, activities, and organizations listed in the [Memo: L-S Student Activity List](#) for the 2026–2027 school year'. Charles Morton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)

Superintendent/Principal Report

Andrew Stephens, *LSRHS Superintendent/Principal*

- Superintendent/Principal Andrew Stephens offered his appreciation to staff members, the administrative team, and facilities personnel for their dedicated work preparing for and launching a successful new school year.
- To make events more accessible and ease scheduling demands for families and staff, Ninth-Grade Orientation and Back-to-School Night have been combined into a unified event scheduled for September 16.
- Recognition was given to the following students named as National Merit Scholarship semifinalists:
 - Aiden Delagrave
 - Caleb Delagrave
 - Henry Frasca
 - Ira McLure
- Members of the School Committee were also reminded of the upcoming annual conference taking place in November.

Subcommittee, Liaison, and Representative Updates

LSSC Website Revisions

Maura Carty, *LSSC member*

[LSSC Homepage](#)

The district website's School Committee section was reorganized to feature an "About Us" page, current priorities, archived records, and meeting schedules. Prioritizing active subcommittees, the updates also preserve public access to key administrative records and contracts.

Sudbury Budget Working Group

Cathie Bitter, *Chair of LSSC*

The budget working group reported an anticipated town budget deficit of \$1.9 million.

To address this shortfall, town administration outlined strategies involving reserve funds and available cash reserves, which would lower the remaining deficit to \$600,000 and necessitate proportional budget reductions across municipal departments and school operations.

- Under these projections, the district's budget expansion for the coming fiscal year is projected at roughly 2.5%.
- Further discussions regarding capital expenditures and detailed financial planning are scheduled for upcoming committee meetings.

Subcommittees Update

Maura Carty, *member of LSSC Subcommittees*

With the 'Superintendent Evaluation', 'Finance', and 'Policy' subcommittees set to convene in the coming week, full committee activities are officially resuming.

Information and Discussion

Mass CEC School Bus Advisory Services Program Commitment Letter

Eric Simms, Sudbury Sustainability Coordinator

[Mass. CEC School Bus Advisory Services Commitment Letter](#)

The School Committee discussed a non-binding commitment letter to join the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center's school bus advisory services program. Offered at no cost, this initiative outlines a roadmap for transitioning to an electric vehicle fleet ahead of future contract renewals. With Sudbury Public Schools already on board, officials sought the committee's backing to initiate consulting services.

Key aspects and considerations regarding the advisory program include:

- Timeline & RFP Alignment: The advisory process will run for about six months. Although this schedule may not fully coincide with the district's upcoming bus contract RFP timeline, the advisory team plans to provide sample language and strategic options for integrating electric buses.
- Value & Planning Structure: Members welcomed the opportunity to utilize expert advice at no charge. While supportive of a coordinated strategy, the committee discussed whether the districts should receive one unified or separate reports.

- Joint Approach: Because the districts operate closely and share a transportation contract, the committee agreed that a single joint report with district-specific breakdowns is the most practical path forward. Pending procedural matters will be coordinated further with the EIC and SPS.

Ravi Simon motioned to approve 'a joint letter of commitment for the electric school bus advisory service program in collaboration with the Celebrating Schools Initiative'. Maura Carty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)

LSSC Updated Operating Protocols

Cathie Bitter, *Chair of LSSC*

LSSC Operating Protocols

The committee discussed proposed revisions to the operating protocols, with a focus on clarifying the role of the M.E.T.C.O. parent representative.

- To align the document with current policy, members confirmed that the representative participates in a non-voting capacity.

Ravi Simon motioned to approve 'the updated operating protocols for the 2026-2027 school year'. Maura Carty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(SEE ACTION ITEMS SECTION)

LSSC 2026-2027 Goals Discussion

Cathie Bitter, *Chair of LSSC*

DRAFT LSSC 2026-2027 Goals

Chair Cathie Bitter and the committee reviewed the draft 2026–2027 goals with a focus on feasibility, clarity, and actionable outcomes. Key points included:

- **Inclusion & Community**: Focusing on creating a welcoming school environment and supporting the "Respecting Human Differences" working group while preserving group autonomy.
- **Data Categorization**: Prioritize evaluating staff and administrator diversity by reviewing historical data and hiring practices.
- **M.E.T.C.O. Engagement**: Strengthening connections with M.E.T.C.O. by shifting toward broader, school-led engagement expansion.
- **Community Outreach**: Clarifying whether outreach efforts should focus on school-level initiatives or direct School Committee engagement, noting that listening sessions require built trust to be effective.

Sudbury for Digital Balance inquiry

Cathie Bitter, *Chair of LSSC*

Chair Cathie Bitter shared updates from a discussion with Digital Balance representatives, which covered key topics including proactive cell phone legislation, student access risks regarding unrestricted AI platforms, and prospective social media litigation.

During the meeting, the committee evaluated the possibility of participating in a nationwide class action lawsuit targeted at social media companies.

- Before taking further action or continuing deliberations, members intend to discuss the matter with district legal counsel to review the potential implications and administrative requirements of involvement.

Action Items:

-VOTE: Ravi Simon motioned to approve all four (4) items on the ‘Consent Agenda’. Jack Ryan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

-VOTE: Jason McLure motioned to approve ‘the authorization of the school-sponsored clubs, activities, and organizations listed in the [Memo: L-S Student Activity List](#) for the 2026–2027 school year’. Charles Morton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

-VOTE: Ravi Simon motioned to approve ‘a joint letter of commitment for the electric school bus advisory service program in collaboration with the Celebrating Schools Initiative’. Maura Carty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

-VOTE: Ravi Simon motioned to approve ‘the updated operating procedures for the 2026-2027 school year’. Maura Carty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

No Comment(s)

Adjournment

Ravi Simon motioned to adjourn the open meeting. Jason McLure 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 9:31PM.