

Sudbury School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
August 17, 2026

**Members Present:**

Jessica McCready - Chair, Betsy Sues - Vice Chair, Julie Durgin-Sicree, Karyn Jones and Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco

**Also Present:**

Annette Doyle, Carol Cavanaugh, Buckner Creel, Jacki Sousa, Stephanie Juriansz, Katie Dineen and Sandra Duran

**Open Regular Session**

Chair Jessica McCready opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. Julie Durgin-Sicree, Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco, Betsy Sues and Jessica McCready all confirmed their remote presence.

1. Public Comment
  - a. Safa Khan, Sudbury resident, and speaking on behalf of Vidya Parwani, advocated to ask that the Committee reconsider adding Eid and Diwali to the SPS School Calendar.
  - b. Kay Bell, Sudbury resident, encouraged the School Committee to follow its established three-step process when considering changes to District policies. She also expressed concern that the Family Handbook was included on the Consent Calendar.
  - c. David Teller, Sudbury resident, shared his concerns about the restraint policy listed on the agenda.
2. Special Matters
  - a. Anti-Hate / Anti-Bias Task Force Presentation
    - i. Jacki Sousa shared a presentation outlining the need for a Jewish PAC. The presentation was shared with the Anti-Hate Anti-Bias Taskforce, which voted to bring it forward to the School Committee for consideration. The intent of the Parent Advisory Committee is to provide representation and support for Jewish families and to help ensure that they feel welcome, included, and safe within SPS.
    - ii. The presentation included data on the number of reported antisemitic incidents and bullying, information supporting the recognition and protection of Jewish students, an overview of the differences between a Taskforce and a Parent Advisory Committee, and supporting evidence for consideration of a Jewish Parent Advisory Committee.

Karyn Jones joined the meeting.

- iii. Questions from the Committee included whether the PAC should specifically be identified as a Jewish / antisemitism-focused PAC, or whether an interfaith PAC that does not prioritize a particular religion could also be considered and whether PACs should have a relationship with the Taskforce and the School Committee.
    - iv. Two members of the Committee shared their support.

### 3. Educational and Operational Matters

#### a. District Reports

##### i. Acting Director of Business and Human Resources

1. Mr. Creel noted his support of the Business Office staff and their hard work.
2. Today is the bid opening for the METCO Bus RFP.

##### ii. Interim Assistant Superintendent

1. Dr. Cavanaugh shared an update on New Teacher Orientation noting that 19 new educators will be present. She thanked Rebecca Amaral and Liz Kerrigan for their hard work in putting the agenda together for the two day orientation.

##### iii. Interim Superintendent

1. Mrs. Doyle shared that all administrators are back as of today with a two day administrative retreat scheduled for later this week. Thanks to Carol Cavanaugh, Stephanie Juriansz, Buck Creel, Michael O'Brien, Shannon Famigletti, Liz Kerrigan, Bryant Amitrano, Christine Maus, Sara Harvey and Brian Menna who will be helping to lead sessions.
2. Opening Day for all staff is two weeks away. The District is excited to welcome Dr. Alex Hirshberg who will present on the impact every adult has on students, the importance of relationships and building strong connections with students. Separate sessions will be held for elementary and middle school staff.

### 4. Consent Calendar

#### a. CASE Q4 Report

#### b. Family Handbook FY27

#### c. Monthly Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants Submission

#### d. Updating Dates in the Policy Subcommittee Charge

#### e. Minutes (06/15/2026 and 07/06/2026)

##### i. A member asked to pull the Family Handbook.

##### ii. Vice Chair Betsy Sues motioned to approve the Consent Calendar as amended. Julie Durgin-Sicree seconded the motion.

##### 1. ROLL CALL VOTE:

- a. Karyn Jones: Aye
- b. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: Aye
- c. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
- d. Betsy Sues: Aye
- e. Jessica McCready: Aye

##### i. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carries.

##### iii. Karyn Jones moves to reorder the Family Handbook until after we discuss Policy JKAA. Betsy Sues seconded the motion.

##### 1. ROLL CALL VOTE:

- a. Karyn Jones: Aye
- b. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: Aye

- c. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
- d. Betsy Sues: Aye
- e. Jessica McCready: Aye
  - i. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carries.

5. Business and Policy Matters

a. Combined Facilities Director

- i. Haynes and Nixon Roof Projects Update
- ii. Update on FY25 / FY26 Projects
  - 1. The roof projects are progressing as planned and there are no concerns about schools opening on time. The work will continue after school hours and may include weekends and holidays.
  - 2. The Haynes emergency lighting and BDA projects are going well.
  - 3. Access control work has been pushed back by one week. Large boulders have been placed at Curtis to help secure the bus parking, playground and Solar installation areas. The Noyes vestibule project is still in the design phase.
  - 4. The Curtis solar canopy work continues through the pre-design phase with installation targeted for summer 2027.
  - 5. HVAC study looking at system needs and electrification opportunities.
  - 6. Building management systems capital repairs continue to be evaluated.
  - 7. Haynes School Playground Renovation – the CPA application is opening in September. Improvement options are under consideration.
  - 8. The bus electrification initiative is under evaluation.
  - 9. A question about the smaller playground at Haynes was asked.

b. Discussion on supporting Jewish students

- i. Support was shared for exploring next steps, including reviewing other PAC charges and thinking about a structure for a Jewish PAC, with support from the Anti Hate Anti Bias Taskforce and legal counsel.

c. Review of Policies JICFB Bullying Prevention and JICK Harassment of Students

- i. These two policies are in place to protect students from bullying and harassment. A consideration to include protected classes was shared.
- ii. A recommendation to place this with the Policy Subcommittee was shared.
- iii. A request to look at policies AC and ACE to offer more clarity was shared.
  - 1. Vice Chair Betsy Sues motioned to task the Policy Subcommittee with review of policies JICFB & JICK. Julie Durgin-Sicree seconded the motion.

a. ROLL CALL VOTE:

- i. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: Aye
- ii. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
- iii. Karyn Jones: Aye
- iv. Betsy Sues: Aye
- v. Jessica McCready: Aye

1. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carries.

2. Policies AC and ACE will be brought to a future agenda, as they were not on tonight's agenda.

d. Potential vote on Policy JKAA Physical Restraint of Students

- i. Stephanie Juriansz, Director of Student Services provided an update on Policy JKAA noting that the regulations addressed in this policy have been recommended by MASC and have undergone legal review. State regulations supported by DESE take effect today and the ask for this item is to discuss whether to dispense with the typical three step policy review process due to the timing of the regulations.
- ii. Members of the Committee and SEPAC shared their concerns due the quick turnaround and not enough time for policy review.
- iii. A desire to add local safeguards was shared.
- iv. Questions surrounded whether anything would prevent the District from complying with the regulations when they take effect.

1. Vice Chair Betsy Sues motioned to dispense with the three step process outlined in Policy BGB.

a. ROLL CALL VOTE:

- i. Karyn Jones: No
- ii. Betsy Sues: No
- iii. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
- iv. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: No
- v. Jessica McCready: Aye

1. **Vote: 2-3.** Motion does not carry.

v. Family Handbook

1. Minor changes to language as well as an update to the equity and inclusion statement were reviewed and approved.
2. A question related to AI language was asked.
3. Vice Chair Betsy Sues motioned to approve the Family Handbook as amended. Julie Durgin-Sicree seconded the motion.

a. ROLL CALL VOTE:

- i. Betsy Sues: Aye
- ii. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
- iii. Karyn Jones: Aye
- iv. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: Aye
- v. Jessica McCready: Aye

1. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carries.

e. Review of Budget Tiered Initiatives

- i. The Committee reviewed ideas shared by each member.
- ii. A suggestion to add preventive maintenance as an immediate need was asked and clarification on what will be sent to administration for review was asked.

f. Potential Approval of RFP for Superintendent Search

- i. Mr. Creel shared the timeline, scope of services that will be provided, submission guidelines and the Evaluation Committee process.

- ii. Questions surrounded geographic reach, protocols if we don't find a candidate, confidentiality clause and clarity on complete services. Additional questions surrounded MASC and the makeup of the Evaluation Committee.
  1. Vice Chair Betsy Sues motioned to approve the Superintendent Search RFP as amended. Julie Durgin-Sicree seconded the motion.
    - a. ROLL CALL VOTE:
      - i. Betsy Sues: Aye
      - ii. Karyn Jones: Aye
      - iii. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: Aye
      - iv. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
      - v. Jessica McCready: Aye
      1. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carries.
    2. Vice Chair Betsy Sues motioned to vote to give the Acting Director of Business and HR permission to release the RFP documents to at least three firms which normally provide superintendent search services. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco seconded the motion.
    3. A question on who the RFP was being sent to was asked.
      - a. ROLL CALL VOTE:
        - i. Betsy Sues: Aye
        - ii. Karyn Jones: Aye
        - iii. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: Aye
        - iv. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
        - v. Jessica McCready: Aye
        1. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carries.
    4. A better understanding of who appropriately holds the role of evaluating the RFP's and a suggestion to add an administrator who has been in the District longer to the Evaluation Committee was shared.
      - a. Vice Chair Betsy Sues motioned to appoint Jessica McCready, Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco, Buck Creel and Carol Cavanaugh to the Evaluation Committee for the Superintendent search firm RFP. Karyn Jones seconded the motion.
        - i. ROLL CALL VOTE:
          1. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: Aye
          2. Betsy Sues: Aye
          3. Karyn Jones: Aye
          4. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
          5. Jessica McCready: Aye
          - a. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carries.
6. Liaison Reports
  - a. At a recent Park and Rec meeting, a question to consider working together with SPS to update and maintain the fields at Curtis was discussed.
  - b. The LGBTQ+ PAC will be present at upcoming Open House events. Their website is up to date and they are currently looking at additional events in the Fall.
  - c. The next Town Budget Group meeting is scheduled for August 31st.

## 7. Adjournment

- a. Vice Chair Betsy Sues motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:22 p.m. Julie Durgin-Sicree seconded the motion.
  - i. ROLL CALL VOTE:
    - 1. Ellen Lederer-DeFrancesco: Aye
    - 2. Karyn Jones: Aye
    - 3. Julie Durgin-Sicree: Aye
    - 4. Betsy Sues: Aye
    - 5. Jessica McCready: Aye
  - a. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Julie Williams  
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

**Documents Reviewed During the August 17, 2026 School Committee Meeting**

- 1. Jewish PAC Presentation\_6.10
- 2. CASE Q4 Update - 5.22.26
- 3. DRAFT\_Family Handbook FY27 for Legal Review.docx
- 4. Monthly Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants\_081726
- 5. Policy Subcommittee Charge (2)
- 6. 061526\_Sudbury School Committee Minutes\_DRAFT
- 7. 070625\_Sudbury School Committee Minutes\_DRAFT
- 8. MEMORANDUM to SC Capital Projects Update 8.12.2026
- 9. Sudbury PAC Memo 8.13.26
- 10. J Policies.docx
- 11. Letter\_School Committee Packet
- 12. DRAFT JKAA Restraint Prevention Policy (1)
- 13. School Committee Budget Priorities (Responses).xlsx - Form Responses 1
- 14. 7.6.26 SPS Budget Tiered Initiatives .docx (1)
- 15. Supt Search RFP to SC 17 Aug 26