

Somers Board of Education Regular Meeting
Somers Board of Education Chambers
Monday, September 14, 2026
7:00 PM

(The recorded livestream may be viewed on SPS' YouTube channel on the school website)

Present BOE Members: Mike Briggs, Dr. Ed DePeau, JT Galloway, Dr. Sharon Goulet, Anne Kirkpatrick, Shane Manning, Gina Olearczyk, Kim Radziewicz, Derek Zelek

Others: Dr. Sam Galloway, Stephanie Levin, Melissa Mucci, Julie Hinkley, Diane Childs, Tenley Stoltz, Amy Avery, Keith Liggett, Aime Liggett, Jennifer Gray, Denise Anderstrom, Morgan Anderstrom, Jenny Bunick, Norah Anderstrom, Vivian Bunick, Meghan Millea, Ellen Quinlan, Erin Quinlan, Erin Orvis, Jennifer Millea

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular Board of Education meeting was called to order by Superintendent Galloway at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Education Chambers.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Superintendent Galloway opened the election of officers for the Somers Board of Education and requested nominations for Board Chair. Ms. Anne Kirkpatrick nominated Mr. Mike Briggs for Chair. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Ed DePeau. Vote: 9-0-0. Mr. Mike Briggs was elected Chair of the Somers Board of Education.

Chair Briggs requested nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Mike Briggs nominated Ms. Anne Kirkpatrick for Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Mr. JT Galloway. Vote: 9-0-0. Ms. Anne Kirkpatrick was elected Vice Chair.

Ms. Kirkpatrick nominated Dr. Sharon Goulet for Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Gina Olearczyk. Vote: 9-0-0. Dr. Sharon Goulet was elected Secretary.

Chair Briggs asked each Board member to select two subcommittees on which they would like to serve.

4. 2027 TEACHER & PARAEDUCATOR OF THE YEAR RECOGNITION

Rationale: Dr. Galloway will introduce the 2027 Teacher and Paraeducator of the Year to the Board.

Discussion: Superintendent Galloway recognized Jamie Furness as the 2027 Paraeducator of the Year, highlighting her commitment to the district, reliability, teamwork, and support of students and colleagues. He noted her strengths in instructional support and professional integrity. Jamie was also recognized at

Convocation. Superintendent Galloway thanked Jamie for her dedication and leadership.

Superintendent Galloway recognized Erin Orvis as Somers Teacher of the Year. Erin, who will compete for Connecticut Teacher of the Year, has served SES for more than 25 years as a classroom teacher, math interventionist, and coach. Superintendent Galloway highlighted Ms. Orvis' dedication to supporting the whole child, helping students reach their potential, and supporting families in need. Ms. Orvis also serves as President of the Teachers' union and returned to the classroom last year without hesitation when the need arose.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5.1. Approval of the August 24, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the minutes from the August 24, 2026 Board meeting.

Motion to approve minutes from August 24, 2026 Regular Meeting. This motion, made by Shane Manning and seconded by Kim Radziewicz, Carried. **Yea: 9, Nay: 0**

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

6.1. Superintendent Update

The Connecticut State Department of Education contacted Superintendent Galloway after noting Somers' strong student performance. Mr. Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer at the Connecticut State Department of Education, invited Superintendent Galloway to discuss the district's results, which exceeded state averages and pre-pandemic performance levels across all areas.

Superintendent Galloway highlighted recent district recognition of all three schools, the Board's support of the new curriculum, and teachers' commitment to high-quality instruction.

6.2. Monthly Budget Report

Rationale: Stephanie Levin, Director of Business Services, will update the Board on the monthly budget report.

Discussion: Stephanie Levin presented the August monthly report. She reviewed current vacancies, including the MBA library media specialist, an IT position, and two maintainer positions, noting that staffing changes may affect the benefits budget line. The SHS school counselor position was filled in September.

Special education outplacements, including tuition and transportation, are being finalized and remain in line with projections. A budget spending freeze remains in place while staffing costs are finalized, with necessary instructional supplies being prioritized.

In response to Board member questions, Ms. Levin noted that outplacement costs remain on target and that, despite two maintainer vacancies, the department has managed well and had a strong school opening.

7. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the consent agenda. This motion, made by JT Galloway and seconded by Anne Kirkpatrick, Carried. **Yea: 9, Nay: 0**

8.1. Warrant of September 14, 2026

Rationale: The Board to review and consent to the warrant of September 14, 2026.

8.2. Resignation

Rationale: Shannon Rooney, SHS School Counselor, is resigning effective 9/18/26 after three years of service to SPS.

8.3. Leave of Absence

Rationale: Allison Lippman, Grade 2 Teacher, will be taking a leave of absence from approximately the beginning of March through the end of the school year.

9. OLD BUSINESS

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1. 1st Posting DBS Code 3280 - Grants and Bequests

10.2. 1st Posting DBS Code 9326.1 - Minutes

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

11.1. Curriculum

No updates.

11.2. Policy

No updates.

11.3. Planning/Finance

The committee met on 9/14/26 to review policies regarding the budget process.

11.4. Salary & Negotiations

The subcommittee hopes to ratify the Administrators' contract at tonight's meeting. The Teachers' contract is under negotiation. The committee will meet on 10/5/26.

11.5. Building

The meeting scheduled for 9/15/26 is cancelled. The next meeting will be held on 10/6/26 at 4 p.m.

12. CIP/CREC/SEF

There is no CIP or CREC report. SEF will meet on 9/16/26.

13. ADVANCE CALENDAR

The Board reviewed a calendar of upcoming school and district events taking place from September through November.

14. AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS

Chair Briggs reviewed public comment procedures, including expectations for respectful conduct, a 3-minute limit per speaker, and 20-minute total allotment for public comment

Ms. Julie Hinkley of Collins Road in Somers, expressed concerns regarding comments made by the SHS Vice Principal and questioned how those comments align with the district's vision and mission, particularly in supporting students and staff with mental health concerns and members of the LGBTQ community. She urged the Board to hold administrators to a high professional standard.

Ms. Diane Childs of 184 County Road inquired about the hiring and recommendation process for the Vice Principal position. Superintendent Galloway confirmed that the candidate was recommended by the hiring committee. Ms. Childs suggested including social media and online content reviews in future hiring processes. Superintendent Galloway agreed.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Rationale: The Board will enter into Executive Session and invite Dr. Galloway and Stephanie Levin into Executive Session to discuss the ratification of the SAA contract.

Motion to enter into Executive Session and invite Dr. Galloway and Stephanie Levin to discuss the ratification of the SAA contract. This motion, made by Shane Manning and seconded by Derek Zelek, Carried. **Yea: 9, Nay: 0**

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:25 p.m.

The Board exited Executive Session at 7:29 p.m.

Motion to ratify the contract between the Somers Board of Education and the Somers Administrators' Association for the dates 7/1/27- 6/30/30. This motion, made by Shane Manning and seconded by Gina Olearczyk, Carried. **Yea: 9, Nay: 0**

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m. This motion, made by Shane Manning and seconded by JT Galloway, Carried. **Yea: 9, Nay:0**

Dr. Sharon Goulet, BOE Secretary Date

Jenna McDermott, BOE Recording Secretary